

**USA Wrestling
Local Organizing Committee Requirements
for hosting National Events**

and

**Best Practices for Recruitment,
Training, and Retention of Officials**

A critical part of running a successful tournament is having the right people working at the event. Mat and pairing officials are among the most important workers at any tournament, and creating a good working environment for these officials can make the difference between a great event and a substandard one. This guide is also designed to provide suggestions on ways for state chapters to recruit and develop new officials, to create positive relationships between tournament operators and officials, and to establish minimum standards for national events.

Recruitment & Retention of Officials

Target age of 16-19 year olds (Cadets and Juniors)

- Offer incentives such as reduced entry fees at regional and national competitions.
- Upgrade officials as soon as appropriate.
- Establish officials' knowledge base through training and mentoring while giving them opportunities to officiate certain national level events if their evaluation merits such consideration.

Target age of late 20s and early 30s (Parents with young athletes who are competing)

- Focus an education process to recruit this membership population. Pinpoint an OEP aimed specifically at these guys who are coaching as parents.
- Stress the benefits of:
 - Learning and applying the rules.
 - Building the comradery between coaches and officials.
 - Building a wrestling community that fosters the above comradery and models good behavior to the young wrestler.
- This age group will at least stick around for the years their children are wrestling, 5-10 years with the hope that by then we would have some of them hooked for good.

Obstacles and suggestions for dealing with them

- Treatment of officials by coaches and parents:
 - Consistent penalties for ejected coaches.
 - More training on dealing with irate coach/parent (for officials at all levels)
- Treatment of new officials by senior officials:
 - Assign mentors to young/new officials for two to three (2-3) years so they become trusting of each other.
- Individuals who are sanctioned at events for their behavior should be reported to the state chairman from their state. The report should be detailed about the actions involved.

Training - Education - Competency

- Conduct a state level OEP at least once every two (2) years in each state, or take advantage of a USWOA sponsored OEP in your area. Try to get all officials in your state to one of these OEPs every couple of years. To arrange an OEP in your state contact John Heyman at john.heyman@verizon.net.
- Offer State Officials Directors opportunities at several national level competitions to meet and disseminate ideas on recruitment and retention of officials.
- Guidelines are available for dissemination and standardization of training at <https://goo.gl/lo87iS>.
- Continue the development of and training for:
 - New officials
 - Experienced officials
 - Teaching officials

Other ways of showing volunteers and officials that they are appreciated

- Personal thanks from tournament director.
- Event shirt.
- Keeping sessions to a reasonable length so officials are not exhausted.
- Adhering to the posted times for close of weigh-ins. Pairers cannot set up the tournament until all entries are finalized. Set up is not completed until hours after the close of weigh-ins.

The following are required for National events. They can be used as suggestions for all other events.

Officials' reimbursements & stipends

- Funds available for distribution to officials:
 - All National Events will add a minimum of \$5.00 to all entry fees, unless other provisions are approved by the USWOA and USAW.
 - This applies to individual tournaments only; dual tournaments are exempted.
- Distribution of stipends:
 - All funds raised from the forgoing assessment will be distributed solely to licensed mat and pairing officials.

- A total number of shares to be distributed will be calculated for each event:
 - Each official who works the entire event will receive a full share.
 - An official who works less than the entire event will receive a share reasonably based on the portion of the tournament they worked. In general, a premium is placed on those officials working the entire event.
 - The total stipend resulting from the fees collected will be divided equally among the shares as calculated.
- National events (excluding dual tournaments) will add an additional \$2.50 to all entry fees to be utilized towards providing lodging to officials, unless other provisions are approved by the USWOA and USAW.
 - All qualified and registered mat and pairing officials will be provided lodging if they sign up at <http://goo.gl/SRcSaz> at least four weeks prior to the event and indicate that they will require lodging. See <http://goo.gl/B4jw3J> for qualifications required to work specific events.
 - If an official subsequently determines that they cannot attend the event, they must notify the tournament director no less than 48 hours prior to the first night's lodging.
 - Officials who do not work an event and who fail to notify the tournament director as required will be subject to the following sanctions:
 - 1st offense – probation for 13 months
 - 2nd offense – no lodging provided for 26 months
 - 3rd offense – no lodging provided for 39 months
 - All rooms are double occupancy. If an official chooses to bring a guest/spouse they shall notify the local organizer at least four weeks prior to the event and will bear ½ the cost of the room.
 - Rooms are not provided to officials under the age of 18.

Tournament Management

- The requirements under this document can be modified by the tournament committee, which should consist of:
 - USAW staff
 - Head pairing official
 - Head mat official(s)
 - LOC representative
 - Coaches' representative
- Weigh-in:
 - One (1) scale for every 100-150 entrants.
 - Two (2) officials per scale
 - At least one (1) athletic trainer or medical personnel
 - One (1) trained volunteer per scale checking fingernails and uniform/singlets.

- Medical staffing
 - One (1) trained medical staff for every four (4) mats.
 - Medical staff must be centrally located and available 30 minutes before competition sessions.
 - Medical staff must be present 15 minutes before all weigh-in sessions.
- Day and Session Length:
 - Sessions should be generally be limited to four to four and a half (4-4½) hours.
 - No competition day shall exceed 12 hours.
 - Each competition day shall have at least 45 minutes built in meal break.
 - Every effort should be made to complete wrestling by 9:00 PM.

Tournament Hospitality

- **Meals:** Hospitality rooms should be staffed in order to monitor who has access to the hospitality area, to constantly restock drinks/light snacks, and to have a system for monitoring who is eating and how much they should take per meal according to the numbers of volunteers and amount of food provided. It should be a goal to vary meals and not be repetitive throughout the tournament.
 - Examples of meals that would meet the requirements:
 - Breakfast (if not provided by the designated officials motel)
 - Breakfast sandwich or equivalent
 - 1 ½ cups of coffee per official
 - 8 oz. juice per official
 - Lunch
 - Pizza, sandwich or equivalent, with fruit or salad
 - Variety of soda, water or juices
 - Dinner
 - Meat entree
 - Hot side dish
 - Salad
 - Small dessert
 - Variety of soda, water or juices.
- **Breaks:** Very specific break times should be built into the schedule. The break should provide at least 45 minutes for meals from the end of the last match of the proceeding session to the first match of the next session. These times should be coordinated through the tournament committee.
- **Social:** The LOC is to provide at least one (1) social per event to include:
 - Variety of beer, soda, water
 - Snacks, pizza or a variety of appetizer-like food.
 - Amounts should be coordinated with the tournament committee based on need.
 - Tournaments longer than three (3) days should consider an additional social.