

Orange County Football Officials' Association

Policies and Procedures Manual

(Revised 9/01/23)

The Policies & Procedures Manual is a compilation of policies and procedures as enacted by the Executive Board of the Orange County Football Officials Association. This manual is made available to the membership to inform and educate them regarding the day-to-day management of the Association as well as the expectations and requirements of the Association's membership.

OFFICIAL'S ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

1. Membership application and dues shall be submitted and paid via online registration and received by the Secretary/Treasurer no later than May 1st of the current year. A late fee of \$50.00 shall be assessed for dues received after May 1st.
2. Any member, who hasn't paid his/her dues by June 1st, shall not be scheduled for any games until their dues have been paid.
3. Any crewmember that hasn't paid his/her dues by June 1st shall be removed from the crew for the current year. The Assignor shall fill this vacancy for the upcoming season, on a weekly basis, with a qualified member of the OCFOA.
4. Failure to provide proof of required Liability insurance will result in said official being denied assignments until proof of such insurance is provided.
 - A. Approved Liability providers include the National Association of Sports Officials, NASO or the National Federation of High Schools, NFHS.

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LEAVE OF ABSENCE

1. Any member of this Association in good standing – i.e. has kept all dues current, has passed all required exams and has maintained a satisfactory attendance record, may apply for and receive an approved leave of absence for up to one year without forfeiting his/her qualification status.
2. An application for a leave of absence must be by letter addressed to the President and Secretary of this Association stating the reason(s) for the request.
3. Upon returning to active membership, the official in question shall pay all current membership dues, pass the current year's summer exam and current year's qualification exam before they become eligible to officiate football games again.
4. If said official was on a crew, he/she does not automatically return to that crew but is eligible to be selected to be on a crew for the season following the leave of absence.
5. Any official on leave of absence for longer than one year will be treated as an official transferring in from another Association as far as eligibility to officiate and to be on a crew.

PERSONAL CONDUCT

1. All high schools are non-smoking and tobacco free environments. Any complaint filed by a school against an official for violation of this policy is an Ethics Committee matter.
2. On game day, consumption of ANY alcoholic beverage prior to the game is expressly forbidden. Any complaint filed by a school against an official for violation of this policy is an Ethics Committee matter and is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from membership in this Association.
3. Use of any illicit drug(s) is expressly forbidden. Any complaint filed by a school against an official for violation of this policy is an Ethics Committee matter and is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from membership in this Association.
4. Failure to show up for a game that has been accepted is an Ethics Committee matter and the official in question will be subject to penalties for such failure to honor the assignment unless having previously notified the Assignor or there was a legitimate emergency that prevented such notification.
5. If an official who is scheduled to work does not show up, or arrives after the scheduled opening kickoff, the other crewmember(s) shall call and notify the Assignor.
6. Failure to abide by the provisions of the Code of Ethics, this personal conduct policy, or any other act that would bring discredit to this Association is an Ethics Committee matter and is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from membership in this Association.

GAME ASSIGNMENTS AND COMPENSATION

1. All officials shall contact the home school prior to the day of the non-varsity game and confirm the status of the game directly from the Athletic Director or Head Coach. Speaking with anyone else is not sufficient.
2. No official shall switch games with another official without the approval of the Assignor. In the case of an emergency, the Assignor shall be notified as soon as practical of the situation.
3. For each scheduled game, the Referee shall contact all officials assigned to the game and all assignments shall be confirmed no later than 9:00 PM on Tuesday of the week of the game. Failure to confirm the assignment by the officials with the Referee by that date and time gives the Referee the option to replace said official(s) without notice, and the official(s) will not be paid for the game.
4. If the Assignor is contacted by a school and informed that the game to which an official has been assigned has been rescheduled, the Assignor will endeavor to contact the assigned official(s) prior to the rescheduled date and time to determine if the official(s) is/are able to accommodate the change. The Assignor has the right to replace the official(s) and the official(s) will not be entitled to compensation.
5. ALL officials working ANY games are doing so as INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS. As such, game officials are not EMPLOYEES of the School, the California Interscholastic Federation, or the Orange County Football Officials' Association. Services rendered as an independent contractor do not come under the auspices of the Workers' Compensation Act.
6. The official, independent of the Association, must obtain insurance for liability and medical coverage. This coverage may be through the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO), the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), or other means as decided by the individual official.

7. Payment of dues to the Orange County Football Officials Association does not guarantee the member to be assigned games to officiate. Assignments are at the discretion of the Assignor.
8. There are four (4) recognized and acceptable forms of game fee payment. The methods of payment are at the discretion of the school.

The methods of payment are:

1. The school may pay in cash at the game.
 2. The school may pay by check at the game.
 3. The school may ask the official to complete a pay voucher and W4. A check will be mailed. *Allow 1-3 weeks for delivery of game fee payment.* If an official refuses to sign a payment voucher or required tax documents, they will not be entitled to compensation.
 4. The school may pay via ArbiterPay, (formerly RefPay a division of Arbiter Sports. For this method, the official will have to complete an enrollment for online via Arbiter Sports.
9. Games assignments turned back to the assignor after acceptance will be subject to a fee according to the escalation chart below. Games declined when assignments are first issued due to an official not blocking the date will also be assessed this fee. The assignor reserves the right to waive the fee at his discretion. These fees will be collected by and paid to, the assignor and must be paid prior to the playoffs. This is considered a financial obligation to the association.

Turn Back Fees		
Turn Back Fees	Per Date	Flag and Tackle are treated as one Date
First offense		\$5.00
2nd Offense	Exponential X2	\$10.00
3rd Offense	Exponential X2	\$20.00
4th and all subsequent Offenses	Exponential X2	\$40.00

BUY-OFF PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOLS

- For varsity games, once an official has accepted a game assignment, both Schools retain the right to have the crew removed from the game through a buy-off procedure at ANY TIME prior to the game.
- A school, at the request of the Principal, may exercise this right by informing the Assignor of such decision and tendering a check to the Association for all five game fees.
- The school must also pay the game fees of the replacement crew.
- The bought-off crew will receive full compensation for the game which they were removed and if the Assignor needs these officials to work elsewhere, they may do so and receive compensation for that new game as well.

ASSOCIATION POLICY ON REDLINING

We accept Redline of officials with the following governed policy:

- a) Number per school (Limit 5 per school)
- b) Length of Redline (1 year max - if official did not work that school the last year there is no reason to have a redline - if we go longer than 1 year the redline request MUST be renewed).
- c) Good Cause - Written
- d) Letter from Principal
- e) The Official be made aware of the redline.
- f) Official cannot be redlined from a school he/she did not work the year before.
- g) If the Varsity Head Coach is new at the school, no redline can be accepted.
- h) Redlines must be submitted at the time the schedule is provided to the assignor.

UNIFORMS

1. All officials working ANY assigned varsity game, including 8-man games, regardless of game start time, shall wear the prescribed uniform as follows:
 - a. 2 ¼” black and white striped shirt with black Byron collar (may be short sleeve or long sleeve, depending upon weather)
 - i. The shirt will have an American flag, whose dimensions are 3 1/8” (W) X 2 1/8” (H) with a white border. If an official is a veteran, the border may be gold in color.
 - b. Black pants with a 1-1/4” white stripe down the outside of each leg.
 - c. Black cap with white piping (the referee shall wear a white cap)
 - d. Black socks without logos of any kind showing (minimum crew sock length)
 - e. Black shoes: (predominately black in color)

2. The alternate uniform for all sub-varsity game assignments is as follows:
 - a. 2 ¼” black and white striped shirt with black Byron collar (may be short sleeve or long sleeve, depending upon weather)
 - i. The shirt will have an American flag, whose dimensions are 3 1/8” (W) X 2 1/8” (H) with a white border. If an official is a veteran, the border may be gold in color.
 - b. Black shorts (No white stripe)
 - c. White crew socks
 - d. Black shoes; (predominately black in color)

3. The alternate uniform shall not be worn during any varsity game.

4. During a specified period, officials may wear wristbands, whistles and/or lanyards, or a specified patch as authorized by the Executive Board to recognize approved awareness or memorial causes.

5. No other attachments or adornments shall be worn on the officials’ uniforms.

GAME FILM/VIDEO/PHOTOGRAPHIC REVIEW

1. No official, other than the Instructional Chairman, his designee, or the Assignor shall review a video recording of another official's game for the purpose of an official review that is requested by a school, coach, or the California Interscholastic Federation.
2. The only exception to this policy is that the Ethics Committee, during the course of their investigation of an alleged ethics violation(s) by an official(s) may review any and all film, video, or photographic materials as necessary to discharge their duties.

NOTIFICATION TO MEMBERS OF MEETINGS AND AGENDA

1. The Board will provide notice of Board meetings directly to members by email no less than two weeks before the scheduled meeting;
2. The Board will provide the meeting agenda directly to the members by email 48 hours before the next scheduled meeting.

EJECTION PROCEDURE

1. If a coach or player is ejected, the official who issued the ejection is required to e-mail or fax a written report (available online at the OCFOA website) of the circumstances that surrounded the ejection to the CIF Liaison and the assignor within 24 hours of the event
2. If the referee/crew chief is not the one to have issued the ejection, he/she too shall file a report regarding the ejection with the CIF Liaison and the Assignor within 24 hours of the event
3. The CIF Liaison will file the notification directly with the CIF offices
4. Any and all questions regarding an ejection are to be directed to the CIF Liaison only and not to the officials involved in the ejection.

PLAYOFF QUALIFICATION

In order to qualify for placement on the Orange County Football Official's Association's Rating Committee Play-off list an official must:

1. Officiate a minimum of six (6) Varsity games (*in Orange County*) during the current year.
2. Be a Certified Member and Member in Good standing
3. Dues are current and the members have met the financial obligations imposed by the association.
4. Have an acceptable attendance record at Association meetings by having missed no more than one meeting (including credit for attending make-up meetings or attendance at other football association's meetings).
5. Passed the summer exam and the qualification exam with a minimum grade of 80% on each exam.
6. The Rating Committee shall submit to the Board for its approval, a list of qualified officials by position. This will include a playoff list that meets the specified needs of the CIF.
7. After approval the Board shall:
 - a. Forward the list to the OCFOA Assignor for use in assigning Play-Off games. No OCFOA official shall work consecutive CIF-SS Finals Games as assigned by the Association's Assignor unless said official is selected directly by the CIF-SS Office
 - b. Forward a list of the top 3 officials by position, or any other amount required, to the California Interscholastic Federation office for their use

CREW CHANGE RESTRICTIONS

- November - January**, the Referee Committee shall conduct the process of evaluating and selecting Varsity Crew Chiefs for the upcoming season.
2. **December 15th or 1 week after the CIF State Championships are completed (Whichever is later)**, Varsity Crew Chiefs must declare their intention to return as a Referee or resign their Crew Chief position.
 3. **January 31st**, All Crew Chiefs returning for the following season are required to notify the Vice-President of their decision to remove a crew member from their crew for the upcoming season.
 4. **February 5th** Crew listings with current vacancies will be posted to the OCFOA Website
 5. **February 5th** Last day for non-crew officials who are eligible to be on a varsity crew shall submit their preferred position(s) to the Vice-President
 6. **February 10th**, The Vice President shall provide a list of all non-crew officials and their desired positions to Crew Chiefs.
 7. **February 10th**, The Deadline for The OCFOA Board meeting to approve the selections of The Referee Selection Committee for Crew Chief vacancies for the upcoming season.
 8. **March 15th**, first day Crew Chiefs will be allowed to formally fill vacancies on their crew by submitting the name and position of the new crew member in writing to the Vice President.
 9. **Starting March 15th**, the Vice President shall be responsible for regular updates to the crew lists on the website weekly
 10. **April 1st**, Last Day Crewmembers are allowed to remove themselves from their crew Any crewmember that removes him/herself after APRIL 1st shall not be eligible to be on a crew during the same calendar year.
 11. **April 30th**, Last day for Crew Chiefs to notify the Vice-President of new crewmember(s) to fill any vacancy(s).
 12. **Beginning May 1st**, any vacant position on the crew will remain vacant for the upcoming season and be filled by the Assignor on a weekly basis for the upcoming season.
 13. If a crewmember must leave the crew due to extenuating circumstances, that official may be replaced by a non-crew member, with Board approval, no later than the June board meeting
 14. Any official who transfers in from another association may not serve as a permanent member of a crew until first serving a full year (pay dues, attend classes and pass all required exams) with the OCFOA.
 15. A transferring official may be assigned Varsity games on an individual game basis upon passing the required OCFOA classification examination and confirmation of their varsity qualification from their previous association as verified by the OCFOA Instructional Chairman and OCFOA Secretary

Best Practices by Officials and Crew Chiefs during this process:

1. The timeline for Varsity Crew Selection is designed to create a window of opportunity for both the Crew Chief (Referee) and Official to be informed of opportunities that exist within our Crew Based Association
2. Crew Chiefs are to refrain from tactics that discourage officials from adhering to the dates and deadlines laid out in the Crew Selection Process
3. Crew Members are encouraged to communicate any decision to their current crew chiefs prior to or in conjunction with any formal notification sent to the Vice President.
4. Crew Chiefs who have vacancies shall respond to all inquiries regarding their vacancies within a reasonable timeframe and in a respectful manner. How the vacancy is filled by the Crew Chief is the decision of that Referee, however the process should be in such a manner that encourages continued membership with the OCFOA and growth of the official(s) selected and not selected.
5. Acts or Actions taken by members of the OCFOA during this process that may be deemed grossly inappropriate or unethical can be reported to the Ethics Committee for further investigation and possible action.

ATTENDANCE AT OCFOA INSTRUCTIONAL MEETINGS

1. All crew members, including crew referees, must earn credit for a minimum of **FOUR** OCFOA instructional meetings.
2. The Executive Board may, at its discretion and with the input of the OCFOA Instructional Chair, waive this requirement under extenuating circumstances.
3. Failure to meet this minimum requirement may result in a loss of “crew eligible” status.

REFEREE REVIEW AND RENEWAL POLICY

1. **Veteran Referees:** Every five years veteran crew Referees shall be interviewed and reviewed by a Referee Review Committee selected by the Board.
2. **Non-Veteran Referees:** First and second year crew Referees shall be interviewed and reviewed by the Committee after each season.
3. **Committee Composition:** 3 to 5 current referees selected by Board who are not also Board members.
4. **Matters Committee Will Review:** Committee will consider and review for its evaluation of a Referee the following: test scores; ratings; leadership in association; evaluations; rules knowledge; game film review.
5. **Committee's Recommendations:** Committee will submit to the Board either a recommendation that a Referee be renewed or placed on probationary status. The Board will vote to adopt or reject the Committee's recommendation per Referee.

A. Probationary Status:

- i. Referees shall be notified within 3 days of Board's decision to place them on Probationary status and provided reasons for the decision and guidance as to areas needing improvement for the following season.
- ii. Referees on Probationary status may be provided with a mentor Referee.
- iii. A Referee is placed on probationary status for 1 season and then will be reviewed by the Committee before the following season wherein the Committee may recommend: 1) Renewed status; 2) Probationary status; or 3) Removal from Referee position. A review of a Referee on probationary status must be completed by the Committee no later than January 30th following the season on probationary status with the Committee's recommendation submitted to the Board at the immediate Board meeting following January 30th -- at which the Board will vote in Executive Session to adopt or reject the Committee's recommendation.

B. Right of Appeal:

- i. Any Referee placed on Probationary status or removed from Referee position may appeal to the Board. The appeal must be presented to the Board within 15 days of notification by the Board of its decision and will be considered at the immediate Board meeting following receipt of the appeal.

 - ii. Appeal must be in writing and must be submitted by email to the President.

 - iii. Appeal will be considered by the Board in Executive Session. Referee may request to be heard at the Executive Session
- 5. Timing of Review:** Review of Referees shall be completed by the Committee by June 30th of each year and should include reviewing a Referee's performance from the preceding 5 football seasons (based on materials described in paragraph 4).
- 6. Roll-out of Process**
- A. 2019 (review will take place by June 30th, 2019)
 - i. Veteran Referees: 6 Referees who currently serve on the Board: Frank Werner, Jeff Roberts, Brian Brennan, David Bautista, Robert Yoakum, Mark Harrison.
 - ii. 1st and 2nd year Referees (new Referees as of 2017 and 2018 seasons)

 - B. 2020
 - i. Veteran Referees: 7 Referees by random draw (but not previously reviewed)
 - ii. 1st and 2nd year Referees (new Referees as of 2018 and 2019 seasons)

 - C. 2021
 - i. Veteran Referees: 7 Referees by random draw (but not previously reviewed)
 - ii. 1st and 2nd year Referees (new Referees as of 2019 and 2020 seasons)

 - D. 2022
 - i. Veteran Referees: all remaining referees who have not yet been reviewed
 - ii. 1st and 2nd year Referees (new Referees as of 2021 and 2022 seasons)

 - E. 2023
 - i. Veteran Referees who became Referees in 2018
 - ii. 1st and 2nd year Referees (new Referees during preceding two seasons)

 - F. 2024
 - i. Veteran Referees who became Referees in 2019
 - ii. 1st and 2nd year Referees (new Referees during preceding two seasons)

 - G. 2025 and beyond
 - i. Veteran Referees who have not been reviewed in last 5 years

ii. 1st and 2nd year Referees (new Referees during preceding two seasons)

MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

1. If any assignments are missed, the other official(s) who worked the game shall notify either the President or Assignment Coordinator within seventy-two (72) hours, and if deemed necessary the following procedures shall be adhered to.
 - a. The official who missed the assignment(s) shall be contacted immediately by the Ethics Committee Chairman, and the Official shall, within fourteen (14) days, submit in writing to the Chairman the reason for missing the assignment(s).
 - b. After reviewing the explanation with the official, the Ethics Committee shall decide whether or not to accept the explanation as valid, and the Chairman shall, within fourteen (14) days, notify the official and the Executive Board, in writing, of the Committee's decision
2. For the first unauthorized missed assignment of the current football season, the official who missed the assignment shall, within fourteen (14) days, pay to this Association's Secretary/Treasurer the individual's total amount of the game fee
3. For the second unauthorized missed assignment of the current football season, the official who missed the assignment shall lose all remaining and future game assignments for the current season and shall be classified as a non-certified member for the following football season.
4. For unauthorized missed assignments, the official shall then have fourteen (14) days to appeal, in writing to the Executive Board, the Ethics Committee's decision.
 - a. After receiving the appeal, the Executive Board shall, within fourteen (14) days, either uphold the Ethics Committee's decision or re-interview the official
 - b. During the appeal, any penalty imposed shall be held in abeyance until the appeal is resolved.
5. At the conclusion of this interview the President shall, within fourteen (14) days, notify the official, in writing, of the Executive Board's decision.
6. The decision of the Executive Board shall be final.
7. At the conclusion of this interview the President shall, within fourteen (14) days, notify the official, in writing, of the Executive Board's decision

OPERATING RESERVE

The purpose of the Operating Reserve Policy for The Orange County Football Officials Association (OCFOA) is to ensure the stability of the mission, programs, employment, and ongoing operations of the organization. The Operating Reserve is intended to provide an internal source of funds for situations such as a sudden increase in expenses, one-time unbudgeted expenses, unanticipated loss in funding, or uninsured losses. The Executive Board shall make every attempt to keep this fund at a minimum of 20%.