



**SOCCER NOVA SCOTIA
REFEREE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

REFEREE HANDBOOK

Revised February 2026

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A. REFEREE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Soccer Nova Scotia Referee (SNS) Development Committee (RDC) is an advisory committee with the objective to assist the Soccer Nova Scotia Referee Development Department with development and implementation of the Referee Development Program.

The committee consists of:

- Chair – SNS Referee Development Officer
- SNS Referee Administrator
- Chief Assessor
- Chief Mentor
- Chief Instructor
- Judiciary Committee Chair
- A minimum of 6 Directors
 - 50% HRM Representatives
 - 50% Rural Representatives
 - Committee members are selected based on experience, equity, diversity and inclusion requirements, and regional requirements.
- SNS Executive Director (ex-officio)

A complete list of Referee Contacts can be found on the SNS website under Referee Resources.

[Referee Contacts](#)

B. REGISTRATION DEADLINES

1. Outdoor Season

All annual season registrations will expire annually on **March 31**. There will be no overlapping from one year's List of Active Referees to the next. Information for the renewal of registrations will be made available to currently registered referees prior to expiry. All referees must register online using the Referee Registration IT System (RAMP).

Late registrations will be accepted. There will be a grace period for late registrations between April 1 – May 15 without a late fee penalty. Late registrations received from May 16 onward will be subject to a late fee penalty as prescribed by Soccer Nova Scotia (SNS).

Refunds for annual season registrations may be administered on a case-by-case basis, less an Administration Fee set by SNS. All refund requests must be sent in writing to the SNS Referee Administrator.

It is mandatory that officials complete the annual Refresher Clinic training (or equivalent) and, where appropriate, successfully complete the appropriate fitness test for the current season.

2. Indoor Season

To officiate in the Indoor season, the referee must be registered with SNS and Canada Soccer for the current annual season (Outdoor), completed the annual Refresher Clinic training (or equivalent) and complete the annual online Indoor Refresher Quiz to complete their Indoor accreditation. Indoor registration is included in your annual Outdoor season registration.

Entry Level Referees or referees who have not officiated in the Indoor season previously may be required to complete an in-person session on the Indoor Laws of the Game.

C. CODE OF ETHICS

- 1) Although the Code of Ethics prescribes standards of conduct for all Soccer Nova Scotia referees, they are not all-inclusive. The absence of a specific standard of behavior does not imply that action is condoned - such action may ultimately be subject to disciplinary action.

Referees play an integral role in the sport of soccer, and they must recognize their impact on the game, its participants, and their fellow referees. The following gives a general statement of the principles of conduct, which are required of referees to fulfill their duties to players, colleagues, and administrators.

Referees are expected to uphold and advance high standards of ethical conduct by being honest and impartial, increasing their competence and prestige, using their knowledge and skill to improve the game, and respecting the dignity and status of, and relationships with their colleagues.

- 2) Referees, having certain privileges through and by SNS, with respect to the game, shall realize their responsibilities and duties to SNS and the game. SNS's Code includes and enlarges upon Canada Soccer's "Code of Ethics" for referees. Specifically, an SNS Referee shall:
 - a) Conduct themselves with dignity both on and off the field of play and shall, by example, seek to inspire the principles of fair play and earn the respect of those the referee serves.
 - b) Not cause Canada Soccer, Soccer Nova Scotia, or any Regional Referee Association to become involved in any controversial matters.
 - c) Adhere to all standards and directives established by the international (FIFA), national (Canada Soccer), and provincial (SNS) soccer associations, the referee's Regional Referee Association, and the rules and regulations of the jurisdiction in which they officiate.
 - d) Always be neat in appearance and maintain a high level of physical and mental fitness.
 - e) Study the Laws of the Game and be aware of all changes and enforce all said laws and changes.
 - f) Perform their designated duties, including attending organized clinics and lectures, etc., and shall assist their colleagues in upgrading and improving their standards of officiating, instructing, and assessing.
 - g) Honour any assignments made for and accepted by them unless unable to do so by virtue of illness or personal emergency.
 - i) Referees are not allowed to trade game assignments with other referees without the approval of the Referee Assignor.
 - ii) The Referee Assignor has the final decision for all game assignments.
 - iii) For any accepted games that referees are unable to officiate, they must contact the Referee Assignor.
 - h) Not publicly criticize other referees, national or provincial soccer associations, or any Regional Referee Association.
 - i) Not make or post any statement to the media (newspaper, television, radio, social media, etc.) related to a game in which the referee has officiated or observed, or to the performance of the players, coaching staff, or other referees.
 - j) Follow the correct lines of communication to the SNS Referee Development Committee, which shall be through the Referee's Regional Referee Association or the SNS Referee Development Officer; and to Canada Soccer's Referee Committee, which shall be through the Provincial/Territorial Soccer Association where they are registered.

3) A Soccer Nova Scotia Referee shall be subject to disciplinary action by the SNS RDC Judiciary Committee or SNS Disciplinary Committee, when applicable, for not complying with the Code of Ethics and Standards of Ethical and Professional Conduct.

4) **Mandatory Criminal Record Check** - Due to the nature of the work performed by Referee Instructors and Assessors, which involves direct, in-person interaction with, and authority over, youth and vulnerable participants, all individuals appointed to these positions are required to maintain a current Criminal Record Check. This is a mandatory condition of appointment, aimed at ensuring the safety and security of all participants.

[SNS Policies and Procedures](#)

D. STANDARDS OF ETHICAL & PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

- 1) Duly registered referees are expected to demonstrate excellence in conduct and ability at each match in which they participate. **This covers the time from arrival until departure from the field.**
- 2) When officiating, all referees shall wear the official uniform:
 - a) All Match Officials in Competitions under the jurisdiction of Canada Soccer and Provincial Associations must wear uniforms comprising of plain black shirts and black shorts. Socks shall be black and **they must also cover the majority of the leg below the knee.** The Savi Graphite (grey) uniforms are considered black. Referees may wear an alternative colour uniform when there is a clash between the uniform shirts of the outfield players of one of the teams and the referee's first choice colour. The preferred alternative second choice colour is yellow. The third alternative colours are blue, **green**, or red. This may be reviewed by Canada Soccer from time to time.
 - b) Soccer Nova Scotia Referees (other than first year referees) must have an alternate colour shirt if the game demands it. If all referees do not have the same alternate colour, then the Centre Referee will wear the alternate and the Assistant Referees will wear black. **For Provincial top-level competitions, semi-pro or professional games,** all Referees shall wear shirts of the same colour. The preferred alternative second choice colour is yellow, and the third as defined by Canada Soccer from time to time.
 - c) The badge shall be worn on the left pocket area of the shirt. The badge shall be for the highest level for which the referee is qualified such as FIFA or National or as approved by Canada Soccer.
 - d) All referees under the age of 18 will wear a green armband as part of the Green Armband Initiative.
- 3) All referees shall be under the jurisdiction of Canada Soccer and Soccer Nova Scotia and shall only officiate games sanctioned or approved by the governing bodies.
 - a) The referee has the responsibility to **confirm games are sanctioned by Soccer Nova Scotia if they are not assigned using the Referee Assigning IT System (RAMP).**
 - b) Officiating games not following the previous statement will be considered a violation of the Standards of Ethical and Professional Conduct and will result in disciplinary action which could result in expulsion from the association.
 - i) Any disciplinary action will be addressed by the SNS RDC Judiciary Committee.
- 4) Referees must accept or decline all assignments within 48 hours of issue or by the deadline given by the Referee Assignor. If the Referee Assignor receives no response, assignments may be reassigned.
- 5) All Referees must adhere to FIFA and Canada Soccer's Anti-Doping Policy.

- 6) Referees must refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, or otherwise offensive language in the conduct of their duties.
- 7) Referees should avoid making any comments that could be misinterpreted as diminishing the skill level of the players or the level of the game being played while in the conduct of their duties.
- 8) Referees must not discriminate against nor take undue advantage of any individual group based on physical ability, physical appearance, race, colour, religion, political belief, economic status, marital/family status, gender, sexual orientation, or ancestry.

9) Referees should not carry their cell phone or headphone devices while actively officiating a game.

10) The maximum number of games per one day for centre referees and assistant referees is based on time and the number of matches. **It is the referee's responsibility to make sure the following guidelines are adhered to.**

- a) A Referee may officiate a maximum of 360 minutes or four (4) games per day.
- b) After 180 minutes or two (2) games, there must be a 2-hour break before returning to officiate.
- c) No more than 180 minutes or two (2) games of the 360 minutes may be as the centre referee.
- d) For 11-aside matches, referees may not act as the centre referee for more than two consecutive matches.
- e) Indoor games – a 250 minute maximum or five (5) x 50-minute games for indoor 7-aside games, with a minimum rest period of 2 hours after a continuous 150 minutes or three (3) x 50 minute-games officiating.
- f) **Exceeding the maximum number of minutes/games per day will be considered a violation of the Standards of Ethical and Professional Conduct and will result in disciplinary action which could result in expulsion from the association.**
 - i) Any disciplinary action will be addressed by the SNS RDC Judiciary Committee.

11) **Referees must decline an officiating role if a perceived conflict of interest exists**, for example:

- a) Not accept any appointment to officiate in any official regular season or higher level game assigned by an accredited SNS Referee Assignor involving a team in the same age and gender division in the same league to which the referee is directly affiliated as a player, coach, or manager.
- b) Not accept any appointment to officiate in any official regular season or higher level game assigned by an accredited SNS Referee Assignor in which an immediate member of their family (by marriage or common law) is a registered player or coach. An immediate member of the family is a parent, a spouse, a son or daughter, or a brother or sister.
- c) Not accept an appointment to officiate in any provincial championship game involving a team or club to which the referee is directly affiliated as a player, a coach, a manager, or an elected Executive or Board member.
- d) Exceptions may exist where a referee may be permitted by a SNS Accredited Assignor and approval of the SNS Referee Development Officer to officiate a game with a presumed conflict.
- e) There may be other perceived conflicts, and the referee is asked to clarify their standing with the SNS Referee Development Officer, **SNS Senior Manager**, or SNS Executive Director.

12) Referees must report to the field ready to officiate and conduct pre-game activities (field inspection,

personal equipment, instructions to assistant referees, team roster checks, players' equipment, game ball, starting time) as directed by the SNS Referee Development Department or their Regional Referee Association but no less than:

- a) **15 minutes** for regularly scheduled indoor and outdoor games.
- b) **30 minutes** for all AAA games
- c) **45 minutes** for Provincial and Atlantic championships.
- d) **60 minutes**, or as required, for **televised, university, and college games**.

13) Referees will complete the Game Reporting following the League Requirements.

- a) Game reporting includes entering the goal scorers, final score and any cards/cautions that may be issued.
- b) This may be using an electronic app, online via a website and/or using a paper game sheet.
- c) Game reporting should be completed within 24 hours of the officiated game.
 - i) If more time is needed, please contact the Referee Assignor and SNS Referee Development Department.
 - ii) Referees should retain all game reporting notes for a minimum of **21 days post-game(s)** due to potential discrepancy inquiries by the leagues.
 - iii) The Referee Assignor, in conjunction with the SNS Referee Development Officer, can decide to stop assigning a referee that continuously neglects to fulfill their off the field obligations above mentioned.
- d) Not providing the appropriate game report will be considered a violation of the Standards of Ethical and Professional Conduct and will be subject to disciplinary action.
 - i) Any disciplinary action will be addressed by the SNS RDC Judiciary Committee.

14) In the event of a Red Card dismissal, the referee must submit a copy of the online SNS Dismissal Report to the SNS Referee Development Officer within 24-48 hours of the conclusion of the game.

- a) The online Dismissal Reports are found on the Soccer Nova Scotia website in the Referees section under Fees and Forms.

15) In the event of a special incident or any incident out of the ordinary, other than a dismissal, the referee must submit a Special Incident Report containing the details of the game and incident(s) to the SNS Referee Development Officer within 24-48 hours after the conclusion of the game.

- a) Special Incident Reports are for any incident out of the ordinary that occurs prior to, during or after a game where the SNS Referee Development Department should be made aware of.
 - i) Examples include abandoned games due to weather conditions; player, team staff or spectator behavior; rosters not completed by team staff after being asked; any evident, or suspected serious injuries by players or any other out of the ordinary incident.
- b) The online Special Incident Report may be found on the Soccer Nova Scotia website in the Referees section under Fees and Forms.

16) For tournament games, the referee must submit a written report to the chair of the discipline committee of the tournament as quickly as they can, but no later than 24 hours to permit the discipline committee to act on the report. The referee must also submit to the SNS Referee Development Officer a written misconduct or special incident report containing the details of the game and incident(s). This **online** report must be submitted within 24 hours after the conclusion of the game. The online Special Incident Report may be found on the Soccer Nova Scotia website in the Referees section under Fees and Forms.

E. DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

- 1) The purpose of the Code of Ethics is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all referees. The Code of Ethics does not exhaust the moral and ethical considerations of professional behaviour and attitude. Compliance with this Code of Ethics depends primarily upon understanding and voluntary compliance, secondarily upon reinforcement by peer and public opinion, and finally, when necessary, upon enforcement through disciplinary proceedings as outlined in Canada Soccer's Policies.
- 2) Any complaints about referees must be submitted in writing to the SNS Referee Development Officer and the appropriate league. If the complaint is specific to a game, a copy of the game report for that game must accompany the complaint.
- 3) The discipline guidelines outlined in Canada Soccer's Policies will be followed.
- 4) If there is no acknowledgement or reply by a referee after 72 hours (3 days) from the second attempt by the SNS RDC Judiciary Committee to contact the referee regarding a disciplinary action, a suspension of activities will occur immediately.
- 5) Suspensions and Administration Fees may only be levied by the SNS Referee Development Officer and SNS RDC Judiciary Committee.
- 6) Records of proven complaints over five (5) years old may be removed from a referee's file unless the reason for suspension was against the ethical principles of being a referee.
- 7) Additional Information on the disciplinary action pertaining to "No Show" referees is found in Section L – Other Policies.

F. PROMOTION

Designation to Leagues

All referees will be assigned to leagues in which they may act as a centre referee. Referees are informed of their designation on their personal online referee account or through communication with the SNS Referee Development Officer. Permission needs to be obtained from the Chief Assessor or SNS Referee Development Officer to accept appointments above this designation level. The Referee Assignor(s) will be informed of these appointments.

Note: Game designations for centre referee and assistant referee assignments to leagues and Referee upgrading may be viewed at the following links.

[Game Designations by Referee Level](#)
[Referee Upgrading](#)

To gain designation to a higher-level League:

- **Youth/District** referees – contact the Regional Mentor Coordinator or the SNS Referee Development Officer, if required, to have a mentor or assessor assigned to observe and comment in writing on your game.

- Mentoring will be arranged through the Regional Referee Association or SNS Referee Development Officer.
- Regional and higher-level referees – Contact the SNS Chief Assessor or the SNS Referee Development Officer.

The promotion and maintenance of referees are defined by Canada Soccer's Policies covering the Registration and Control of Referees. These policies provide guidelines and advice for implementing Canada Soccer's directives in Nova Scotia. In the event of a discrepancy between this guide and the policies set by either Canada Soccer or SNS, then Canada Soccer Policies shall take precedence.

Application to the Promotion Scheme and Promotion of Referees

- 1) A District Referee may apply to enter the promotion scheme after completing one season or 12 months as a District Referee. Applicants must have completed 10 qualification games as a Referee; these games must be 11-aside competitions for players over the age of 16. A game log (in the format specified by SNS) providing the details of these games **may be requested to be submitted with the application**. Applicants must meet the Regional Fitness Testing requirements in the season preceding their application. Applicants must apply in writing to the SNS Referee Development Officer by March 1st.
 - a) Applicants meeting these requirements shall be considered for the promotion scheme and take the Canada Soccer Laws of the Game online exam for eligibility.
- 2) Referees already in the promotion scheme from the previous season or seasons and who continue to meet the requirements of application for promotion will automatically be included in the promotion scheme for the upcoming season unless they withdraw in writing by March 1st to the SNS Referee Development Officer.
- 3) Regional Referees may apply to enter the promotion scheme for Provincial upgrading after completing one season or 12 months as a Regional Referee. Applicants must have completed 10 qualification games as a Referee; these games must be 11-aside competitions for players over the age of 16. A game log (in the format specified by SNS) providing the details of these games must be submitted with the application. Applicants must meet the Regional Fitness Testing requirements in the season preceding their application. **Applicants must meet the Provincial Fitness Testing requirements the same year of their application**. Applicants must apply in writing to the SNS Referee Development Officer by March 1st.
- 4) Regional and Provincial Referees will remain in the promotion scheme subject to satisfying the criteria as determined by Canada Soccer periodically.
- 5) Regional Referees may be invited on the advice of the SNS Referee Development Officer, the Provincial Assessment Program, or their Regional Referee Association to apply for promotion to Provincial Referee. This invitation shall be based on completing the Provincial Referee fitness test, practical field performance, and other criteria as determined by Canada Soccer from time to time. Field performance will be determined by feedback and reports from the Provincial Assessment Program.
- 6) Promotion to Regional and Provincial Referee will be based on:
 - a) Successful completion of the Canada Soccer Laws of the Game online exam.
 - b) Successful completion of the fitness testing requirements as defined by Canada Soccer.
 - c) Participation in required in-service training and successful completion of the examination as determined by Canada Soccer.
 - d) Evaluation of field performance, feedback consideration, and Assessments by Assessors on a minimum of 3 games over a minimum of 10 qualifying games as a Centre Referee. In addition to this, the candidate must complete a minimum of 5 qualifying games as an Assistant Referee. A qualifying

game is an 11-aside outdoor game in competitions where the players are over the age of 16. These games must be completed in the same season. The SNS Referee Development Officer may require that assessments for promotion be performed on significantly competitive games. Applicants seeking promotion must document through a game log the 10 qualifying games they have completed.

- 7) The Chief Assessor together with the SNS Referee Development Officer will review the status of all Referees in the promotion scheme annually. The purpose of this review will be to identify Referees in the promotion scheme for promotion to Regional or Provincial Referees based on the criteria set out in paragraph 6 above. Recommendations will then be made for the approval of the SNS Referee Development Committee so that the names of promoted Referees can be provided to Canada Soccer by the December 15th deadline annually. The SNS Referee Development Officer will ensure that the promoted Referees are notified of their new status in writing.

Maintenance Requirements for Promoted Referees

- 8) Referees promoted to Regional or Provincial Referee will maintain this certification so long as they:
- a) Maintain annual registration in good standing with SNS or their new home Province should they relocate.
 - b) Annually meet in-service training requirements as defined by Canada Soccer. **Fitness Testing included.**
 - c) Maintain satisfactory field performance as determined by the annual review of feedback and field Assessments.
 - d) Ensure SNS Referee Development Department has access to a game log of all qualifying games (in the format specified by SNS) at the end of the outdoor season. A qualifying game is an 11-aside outdoor game in competitions where the players are over the age of 16.
 - e) Any Provincial or Regional Referee may be assessed for reevaluation purposes at any time as determined by the Chief Assessor or the SNS Referee Development Officer.
- 9) The Chief Assessor together with the SNS Referee Development Officer, will review and present the status of all Regional and Provincial Referees annually to the SNS Referee Development Committee. The purpose of this review will be to identify Referees who have or have not met the requirements to maintain their classification as defined by the criteria in paragraph 1 above and therefore may have their status adjusted.
- a) The purpose of this is to maintain and elevate the standard of officials in the province.
 - b) Recommendations for the adjusted Referee statuses will be presented for the approval of the SNS Referee Development Committee.
 - c) The SNS Referee Development Officer will ensure that the Referees are notified of their new status in writing.
- 10) A District Referee who has not met the requirements of the program may reapply for admission as outlined in the application section of this document.
- 11) A Provincial or Regional Referee who has been reclassified may make a written application outlining the justification for reinstatement to the SNS Referee Development Officer by March 1st. The Chief Assessor, together with the SNS Referee Development Officer will review the application for reinstatement and submit their recommendation to the SNS Referee Development Committee **prior to the end of March.** The SNS Referee Development Officer will ensure that the Referee is notified of the outcome of their application.

G. MEDICAL AND FITNESS TESTING

1) Provincial Fitness Testing by Provincial Associations

The High Intensity (HI) Fitness Test is the required fitness test for Provincial Referees.

Match Officials will be required to undertake this test during the months of February to May and must successfully complete this test to officiate as a Provincial referee.

Where a Match Official fails the initial test, they will be required to have attained the minimum standard before the end of the outdoor season following the initial test. If this is not attained, then the referee will be removed from the Provincial List of Referees.

Dispensation will be granted by the Provincial Association from the initial fitness test for injury or illness only. Dispensation for injury or illness will only be given where a Match Official provides a medical certificate confirming the injury or illness and a prognosis of recovery. In such circumstances, the Provincial Association reserves the right to seek independent medical advice at any time.

Where a Match Official receives dispensation from the initial fitness test, they will be required to have attained the minimum standard of the HI Test within 5 months of their first fitness assessment. If this is not attained, then the referee's position will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Provincial Association and may result in removal from the Provincial list of Referees.

2) Recommendations for Regional and Below Fitness Testing by Provincial Associations

Fitness testing of Regional Referees and below is at the discretion of individual Provincial Associations. Canada Soccer expects that all Regional and District referees in the promotion scheme and those nominated for National competitions will have successfully completed the fitness test to the minimum standard as outlined in the chart below.

The HI Test for male and female referees is the recommended fitness tests for Regional Referees. Regional Referees with the intention of maintaining their status have the option to take the Beep Test or the HI Test. **Referees are required to meet the minimum standard to pass the Beep Test for Match Officials.**

Referees seeking promotion will be expected to meet the fitness test standard for the promotion level.

3) Fitness Test Standards by Category

FIFA Fitness Test Standards			
Referee Category	Sprints x6 (40 m)		Interval Run Minimum x40 intervals (4000 m)
Women FIFA/National	Maximum 6.40 sec		17/20 sec
Women Provincial	Maximum 6.60 sec		17/22 sec
Women Regional	Maximum 6.80 sec		17/24 sec
Men FIFA/National	Maximum 6.00 sec		15/18 sec
Men Provincial	Maximum 6.40 sec		15/20 sec
Men Regional	Maximum 6.60 sec		17/22 sec
Assistant Referee Category	CODA	Sprints x5 (30 m)	Interval Run Minimum x40 intervals (4000 m)
Women FIFA/National	Maximum 11.00 sec	Maximum 5.10 sec	17/22 sec
Men FIFA/National	Maximum 10.00 sec	Maximum 4.70 sec	15/20 sec

* The Beep Test may be used for National list and Provincial Referees for practice and training purposes but will not replace the FIFA High Intensity (HI) Test as the mandatory fitness testing protocol.

H. ASSIGNING GUIDELINES

- 1) The Code of Ethics applies to all SNS Referee Assignors. Lack of compliance with the Code of Ethics will result in disciplinary action by the SNS Discipline Committee.
- 2) SNS produces two Official Lists of Referees. Referees are registered for the annual referee season from April 1 to March 31. All registrations will expire annually on March 31.
 - All late registrations will be accepted and there will be a grace period between April 1 – May 15 without a late fee applied.
 - Late registrations received from May 16 onward will be subject to a late fee penalty as prescribed by Soccer Nova Scotia.
 - **Referees wishing to officiate indoor soccer must be registered for the annual referee season (Outdoor), have completed the annual Refresher Course training (or equivalent) and complete the yearly online Indoor Refresher Quiz to be placed on the official list for Indoor assignment. Indoor registration is included in your annual season registration.**
- 3) All assignments will be made from the SNS official List of Active Referees for the current season. The Official List is available to accredited assignors through the Referee Assigning IT System (RAMP).
- 4) All Assignors will follow SNS Guidelines for Assigning.
- 5) All leagues sanctioned by Soccer Nova Scotia will adhere to the payment of referees related to game cancellations at late notice (12 hours or less) or no notice at all, and for games that referees attend but are not played due to team no-shows or field safety issues, and other matters agreed to by both teams of mutual concern.
 - a) Referees will be required to complete the online SNS Referee Claim Form to claim fees that are not paid.

[SNS Referee Claim Form](#)

- b) **Referees will not be paid for game cancellations on short notice due to “Acts of God” or at any time when Emergency Services (Police, Fire, EMS, etc.) or the city/town have closed the field(s), areas, etc. due to a potentially hazardous situation.**
- 6) All Soccer Nova Scotia sanctioned leagues and tournaments will assign referees using the Referee Assigning IT System (RAMP). All assignments will be done in accordance with SNS policies.
 - a) All Outdoor 11-aside and 9-aside League and playoff games shall be assigned a referee and two assistant referees. Where 9-aside level C games are played, leagues may assign a single referee.
 - b) All Indoor League games shall be assigned a minimum of one referee.
 - c) 11-aside league games played indoors shall be assigned a minimum of 3 referees.
 - d) All leagues & divisions will be graded, in terms of referee qualifications, each year by the SNS Referee Development Officer in conjunction with the SNS Referee Development Committee, between 10 and 0 where 10 is the highest.
 - e) Each SNS referee will be graded each year by the SNS Referee Development Officer between 10 and 0 where 10 is the highest.
 - f) Under normal circumstances referees will only be assigned games at or below the grade level that they

are at, e.g., a grade level 8 referee could be assigned to grade level 8, or below, games.

- g) In situations where there is a shortage of referees, the Referee Assignor may assign a referee to a game that is higher than their grade level with the guidance of the SNS Referee Development Officer and Regional Referee Association.
- h) A referee may be assigned, for upgrading purposes, a game higher than their grade level at the request of the SNS Referee Development Officer or the Regional Referee Association.
- i) In a game that requires a 4th official, it is recommended that the 4th official should be at, or above, a grade level capable of taking over as referee if the originally assigned referee becomes incapacitated during the game.

j) There is no guaranteed minimum number of games assigned to a referee per season.

- 7) Referees will be able to provide their availability and limitations using the online Referee Assigning IT System (RAMP). The referee assignor will try to respect the referees' limitations. No referee will be required to officiate a game they do not wish to officiate.
- 8) Referees shall have the right to choose the competitions for which they are willing to officiate, provided the competitions meet the criteria for which the referees are registered.
- 9) If possible, assignments will be done at least 7 days in advance of a game.
- 10) To ensure that assignments are done fairly for both referees and leagues, Referee Assignors will follow these guidelines:
 - a) For each assigning cycle, games are identified and sorted so that the highest grade level games receive priority i.e., grade level 10 games will have priority over grade level 9 games and so on.
 - b) The exception to this would be an assignment of development games requested by the SNS Referee Development Officer or Regional Referee Association.
- 11) For all game assignments from the Referee Assigning IT System (RAMP), an email is sent to the referee inviting them to accept or decline the game on the assignment system. The Referee Assignor may remove the assignment if the referee has not confirmed the game within 48 hours of the offer date.
- 12) The Referee Assignor may make modifications to the assignments at any time if it is in the best interests of the game and overall policies are adhered to.
 - a) For example, a last-minute appointment that does not allow for a 48-hour response time by the referee.
- 13) A sanctioned league, the Regional Referee Association or the SNS Referee Development Officer may request manual assignment on a game-by-game basis before a game for a good cause, e.g. development, mentoring or assessment, for a Provincial final or for a potentially difficult game. Under normal circumstances, these requests should be submitted to the Referee Assignor 2 weeks prior to the game.
- 14) When a game is cancelled or modified by a sanctioned league, it must notify the Referee Assignor.
 - a) If the game is more than 48 hours away, notice of the change will be given through that league's normal communication method to the Referee Assignor.
 - b) If the game is less than 48 hours away, the league will notify the Referee Assignor, who will communicate with the referees directly involved through their normal communication method.
 - c) In both instances, the Referee Assignor will confirm receipt of the game cancellation or modification to

the sanctioned league.

15) Once a Referee has accepted a game, they are responsible for completing the assignment.

- a) Honour any assignments made for and accepted by them unless unable to do so by virtue of illness or personal emergency.
- b) Referees are not allowed to trade game assignments with other referees without the approval of the Referee Assignor.**
- c) The Referee Assignor has the final decision for all game assignments.
- d) For any accepted game assignments that referees are unable to officiate, they must contact the Referee Assignor and request acknowledgement of their change in their availability.**
- e) The Referee Assignor will update the Referee Assigning IT System (RAMP) with the replacement referee if they are at the appropriate level or classification to officiate the game.

16) Following a game, a referee is required to complete the game report within 24 hours and submit any online dismissal or special incident reports within 24-48 hours as mentioned in Sections 11 – 13 of the Standards of Ethical and Professional Conduct.

17) The maximum number of games per day for centre referees and assistant referees is based on time and the number of matches.

- a) A referee may officiate a maximum of 360 minutes or 4 games (U12 – Senior Divisions) per day.
- b) After 180 minutes or two (2) games, there must be a 2-hour break before returning to officiate.
- c) No more than 180 minutes or two (2) games of the 360 may be as the centre referee.
- d) For 11-aside matches, referees may not act as the centre referee for more than two consecutive matches.
- e) Indoor games – a 250 minute maximum or five (5) x 50-minute games for indoor 7-aside games, with a minimum rest period of 2 hours after a continuous 150 minutes or three (3) x 50-minute games of officiating.
- f) The Referee Assignor is responsible for following the guidance of the maximum number of minutes/games per day that a referee can be assigned.
 - i) It is the Referee Assignor's responsibility to report any extenuating circumstances that may allow a referee to exceed the maximum number of minutes/games per day to the SNS Referee Development Department.
 - ii) It is the referee's responsibility to manage their maximum number of games/minutes per day in circumstances where the Referee Assignor must use the Open Assignment function in the Referee Assigning IT System (RAMP) to complete game assignments.

18) If a referee does not attend a game, the sanctioned league must report the incident to the Referee Assignor who will inform the Regional Referee Association or the SNS Referee Development Officer when it applies.

- a) The Regional Referee Association or SNS Referee Development Officer, when it applies, will inform the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee.
- b) Appropriate action against the referee in accordance with SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee will proceed.

- 19) It is the responsibility of the assigned referees to report any “No Show” referee(s) or late arrival to the Referee Assignor.
- a) The Referee Assignor will mark the missing referee as Absent in the Referee Assigning IT System (RAMP) whenever there is a “No Show”.
 - b) If another referee fills in for the “No Show” referee, the Referee Assignor will add a note on the game assignment who the “No Show” referee was, and the game assignment will be updated to add the fill-in referee in the Referee Assigning IT System (RAMP).
 - c) The Referee Assignor will confirm the circumstances of the “No Show” with the referee in question and provide the information to the Regional Referee Association or the SNS Referee Development Officer when it applies, who will inform the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee of the “No Show”.
 - d) The SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee will determine what action must be taken against the referee.
 - e) **All** “No Show” referee circumstances will be communicated to the Regional Referee Association or the SNS Referee Development Officer when it applies.
- 20) If a referee contravenes any sanctioned league’s published rules, the league must report the incident to the SNS Referee Development Officer who will take appropriate action against the referee in accordance with the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee and Canada Soccer Policies.
- 21) If Referees have concerns about assigning, they should contact their Regional Referee Associations or the SNS Referee Development Officer.

[Referee Assignor Best Practices Guide](#)

I. GAME DESIGNATIONS & ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

This document is an extension of Canada Soccer’s ‘Guide to Appointments’, providing specific guidance for competitive games in Nova Scotia by providing advice on how Canada Soccer’s guidelines can be practically implemented in Nova Scotia. This document must be read and understood in the context of Canada Soccer publication that is available from the SNS Referee Development Officer.

In addition to the guidelines below, see also the Canada Soccer Policies.

It is the responsibility of all Regional Referee Associations, supported by the SNS Referee Development Officer, to advise Referee Assignors in their area of these guidelines and the provisions in the Canada Soccer Policies.

Referee Assignors are expected to follow the guidelines described below as closely as possible.

The “Order of Precedence” of appointments, whether as a Referee or Assistant Referee, shall be as follows:

- I. International Appointments
- II. International Representative matches appointed by Canada Soccer
- III. The MLS; Canadian Championship
- IV. Canadian Premier League; Northern Super League
- V. MLS Next Pro
- VI. National Championships and all other Canada Soccer Appointments
- VII. Provincial Pro-Am First Division; Provincial Pro-Am Cup Competitions
- VIII. Provincial Pro-Am Second Division (eg L1O Championship, L2Q)
- IX. Senior Provincial League Competitions/Cup or equivalent; WPSL

- X. University and College Leagues
- XI. MLS Next Flex Youth League (International Youth Club Competition)
- XII. Youth Provincial Standard-based High Performance Leagues
- XIII. Pro-Am Reserve/Youth Competitions
- XIV. Youth Provincial/Territorial Association Cup Competitions
- XV. Senior Regional Soccer
- XVI. Youth Regional Soccer
- XVII. All other local competition

J. GAME FEES

The Soccer Nova Scotia Board of Directors has standardized referee fees for all of Nova Scotia. Referees may only be paid game fees and expenses at rates set in advance by Soccer Nova Scotia, under whose jurisdiction the games are played. It is an offense for a referee to ask for or receive more than the set rates.

Referee Fees are published on the Soccer Nova Scotia website.

SNS and NSSL Travel Allowances are published on the Soccer Nova Scotia website.

[Referee Fees and Travel Allowance Fees](#)

K. FIELDS OF PLAY

For field locations around the province, refer to the assigning league or district website.

L. OTHER POLICIES

1) Referee “No Shows”

Definition: Failure of an official to report to a game (to which they have been appointed and have accepted an assignment) without giving adequate notice of their inability to officiate the game.

- **An hour or so prior to kick-off does not constitute adequate notice.**
- The Referee Assignor may be able to find a replacement, so a full crew or **single referee for Indoor games may be** present at the game, but, by definition, the originally assigned referee is a “No Show”.

“No Shows” impact the game and the reputation of all Referees. “No Shows” need to be dealt with promptly and consistently by the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee or Regional Referee Associations.

- The Referee Assignors need to be advised of the “No Show” by the other assigned referees and/or leagues.
- The Referee Assignors will inform the SNS Referee Development Officer of the “No Show”.
- The SNS Referee Development Officer will notify the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee and appropriate Regional Referee Association.

Policy for District Referees:

1st Seasonal Offence:

- Mentoring – under the direction of the appropriate Regional Referee Association and the Referee Assignor.

- All steps taken should be documented to the referee and the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee.

2nd Seasonal Offence:

- Mentoring - under the direction of the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee.
- The referee should be given notice that any future “No Shows” will impact their game assignments.
- All steps taken should be documented to the referee and the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee.

3rd Seasonal Offence:

- The complaint will be reported to the SNS Referee Development Officer by the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee for investigation and discipline.
- Suspension of the referee will occur until the review of circumstances leading to the “No Show” have been resolved.
 - In case of appeal by the referee, the suspension will occur until the circumstances have been resolved.

Policy for Regional and Provincial Referees:

All Offences:

- Mentoring and other actions as deemed appropriate by the SNS Referee Development Officer, the Chief Assessor, and the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee.
- All steps taken should be documented to the referee and the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee.

Under current SNS and CSA policies, only the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee can suspend a Referee or assess a financial penalty.

Discipline Guidelines:

No specific discipline guidelines exist for the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee to follow once a complaint is received. The options available to the SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee are:

- Mentoring
- Warning
- Suspension
- Official Reprimand
- Administrative Assessment
- Reimbursement of field and referee fees
- Combination of the above
- Any other actions as deemed appropriate

The SNS Referee Development Judiciary Committee must have the discretion to deal with the variety of situations that will arise.

2) Assessment Fee Policy Statement:

Referees are required to apply for assessment for the purposes of promotion, upgrading, or personal development.

Referees will also be required to pay a portion of the Assessment Fee based on their current position in the promotion scheme.

The following fees will apply:

- a) Referees requesting an assessment for **upgrading or promotion** will pay a portion of the assessment fee based on their current position within the promotion scheme.
 - i) Upgrade within District classification (levels 4-7) for a fee of \$30
 - ii) Upgrade within Regional classification (levels 7-9), for a fee of \$40
 - iii) Provincial upgrading to level 10, for a fee of \$50.
- b) Requests for assessment must be received in writing by the SNS Referee Development Officer using the appropriate form found on the SNS website.
 - i) The assessment fee will be applied to the Referee's RAMP Registration account for payment. Payment may be made online for the amount indicated above or by e-transfer. For e-transfer details, please email kate@soccerns.ca.

[SNS Referee Assessment Request Form](#)

- 3) The following policies are found on the Soccer Nova Scotia website under Referee Resources:
- Canada Soccer Fitness Policy for Referees
 - Canada Soccer Policy on Head Coverings – Headscarves and Turbans
 - Players Wearing Casts
 - Canada Soccer Insulin Pump Policy
 - Lightning Safety/Severe Weather Policy
 - Hydration Breaks
 - Social Media Guidelines for Referees

M. FORMS

Please see Fees and Forms under the Referees section on the Soccer Nova Scotia website.

[Referee Forms](#)

N. MEMORANDUM OF PROVINCIAL ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Memorandum of Provincial Association Responsibilities for Registered Referees

Provincial Associations must provide, as a minimum, the following for referees administered by them:

1) Registration

Registrations for Referees must be in accordance with the Regulations for the Registration and Control of Referees as amended by Canada Soccer from time to time. The Provincial Association will collect, on behalf of Canada Soccer, the National Registration fee and, where appropriate, any Provincial Registration Fee. Associate Referee fees levied for Referees administered by another Provincial Association will also be collected by the Provincial Association.

2) Provision of Provincial Soccer Association Handbook

Provincial Associations should provide, as a minimum, the Provincial Competition Rules, details of Club

Secretaries, and details of grounds/match venues.

3) Public Liability Insurance

Adequate cover for public liability insurance should be provided in accordance with individual Provincial requirements.

4) Recruitment and Basic Training of New Referees

The recruitment and training of new referees is an important area in which Provincial Associations have a responsibility towards the development of the future of the game. Canada Soccer supports this area with the provision of material support and instructor development.

5) Mentor Scheme

It is recognized that mentoring is an aid to retention and Provincial Associations are encouraged to extend the service to referees wherever possible.

6) Promotion and Assessment Scheme

Provincial Associations are responsible for the promotion of referees up to Provincial Referee in accordance with the Regulations for the Registration and Control of Referees, by ensuring that referees are active at the appropriate level and are regularly assessed. Referees outside the promotion scheme, who are administered by the Provincial Association, should be regularly assessed for development purposes.

7) In-Service Training

Referees below the National List are provided with in-service training by Provincial Associations. In-service training for Referees in the promotion scheme is mandatory in accordance with the Regulations for the Registration and Control of Referees. Other in-service training should be provided for referees as appropriate.

8) Appointments

Provincial Associations make appointments to their individual Competitions. In addition, it is invited to make nominations in respect of National Competitions at the request of the Canada Soccer Referees Department.

9) Fees

Provincial Associations set match officials' fee limits to ensure parity across the Competitions and Leagues they sanction.

10) Nominations for the National List

Provincial Associations are required to nominate eligible and suitable referees to join the National List from its Provincial Referees on request from The Canadian Soccer Association Referees Department. Those Referees who are nominated for consideration to the National List must have successfully met the criteria as determined by The Canadian Soccer Association Referees Committee from time to time.

11) Allocation to Leagues

Referees who successfully complete the Entry Level Referee Course are to be advised in accordance with the Regulations for the Registration and Control of Referees, of the leagues and competitions on which they may operate.

12) Legal Advice

Provincial Associations may assist in the provision of legal advice where appropriate to referees. This could involve seeking advice from Canada Soccer on behalf of the referee in certain circumstances.

13) General Advice

General advice and guidance on all football-related matters, including directives and information from The Association, should be promulgated by the Provincial Association to those referees it administers.

14) Transfers

Provincial Associations are responsible for ensuring that Provincial Referees and below who move to another Province are notified to the receiving Provincial Association. The Canada Soccer Transfer Form is to be used for this purpose and may be found on the Soccer Nova Scotia website. Upon receipt of that notification, the receiving Provincial Association should ensure that the referee is made aware of the refereeing activities in the province.

15) Referee Discipline

The Regulations for the Registration and Control of Referees devolve the responsibility for Referee discipline, of those referees not operating on the National List or above, to the Provincial Association that administers the Referees' registration. A Referee may be dealt with in the normal course as a participant for any alleged misconduct pursuant to the Rules of Canada Soccer (i.e., by a Disciplinary Commission), in addition to having issues relating to the Registration as a Referee considered by the appropriate Referees Committee. Referees should be made aware of the process by which any acts of misconduct, or indiscipline in relation to their registration, will be dealt with by the Provincial Association. See Discipline Section E and Other Policies for "No Show" Referees.

16) Nominations for Referee Instructor Courses

Provincial Associations should identify those candidates they consider suitable to attend the Accredited Referee Instructors Course in accordance with the criteria notified by The Association from time to time.

17) Nominations for Referee Assessor Courses

Provincial Associations should identify those candidates they consider suitable to attend the Accredited Referee Assessor Course in accordance with the criteria notified by The Association from time to time.

18) Liaison with the Canada Soccer Referee Department

Provincial Associations should make every use of the services of the Canada Soccer Referee Department in the support of its responsibilities for registered referees as outlined in this Memorandum.

In addition, Provincial Associations are encouraged to consider offering the following to referees administered by them, dependent upon the size and make-up of the Provincial Association.

19) Schools of Excellence and Referee Academies

Provincial Associations are strongly encouraged to include a School of Excellence or Referee Academy for referees. Canada Soccer will support this with provision for instructor development and programs specifically designed for referee development within this environment.

20) Personal Accident Insurance

Provincial Associations are encouraged to investigate the need for Personal Accident Insurance for referees.