

## ***Certification Info, Criteria, and Process***

### **USATF Officials' Certification Overview**

Training and certification of officials is central to USATF's goal of ensuring fair and safe competitive opportunities for athletes. As an official gains experience, exposure to correct officiating practices, and additional training, USATF recognizes this skill development through progressive levels of certification.

Officials are certified on an overall basis, and also for specific event skills - which may range from Association to Master level for that official. Advancement from one level to another is not automatic; it's earned through diligent service and demonstrated proficiency.

All certifications expire at the end of each four year Olympiad period. Certification levels are subject to review each Olympiad; officials inactive or minimally active during the previous Olympiad may have a specific skill area or their entire certification level reduced by one level.

Timelines - New officials may apply for initial Association certification at any time. Certified officials are recertified for each four year Olympiad period during the year of the Summer Olympic Games. Officials who meet the criteria for certification upgrade may request advancement to the National and Master levels at the time they believe they are eligible.

### **Certification Levels and Criteria**

(Association criteria for certification at the various levels may be more stringent than the national minimums.)

#### **Pre-Association Level**

Prior to becoming a certified official, prospective candidates are encouraged to assist at meets at the "Pre-Association" level. This permits the novice official to gain a range of officiating experience and to appreciate the expectations and responsibilities inherent in being a USATF certified official. The association will attempt to provide mentoring to guide this official.

#### **Association Level**

When first certified by USATF, all individuals will be an Association level official regardless of the number of years they have been officiating. To become or remain as an Association level official, an individual is expected to:

- Attend a training/certification clinic during the Olympiad
- Complete an open book examination on the rules of all aspects of the sport, with a score of at least 85%
- Be a current member of USATF; pay the certification fee established by the Association, provide a current photograph, and complete the officials' application form

Officials must also meet the following specific requirements set by the Association:

- XXXXXXXXX

#### **National Level**

***A National level official should be able to head up an event at a major meet in an Association and work as an official at national championships.*** A National level official will be certified in at least one skill at the National level, and may be certified in other skills at the Association or National levels.

An official seeking National level certification must:

- Have served as an Association level official for at least two years
- Submit an officiating resume listing meets at which he/she officiated during the prior two years
- Attend a training/certification clinic during the Olympiad
- Complete an open book examination on the rules of all aspects of the sport, with a score of at least 90%

- Be a current member of USATF; pay the certification fee established by the Association, provide a current photograph, and complete the officials' application form

Officials must also meet the following specific requirements set by the Association:

- Officiated an average of at least **xx** meets per year, including at least **x** championship meets over the previous two years
- Officiated the event skill requested an average of at least **xx** meets per year in the previous two years and served as the chief of the event or skill in at least **x** of those meets
- Officiated at least **x** meets outside the Association in each of the two previous years
- Provide **x** letters of recommendation attesting to their qualification to be a National level official, from **xxxxxxx**

## Master Level

Master level certification is reserved for a limited number of the most outstanding officials who have achieved mastery in a specific area of officiating. Through experience, demonstrated competency, and a commitment to high-quality objective officiating, **Master officials have developed the skills necessary to serve in a leadership role in their area of specialization at a major national or international competition.** A Master level official will be certified in at least one skill at the Master level, and may be certified in other skills at the Association, National, or Master levels.

An official seeking Master level certification must:

- Have served as a National level official for at least three years
- Submit an officiating resume listing meets at which he/she officiated during the prior three years
- Attend a training/certification clinic during the Olympiad
- Complete an open book examination on the rules of all aspects of the sport, with a score of at least 95%
- Be a current member of USATF; pay the certification fee established by the Association, provide a current photograph, and complete the officials' application form

Officials must also meet the following specific requirements set by the Association:

- Officiated an average of at least **xx** meets per year, including at least **x** championship meets, over the previous three years
- Officiated the event skill requested an average of at least **xx** meets per year in the previous three years and served as the chief of the event or skill in at least **x** of those meets
- Officiated at least **x** meets outside the Association in each of the three previous years
- Provide **x** letters of recommendation attesting to their qualification to be a Master level official, from **xxxxxxx**.

## Master Referee

The Master level certification as a referee is reserved for a very small number of outstanding officials who have demonstrated their ability and competence as lead officials and who have a great deal of technical and practical knowledge of the rules. To be considered for this level, a candidate must (1) take an open-book test on the rules of USATF, the NCAA, and high schools, particularly where they differ significantly from USATF rules; (2) have a minimum of three years experience as a referee in the discipline in which a candidate seeks to be upgraded; (3) have two written letters of recommendation, one from a meet director and one from his/her certification chair, NTO, ATO or ITO; (3) have a resume from the last three years showing assignments as a National level referee. The five discipline areas for certification are:

Track Referee

Combined Events Referee

Long Distance

Field Referee

Race Walking Referee

Running Referee (includes Cross Country)

## National Technical Official

This is an IAAF level of certification reserved for Master Level Referees who want to become internationally certified to work international meets in the United States. It is the first step in IAAF certification. To be considered, a candidate must be a Master Referee in at least two of the five disciplines (see above) for a minimum of three years in each discipline.

## Certification Process

### Initial Certification - Association Level

Individuals submit their request for certification at the Association level with items # 1 thru 6 below.

### Recertification at the Current Level

Certified officials request recertification from their Certification Chair, providing the Chair with the following items:

- 1) Current year USATF membership number. **Join Online** (a \$30 annual cost)
- 2) National Officials 2009-2012 **Certification Application Database Form**
- 3) Answer sheet for the Officials Rules Review/test. Download the Rules Review for your level from the "**Certification Rules Review**" section on the USATF Certification webpage. Note: Reviews for 2009-2012 recertification are based on 2008 rule books
- 4) Check for \$xx.xx Certification Fee, made payable to "XXXXXXXXXXXX" (this is a one-time fee for the 4 year 2009-2012 Olympiad). It includes national certification, USATF Certified Official's photo ID card and pin, association expenses for certification, materials, mailing, and XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
- 5) Photo (head only) - preferably a digital (jpeg format), or a 1" x 1" passport type photo
- 6) Date attended an official's training/certification clinic.
- 7) For National and Master level recertification only: a resume of meets officiated (meet, location, date, duty -- and whether a crew member or head) satisfying the criteria above, and clinics attended. Resumes must cover the past two years (for National level recertification) or the past three years (for Master level recertification).

### Certification Upgrade – Overall Level

Officials who meet the criteria above may request advancement to be certified overall at the National and Master levels. Requests are reviewed by a panel of Master officials from the association and the Certification Chair. Simply fulfilling a time requirement does not suffice to upgrade an official to the next level. The panel approves or disapproves requests based on a review of: the years of officiating at the Association or National level; the meets worked and the level of competition; the variety and level of responsibility of assignments; the quality of officiating; knowledge of the rules of competition; and demonstrated professionalism, reliability, and dependability. The panel may contact meet directors, coaches, and other officials for evaluation purposes.

### Certification Upgrade - Specific Event Skill

Certified officials may request upgrade in their certification level from their Certification Chair for specific event skills (not to exceed their overall certification level), providing the Chair with the following items:

- National Officials 2009-2012 **Certification Application Database Form**
- Letters of recommendation - for National level: a letter from an active National or Master level chief judge you have officiated under in the skill requested; for Master level: letters from two active Master level chief judges you have officiated under in the skill requested
- Resume of meets officiated (meet, location, date, duty performed) showing officiating performance in the skill(s) requested in at least xxxx meets per year during each of the previous two years (National) or three years (Master), in various positions/duties for the skill

### Transfer of Certification from other Associations

The Association will recognize the transfer of an official from another USATF association, with his or her current certification levels, provided they are a member in good standing with the USATF and their former association. Individuals seeking a transfer-in should contact the Certification Chair, XXXXX XXXXXXXX at (xxx) xxx-xxxx, or e-mail at xxx@xxxxx, and have their former association certification chair also contact him/her.

### Appeals of Certification Actions

Enter your appeals process, or consider using the following: Appeals are sent to the Association President or Certification Chair, and are acted upon by a Certification Subcommittee composed of master level officials.