



**ONTARIO
SOCCER**
EST. 1901

2024-2025 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

SECTION 10 – MATCH OFFICIALS

PROCEDURE 1.0 – GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 1.1 An Ontario Soccer registered Match Official on the Official List of Match Officials (registration database) may only officiate sanctioned Ontario Soccer games. Any Ontario Soccer registered Match Official that officiates in an unsanctioned game is subject to disciplinary actions under Section 12, Procedure 9.16.
- 1.2 All Match Officials shall enforce the appropriate Laws of the Game and competition rules as per Ontario Soccer and Canada Soccer directives.
- 1.3 No person shall take part as an official in any competition under the jurisdiction of Ontario Soccer, who is not on the Official List of Match Officials. However, if in unforeseen circumstances an official fails to show up for a game or is unable to act, the Competition Host Organization or the Team Officials shall have the right to agree on some other person who is willing to officiate in accordance with the competition rules.
- 1.4 **Ontario Soccer Conflict of Interest Guidelines for Match Officials**

A Match Official may not accept an appointment if they have a Conflict of Interest. Conflicts of interest arise if an official has, or appears to have, private or personal interests that detract from their ability to carry out the obligations as an official with integrity in an independent and purposeful manner. If a registered Match Official has an immediate family member (spouse, son, daughter, brother, sister, parent) who is a Player, Coach, or Team Official (including assistant Coaches, Managers, trainers, etc.) in a particular League and division, they cannot officiate in that division of that League.

The complete Conflict Of Interest policy is available here in Appendix A1:
[Ontario Soccer Policies March 25 2023](#)

PROCEDURE 2.0 – REGISTRATION

- 2.1 Registration is effective April 1st and terminates on March 31st of the following year.
- 2.2 All persons wishing to be placed on the Official List of Match Officials shall register annually with Ontario Soccer. Each application shall be accompanied by the fee as set by Ontario Soccer. Ontario Soccer reserves the right to assess additional fees as deemed necessary. If all criteria are met, the name of the applicant shall be placed on the Official List of Match Officials.
- 2.3 Registration includes:
- a) Registration to Ontario Soccer
 - b) Registration to Canada Soccer for Provincial, Regional, District and Youth Match Officials
- 2.4 A Match Official may only register in a classification for which they are accredited. If they wish to register at a lower classification, they must notify the Match Officials Development Staff in writing prior to March 31st of the current year.
- 2.5 A person wishing to register as a Match Official must complete an annual Laws of the Game (LOTG) evaluation. A Match Official may request one re-take of the annual education evaluation if they fail to meet the required mark for their individual grade as per Ontario Soccer Grading Protocol document.
- 2.6 A Match Official who has let their registration lapse two years or more and who applies for re-instatement may be required to re-take the Canada Soccer Entry Level accreditation course, and will have their case reviewed by the Ontario Soccer Match Officials Development lead, who, in making a decision, will be guided by [Canada Soccer Rules and Regulations](#). The Match Official requesting re-instatement will be required to pass the Laws of the Game (LOTG) evaluation at the level deemed appropriate by Ontario Soccer.
- 2.7 A complete list of names and addresses of all Match Officials on Ontario Soccer's Official List of Match Officials will be forwarded to Canada Soccer annually by a date set by Canada Soccer.



- 2.8 Ontario Soccer will determine what will be included in the registration package on an annual basis.
- 2.9 Persons wishing to start officiating must first attend the appropriate accreditation course.
- 2.10 Ontario Soccer has the authority to request an annual registration fee from Development Support Team members (defined as Assessors, Instructors) that only register as a Development Support Team Member (and not a Match Official) if they are deemed to be earning funds from performing Ontario Soccer related duties.
- 2.11 All Club Head Referees and District Referee Coordinators must register annually with Ontario Soccer. This registration is at no cost to those individuals holding these two roles. A registration fee will apply to all other roles held by the individual.
- 2.12 It will be required that a Match Official 18 years of age and older must provide confirmation that they have reviewed the Rowan's Law concussion awareness resources annually, and must provide the confirmation on their annual registration.

PROCEDURE 3.0 – MATCH OFFICIALS' CLASSIFICATION AND STANDARDS

- 3.1 Match Official Classifications are based upon the classifications set by Canada Soccer. Ontario Soccer Match Official Classifications are as follows:
 - Provincial Match Official
 - Regional Match Official
 - District Match Official
 - Youth Match Official
 - Small-Sided Game Match Official

FIFA and Canada Soccer Referee Classifications are in accordance with [Policy 3.1 of Canada Soccer's Regulations For The Registration And Control of Referees](#)
- 3.2 Ontario Soccer may at its discretion re-examine, re-classify or re-grade any registered Match Official, and it may remove any Match Official from the Official List of Match Officials for just cause. Ontario Soccer may similarly reinstate a Match Official to the Official List of Match Officials.
- 3.3 The review of a Regional and Provincial upgrading Match Official's file will be completed annually by Ontario Soccer. Match Officials will be notified in writing of their classification.
- 3.4 Nominations for the Canada Soccer NextGen & Women's Program and National Referee, Instructor and Assessor classification shall be made annually by Ontario Soccer's Match Officials Development Program in consultation with the Match Officials Development Committee, and at the direction of Canada Soccer.
- 3.5 A Match Official transferring to or from another province must complete the standard [Canada Soccer Referee Transfer form](#) and submit to the Ontario Soccer Match Officials program staff.
- 3.6 All Match Officials who wish to officiate Futsal must follow requirements as set by Canada Soccer.
- 3.7 Match Officials must apply for promotion as per **Guidelines for [Regional or Provincial Upgrading](#)**.
- 3.8 A Match Official must be a minimum of 12 years of age as of April 1st of the current year in order to be eligible to register as a Small Sided Game Match Official. A Match Official must be a minimum 14 years of age as of April 1st of the current year in order to register as a Youth Match Official.
- 3.9 To register or maintain standing as a Small Sided Game Match Official, a Match Official must:
 - a) Be 12 years old as of April 1st of the current year; and
 - b) Complete the annual Laws of the Game evaluation.
- 3.10 To be eligible for consideration for promotion to a Youth Match Official, the Small Sided Game Match Official must:
 - a) Be 14 years old as of April 1st of the current year;



- b) Successfully complete the Canada Soccer Entry Level Accreditation course; and
- c) Be in good standing.

When the participant passes the Entry Level Examination, they will be eligible to referee as per the appointment chart (see Procedure 5.0 Appointments). If the participant fails the Entry Level Examination, they may re-write the examination. Failing to pass the re-write, the participant will be required to retake the course.

3.11 To maintain classification as a Youth Match Official, a Match Official must:

- a) Officiate only competitions that are sanctioned by Ontario Soccer;
- b) Adhere to all Published Rules of Ontario Soccer and be in good standing;
- c) Remain current by completing education programming, as required; and
- d) Maintain registration each year & pay the annual fees as published by Ontario Soccer.
- e) Meet the standards set out in the current version of Ontario Soccer Grading Protocol.

3.12 A Youth Match Official will be promoted to a District Match Official on the day of the Youth Match Official's 16th Birthday.

3.13 To maintain classification as a District Match Official, a Match Official must:

- a) Officiate only competitions that are sanctioned by Ontario Soccer;
- b) Adhere to all Published Rules of Ontario Soccer and be in good standing;
- c) Remain current by completing education programming, as required;
- d) Maintain registration each year and pay the annual fees as published by Ontario Soccer; and
- e) Meet the standards set out in the current version of Ontario Soccer Grading Protocol.

3.14 To be eligible for consideration for promotion to a Regional Match Official, a District Match Official must follow the process stated in [Ontario Soccer Guidelines for Regional Upgrading](#).

3.15 To maintain classification as a Regional Match Official, a Match Official must:

- a) Officiate only competitions that are sanctioned by Ontario Soccer;
- b) Adhere to all Published Rules of Ontario Soccer and be in good standing;
- c) Remain current by completing education programming, as required by Ontario Soccer;
- d) Maintain registration each year and pay the annual fees as published by Ontario Soccer;
- e) Meet the assessment standard required by Canada Soccer; and
- f) Fulfill the Canada Soccer fitness test requirement for Regional Match Officials as stated in [The Fitness Test Protocol Document](#).

3.16 To be eligible for consideration for promotion to a Provincial Match Official, a Regional Match Official must follow the process stated in the Ontario Soccer Guidelines for Provincial Upgrading.

3.17 To maintain classification as a Provincial Match Official, a Match Official must:

- a) Officiate only competitions that are sanctioned by Ontario Soccer;
- b) Adhere to all Published Rules of Ontario Soccer and be in good standing;
- c) Remain current by completing education programming, as required by Ontario Soccer;
- d) Maintain registration each year and pay the annual fees as published by Ontario Soccer;
- e) Meet the assessment standard required by Canada Soccer; and
- f) Fulfill the Canada Soccer fitness test requirement for Provincial Match Officials as stated in The Fitness Test Protocol Document.

3.18 Regulations regarding National Nomination are as per [Canada Soccer's Regulations For the Registration And Control of Referees](#)

3.19 No Match Official grade that meets the Ontario Soccer Grading requirement (as per the Ontario Soccer Grading Protocol) may be adjusted at any time, in any system without prior written approval of Ontario Soccer Match Officials Development staff.



- 3.20** All Futsal Match Officials must register annually with Ontario Soccer, and pay the required registration fee which will be determined annually. Active Registration will open September 1 and close October 31st. A late fee will be applied to any registration completed after October 31st of the current registration season.
- Registration will be active until August 31st of the following year.
- 3.21** Futsal Match Officials will be graded based on the current Futsal Grading Protocol. Ontario Soccer has the right to adjust grades as required.

PROCEDURE 4.0 – FITNESS TESTS

- 4.1** FIFA, National list Match Officials and Assistant Referees, shall meet the requirements of Canada Soccer (CS).
- 4.2** Provincial and Regional Match Officials shall meet the requirements of Canada Soccer.
- 4.3** District Match Officials that require fitness testing, shall meet the fitness test standards set annually by Ontario Soccer as per The Fitness Test Protocol.
- 4.4** A female Match Official wishing to pursue her career to officiate at the Senior Men's level (as specified in the Pyramid of Refereeing) must refer to the Canada Soccer Fitness Testing Guidelines: [CSA Fitness Policies and Procedures 2017](#) for current and up-to-date fitness requirements.
- 4.5** The organizing of fitness tests is the responsibility of Ontario Soccer. District level Fitness Tests will be organized by the District Association in consultation with Ontario Soccer. Approval of the fitness test, and the assignment of a Fitness Test Supervisor will be administered by Ontario Soccer.
- 4.6** Any Match Official who is required by these Operational Procedures to complete a fitness test and fails to pass or does not attend the appropriate fitness test for their classification by May 31st each year shall be regraded as per Ontario Soccer Grading Protocol.
- All Fitness testing shall be governed in accordance to the annually reviewed and published Ontario Soccer Fitness Testing Protocol, which includes but is not limited to covering sickness, injury, refusal, failure and reinstatement.
- 4.7** Immediately upon declaring an injury in writing, or verbally, a Match Official will be ineligible to officiate until a doctor's note stating recovery is provided to Ontario Soccer. Until this point, the Match Official's online assigning account will be de-activated. Please refer to the Fitness Test Protocol. In the event of an injury, whereby a Match Official cannot complete the required Fitness Test, they must adhere to the annually reviewed and published Declared Injury Protocol.
- 4.8** FIFA Match Officials and FIFA Assistant Referees, and National Match Officials must have their fitness tests supervised by a National Instructor or a National Assessor.
- 4.9** From time to time, Ontario Soccer may require a Match Official to attend and pass additional fitness tests for special competitions as deemed necessary.

PROCEDURE 5.0 – APPOINTMENTS

- 5.1** Games will be assigned based on the Canada Soccer Pyramid of Assigning and Ontario Soccer Grading Protocol.



- 5.2** A registered Match Official may only officiate in games involving:
1. Registered teams playing in sanctioned competitions,
 2. Special Olympics teams,
 3. College, University, Grade School or High school competitions that have a current signed Ontario Soccer Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the District Association and/or Ontario Soccer and the applicable School Board organization,
 4. A registered team playing against a college team or a university team in a sanctioned competition
 5. Municipally sponsored competitions, subject to the approval of the District Association.
- 5.3** A Match Official wishing to accept games outside Ontario must request approval from Ontario Soccer in writing by completing the [Canada Soccer Application to Officiate Inter-Provincially or Internationally](#), and submitting to the appropriate staff member a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the event.
- 5.4** Games to which a Match Official may be eligible to officiate can be found in [Ontario Soccer Game Fee and Assigning Protocol](#).
- 5.5** A Match Official may not turn back an appointment less than 72 hours prior to game time unless approved by the assignor and/or Ontario Soccer Match Officials Development staff.
- 5.6** Match Official Appointments should be in accordance with the Futsal Match Official Grading Protocol which can be found here: <https://www.ontariosoccer.net/futsal>

PROCEDURE 6.0 – MATCH OFFICIALS FEES

- 6.1** Match Officials may only be paid game fees and expenses at rates set in advance by Ontario Soccer or Leagues under whose jurisdiction the games are played. It is an offence to offer or for an official to ask for, or receive, more than the set rates.
- 6.2** Unless otherwise stipulated in the rules of the competition, the home team, Club, League or Association shall pay all the designated fees and expenses.
- 6.3** Each League in Ontario must adhere to the game fees set out in (Ontario Soccer Game Fee and Assigning Protocol)
- 6.4** The maximum Match Official game fee may be increased when only a referee is required to officiate a game.
- 6.5** The maximum Match Official game fees shall be reviewed every two years.
- 6.6** All Leagues must have their Match Official game fees approved annually by their Governing Organization, and make them available to their members, Match Officials and Ontario Soccer prior to the start of the active playing season.
- Recreational Game Fees cannot exceed District/Development Game Fees for the same age groups.
- District/Development Game Fees cannot exceed Regional Game Fees for the same age groups.
- Regional Game Fees cannot exceed Provincial Game Fees for the same age groups.
- 6.7** Each League will pay Match Officials for cancelled games as per Ontario Soccer Game Fee and Assigning Protocol.
- 6.8** Cancelled games: A League must define and publish how and when a Match Official shall be notified and/or paid regarding a cancelled game.
- 6.9** When a Match Official has arrived to the field to officiate a game, and must declare the game cancelled or abandoned prior to the start of the game, the Match Official shall be paid a minimum of fifty (50) percent of the League's published game fee. The Match Official may be required by the League to collect the game sheets at the field and submit the game report in order to be compensated for the cancelled or abandoned game.



6.10 Cancelled Games

- a. And notifies the Match Official within the specified time as outlined in the League's policies, and in adherence with the Game Fee and Assigning Protocol, prior to the start of the game, the Match Official shall not receive remuneration for the game.
- b. Notifies the Match Official within less than the specified time as outline in the League's policies prior to the start of the game, and in adherence with the Game Fee and Assigning Protocol, the Match Official shall be paid fifty (50%) percent of the League's published game fee.

Note: Fees related to canceled exhibition games should be reflected in Club Policies and Procedures.

6.11 When a Match Official must declare a game to be abandoned after it has been started, the Match Official shall be paid the game fee as published, and in adherence with the **(Game Fee and Assigning Protocol.)**

6.12 All Match Officials assigned to Ontario Soccer program events (including but not limited to) Ontario Player Development League, Ontario Cup, OUA and OCAA matches) are required to adhere to the details of the Payment Policy and the standards, expectations, terms & conditions as defined in each program. The Payment Policy can be found here: <https://www.ontariosoccer.net/match-official-forms>.

PROCEDURE 7.0 – REPORTS

- 7.1** All game reports, including dismissal, caution, injury, special incident or Match Official assault must be submitted within 48 hours of game completion to the appropriate authority.
- 7.2** Failure to meet reporting timelines will result in Match Official discipline being initiated.
- 7.3** In the event of Match Official Assault, Match Officials are advised to follow the steps laid out in Ontario Soccer Match Official Assault procedures (Section 12 – Discipline 6.0).

PROCEDURE 8.0 - ASSIGNORS

- 8.1** A District Referee Coordinator (DRC) should not, to avoid both perceived and actual conflict of interest, simultaneously hold the role of Assignor.
- 8.2** No additional fees can be charged by any Association or Organization to a Match Official in order to be assigned games.
- 8.3** Each District Association must provide to Ontario Soccer a complete list of all Leagues, and all game assignors annually by March 31st on the template provided by Ontario Soccer.
- 8.4** All other areas in regard to assigning are covered in the Ontario Soccer Assignors Protocol
- 8.5** Each assignor must annually register as a member of Ontario Soccer and accept and sign the Assignors Code of Ethics.
- 8.6** Ontario Soccer reserves the right at any time to request from a District Association, League or Club a list of the game assignments for each competition assigned by its Assignors.
- 8.7** No additional Referee Association, District or Club may require an additional membership fee or additional program for game assignments unless pre-approved by Ontario Soccer.
- 8.8** Assignors are not permitted to officiate in a League in which they are the assignor unless the Assignor receives written approval from the District Referee Coordinator and the District Association. The District Referee Coordinator is permitted to restrict the number of matches in which an Assignor may assign themselves per week. Failure to comply with this procedure will be subject to disciplinary sanctions.



PROCEDURE 9.0 – ASSESSORS AND INSTRUCTORS PROGRAM

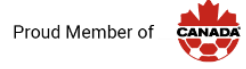
- 9.1 Regulations for the Assessors and Instructors Programs of Ontario Soccer are in line with Canada Soccer's program.
- 9.2. Only currently accredited Canada Soccer instructors, or designated Ontario Soccer instructors can deliver any Laws of the Game education, for the purposes of accreditation, in any format at any level.
- 9.3 Any organization (School/Club/District/etc.) hosting any Ontario Soccer Match Officials Clinic where participants could be under the age of 18 years as of the date of the clinic, must ensure a representative is present in the classroom throughout the duration of the clinic proceedings



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