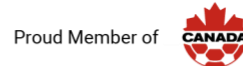




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## **INFORMATION BULLETIN**

**Bulletin #:** I2022-042  
**Date:** July 4, 2022  
**To:** District Administrators, Presidents, Associate Members  
**CC:** Ontario Soccer Board of Directors, Staff  
**From:** Peter Augruso, President & Chair of the Board of Ontario Soccer  
**Subject:** Match Officials Charter – Stop the Cycle, Change the Culture

Match Official (Referee) retention and recruitment numbers has seen a drastic depletion of officials at all levels. Although historically low in all sports, if they continue at current levels, they will threaten the viability of our game. When surveyed, the number one reason for Match Officials not returning to the game is maltreatment. Research also confirms that Match Officials are at increased risk for mental health challenges.

At Ontario Soccer, we strive to create programming and policy that will protect our Match Officials from the physical and mental health impacts of bullying and harassment. As such we, are announcing a multi-year program surrounding **Match Official Bullying and Harassment** that will holistically address policy and discipline changes and public/participant education. This will be supported by a marketing and awareness campaign. We will gather input from the officiating community through focus groups, surveys and meetings. Additional research and data from University and Research partners will drive change throughout all levels of the game in Ontario.

As a first step in this program, we are releasing our **Charter of Match Officials**; one signed by the Ontario Soccer Board of Directors, and the other signed by our District Association Leaders. These Charters are a small first step in addressing the change in perspective, and adjustment to the current culture. By signing these charters, our membership leaders are publicly committing to supporting our Match Officials with “a zero-tolerance approach and to delivering the anti-bullying and harassment programs we are developing.

[Click here](#) to view the Charter and for more program information.

In addition to this Charter, more resources will be released in the coming weeks and months. If you have any questions, please contact Nicky Pearson, Sr. Manager of Match Officials Development [npearson@ontariosoccer.net](mailto:npearson@ontariosoccer.net).

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