

Southern California Aquatics Federation (SCAF) Policies and Procedures

Updated June 2022

I. Declaration of Policy

- I. Water polo sanctioning bodies have entrusted us to assist them in the development of their youth through athletics. The proper operation of such a process requires that officials be independent, impartial, and responsible to the people with whom they interact, including both the public and fellow officials. The purpose of the Code of Ethics is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all officials. The Code of Ethics does not exhaust the moral and ethical considerations of professional behavior 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.

II. Ethical Standards / Conflict of Interest

- A. SCAF Members must be free of obligation to any interest other than the impartial and fair judging of competitions. Without equivocation, game decisions that are slanted by personal bias are dishonest and unacceptable.
- B. SCAF members recognize that anything that may lead to a conflict of interest, either real or apparent, must be avoided. Gifts, favors, special treatment, privileges, employment or a personal relationship with a school or team that can compromise the perceived impartiality of officiating must be avoided.
- C. SCAF members have an obligation to treat other officials with professional dignity and courtesy and recognize that it is inappropriate to criticize other officials.
- D. SCAF members have a responsibility to continually seek self-improvement through the study of the game, rules, mechanics, and the techniques of game management. They have a responsibility to accurately represent their qualifications and abilities when requesting or accepting officiating assignments.
- E. SCAF members shall protect the public (fans, administrators, coaches, players, et al) from inappropriate conduct and shall attempt to eliminate from the officiating avocation/profession all practices which bring discredit to it.
- F. Sports officials shall not be a party to actions designed to unfairly limit or restrain access to officiating, officiating assignments or association membership. This includes selection for positions of leadership based upon economic factors, race, creed, color, age, sex, physical handicap, country, or national origin.

III. Affirmations:

- A. I devote time, thought, and study to maintain the highest standards of our sport. I strive to perform in as professional a manner as possible:
1. By acting within the governing rules and mechanics of competition.
 2. By acting in a spirit of good sportsmanship.
 3. By have a protective rather than a punitive attitude toward enforcement of the rules
 4. By being impartial
 5. By maintaining my focus on observation, not expectation, not anticipation, not preference
 6. By ensuring the conditions of a competition are fair and equitable for all participants.
- B. I strive to work with officials in a spirit of harmony and cooperation. I am respectful and courteous of others, cognizant that difference of opinion and interpretation may occur. I critically evaluate my performance after each competitive session as a step toward improvement and growth.
- C. I resist every temptation and outside pressure to sue my position as an official to benefit myself. Under all circumstances, I avoid promoting the special interest of any person or group of persons other than the athletes we serve. I recognize that it is important to honor contracts regardless of possible inconvenience or financial loss.
- D. I do not use illegal or recreational drugs or alcohol immediately before, during or immediately after any competition session where I am working or in attendance as an observer.
- E. I have not engaged in, nor will I ever engage in, any behavior that utilizes the influence of my position to encourage inappropriate sexual intimacy with any minor, any athlete, and coaching staff or any facility staff.
- F. I agree to abide by the Code of Ethics. Failure to follow this policy may result in my termination with SCAF-Water Polo.
- G. Further, I acknowledge that I am an independent contractor and SCAF-Water Polo has no responsibility to guarantee employment as a result of training received.
- H. I agree to the SCAF-Water Polo Policies and Procedures in full.
- I. I have obtained and maintain personal liability coverage, insuring me, and holding SCAF-Water Polo harmless against any legal claims made by others in connection with my activities as a SCAF-Water Polo official.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print name: _____

IV. Statement of Policies for Water Polo Officials

A. Certification of Officials

1. An official will be certified to officiate assigned games only upon completion of the following criteria:
 - a. Pass a written test (scores and policy to be determined by SCAF-WP Board of Directors)
 - b. Attend instructional clinics and meetings.
 - c. Participate in practical sessions.
 - d. Be a member in good standing of SCAF-WP
 - e. Complete a minimum of eighteen (18) hours of instructional training to include: written exam completion and evaluation (4 hours), instructional clinics and meetings (14 hours), and technical training and evaluations (2 hours).
2. Current members are responsible to update their membership data either via the SCAFWP.org website, or direct communication with their Area President. Notice of all meetings will be sent to all members in good standing at the email address of record, no later than twenty-one (21) days prior to any mandatory meeting clinic, or practical session.
3. Absence from a mandatory meeting, clinic, or practical session may be grounds for disciplinary action. Absence may be excused ONLY at the discretion of the President of the member's Area Chapter. The absence does NOT exempt the member from mandatory make-up of the missed instruction.

B. Uniform and Equipment

1. A proper uniform consists of white shoes and socks, white trousers and white belt, and a white, collared shirt. The uniform should be always neat and clean. Since water polo games are often conducted outdoors in rainy weather, appropriate provision should be made for inclement weather, not including umbrellas. If additional items of clothing are worn (hat, jacket, etc.) they shall also be white. In all cases, such attire must be appropriate and professional.
2. Each official must provide their own equipment as follows:
 - a. Red and Yellow cards
 - b. Whistle
 - c. Current rule book
 - d. Watch

C. Relocating officials

- a. An official from outside of the area that SCAF-WP serves, who is unknown to the SCAF Board of Directors will be accepted as a Trainee. Upon receipt of a letter (physical or digital) certifying comparable training or certification by another recognized water polo official's association, she/he will be placed on the appropriate SCAF list, subject to the certification rules stated herein for any member.

D. Guest Officials

- a. The SCAF-WP Board of Directors may designate officials for assignments who visit temporarily outside of the area that SCAF-WP serves, based on the direct personal knowledge by a SCAF-WP Director, based on the comparable training or certification by another recognized water polo officials' association.

E. Independent Contractors

- a. According to the California State Departments of Education and Justice, " ... an official at a high school athletic event is an independent contractor and therefore not covered by the Workers' Compensation Statutes". As an Independent Contractor, it is the Officials responsibility to comply with the appropriate statutes.

F. Assignments

1. Definition of "Season"

- a. A season is defined as: a specific assignment period, level of competition, gender of players, supervised under a recognized water polo sanctioning body. For example, CIF boys' season, NCAA women's season, or Junior College Men's season.

2. Assignment to games

- a. SCAF-WP trains and certifies officials who are then assigned by the various commissioners and/or assignors to games. Some assignors will contact you by email or phone while others might make their assignments at a meeting that will be advertised in advance. Some assignors may charge an administrative fee for their services. It is imperative that each official be familiar with the policies of these commissioners and assignors. Failure to adhere to such policies usually results in the removal of that official from that commissioner's or assignor's list, for the current or immediate next season.

3. Changing assignments

- a. All game assignments must go through the appropriate assignor. An official may NOT change an assignment without contacting the assignor. An official may not accept a game directly from a coach or school without clearing the assignment through the appropriate assignor. Once an assignment has been accepted from the appropriate assignor, an official may not cancel that assignment to officiate a game in another area or level without clearing the change with BOTH ASSIGNORS. Failure to adhere to this policy could result in a loss of the official's next game or games and could also affect the officials' consideration for championship and/or postseason game consideration for the current or immediate next season.

4. Returned Assignments and No-Show Policy:

Assignments to officiate water polo games are administered by the SCAF-WP Board of Directors. The groups that officials are assigned to cover consists of High Schools in the CIF Southern Section and Junior Colleges in the WSC (Western States Conference), SSC (South Coast Conference), and OEC (Orange Empire Conference) conferences in Southern California. The following is a Returned Assignment and No-Show Policy as it relates to games that come under the jurisdiction of the above listed entities. Qualified officials shall obtain assignments to referee water polo games through a process prescribed by the SCAF-WP Board of Directors.

Non-Sanctioned games:

Any High School or Junior College games, to include "off season" or "summer league" games, that are not sanctioned by the proper governing body will not be assigned by any Area Associations or the SCAF-WP Board of Directors. Any officials who participate in these non-sanctioned games agrees to hold harmless the SCAF-WP Board of Directors, Area Associations and Area Associations Boards of Directors, and/or Area Assignors for all liabilities for injury or damages sustained as a result of officiating said games, including without limitations all claims and medical expenses incurred by said official.

Returned Assignments:

Officials who want to officiate in any Area Association, to include High School and JC, shall follow the prescribed procedure and only accept games in which

they can actually participate. Returning assignments to the assignor is discouraged and may (changed from SHALL) result in the imposition of a \$10 (changed from \$5) fee per returned assignment. Returning more than one assignment per season may result in the elimination of, or reduction, in the number of assignments granted in the future or other disciplinary actions as determined by the SCAF-WP Board of Directors. Any fines will be paid directly to the Area Associations Treasurer.

No Show Policy:

Failure to be present and perform the duties of an official for an assignment without notifying the assignor (No Show Official) shall be considered a breach of contract in the performance of the duties as an official. A NO SHOW OFFICIAL shall be fined \$50.00 per occurrence. The fine shall be immediately due and payable to the Area Association's Treasurer. One half (½) of said fine shall be dispersed to the single official who worked that particular contest. In addition, any official failing to show for any assignment without notifying the assignor (and home school where appropriate) shall be subject to disciplinary action as follows:

1. First occurrence, the official shall be placed on a "probationary" period subject to the discretion of the Area Association where the incident occurred.
2. Second occurrence, the loss of all or a portion of the remaining assignments for that season. Future assignments will be at the discretion of the Area Associations Board of Directors.
3. Third occurrence, elimination of all assignments for that season and suspension from any assignments for the next high school or JC season for which that official seeks.

In addition to the above disciplinary action, the SCAF-WP Board of Directors may determine that an official that continues to exhibit recurring unprofessional and negligent behavior may be placed on indefinite suspension, to be determined by the Area Associations Board of Directors.

4. Imposition of penalties pursuant to this policy may be appealed to the SCAF-WP Board of Directors through written contact with the SCAF-WP

President. Any action taken by the SCAF-WP Board of Directors shall be binding.

5. Due Process Policy: Any member of SCAF-WP shall have the opportunity to address grievances with their local area Board and subsequently, the SCAF-WP Board of Directors. Written communications with the Area President and SCAF-WP President will suffice to begin the process. The local area Board of Directors shall have initial jurisdiction with SCAF-WP acting in a support role, unless the local authority feels that to avoid bias or conflicts of interest, the SCAF-WP Board of Directors will handle the members grievance. The SCAF-WP President, or his/her designee, shall have the responsibility of addressing the grievance in a timely manner.

G. Advancement to College Lists

1. SCAF-WP will keep a College List specifying which officials are qualified to work at the Community College and Four-Year College level.

The College List

1. Placement of an official's name on the list by the SCAF-WP Board of Directors shall occur only after the following criteria have been met:
 - a. The official has been a working member of SCAF-WP for at least two (2) years, or equivalent experience from outside the area that SCAF-WP serves, as approved by the SCAF-WP Board of Directors.
 - b. Referee 100 high school or USAWP age group games within the two (2) years immediately preceding application for listing.
 - c. After completion of items (a and b), the official submits a written request to the SCAF-WP Board of Directors to be evaluated for placement on the College List with "provisional status",
 - d. SCAF-WP will make its best effort to assure that a provisional official will work at least one college game under the direction of an official assigned/recommended by the Senior Chair or Assignor.
 - e. If a positive evaluation is made, the official's name will be added to the College List for the following season as a regular member.

H. Rating and listing

1. Goals

Our work at SCAF-WP aims at two things: training and assignment. Fairness to all members demands that assignment reward performance. Without some neutral

method of measuring performance our assignors are faced with repeated charges of favoritism. The result: 1) members believe discrimination keeps them down, and 2) they retain a built-in excuse to ignore their performance deficiencies. Fair measurement of performance is a pre-requisite to rating referees, the key determinant of assignment to regular season and post-season championships. There are many challenges to fair performance evaluation in any endeavor, perhaps even more in the subjective environment of sports officiating. That alone should not prevent us from trying. By giving every SCAF-WP Director a hand in the process, in turn rendering collective judgement, the issue of personal bias is minimized.

2. General Definitions

- a. Advancement Pool: SCAF-side list of referees for assignment to graded games of various levels for personal advancement within SCAF rating.
- b. Evaluation: subjective interpretation of skills by observers, to provide individual referee instruction.
- c. Graded games: selected group of games which serve as the only evaluation subjects for advancement
- d. Grading: survey of skills by a control group of observers, to rank and rate performance among a pool of referees.
- e. Ranking: placement of referees on a list in order of performance according to survey results.
- f. Rating: placement of referees into classifications, according to statistical consistencies in survey results.

3. SCAF Rating Committee

- a. Members: President, Sr. Programs Chair, Program Chair, (2) At-Large appointee's selected by the SCAF President and approved by the SCAF-WP Board of Directors.
- b. Responsibility:
 - i. Appoint a control group of Observers
 - ii. Supervise activity of the Observers
 - iii. Collect Championship pool of officials for High School based on consultation with the SCAF-WP Board.

- iv. Identify Graded Games (evaluation tournaments) for each level of play.
- v. Each member to always act as a mentor to all officials.

c. Policy:

- i. A SCAF Rating Committee is responsible to administer the ranking and rating of referees for High School, Community College, and CIF Southern Section subject to approval of the SCAF-WP Board.
- ii. Rating guides assignors: referees of like classification should be assigned alike to quality and quantity of games for a given season.
- iii. Coach and referee surveys determine rating (and game assignments) for the regular season. Graded games rankings determine championships.

d. Process:

i. Rating for Season Assignment

1. Facilitate each area to perform a post-season rating of their officials by coaches and officials
2. Ranking for Advancement Assignment
 - a. SCAF designates Graded Games for each level of advancement
 - b. In consultation with the Area Chapters, SCAF-WP Board of Directors identifies an Advancement Pool for each level of play.
 - c. Assignors receive Rating List and Advancement Pool for that level of lay.
 - d. Identify separate control group observers.
 - e. Hires control group observers (evaluators) by level of play, daily stipend, paid on completion of written grading sheets. Observers may NOT work in the Advancement Pool for which they evaluate.
 - f. SCAF-SP Rating Committee nominates referees to each championship, based on tabulation of Grading Sheets and their final judgement on pairings and scheduling.

I. SCAF-WP Board of Directors

The SCAF-WP Board of Directors meets at least six (6) times during the year. All the meetings are open to all members of SCAF-WP if they choose to attend. They can contact any member of the SCAF-WP Board or their area representatives for further information.

J. Remediation

1. Any official may be required to attend remediation sessions to continue officiating during the current or immediate next season. Only the SCAF-WP Board of Directors may sanction a member, but any person, making a written complaint of the performance or behavior of any member official may initiate remediation. Any complaint made for technical competence must be referred to the SCAF Training Committee. It will then be the responsibility of the official in question and the SCAF Instructional Chair or his/her designee to establish a series of remedial steps that must be successfully completed prior to assigning the official in question to future games/seasons. The review session may consist of:

- a. A review of the playing rules and their interpretations.
- b. A passage of a written rules test at the appropriate standard.
- c. A written evaluation of a scrimmage to be conducted by the SCAF-WP Instructional Chair or his/her designee.
- d. A written evaluation of an actual game observed by the SCAF-WP Instructional Chair or his/her designee.
 - i. Must be formally observed and recorded upon the completion of the review sessions.
 - ii. The SCAF-WP Instructional Chair or his/her designee will submit a written report and evaluation in question to the SCAF-WP Board that shall review the reports and make a decision regarding the situation.
 - iii. The "official in question" may appeal the Board's decision in writing within a period of ten (10) calendar days of the Board's decision. The "official in question" must arrange to repeat the remediation process but with at least the SCAF-WP Instructional Chair or his/her designee plus two members of the Training Committee present at both the practical session and the official game.

3. Sanctions may take one or more of the following forms:

- a. Assignment of games at a lower level of competition.
- b. Suspension for the remainder of the season

- c. Suspension from the next season of contests
 - d. Removal from the water polo association's list of qualified officials.
 - e. Sanctions against any given official may not be for more than one calendar year.
- 4. If the complaints are of a more serious nature or a violation of the Code of Ethics, the official may be suspended immediately from all of his/her assignments until the Area Chapter and/or the SCAF-WP Board of Directors can conduct a hearing.
- 5. Training Committee:
 - a. Selection: by the SCAF-WP Instructional Chair subject to the approval of the SCAF-WP Board of Directors.
 - b. Training Committee Composition:
 - i. SCAF Instructional Chair
 - ii. Five (5) elected/appointed Area Training Coordinators, each from a different area.
 - iii. The Area Instructional Chair will assist the Training Committee in its duties
 - iv. Term is for one (1) year.
 - c. Duties:
 - i. Review the training materials distributed to all the members.
 - ii. Prepare a syllabus for the area meetings
 - iii. Supervise the training clinics including recommendation of locations, dates, Instructors, Demonstrators, etc.
 - iv. Receive complaints about officials
 - v. The Instructional Chair shall report at each SCAF-WP Board of Directors meeting.
 - vi. Work on other project as directed by the President of the SCAF-WP Board of Directors.