

Certification of Track & Field Officials

National Officials Committee. As the national governing body for the sports of athletics, USA Track & Field is responsible for training and certifying those officiating these sports through its National Officials Committee.

According to Section H (*Officials*) of Article 17 (*Administrative Divisions*) of the USA Track & Field Bylaws, the National Athletics Officials Committee shall:

- i Certify, train, and generally supervise officials of all disciplines of Track & Field;
- ii Establish and monitor the overall requirements for the training and certification of officials;
- iii Delegate to Association Officials' committees such duties as this committee directs;
- iv Develop and encourage the use of standard uniform attire to be worn when officiating;
- v Request, when appropriate, advice and reports from Association Officials' committees concerning the training, certification, and other activities that it is conducting; and
- vi Provide each Association Officials' committee, when appropriate or requested, with forms, examinations, clinic programs and other material or know-how to assist the Association Officials' committee in carrying out its duties.

Certification: Consistent with guidelines provided by USA Track & Field's National Officials Committee, each local USA Track & Field association is to elect or appoint an Officials Certification Chairman. Each association chairman is to provide an ongoing program to train and certify the officials needed for athletics competitions throughout the geographic area served by the association up to the Master Level Referee position. Progressive levels of certification have been established by the National Committee to recognize greater degrees of experience, training and demonstrated competence held by individual officials. These are the *Association*, *National* and *Master* levels of certification.

Certification of officials through USA Track & Field establishes the minimum standards of proficiency. Training and certification of track and field officials is central to USA Track & Field's goal to insure fair and safe competitive opportunities for its members. The training and certification processes promote a serious and professional approach to officiating. Seeking certification demonstrates the official's commitment to excellence, proficiency and personal development. As the official gains experience, exposure to correct officiating practices and additional training, USA Track & Field recognizes this skill development through progressive levels of certification -- *Association* to *National* to *Master*. Each certification level is subject to review each Olympiad. Officials inactive or minimally inactive during the previous Olympiad may have a specific skill area or their entire certification level reduced by one level.

Progressive Levels of Certification: Prior to becoming a certified official, prospective candidates are encouraged to function at the *Pre-Association* level for one year. This permits the novice official to gain a range of officiating experience and to appreciate the expectations and responsibilities inherent in being an USA Track & Field certified official. The following minimum requirements have been established for each level of certification:

Association: To become an Association level official, the individual is expected to attend a training clinic, satisfactorily complete an open book examination on the rules of all aspects of track and field and submit a completed certification form to the Association Certification chairman.

National: After serving as an *Association* level official (preferably for at least two years), the official seeking the *National* level must submit a meet resume listing meets in which he/she officiated during the prior two years and indicate any clinic(s) attended during this period and meet any association requirements for attaining the *National* level rank. 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.

Master: The 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, these officials have developed the skills necessary to serve in a leadership role in their area of specialization at a major national or international competition. To be considered for this rank, the candidate must provide **two** written recommendations outlining their qualifications, one from each of the following: (1) a current *Master* level official and (2) a meet director or coach. As well, the candidate must present a meet resume listing meets in which he/she officiated during the prior two years, indicate any clinic(s) attended during this period. Prior to submitting his/her application, the candidate must have a minimum of **three** years experience at the *National* level. The candidate will be required to indicate his/her area of mastery from the following categories of officiating: A *Master* level official should serve in a leadership role to develop other officials in his or her area of expertise. He or she should be able to be a lead official at a national championship.

- Starting
- Track Events
- Vertical Jumps
- Long Distance Running
- Race Walking
- Horizontal Jumps
- Throws
- Multi-Events

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 of track & field. To be considered for this rank, the candidate must (1) take an open book test on the rules for USATF, but also for NCAA and high schools, particularly where they differ significantly which is sent to the National Official Committee for correction and evaluation, (2) have a minimum of three years experience as a referee in the discipline the candidate seeks to be upgraded in, (3) two written letters of recommendation, one from a meet directors, and one from his or her certification chairs, NTO, ATO or ITO; (3) resume of the last three years showing his assignments as a national level referee. Here are five discipline areas for certification:

Track Referee Field Referee
Combined Events Referee Race Walk Referee
Long Distance Running Referee (Including Cross Country)
See separate write-up - Master Referee Certification for more details.

National Technical Official: This is an IAAF level certification that was added in 2002. It is reserved for Master Level Referees that want to become internationally certified to work international meets in the United States. It is the first step in IAAF certification. To be considered you must be a master level

referee in at least two of the following five disciplines for a minimum of three years in each discipline. The disciplines are Track, Field, Combined Events, LDR/Cross-Country and Race Walking. More details are cover under this heading in a separate write-up - IAAF National Technical Official.