Safety and Responsibility

Participants in women’s lacrosse must be aware of the Official Rules for Girls & Women’s Lacrosse and are expected to play, coach, officiate and spectate according to the spirit and intent of the women’s game. Emphasis is placed on safety and good sportsmanship. Everyone involved with the women’s game must act with consideration for the safety of others. Players must ensure that their behavior, equipment and uniform conform to all required and allowable standards, as defined by US Lacrosse rules. Coaches must ensure that they are teaching their players to play by the rules of the women’s game and should participate in continuing lacrosse-specific education and training that helps them to understand and teach new rules and address safety concerns. Officials must ensure fair and safe play by consistently enforcing the rules and by participating in continuing lacrosse-specific education and training that helps them to understand and interpret new rules. Spectators must contribute to a safe-play environment by demonstrating positive and sportsmanlike conduct and by understanding and appreciating the unique rules and culture of the women’s game.

Implementation and Authority

The US Lacrosse Women’s Game Sub-Committee is responsible for establishing, reviewing, maintaining, and disseminating the rules of women’s lacrosse for all levels of play except for NCAA collegiate play. US Lacrosse offers the public the opportunity to suggest rule changes to the Rules Committee through written submission by June 1st each year. Each June, the Rules Committee meets to review and discuss rule suggestions and any relevant injury surveillance data before making their recommendations to the US Lacrosse Board of Directors. The women’s rules are annually voted on in September by the members of the US Lacrosse Women’s Game Committee, and are issued under the authority of US Lacrosse and endorsed by the National Federation of State High School Associations as the official rules for girls’ and women’s lacrosse.

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Information about the rules and about the purchase of Rulebooks can be found at http://www.uslacrosse.org/rules
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The Women’s Game Officials Subcommittee [WGOSC] of US Lacrosse has written this Manual to assist officials at all levels in their pursuit of officiating excellence. The WGOSC urges all officials to read the Code of Conduct (Part One), the US Lacrosse Code of Ethical Conduct (Part One), the Statement of Philosophy (Part One), and the Official’s Code of Ethical Conduct and Grievance Procedures (Part Eleven - Grievances). The WGOSC challenges each and every official to commit these statements to heart and to action both on and off the field. This Manual serves as the policies and procedures for the US Lacrosse Women’s Game Officials Subcommittee in conjunction with the Subcommittee Bylaws (Available on US Lacrosse website).

In an effort to promote, educate, and develop consistency among officials as we interpret and apply the rules, the WGOSC sponsors a National Rules Interpretation Clinic annually at the USL Convention. All local and region umpiring chairpersons must attend this workshop. Each local representative is then responsible for disseminating the current rules and interpretations through a rules and umpiring meeting prior to the start of the lacrosse season. **Those boards not represented at the National Rules Interpretation Clinic will be sent a qualified clinician to conduct their local rules interpretation meeting at the local board’s expense.**

While the WGOSC wants to preserve the movement, freedom and flow of the women’s game, we must remind all US Lacrosse officials to consistently and strictly enforce all rules involving player safety. Even though penalizing every dangerous or potentially dangerous action by players limits the flow of the game and brings criticism from coaches, players and spectators alike, not to call these fouls may result in serious injury.

US Lacrosse and the WGOSC are asking coaches, players, trainers, and officials to share the responsibility for making the game safe for every player on the field. Persistent enforcement, strict interpretation, and consistent implementation of the rules are necessary during daily practices as well as during scheduled contests. Penalizing dangerous play may alter the flow of the game but may also help to preserve the beautifully free, fast moving and safe game of women’s lacrosse as we know it and like to see it played: free from injury and without the need for additional protective equipment.

Officials alone cannot make the game safe, but we can call a good game and continue to be ambassadors of safety, fair play, and good sportsmanship both on and off the field. We must convince players and coaches that they share the responsibility for keeping lacrosse safe and injury free.

US Lacrosse Women’s Game Officials Subcommittee
Women’s lacrosse is one of the fastest growing competitive sports. As the sport grows it is important that we continue to expect all participants to understand that “how the game is played” or sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity are as integral to the sport as are the skills and tactics used in playing the game. Playing to “win at all costs” with disregard for the rules and safety of all participants is not acceptable if we are to be ambassadors for maintaining the integrity of the beautiful game of women’s lacrosse.

As officials, we are an integral part of the game. We are very visible. Our decorum, as well as our skills, is constantly being scrutinized by coaches, players, spectators, and our fellow officials. We are paid to be professional in our job, and in spite of the pressure, we are neither adversaries nor advocates. We are facilitators whose responsibility it is to demand and enforce fair play and sportsmanship if we expect to earn the respect we feel we deserve.

As part of this team effort, we must arrive properly dressed and be on the field 30 minutes (college)/20 minutes (high school) before game time. If other commitments prevent you from arriving at a game on time, do not take the game. However, if you are going to be late, have the courtesy to call the host school, and if possible, your fellow official(s) to let them know. Arriving properly dressed and on time to a game alleviates some of the pre-game tension felt by coaches and your partner(s). By arriving late to a game, the officials have one strike against them even before the game begins.

Regardless of how well either one or both or all three of you may know a coach, greet each coach briefly together, and thereafter, concern yourselves with only the game. Avoid fraternizing with players and spectators. Remember, you are an official, and therefore by definition, neutral. Continue your pre-game duties together. Inspect the grounds, goal cages, and equipment together and answer any questions concerning rules interpretations together. At half time, stay on the field together and discuss in private any problems that may have occurred in the first half. If necessary confer together with the captains or coaches of both teams about possible misapplications of the rules. After the game, sign the scorebook (if readily available) and leave the field together without delay.
During the game respect your partners’ space. Prior to the game, you will have discussed field coverage, advantage signals, and double whistles. Be aware, a “no call” is a decision not to stop play. If you continually blow a whistle “under your partner’s nose” you communicate a lack of confidence in your partner’s officiating ability.

Avoid reacting to or responding to any comments or criticism from coaches, players, or spectators about either your calls or your partners’ calls. Remember, an official is closer to play and at a better angle to make a call than are the coaches, bench players, or spectators. Secondly, coaches do not have an objective view of the game. Coaches have an inherent bias and are emotionally attached to one team engaged in the contest. Therefore, no matter how antagonistic or abrasive a coach becomes, repress the urge to retaliate verbally. Coaches and players are fully responsible for their conduct. If criticism becomes offensive, you have a responsibility to yourself, your partner(s), and to the game to administer a card. Set your standards of behavior and limits well in advance and stick to them. Misconduct is a coach’s or player’s problem and will only become an official’s problem if it is not dealt with quickly, dispassionately, and professionally — act do not react.

Finally, never forget that we represent the profession of sports officiating both on and off the field. Do not accept games at your Alma Mater, at the school where you work, or at the school your children attend. [See “Official Risk Management” in Part 10 of this Manual for more information about conflicts of interest.] When watching a game, do not make any critical comments about the officiating and do not cheer heartily for a particular team or player. During casual contact with coaches, try to avoid being drawn into making comments on calls made in previous games, as you may be indirectly criticizing a fellow official. As officials, it is our responsibility to encourage the highest level of play and to model good sportsmanship.

The Women’s Game Officials Subcommittee has adopted a Code of Ethical Conduct to establish standards of behavior for officials, to provide an avenue for filing of a grievance, and to provide officials with due process when a grievance is brought against them. The complete Code of Ethical Conduct appears in Part 10 of this Manual.
INTRODUCTION

Updated – September 13, 2008

The mission of US Lacrosse is to ensure a unified and responsive organization that develops and promotes the sport by providing services to its members and programs to inspire participation, while preserving the integrity of the game. US Lacrosse grants the privilege of membership to individuals (players, coaches, officials and leadership) and organizations committed to the tenets of its mission.

Inherent within all professional organizations is the potential for conflicts of interest, harassment, abuse of power, and other forms of unethical behavior. Through the establishment of an organizational Code of Ethics, US Lacrosse has defined a set of guidelines to promote and protect the spirit of the game, safeguard the best interest of the participants, and establish and maintain standards of behavior. The Code is not intended to serve as a set of rules, but rather to outline general principles and guidelines of aspirational virtues and proper ethical standards for all members, volunteers, staff, and any other individuals and organizations that choose to affiliate with US Lacrosse.

The definition of ethical behavior is having an understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and at all times choosing to do what is right. This definition should be applied at the individual level to those within the US Lacrosse umbrella: employees, volunteers or individuals who represent US Lacrosse within the community at large, as well as at the corporate level, pertaining to the actions of US Lacrosse and other affiliated organizations. Ethical considerations are integral, not optional, elements of all sports activities and apply to all levels of participation.

Participation in the sport of lacrosse provides a powerful vehicle for a participant’s personal growth and development, by teaching the values of respect, fairness, teamwork, communication, responsibility, truthfulness, non-discrimination, honesty and integrity. These values serve as the core ideals for the US Lacrosse Code of Ethics.

Respect

A key component of ethical behavior is respect, which is defined at individual, team and corporate levels. Individuals should value the opinions, views and roles of others who work to further the mission of the organization. All should safeguard the dignity, privacy and freedom of individuals regardless of their race, color, creed, socio-economic status, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or nationality. Respect defines the value that US Lacrosse, as an organization, places on honoring the history of the sport, and demonstrates the regard it shows to the various and disparate constituencies that have come together to form US Lacrosse in an effort to further the growth and development of the sport.
**Fairness**
Fairness is making decisions without favoritism or prejudice. US Lacrosse firmly believes that the concept of fairness is fundamental to sports. Anything that creates an unfair advantage violates the spirit, as well as the integrity, of the sport of lacrosse.

**Teamwork**
Teamwork is a cooperative and coordinated effort on the part of a group of individuals who work collectively in the interest of a common goal. US Lacrosse believes there is significant value in promoting teamwork, both on and off the field, in every aspect of the sport. US Lacrosse members, volunteers, staff, and other affiliated individuals and organizations should adopt and promote the philosophy that greater success can be achieved when individuals sacrifice their desire for personal accomplishment in favor of the benefits of their team and the lacrosse community.

**Communication**
Communication is the process whereby individuals create shared understanding. It is an active “two way street,” requiring a balance of articulating, listening, writing, reading, observing, questioning, analyzing and evaluating. Communication may be verbal, nonverbal or written. It can be sent through various media and transmits a thought provoking idea, gesture, or action.

US Lacrosse members, volunteers, staff, and other affiliated individuals and organizations should communicate with clarity, honesty, timeliness and openness. Communication should include all pertinent information shared transparently with all appropriate recipients. Clear, honest and timely communication allows for collaboration and cooperation, building a stronger game and community for the sport.

**Conflict of Interest**
A conflict of interest is present in any instance in which the actions or activities of an individual, including members, volunteers, staff and affiliates representing or acting on behalf of US Lacrosse, could result in actual or perceived personal gain or advantage, and/or have an adverse effect on the interests, mission or integrity of US Lacrosse. Individuals who represent and serve US Lacrosse, at the local, regional or national levels, have a duty to disclose any financial interest or personal obligation that may actually or perceptually affect the independence of their judgment.

**Legality**
US Lacrosse members, volunteers, staff, and other affiliated individuals and organizations are obligated to comply with all applicable laws. Violation of the law is not tolerated.
Representing the fastest growing national sport as an emerging force in sports organizations and leadership, US Lacrosse has a duty to provide positive influence over athletic administrators, programs, officials, coaches, players, and affiliated individuals and organizations. The goal of US Lacrosse is to promote sportsmanship and character by teaching, advocating, modeling and enforcing ethical principles, while preserving the integrity of the game.

By affiliating with US Lacrosse, individuals and organizations agree to comply with the aspirational guidelines set forth in the Code of Ethics. Failure to adhere to this Code may result in revocation of membership or affiliation. US Lacrosse encourages others involved with the sport of lacrosse to adopt and follow these important guidelines.

**Statement of Philosophy**

The official is an integral part of the freedom, flow and spirit of the game of women’s lacrosse. In order to gain the respect of players, coaches and spectators, the official must have a current and in depth knowledge of the rules and officiating procedures, personal integrity, and the ability to maintain sustained physical effort. The official must also encourage the highest possible level of play and sportsmanship. The official must be concerned with the promotion and education of officials, and thereby the elevation of officiating standards. The ultimate challenge of officiating lacrosse is to let the outcome of the game be determined by the legal play of the players.

**Mission of the Women’s Game Officials Subcommittee**

US Lacrosse and the Women’s Game Officials Subcommittee (WGOSC) do not approve or encourage the use of unrated officials, nor do they deem it appropriate for probationary officials to officiate games unless they are supervised by a US Lacrosse certified and rated official. Therefore US Lacrosse and the WGOSC are committed to the mission of Recruiting, Training, Retaining and Promoting officials for the Women’s Game.
I. US Lacrosse Officials - Membership, Certification & Professionalism

A. Membership

1. Pay annual US Lacrosse membership fees. [Junior Officials – See Part 12 – Appendix for important information regarding US Lacrosse Membership.]

2. Hold a current US Lacrosse Officials membership through a US Lacrosse Local Board/Association. Pay dues or fees as required by the Local Board/Association.

B. Certification

Official’s certification is a credential awarded through US Lacrosse Officials Education Program (OEP) to individual US Lacrosse member officials who have completed the following:

1. The US Lacrosse Women’s Game Officials Online Course.

2. Required classroom hours with a US Lacrosse certified Trainer or Clinician.

   Note: Local Boards/Associations may have required meetings and/or clinics that must be completed in addition to the required US Lacrosse Certification classroom hours. [Refer to Part Three – On-Field Ratings for specific requirements.]


4. Annual US Lacrosse Rules Test – Passed at the level of current rating. Failure to pass the Rules Test mandates a retake of the test.

5. Earn and consequently maintain a non-expired US Lacrosse On-Field Rating.

C. Professionalism


2. Do annual service commensurate with On-Field Rating. [See Part Eight – Service Standards]

3. Wear the US Lacrosse Approved Uniform for officials. [See Part Twelve – Appendix]

4. Avoid accepting games where a personal connection exists with a school (e.g. recent alumni, on staff, daughter playing on the team, etc.).

5. Be consistent and impartial in making calls.
6. Be professional in both attitude and action toward the other officials, coaches, and players. It is recommended that an official communicate with the assigner about limiting the number of times any one team is seen during the season.

7. Have the name and contact information of Rules Interpreters --- Local, State, Region, National --- to get immediate responses to rules questions.

8. Read all approved rulings made during the season which the National Interpreter posts on the US Lacrosse Website and sends to all Super Region Chairs, Region Chairs, and Local Board/Association Chairs.

D. Member in Good Standing

A “Member in Good Standing” is an official who has met all criteria in A. Membership; B. Certification; and C. Professionalism described above.

II. US Lacrosse Officials - Governance

A. WGOSC

1. WGOSC Membership & Qualifications

   a. The US Lacrosse Women's Game Officials Subcommittee (WGOSC) shall consist of a Chair, past Chair (if not already serving as a Super Region representative or Member-At-Large), 6 Members-At-Large and one representative from each Super Region with the exception of Super Region 4 which will have two representatives. (Rationale: Due to its large geographic area and growing number of officials Super Region 4 will have two representatives).

   b. Super Region representatives shall hold a minimum of a District On-Field Rating. Members-At-Large shall hold a minimum of a Local On-Field Rating or an On-Field Rating commensurate with her responsibilities.

   c. Members-At-Large shall be selected by the WGOSC Chair and approved by the Women's Game Committee Chair. The Members-At-Large shall represent the following constituencies --- two (2) Youth game representatives; one (1) Youth Rules Interpreter; one (1) Collegiate Officials Association (COA)/Collegiate Women's Lacrosse Officials Association (CWLOA) representative; one (1) Officials Education and Recruitment Subcommittee representative; one (1) US International official representative. Members-At-Large shall serve a two year term and a maximum of 3 consecutive two year terms. Terms commence August 1st. No more than three Members-At-Large shall rotate off the committee in any one year.
d. The Women’s Game Committee Chair may also appoint non-voting consultants to the Officials Subcommittee as she sees fit.

e. In the event of a Member-At-Large vacancy, the WGOSC Chair will appoint someone to fill the unexpired term. In the event of a Super Region representative vacancy, that Super Region will be responsible for filling the vacancy.

2. WGOSC Responsibilities

a. Oversee all policies and procedures related to the governance of women’s game officials.

b. Provide direction and services for Local Boards/Associations in recruiting, training, retaining, and promoting officials for the USL women’s game (U19 and younger).

c. Provide direction and services for Regions and Super Regions in recruiting, training, retaining, and promoting officials.

d. Work with US Lacrosse’s OEP and training working group to support and promote the professional growth and development of officials through the use of standardized curriculum, courses and certified trainings.

e. Prepare the Rules Test by a deadline established in conjunction with US Lacrosse staff.

f. Establish and endorse standards and procedures for the rating of officials (all levels), subject to periodic review.

g. Work with the Training Committee and Rules Committee to periodically revise any technical materials on officiating which are available for use at clinics, workshops, or in manuals or rulebooks.

h. Work with the Local board/associations to oversee Youth, Apprentice and Adult evaluation policy and procedures.

3. WGOSC Chair Qualifications

a. The Chair shall be appointed by the Women’s Game Committee Chair. Preferred qualifications include previous WGOSC experience and a Level 3, formerly District, or above rating.

b. She shall assume her duties on August 1st.

c. The term of office for the Chair shall be three years. The Chair may serve a maximum of 2 consecutive three year terms.

d. The WGOSC Chair may not simultaneously serve as a Chair within the governance structure of Women’s Game Officials.
4. WGOSC Chair Responsibilities

   a. Serve a three year term.

   b. Serve as a voting member on the US Lacrosse Women’s Game Committee.

   c. Oversee the maintenance of an up-to-date record of all US Lacrosse certified officials with the assistance of US Lacrosse staff, Super Region, Region and Local board chairs.

   d. Oversee the maintenance of an accurate record of all National officials, including contact information, ratings received, renewal dates and other pertinent activities until June 30, 2017. Oversee the maintenance of an accurate record of all International officials, including contact information, ratings received, renewal dates and other pertinent activities with the the assistance of the FIL liaison to the WGOSC.

   e. Work with the OEP to identify Certified Trainers within the Region and Local boards.

   f. With the Training Committee Chair oversee the assignment of qualified/ certified clinicians to official US Lacrosse clinics.

   g. Contribute to USL publications as needed.

   h. Write reports for the USL Women’s Game Committee and the Board of Directors.

   i. Work with the US Lacrosse and OEP departments to coordinate the assigners, trainings and/or observations of officials for National Tournament (NT) to ensure that:

      1. Information about NT is circulated in a timely manner.

      2. The assigner completes a scheduled of officials for all NT games.

      3. Advertise the position for assigners as needed. Applications to be reviewed by US Lacrosse Games Administration and OEP in conjunction with the WGOSC Chair.

   j. Have the authority to waive any policy at any time with the approval of the WGOSC.

B. Super Region
1. Super Region Chair Qualifications
   a. Serve a two year term and a maximum of 3 consecutive two-year terms for their Super Region (Super Region term begins August 1 of even years for Super Regions II, IV, and VI; odd years for Super Regions I, III, and V).
   b. The Super Region Chair may not simultaneously serve as a Chair within the governance structure of Women’s Game Officials.

2. Super Region Chair Responsibilities
   b. Serve on the WGOSC, actively participating on committees and projects assigned by the WGOSC Chair.
   c. Facilitate communication between the WGOSC and the Region Chairs.
   d. Assist in regional problem solving.
   e. Attend the annual USL Rules Interpretation session and chair the annual Super Region meeting, both held at the yearly USL Convention.
   f. Act as official liaison when the National Tournament is held within her Super Region, a role that includes but is not limited to officials’ hospitality and liaison with National Tournament Committee (conference calls).

C. Region

1. Region Chair Qualifications
   a. Serve a two or three year term as determined by the region.
   b. The Region Chair may not simultaneously serve as a Chair within the governance structure of Women’s Game Officials.

2. Region Chair Responsibilities
   b. Attend the annual National Rules Interpretation Meeting.
   c. Facilitate communication between the Super Region Chair and the Local Umpiring Boards, and request service/assistance from the WGOSC as needed.
d. When requested, provide a list of competitive tournaments where training and observations can be conducted.

e. Perform all duties, as listed in Part Seven, for Regional Observations.

f. In consultation with the Super Region Chair, consider for approval the extension or grant a one year leave of absence for an official who is unable to be judged due to extenuating circumstances (pregnancy, illness, family responsibilities, etc.) during the renewal year or in situations where the officials is unable to officiate for the upcoming season.

g. Consider a Probationary rating for an individual who has paid dues to US Lacrosse but who has not yet received a rating or who has not fulfilled all of the annual requirements to maintain an existing rating. A probationary official is an individual in pursuit of a rating or fulfillment of annual requirements who should not officiate any contest without appropriate supervision by a rated official.

h. Assist Local Boards in problem solving. (The Region Chair should not be the Chair of any Local Board.)

i. Annually, or more frequently as needed, meet with all of the Local Board Chairs to organize activities in the region. Minutes of this meeting should be kept and sent to the Super Region Chair.

j. Elect or appoint a Secretary or Treasurer (if appropriate).

1. Develop a nominating process for the election of the Region Secretary and Region Treasurer (if appropriate).

k. Ratings within the Region:

1. Keep accurate records of the play days and service opportunities.

2. Ensure there are adequate rating opportunities throughout the region.

3. Assist Local Board Leadership.

l. Act as liaison to the National Tournament assigner to identify officials with three-person positioning experience.

m. Appoint a Nominating Committee Chair for the Region Chair election process.

1. The Committee shall consist of three officials, one of whom will be the Chair. The committee members must represent different Local Boards.
2. The Committee shall present nominees for the position of Region Chair.

3. The Region Chair shall be voted on by slate or ballot presented to the Super Region and Local Chairs. All Local Chairs must vote, no abstentions.

4. In the event of an even number of voters, the Super Region Chair will be added as an eligible voter.

D. Local Board/Association

1. Local Board/Association Chair Qualifications


   b. Must hold a current, not expired US Lacrosse certified rating.

   c. Serve a two-year term as reflected in the by-laws of the board/association.

   d. The Local Board/Association Chair must be an active member of the board and should reside in the local area that the board serves. Only under circumstances where no individual living in the area is willing and able to serve as the Local Board/Association Chair should a board consider allowing an out-of-area chairperson. Local residence is strongly recommended for all Local Board/Association officers.

   e. The Local Board/Association Chair may not serve in multiple roles unless absolutely necessary.

   f. The Local Board/Association Chair should not simultaneously serve as a Chair within the governance structure of Women’s Game Officials.

   g. The Local Board/Association Chair should not serve as the Assigner.

2. Local Board/Association Chair Responsibilities

   a. Attend the annual National Rules Interpretation Meeting, and then organize the annual rules interpretation meeting and rule book distribution for their Board/Association.

   b. Notify all Local Board/Association members about approved rulings made during the season which the National Interpreter posts on the US Lacrosse Website.

   c. Designate two officials, other than him or herself, to be Certified Trainers and have access to the US Lacrosse OEP Certified Trainer course.
d. Organize local clinics and training as needed.

e. Supervise the rating process for Youth, Apprentice, and Local ratings.

f. It is recommended that Local Boards have a background check procedure in place for all officials. USL offers a background check for purchase on its website at time of renewals, and the Local Board Chair can verify the successful completion of a background check. Unsuccessful background checks with the National Center for Safety Initiatives may result in an immediate termination of USL membership.

g. Consider for approval the extension, for one year only, of the Local rating when candidates are unable to be judged due to extenuating circumstances (pregnancy, illness, family obligations, etc.) on the date of a rating session, or grant a one-year leave of absence in situations where the official is unable to official for the upcoming season. An extension or leave of absence may not be granted consecutively.

h. Consider a Probationary rating for an individual who has paid dues to US Lacrosse but who has not yet received a rating or who has not fulfilled all of the annual requirements to maintain an existing rating.

i. File the Local Board/Association Bylaws and Operating Procedures with the WGOSC Super Region Chair.

j. Continually update rosters, including ratings and dates of expiration throughout the year on the USL Database. Note: As soon as possible after a new rating is awarded update the USL Database.

k. Local board chairs are expected to annually provide and maintain a service plan to be reviewed by their Super Region Chair.

l. Elect or appoint a Secretary who will:
   
   1. Keep minutes and send a copy to the Region Chair.
   2. Help the Local Chair disperse information.
   3. Keep accurate records of all officials holding ratings within the jurisdiction of the Local Board/Association.
   4. Keep attendance records.

m. Elect or appoint a Treasurer who will:
   
   1. Collect dues.
   2. Pay invoices.
n. Appoint a Ratings Chair to coordinate rating sessions. Inform the Region Chair of play days and rating opportunities within the jurisdiction, review test scores, and track service given.

o. Be certain that all candidates receive a constructive written and/or verbal follow up from their on-field rating spokesperson after the on-field rating session.

p. Appoint a Chair to communicate with state high school associations, if applicable.

q. Serve or appoint a designee to serve on the US Lacrosse Chapter as the Women’s Game Officials representative.

r. Request service/aid from the WGOSC as needed.

s. Appoint a Nominating Committee Chair for the Local Board Chair election process.

1. The Committee shall consist of at least three officials, one of whom will be the Chair.

2. The Committee shall present nominees for the position of Local Board Chair.

3. The Local Board Chair shall be voted on by slate or ballot presented to the Local Board.

t. When necessary appoint and assemble a Grievance Committee according to US Lacrosse guidelines.
OFFICIALS SUBCOMMITTEE

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USL Youth - Cathy Russo
girlsrules@uslacrosse.org
NCAA - Stephanie Smith,
ssmithsre@gmail.com

NCAA
Rules Editor - Stephanie Smith,
ssmithsre@gmail.com
Coordinator of Officials - Melissa Coyne,
mcoyne@uslacrosse.org
Super Region I – Kathy Gibbons
Upper New England – Steve Metz
Lower New England – Jodi Michna

Super Region 2 – Jason Brightful
New York Region – Eileen Jones

Super Region 3 – Ericka Leslie
Upper Atlantic – Maureen Dwzill

Super Region 4 - Patti Cleary & John Bazzanella (co-chairs)
Middle Atlantic Region – Lucia Perfetti-Clark
Lower Atlantic Region – Joan Sitterly
Southeast Region – Randy Booth
Deep South Region – Open

Super Region 5 – Linda Strapp
Great Lakes Region – Heidi Mella
North Central Region – Holly Souza
Central Region – Jim Guffey
South Central – Carolyn Merritt

Super Region 6 – Dave Dunham
Northwest Region – Janet Lennon-Jones
Mountain Region – Allison Bailey
Southwest Region – Laura Rogal
Pacific Region – Maggie Fanta
ON-FIELD RATINGS

PART 3
I. Levels of Officiating

Officials are expected to be certified and rated on-field or resolve their probationary status before being contracted for services. It is important to ensure that all officials have proper training and the skills necessary to keep the game safe for all participants.

Officials must demonstrate the competencies listed on the “On-Field Evaluation Form” for the evaluation they are attempting to earn. The official must demonstrate the competencies listed for their evaluation as well as the competencies listed on the “On-Field Evaluation Form” that is being attempted.

The competencies are categorized into 5 Core Areas:

1. Professionalism & Game Day Responsibilities
2. Knowledge & Judgment
3. Positioning, Field Coverage, & Fitness
4. Mechanics, Penalty Administration, & Game Management
5. Comportment, Communication, & Teamwork

Officials are responsible for maintaining or advancing their On-Field Evaluation & Certification according to policies as outlined in the current Women’s Game Officials Policies and Procedures Manual.

Junior Official

Is defined as any official between 14-18 years of age or in high school, who may only officiate Youth games for players that are at least two age levels below their age. [See Part 12:4 – Appendix for important information regarding Junior Officials – US Lacrosse Membership; Junior Official Requirements; Local Board Considerations & Suggestions.]

Apprentice Official

Defined as any adult official, 19 years of age and older, who has not yet met the full requirements for Level 1, 2 or 3 certification. This official is on the path to a certification, but may not have met the requirements for the on-field evaluation, rules test, classroom or on-line course completion. As they are still in training it is recommended when possible to be partnered with a higher level certified official.

Adult Official

Defined as any adult official, 19 years of age and older, who is capable of officiating Youth, Middle School, JV or Varsity games.

Officials Certification:

There are three levels of Officials certification as described below:
Level 1 – Level 1 officials possess a basic understanding and knowledge of the game and the skills outlined in the evaluation form for Level 1 Official and have the necessary abilities to officiate games effectively using two-person system.

Level 2 – Level 2 officials possess an advanced their understanding and knowledge of the game and two-person system, a basic understanding of three person system and the skills outlined in the evaluation form for Level 2 official.

Level 3 – Level 3 officials have advanced proficiency, understanding and knowledge of the game and are capable of officiating in the two and three-person system. These officials have the skills outlined in the evaluation form for Level 3 official.

II. Guidelines & Requirements for Certification & Evaluation

After completing “Certification” as described in Part Two, an official earns an On-Field Evaluation at an approved event [see On-Field Evaluation Grid] during which verbal feedback and an assessment of competencies [refer to the On-Field Evaluation Form] the evaluation is completed by qualified evaluators.

Junior Official

The WGOSC recommends that a Junior Official officiate at least two age levels below her age. Local boards/associations must define the specific guidelines for assigning Junior Officials while taking into account their state’s regulations regarding minimum age requirements for sports officials and working papers. In all cases, adequate supervision should be provided.

New & Renew Junior Officials

Initial Certification Requirements:

1. US Lacrosse Membership as an “Official”
2. Complete Online Rules and Penalty Course for Women’s Officials
3. Minimum of 5 hours of annual classroom and field training
4. Pass BOTH Rules exam with an 80% or better
   a. Pass US Lacrosse Youth Rules Exam
   b. Pass the US Lacrosse High School Rules Exam
5. Demonstrate officiating skills/competencies as listed on the “Youth Official On Field Observation Checklist”
Annual Recertification Requirements:

1. Maintain membership with US Lacrosse as an “Official”
2. Minimum of 5 hours of annual classroom and field training
3. Pass BOTH Rules Exams with an 80% or better
   a. Pass US Lacrosse Youth Rules Exam
   b. Pass the US Lacrosse High School Rules Exam
4. Complete On-Field Evaluation for Junior Officials
   a. Evaluation, if passed, is good for one year

Adult Official

Initial Certification Requirements

1. Active US Lacrosse Membership as an “Official”
2. Complete Online Rules and Penalty Course for Women’s Officials
3. Minimum of 5 hours of annual classroom and field training
4. Pass Annual US Lacrosse High School Rules Exam with an 90% or better
5. Complete On-Field Evaluation
   a. Evaluation is good for up to 3 years

Annual Recertification Requirements

1. Maintain membership with US Lacrosse as an “Official”
2. Minimum of 5 hours of annual classroom and field training
3. Pass US Lacrosse High School Rules Exam with an 80% or better
4. Complete On-Field Evaluation for Local Officials – If applicable
   a. Evaluation is good for up to 3 years

Unsuccessful On-Field Evaluation Attempts

When a candidate fails to achieve the attempted On-Field Evaluation, there is a required waiting period of one (1) month in which the failed attempt occurred before the candidate may attempt that level a second time. Exceptions to this policy need to be approved by the candidate’s Local Board/Association Chair. For example: A candidate could attempt an On-Field Evaluation on February 30th and again on April 10th.

Failure to achieve an On-Field Evaluation after two (2) attempts within the quarter (3 months) following the successful completion of the Training Clinic results in the official having to fulfill a waiting period of two (2) quarters outside of the quarter in which the 2nd of the failed attempts occurred.
Certification & Evaluation Notification

Within three (3) days of the On-Field Evaluation evaluators will notify, by email, each candidate, and the Local Board/Association Chair with the results and expiration of the On-Field Evaluations.

The evaluators will collect all comments and write an evaluation letter that is sent to the candidate within a maximum of 3 weeks following the event.

The evaluation letter author will maintain a copy of the letter for the duration of the candidate’s evaluation.

The candidate is expected to maintain a copy of the letter for at least the length of the On-Field Evaluation earned.

Note: The candidate may be asked to share this information with future clinicians and/or evaluators.

Evaluation Extension

If an official is not able to attend an On-Field Evaluation session or complete an On-Field Evaluation session due to extenuating circumstances (i.e. pregnancy, illness, injury, family emergency, etc.) may request via email to have the Local Board/Association Chair in consultation with the Local Board/Association Executive Committee review her case and extend the end date of the evaluation.

The Local Board/Association Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee may grant a one year leave of absence in situations where the official is unable to officiate for the upcoming season.

An extension or leave of absence may be granted consecutively if circumstances deem it appropriate. An extension of this type must be approved by the Local Board/Association Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee.

Expired Evaluation

If an On-Field Evaluation expires, the official is no longer compliant with the Certification of a US Lacrosse official as outlined in Part Two.

Fitness Requirement

Currently, there is no fitness requirement for Certification & Evaluation; however, Local Boards/Associations are encouraged to emphasize fitness and wellness for its officials.

If a Local Board/Association does wish to add a fitness requirement as part of its certification, US Lacrosse is in the process of developing a program for utilization.
Professional Growth and Development

• Be a mentor
• Work with a mentor
• Become a Certified Trainer
• Recruit and train new officials
• Attend an observation opportunity

Local Official Service Requirements

See “Service Standards” in Part Eight of this manual and consult your Local Board/Association Executive Committee for your requirements.
Officials Certification & Evaluation Diagram
### Training and Clinician Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Training</th>
<th>Clinician requirement</th>
<th>Minimum classroom training hours</th>
<th>Minimum field training hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local board - clinic renewal</td>
<td>Certified Trainer/s Previous clinician experience preferred</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAD 1</td>
<td>Certified Trainer/s Previous clinician experience preferred Level 2 or 3 and above.</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Developmental - Youth, Apprentice, Adult with less than 2 years officiating experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAD 2</td>
<td>Certified Trainer/s Previous clinician experience preferred Level 2 or 3 and above.</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Youth, Adult with greater than 2 years experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAD 3</td>
<td>Certified Trainer/s Previous clinician experience preferred Level 3 and above with 5 or more years experience in officiating in 3-person system</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Approved On-Field Evaluations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Recommended Certified Evaluators</th>
<th>Number of Games (minimum)</th>
<th>Qualified Play</th>
<th>Length of Evaluation</th>
<th>Test Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior and Youth</td>
<td>1 Certified Trainer/Evaluator of Level 3 and above</td>
<td>Observation with feedback on 2 halves</td>
<td>Any age level of play</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>90% open book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice</td>
<td>1 Certified Trainer/Evaluator of Level 3 and above</td>
<td>Observation with feedback on 2 halves</td>
<td>Scrimmage or play day</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>90% open book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>1 Certified Trainer/Evaluator of Level 3 and above</td>
<td>1 game with &gt; or = 20 minute halves</td>
<td>Scrimmage or play day</td>
<td>Up to 2 years</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>2 Certified Trainers/Evaluators; 1 Certified Trainer/Evaluator and 1 Level 3 or above; 2 Level 2 with &gt;5 years officiating experience</td>
<td>1 game with &gt; or = 20 minute halves</td>
<td>Preferably competitive games of any type</td>
<td>Up to 3 years</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>2 Certified Trainers/Evaluators with 3 person system experience; 1 Certified Trainer/Evaluator and 1 Level 3 with &gt;5 years experience in 3 person system</td>
<td>2 games with &gt; or = 20 minute halves using 3 person system</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>Up to 3 years</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. College Officials

Anyone who officiates women’s lacrosse at the collegiate level --- College Club (WCLA); Junior College; NAIA; NCAA --- is considered a College Official.

II. C.O.A./CWLOA

The Collegiate Officials Association (COA) is a new national organization dedicated to providing expanded opportunities for all collegiate officials to advance their performance goals. The COA joins US Lacrosse, the Intercollegiate Women’s Lacrosse Coaches Association and the NCAA as a neutral, independent partner, committed to increasing the number and quality of collegiate officials. Through continuing education and training unique to the collegiate game, through creating a network offering cross country access to a wider range of games and by creating a central network to coordinate various administrative tasks such as fee negotiations and conflict review, the COA is designed to improve your experience as a collegiate official.

III. NCAA Post Season

A. Assigning Policies and Procedures

In March of each year the NCAA will communicate with college officials via e-mail requesting their availability for post season play. It is very important that the National Coordinator of Officials and the NCAA have a current e-mail address for each official and that each official return their forms and paperwork in a timely manner. The coordinator will be given availability information for each official and will use that information when making the assignments for NCAA tournament play in all three Divisions.

In early May, once the committees for each Division determine tournament selections and seeding the coordinator will then schedule the four officials who will work each game (3 on field officials, 1 alternate/table official). The coordinator must work within travel restrictions and guidelines set by the NCAA when determining these assignments. She will also use information gathered during the season from coaches, from an evaluation group established by the coordinator, and from her own personal observation of officials.
B. Rules Interpretation Meeting - Attendance

In the interest of promoting official development and encouraging continuing education for all collegiate officials, any official wishing to be considered for a game assignment during NCAA tournament play at all levels will be required to attend an officially approved NCAA rules interpretation session. One site will always be the US Lacrosse Convention each year, and other sites will be scheduled in various locations around the country. As part of this program we will also be asking the various conferences to use the same criteria and for their conference tournaments only assign those officials who have made a commitment to improving their game by attending these official sessions.

C. Official Dress Code

The NCAA Women’s Lacrosse Committees have instituted a dress code for officials who are assigned to work championship games at all levels. All officials that are part of the umpiring team at each site shall be dressed appropriately and professionally using the following guidelines: slacks, skirts, capris or dress shorts must be khaki or black; shirts must be white, black or navy blue. Shirts may have a small logo (NCAA, USL, manufacturer’s symbol) but otherwise should be plain. A nice sleeveless shirt is acceptable; however there should be no tank tops. Plain outerwear is acceptable in inclement weather. Table officials should be in full official uniform during the game they are assigned. Officials not assigned to the game in progress should not be on or near the field or the scorer’s table unless they are part of an official meeting set by the head official. Members of the crew not working the game in progress may watch from the stands; however, they should not be socializing with the fans from either school and should remain as unobtrusive as possible.
PART FIVE

INTERNATIONAL OFFICIALS
DEAR VISITING OFFICIAL,

US Lacrosse welcomes you. This letter is to explain the current procedures for foreign nationals who want to official in the United States under the auspices of US Lacrosse.

Requirements

• Hold an International accreditation from a country that fields a women's lacrosse team currently active in International competition, i.e. World Cup.

• Attend a Local official training session given by an approved clinician.

• Take and pass the USL rules test for women’s lacrosse

• Be rated on the field by a USL certified rater

Please be advised that each official who is a foreign national is responsible for any visas, work permits, or green cards necessary for employment in the United States.

Select officials, with or without an International accreditation, may be invited by US Lacrosse to official at a specific event (for example, Spring Premiere, Fall Classic, National Tournament). This invitation does not extend beyond such event and does not, in and of itself, qualify the official to officiate any other contest in the US, unless the official has met the above standards.”

We hope that this letter clarifies US Lacrosse's obligations and policies regarding umpiring in the United States.

Sincerely,

WGOSC Chair
A USL official holding a Federation of International Lacrosse (FIL) International Accreditation shall have all the qualities and skills of a USL official and shall represent the United States and US Lacrosse in international competition in accord with the standards established by US Lacrosse for its members.

**US International Umpire Committee (CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW)**

1. The US International Umpiring Committee (USIUC) shall consist of a Chair and all USL umpires with FIL ratings.

2. The Chair-elect shall be voted by slate or ballot presented to the USIUC at its January committee meeting prior to the year of service. The incoming Chair shall assume duties in the following January at the National Convention.

3. The term of office for the Chair shall be two years. The Chair shall then serve an additional year as an ex-officio member of the USIUC.

4. The responsibilities of the USIUC include, but are not limited to:

   a. determine all policies related to International requirements for US umpires;

   b. provide direction and service for US umpires in International events;

   c. receive all applications and nominations for new and renewal US candidates for FIL ratings;

   d. guide candidates in the correct procedures for applying for new or renewal ratings and for adhering to all deadlines;

   e. establish standards, criteria, and procedures for rating umpires and ranking umpires for US International events;

   f. select umpires for all matches involving any official US team. Umpires should be selected from a list of International and National umpires aspiring to become an International umpire. A rotation of US umpires will be monitored based on location and availability;

   g. hold ballot elections to rank US International umpire and technical delegate positions for all US tours, U19, and World Cup events;

   h. periodically revise any technical materials on US International policy; and

   i. hold two meetings a year, one to occur at the National Convention and one to occur at the National Tournament.

5. The responsibilities of the USIUC Chair include, but are not limited to:

   a. serve a two-year term;

   b. serve as a communicator to the WGOSC, the USL Women’s Game Director, and the National Teams’ coaches;

   c. record all budget requests and submit to USL;
d. keep an accurate record of USL International umpires’ addresses, email address, telephone numbers, date of birth, dates ratings were received, dates ratings expire, and individual resumes;

e. oversee disbursement of IUC materials;

f. work closely with USL or other liaison to coordinate umpires for International matches, tours, and events; and

g. have the authority to waive any policy at any time with the approval of the USIUC.

International Official Application and Judging Policies for New and Renewal Candidates

A. Application Requirements for NEW International Candidates — must submit all paperwork to USL International representative (Chair) by March 1st.

The following is a list of procedural criteria that all New International Candidates are expected to adhere to:

1. Complete the USL International Clinic Application.
   a. An applicant must have officiated four spring seasons.
   b. Secure a minimum of two signatures of International officials or International Emeritus officials. The recommending International officials must have an International rating and renewed at least one time. These officials should have worked with the candidate on competitive college games and/or think that the candidate can demonstrate the skill set needed to pursue an International Rating. These recommendations can be done electronically.
   c. Submit a completed “International Clinic Application” to the International Chair before the posted International Clinic deadline.
   d. Complete an on-line registration.

   Note: Attendance is required at an International Clinic prior to standing for the International Rating.

2. Submit New International Candidate Application to USL International Chair by March 1st.
   a. Include lacrosse resume denoting service at local, regional and national levels and positions held.
   d. Include upcoming game schedule.

3. Attend a FIL approved event to stand for an accreditation.
a. USL International Chair will work with Federation of International Lacrosse (FIL) to facilitate appropriate opportunities for accreditation. See the FIL International Accreditation Policy for all international accreditation requirements.

MENTORING

PART SIX

6
I. MENTORING

The Mentor-Mentee relationship is invaluable for the “Training, Retaining, and Promoting” of US Lacrosse officials. It is highly recommended that Local Boards/Associations establish a mentoring program for Junior, Youth, Apprentice, and Local officials. Herein are suggestions for the Mentor and for the Mentee. These suggestions are just that and not meant to be all-inclusive of the many ideas that US Lacrosse member officials and their Local Boards/Associations may have.

II. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE MENTOR

Pre-Season

- Establish logistics of mentor/mentee relationship: how often and best time to talk, contact information, any off-limit times to call, etc.
- Review mentee’s strengths /weaknesses. Utilize paperwork from most recent rating session.
- Request copy of their game schedule and offer them your schedule.
- Set specific goals together and list ways to reach these goals.
- Highlight US Lacrosse Convention as learning and networking opportunity.
- Discuss:
  - Game schedule and assigned partners --- Level of games & partners who might be helpful teachers
  - Fitness
  - Attitude: “Student of the Game”
- Coordinate schedules to fulfill service requirements together, if possible.
- If you teach a clinic, invite your mentee to sit in / assist (if appropriate).

In-Season

- Perform a mid-season verbal evaluation with them. Use appropriate level “On-Field Rating Checklist” as starting point. Set new goals for remainder of season.
- Observe on-field performance if possible / make notes / discuss specifics.
- Invite mentee to watch you officiate
- Attend a game together to watch and discuss.
- Listen carefully to what your mentee is saying (and not saying).
• Discuss:
  - Rules
  - Interpretations
  - Judgments

- Game situations from your and their games
• Break games into component parts:
  • What level was the competition?
  • What was the demeanor of the coaches and players?
  • What actions occurred and under what game circumstances?
  • What rulings or judgments were made in response to these variables?

End-of-Season
• Make list of your mentee’s accomplishments and the challenges s/he needs to work on.

  Be human! Admit to your own mistakes in the game.
  Share these shortcomings often.
  Tell stories of your own learning experiences.
  Keep your mentee enthusiastic!

  They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.
  — Carl W. Buechner

The Specifics
• Field positioning
• Mechanics and whistle talk
• Pre-game content
• Rules questions and clarifications, specifically new rules for this season
• Officiating at various levels, holding / not holding
• Use “rulebook language” with partners, players and coaches
• Game management: pressure situations, tight games, rivalries, diffusing potential coach/official confrontations
• Communication with partners, assigners, coaches, players and fans
• Understanding the official team concept: when and how to offer help
• The importance of safety and how it is interpreted in aggressive play
• Appropriate use of cards as tools to control the game

Other Suggestions

• Consider the intangibles of officiating (displaying positive attitude and willingness to improve, field presence).

• Consider things you can control (uniform, fitness level, attitude, professionalism).

• Understand the nature of feedback and best way to receive it ("okay, I’ll try that" vs. “but I…” or “I just…”).

• Point out excessive explanation of actions in response to negative feedback that does not best utilize a learning opportunity.

• Weather: Tips on staying dry / staying warm / keeping cool / equipment/uniform suggestions.

• Double check your Mentee’s perception of game situations with their officiating partners if appropriate. Help develop objectivity.

• Introduce Mentee to other veteran officials.

• Encourage Mentee to become involved with local board activities.

• Discuss and encourage off-season and/or out-of-area clinic and tournament opportunities.

Reassure and praise your protégé after every conversation.

Don’t focus solely on performance that needs improvement.

Tell mentee when they are doing something well.

Refrain from giving advice.

Instead, suggest other ways to look at the situation.

Suggest the range of responses available.
III. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE MENTEE

Pre-Season

• Establish logistics of Mentor/Mentee relationship: how often and best time to talk, contact information, any off-limit times to call, etc.

• Share and review any “Feedback Summary Letters” or “Checklists” completed by observers or raters.

• Request a copy of your Mentor’s game schedule & offer your schedule to your Mentor.

• Make a list of specific goals and work together to find ways to reach these goals.

• Discuss:
  - Game schedule and assigned partners
  - Level of Games
  - Fitness
  - Attitude: be a “Student of the Game”

• Paperwork:
  - Do you have any “Applications” that must be completed (Where to find the “Application”? What information and signatures are necessary to complete the application? What is the deadline? To whom do I submit the application? What else do I need to know?)
  - Lacrosse resume (Create a “Resume” if needed and show your Resume to your Mentor for comments)

• Coordinate schedules to fulfill service requirements together, if possible.

• Attend a clinic if your Mentor is a clinician.
In-Season

- Observe Mentor officiating if possible / make notes / discuss specific situations.
- Attend a game together to watch and discuss.
- Be clear in your communications with your Mentor.
- Discuss:
  - Rules
  - Interpretations
  - Judgments
  - Game situations from your and their games

- Look at your games as component parts: What level was the competition? What was the demeanor of the coaches and players? What actions occurred and under what game circumstances? What rulings or judgments were made in response to these variables?
- Share and review goals for the season and set new goals.

> Be not afraid of growing slowly. Be only afraid of standing still.

> It's OK to say you've made a mistake. Own it & Correct it!

On-Field Rating Event

- If you have never attended a specific On-Field Rating Event, become familiar with the layout of fields, the location of bathrooms, the location of the designated official area, food and drink availability, etc.
- Give yourself plenty of extra time!!!
- Review and double check your game schedule [rating game(s), field numbers, etc.] Highlight times and fields of your games, making special note of rating games.
- Be calm. Excessive worrying won't help you on the field.
The Specifics

• Read the Rulebook (USL and/or NCAA) and US Lacrosse Officials Manual and refer to them often.
• Field positioning in the two or three-person system
• Mechanics and whistle talk
• Pre-game content
• Rules questions and clarifications, specifically new rules for this season
• Umpiring at various levels, holding / not holding
• Use “rulebook language” with partners, players and coaches
• Game management: pressure situations, tight games, rivalries, diffusing potential coach/official confrontations
• Communication with partners, assigners, coaches, players and fans
• Understand the official team concept
• The importance of safety and how it is interpreted in aggressive play
• Appropriate use of cards as tools to control the game

Other Suggestions

• Intangibles of umpiring (displaying positive attitude and willingness to improve, field presence)
• Things you CAN control (uniform, fitness level, attitude, professionalism, rule knowledge) Understand the nature of feedback and how to graciously accept it

I believe that dreams come true for those who put their hand to the plow and don’t look back.

Most of the time, overnight success comes at the end of a long and tiresome trek.

Be a good listener. Be positive. Be helpful.
I. Local Observations

A. Role of the Local Board Chair
   a. In an attempt to promote and retain officials, Boards should empower veteran officials to identify those newer officials who possess the skills necessary to officiate higher levels of competition locally.

   b. After an official is identified, LBC should make every attempt to have that official observed and/or rated by an upper level (District or higher) official. For a rating, see Part Three – On-Field Ratings in this Manual.

B. Opportunities for observations
   a. Previously scheduled game.
   b. Scrimmage with a high level of competition.
   c. Fall play-day – High School, upper level Youth.

C. Use of Observation form - On-field Local Observation Checklist
   a. This link can be sent to observers to download the form or the form can be downloaded and sent to the observer.
   b. This form is an abbreviated Local On-Field Rating Form that contains the necessary skills for a Local rated official.

D. Identifying officials to serve as an observer
   a. It is recommended that officials who observe be rated at least one (1) level of rating above the official who is being observed.

   b. If possible, an Emeritus may observe and provide feedback to the official.

   c. A senior, veteran official with a rating equal to that of the official but with considerable game experience may observe and provide feedback to the official.

   d. Compensation and/or Service: It is at the discretion of the LBC and/or Executive Committee of the Local Board whether to pay the observer or count the observation as service.

E. Susie Ganzenmuller Observation Program
   The purpose of this program is to emulate Susie Ganzenmuller’s passion and attitude toward officials’ on-field development through a grant to Local Boards/Associations to implement an observation program. The goal of this program is to develop officials, by utilizing on-field evaluations throughout the spring season. As such, observers will be trained to identify and communicate key areas for improvement in working with officials and follow up to see if these officials have implemented the suggestions into their games.
II. Regional Observations

A. Role of the Region Chair

a. Region Chairs should reach out to LBCs to identify those officials who possess the skills necessary to officiate higher levels of competition within the Region.

b. After an official is identified, the RC should make every attempt to have that official observed and/or rated by an upper level official. For a rating, see Part Three – On-Field Ratings in this Manual.

c. Contact the Observation Coordinator on the WGOSC and an Education and Training Associate at US Lacrosse with the name of the official.

B. Opportunities for observations

a. Previously scheduled game with a high level of competition.

b. Preseason scrimmage with a high level of competition.

c. Post season competition.

d. Fall play days – upper level high school, club or college.

C. Use of Observation form - On-field District Observation Checklist

a. This form is a form that contains the necessary skills for a District rated official.

b. This link can be sent to observers to download the form or the form can be downloaded and sent to the observer.
A. US Lacrosse Official Emeritus Award - National

The US Lacrosse Official Emeritus Award is given to an Official who has retired her status as an official and is recognized for her exemplary contributions to women's umpiring on a national level. The recipient of this award has served as a role model and has upheld the highest standards of professionalism. The Emeritus official has demonstrated exceptional service. This award is conferred by the WGOSC upon an individual who has held a rating for a minimum of ten (10) years and has renewed her Rating on-field a minimum of two (2) times.

This individual may continue to officiate at the level of her on-field evaluation. If she chooses to no longer official or maintain an active rating, she may continue to serve as a clinician or an evaluator for up to five (5) years after retiring her active status as an official, provided she stays current with rules and rule applications by attending an annual rules interpretation and taking the annual test beyond the 5 year limitation, annual exceptions may be made with WGOSC approval.

**Criteria, Description of Role and Process for selecting Candidate for the US Lacrosse Official Emeritus Rating for national service**

1. A Local Board Chair, Region Chair or Super Region Chair may nominate an official or the candidate may nominate herself.

2. The Emeritus Official must have held a rating and been an active official for a minimum of ten (10) years and must have renewed her rating on the field at least two (2) times and chooses not to renew her rating but continues to official in her home region.

3. The Emeritus Official must have provided service.

4. The service provided at the level must include at least three (3) of the six (6) following examples:
   
   **a.** Served as a Region Chair or Super Region Chair
   
   **b.** Served on the WGOSC for multiple terms.
   
   **c.** Served on committees or Sub-Committees related to the WGOSC (i.e., Training Committee, Rules Committee, WCLA, BOG, BOD, etc.)
   
   **d.** Completed projects (i.e., videos, DVD’s, power points, training programs) or maintained the contents of the Official Manual, Rulebook, ratings, or Training materials.
   
   **e.** Served as a clinician for at least two (2) Clinics/Camps or at least three (3) Developmental or Clinics/Camps outside her Super Region.
   
   **f.** Officiated at least two (2) conference championships or at least four (4) NCAA post season championship games or at least two (2) National Championship semi-final or final games.
5. The Emeritus Official is no longer an active official at high-level competitions.

6. The Emeritus Official may official provided she takes and passes the written examination annually and achieves a score of at least 92%, and pass the practical on-field test per the WGOSC Official Manual.

7. The Emeritus Official may continue to train and rate official candidates at all levels for up to five (5) years provided she takes and passes the written examination annually, achieves a score of at least 92%, attend the annual National Rule interpretation at the USL Convention and maintain good standing with their Local, Region and Super Region Official Boards. Beyond the 5 year limitation, annual exceptions may be made with WGOSC approval.

8. The Emeritus Official is not required to perform Local, Region or National Service if she is no longer actively officiating games.

Nominations for US Lacrosse Official Emeritus Award, Time Frame and Selection

1. Candidates nominated for the US Lacrosse Official Emeritus designation will be asked to complete a nominating form and send a resume to the WGOSC Chair by November 1 or April 1 for review at the next WGOSC meeting. Utilize the form found in the “Quick Forms” library on the website.

2. The US Lacrosse Official Emeritus Award shall be presented by the WGOSC Chair at any WGOSC meeting.

B. Laurette Payette National Service Official Award

The Laurette Payette National Service Official Award is an honorary award given by the WGOSC to an official who has shown exceptional service toward the professional development and standards of officials on the Local, Regional and National level.

Criteria, Nominations, and Selection

1. Any WGOSC member may nominate an official who has been and continues to be active at the National level. Utilize the form found in the “Quick Forms” library on the website.

2. The nomination form shall be submitted to the WGOSC Chair by November 1.
3. The Distinguished National Service Official Award shall be presented by the WGOSC Chair for review by the WGOSC at the next meeting after November 1.

C. Official Emeritus Award - Regional or local level

The Official Emeritus Award is given to an individual who has retired her status as a official and is recognized for her outstanding contributions to women's lacrosse umpiring on a regional or local level. The recipient of this award has demonstrated exceptional service at the regional and local levels. This award is conferred by the Super Region upon an individual who has been an active official for a minimum of eight (8) years and has renewed her rating on the field a minimum of two (2) times.

This individual may continue to officiate at the level of her on-field evaluation. If she chooses to no longer official or maintain an active rating, she may continue to serve as a clinician or an evaluator for up to five (5) years after retiring her active status as an official, provided she stays current with rules and rule applications by attending an annual rules interpretation and passing the annual rules exam.

Criteria, Description of Role and Process for selecting Candidate for the Official Emeritus Rating

1. A Local Board Chair, Region Chair or Super Region Chair may nominate an official or the candidate may nominate herself.

2. The individual must been an active official for a minimum of eight (8) years and must have renewed her rating on the field at least two (2) times and chooses not to renew her rating but continues to officiate in her home region.

3. The official must have provided service at the regional and local levels.

4. The service provided at least two (2) of the five (5) following examples:

   a. Served on committees related to the WGOSC (i.e., training committee, rules committee)

   b. Provided service outside her Local Board (i.e., umpiring at the WD National Tournament, helping with clinics, helping with new official training, serving as a mentor, etc.)

   c. Contributed to the continuity of activities or documents for the benefit of the Local or Region Board. This could include web pages, Local or Regional ratings, area training materials, or recruiting efforts.
d. Rated or trained at a minimum of two (2) District Clinics or at least three (3) Local Clinics.

e. Selected to official multiple post season games.

5. The official is no longer an active official at high level competitions.

6. The official may officiate provided she takes and passes the written examination annually and achieves a score of at least 90%, and passes the practical on-field test per the Official Manual specifications.

7. The official may continue to train and rate official candidates at all levels for up to five (5) years provided she takes and passes the written examination annually, achieves a score of at least 90%, attends the annual National Rule interpretation at the USL Convention and maintains good standing with her Local and Region Official Boards. Beyond the five year limitation, annual exceptions may be made with WGOSC approval.

Nominations for Official Emeritus Award, Time Frame and Selection

1. Candidates nominated for the Official Emeritus designation will be asked to complete a nominating form and send a resume to the WGOSC Super Region Chair for review at the next meeting. Utilize the form found in the “Quick Forms” library on the website.

2. The Official Emeritus Award shall be presented by the WGOSC Super Region Chair at a time deemed most appropriate by the Region.
I. Local Board

Risk Management for Local Boards

INTRODUCTION

Local board best practices can play an important role in risk management. With the safety of lacrosse participants as a primary responsibility of US Lacrosse officials, local official boards administratively put in place practices that best support the development and assignment of sound officials. Boards should be mindful of legal and ethical organizational requirements as well as operational best practices. This means that boards should strive to have their administrative house in order, as well as its official recruitment, training, development and accountability processes.

The best “risk management” for local boards entails proper board organization and reasonable management of its officials. Local official boards face very little legal exposure. For a board to have legal liability, the claimant must prove that the board did or failed to do something that caused or contributed to their injury. This could only be demonstrated in unusual circumstances such as a board failure to require reasonable official training, performance assessment or strongly ill-advised official assignment. Nonetheless, if an injury to a lacrosse participant occurs, assessment of potential liability will most certainly include investigation into the official conduct and may include scrutiny of local board practices. This appendix provides helpful guidance for preventing and managing this situation.

BOARD FORMATION & ORGANIZATION

Local boards should incorporate as a non-profit organization. Most Secretary of State offices in each state make non-profit incorporation relatively easy with forms and guidelines available online and by mail. Ideally, your board may engage a lawyer on a volunteer basis to help with incorporation requirements. Proper board organization is necessary from a state incorporation standpoint but additionally serves to demonstrate a proper organizational approach to official management.

Each state has varying organizational and annual filing requirements that must be followed for proper non-profit treatment. Non-profit status allows for favorable tax treatment and some modest insulation from legal liability (not absolute). Local boards should additionally consider filing with the Internal Revenue Service for 501(c)(3) status. The application process is rigorous and may require the services of a tax attorney. If your local board can qualify, 501(c)(3) status provides for significant tax-free operation.

Local boards should have a corporate organization “plan” in place to make sure:

- Incorporation is complete and on file with the corporations department within your Secretary of State Office
- The non-profit organizational requirements are understood by board officers and/or volunteers. Requirements typically include:
- The election of officers (which vary by title and minimums). Your Local Board Chair has several US Lacrosse/Women’s Game Committee requirements essential to consistent rule interpretation and official training throughout the country. This thorough development of sound officials is an important aspect of risk management at the local level. For this reason, election of a competent and dedicated Local Board Chair is a fundamental first step.

- Maintenance of the organization’s incorporation documents, charter, etc.

- Minimum meeting requirements (some states allow unanimous adoption or voting in lieu of meetings)

- Annual report filing with appropriate fees

  • Term limits for board officers is a widely-accepted best practice and should be instituted

  • The local board chair must be an active member of the board and should reside in the local area that the board serves. Only under circumstances where no individual living in the area is willing and able to serve as the local board should a board consider allowing an out-of-area chairperson. Local residence is strongly recommended for board officers.

Additional organizational considerations for local boards include:

  • Coordination or integration with the local and/or regional US Lacrosse chapters

  • Communication with existing model local umpiring boards

  • Communication with US Lacrosse volunteers and staff with potential board resources

**BOARD OPERATIONAL PRACTICES**

A goal of the US Lacrosse mission, rules, interpretation and official training is to allow fair and fun competition while minimizing the risk of injury to game participants. Official local boards play a role in minimizing the risk of injury to participants by proper oversight of officials. This in turn minimizes the board’s exposure to potential liability. To that end, the following responsibilities should be undertaken by local official boards:

1) Compliance with local board requirements as set forth in the US Lacrosse Official Manual. Requirements for boards and Local Board Chairs are designed to facilitate consistent rules interpretation and well-developed official training from US Lacrosse throughout the country.
2) Recruitment of ‘willing and able’ official candidates. Seek out interested and capable candidates. Candidates should be diverse in race, gender, age, ethnicity, religion and socioeconomic status. The costs, US Lacrosse membership, training and service requirements should be discussed and transparent to all candidates.

   a. If costs to participation are prohibitive for candidates, boards should consider grants, sponsorships and alternatives to allow training and development of interested candidates.

3) Management of Officials

   a. Require and confirm US Lacrosse membership. Membership in the lacrosse national governing body (USL) is to provide officials with US Lacrosse resources including Lacrosse Magazine (with informative and educational information), access to ‘gold standard’ training, electronically transmitted official newsletters, injury and liability insurance coverage, etc.

   b. Require US Lacrosse official training and certification. Boards should provide or gain access to training with skilled clinicians. Additionally, training and certification records for each official candidate should be created and maintained. Boards should create a training and certification record repository so that the certification of each official can be verified if necessary. Officials should not take the field until trained, certified and prepared. This rule should be communicated to all candidates and enforced by the board and/or its representatives. Failure to require training and certification can expose a local official board to legal liability.

   c. It is recommended that Local Boards have a background check procedure in place for all officials. USL offers a background check for purchase on its website at time of renewals, and the Local Board Chair can verify the successful completion of a background check. Unsuccessful background checks with the National Center for Safety Initiatives may result in an immediate termination of USL membership.

   d. Award official ratings substantiated with demonstrated skill and aptitude. Part Seven of the US Lacrosse Women’s Official Manual provides the skills required for each official rating level. It is important the Local Board clinicians and raters evaluate and rate official candidates by closely adhering to the mandated standards and skills. Awarding an unsubstantiated or inflated rating can lead to potential legal exposure because of the Local Board’s role in placing an unqualified official on the field.

   e. Provide officials with access to essential tools and information. This includes US Lacrosse and/or NCAA rulebooks (if not received through USL membership), official manual, uniforms and equipment, clear training requirements, additional training opportunities, US Lacrosse convention learning opportunities, etc.
f. Provide officials with frequent pre-season and during-season communication. Topics should include rule clarifications and emphasis, “lessons learned” items, Q & A opportunities, learning opportunities, mid-season meetings and encouragement to attend local contests assigned with experienced official teams.

g. Utilize an appropriate system for assigning officials. The assigner/assigning authority should have a clear understanding of each official’s certification and experience coupled with knowledge of school/team playing levels, cultures and rivalries. Officials should be assigned to games only within their experience range. The ability to maintain control of the game and safely manage play is an important risk management factor. If officials are given officiating learning opportunities outside of their experience range, more experienced officials should be paired.

h. Comply with US Lacrosse and state reporting requirements. Local boards should require and monitor official knowledge and compliance with reporting requirements related to misconduct, cards, injuries and other reportable events.

i. Develop feedback opportunities for officials. Boards should consider a system that allows coaches and fellow officials the opportunity to give valid feedback on official conduct and competency. While this could be a good practice, from a risk management standpoint, it likewise can be a source of liability exposure. If a board learns of poor official performance, either through a grievance or through regular rating practices that jeopardizes participant safety, it must respond.

j. Develop a process to deal with underperforming officials and adhere to that process. If a board fails to further educate/train an underperforming official or limit the official’s officiating, and an injury occurs while the official is officiating, the board’s response could be scrutinized.

k. Appoint an “ethics advisor” or “ethics committee.” The advisor should not be the assigner. If there is a committee, the assigner can participate but should recuse themselves if the raised issue involves assigning.
II. Independent Contractors - The Official

Official Risk Management

INTRODUCTION

Safety of lacrosse participants is paramount within the responsibilities of US Lacrosse officials. Prioritizing the safety of players, coaches, fellow officials and spectators is the most effective form of “management” of risk. Official exposure to legal liability stems almost exclusively from physical injury suffered by an individual while participating in, or attending a lacrosse game. Officials can manage risk by: (a) identifying the risks inherent in the sport of lacrosse; (b) avoiding those risks through effective umpiring; and (c) by minimizing the impact of unavoidable risks. This appendix provides helpful risk management guidance.

A seminal goal of the US Lacrosse rules, interpretation and official training is to allow fair and fun competition while minimizing the risk of injury to game participants. Minimizing the risk of injury minimizes the exposure to potential liability.

For an official to be found liable in a lawsuit for the player/participant/spectator injury, the injured person must demonstrate that the official did or failed to do something that caused or contributed to the injury. This “exposure” extends far outside the field boundaries and for the most part begins with the appropriateness of training. The range of conduct for which an official may be scrutinized includes but is not limited to rule knowledge, training (or lack thereof), assignments, field conduct, professionalism, communication, rule enforcement (or lack thereof), judgment, rule compromises and player/coach/spectator interactions. Although potential litigants initially will observe only on-field official behavior in considering liability, the competency of the official, the appropriateness of the assignment, and every aspect of how the official came to do what s/he did (or not do what s/he allegedly should have) will be examined.

Lawsuits against officials are very uncommon for many reasons, not the least of which is that participants assume some level of risk to themselves by participating in the sport. If someone is hurt however, anyone who contributed to or could have prevented the injury may face some level of inquiry and a rare few may face legal liability. Officials should know that an injured participant may investigate potential liability against you and your partners, the school/venue, the coaches, other players, your local official board, assigner and/or US Lacrosse. You should also know that as an official member of US Lacrosse, you are provided with liability insurance coverage if you are sued. Whether you ever face questions or a lawsuit, the best management of your legal exposure is to have adhered to the rules, guidelines and safety-based decisions.

The USL Women’s Game Officials Policies and Procedures Manual – in its entirety – provides extensive general and specific guidance, which if followed, will limit potential risk. This Appendix intends to emphasize those points and provide officials with a few summarized best practices to limit liability.
Official COMPETENCY

Official must agree to learn the rules thoroughly and undergo the necessary training as established by US Lacrosse. Officials must then complete the classroom training, onfield rating process and obtain certification before they are allowed to officiate unsupervised. Thereafter, the official must remain in good standing by meeting all annual certification requirements. The annual requirements are provided in Part Three of the US Lacrosse Women’s Game Officials Policy & Procedure Manual.

The training and assessment of official candidates should be well-designed and reasonably standardized. US Lacrosse youth/women’s game rules, training and assessment methods are evaluated at least annually and have been increasingly standardized. From a risk management standpoint, the rules, training and rating process available to US Lacrosse officials is reasonably prudent. An official’s potential exposure will be lessened considerably simply by successful participation in training with thorough knowledge and enforcement of the rules.

SEASON/GAME DAY PREPARATION

Comprehensive Approach to Official Readiness

Be Mentally & Physically Prepared

Avoid fatigue, illness and distraction. If an illness, injury or life circumstance interferes with an official’s ability to focus and/or perform, the official should attempt to find a capable substitute. An official may face legal exposure if an injured individual claims the official was unable to sufficiently perform thereby leading to the injury. By way of example, if an official is struggling to keep up with players and consistently is not in position to make calls, prevent rough play, etc, the official’s performance will be under the microscope if a player is hurt. An official may later be questioned about the amount of sleep s/he had before game day, her/his conduct 12-24 hours prior to the game and the official’s physical and mental condition during the game. Your conduct on and off the field will be considered in any lawsuit.

If circumstances require you to official while physically or mentally challenged, you should ask your partners to help in any what they can. You should also not discuss any challenges with which you are dealing with anyone other than your official team who may be in a position to assist.

Be Equipped

Obtain and maintain current US Lacrosse and/or NCAA rule books, the current US Lacrosse Official Manual, proper uniform, cards, whistle, watch and field/turf shoes.

Train & Refresh

Read the rules and manual. Complete the necessary US Lacrosse official training to obtain an official rating. Annually take the official written exam. In years between ratings when formal training is not required, keep your rule/official knowledge and game management skills fresh. Annually complete recurring mandates such as attending a rule interpretation, paying local board dues, taking the online test, and any other requirements to remain a member in good standing on your local board.
GAME DAY
Everything You Do and Say May Matter

1) Timeliness

Avoid having to rush to a game or being late. If circumstances prevent you from being timely, take a moment to collect yourself to be in the proper frame of mind before taking on your responsibilities. It is important for you, your official team dynamics and for attendee perception.

2) Professionalism

Remain professional. The impression you make upon the moment of arrival – appearance, readiness, communication – through your departure from the venue provides the framework through which you will be viewed. Simply put, an impressive and pleasant bed-side manner will go a long way to manage risk. Professionalism and how you communicate your professionalism is an important risk management tool. Rapport and respect can be an invaluable intangible factor.

3) Rules, official equipment, etc

Always have a rule book present. You may even want to have your manual present for reference.

4) Official Pre-Game Meeting

This is essential to communicate any and all concerns, approaches and issues about which to be aware. Emergency protocols related to injuries, weather, etc. should be discussed and decided so that the official team may react promptly and in an organized fashion. The meeting serves to set the team framework which will enhance the officials’ management of the game and risk.

5) Field Inspection

Your field inspection should be thorough with a focus both upon compliance and safety. Be on the lookout for debris hazards, sprinkler heads, improper pylons, unpadded objects near the field, exposed grids or animal holes. If a player or participant is injured by a field condition, your potential legal exposure will stem from whether you conducted a reasonable inspection and required rule compliance. Additionally, if you reasonably could have suggested something to make the field or surrounds safer and failed to do so, your failure will be questioned. At a minimum, officials should inform the game administrator or field manager of conditions or situations that appear unreasonably hazardous whenever they develop.

If it affects safety, it is suggested that officials do not allow a “waiver” by coach/player agreement for a non-compliant field. If a compromise is permitted, efforts to best ensure safety should be made (i.e. padding, covering, cautionary warning to teams). As required by the rules, all non-movables adjacent to playing field should be padded. If a school/venue does not have padding, you should decide the nature of the risk to the players and officials and make a reasonable decision about whether the game should be played. If the game is played, all participants should be warned about the unpadded objects. This can be accomplished by discussion with the coaches and/or captains.
6) **Equipment check – follow the rules.**
   a. Attentive and thorough check
   b. No waiver for non-compliant equipment
   c. Condition – any safety issues with sticks or uniforms?
   d. Proper mouth guards and equipment that meets standards (if observable)

7) **Coach Certification of equipment compliance**

   By ensuring you receive coach certification, you enforce the rules, send the message of safety focus and compliance, and, shift any potentially liability associated with non-obvious equipment compliance to the coach/institution.

8) **Weather**
   a. Learn the school/venue weather tracking capabilities. Reach an understanding with the field/site manager regarding at what safest point will a game be suspended.
   b. Safety is your guide. An official may suspend a game for harsh weather conditions, including excessive heat and humidity.
   c. Comply with USL, league, federation, association or school rules – whichever is most stringent.
   d. Officials should take reasonable steps to educate themselves in the recognition of emergency conditions that might arise during the course of competition – weather related or otherwise.

**CALLING THE GAME**

1) **Rules – Know them, Study them, Enforce them – Manage Your Risk by Calling the Game as you are Trained to Do**

   Setting the tone and enforcing the rules start to finish is a very effective if not the most effective risk management an official can undertake. Additionally, although “preventive umpiring” has a valuable place, it should be used to prevent fouls, not as a substitute for calling them. By demonstrating your ability to head-off dangerous play, and your willingness to quickly and firmly penalize dangerous play, you can minimize your legal exposure.

   As you are trained, you should enforce the rules consistently and communicate with you partners continually. Your communication with your partners is necessary for game management but it also magnifies the team awareness of “risk” that may develop during the game. Getting it right is more important that getting it almost right quickly.

2) **Mechanics**

   Positioning and game mechanics are critical to field coverage. The official team needs to be in a position to see the field, see the fouls and enforce the rules. Proper field coverage is important for risk management.
3) **Coach Communication**

Game management should include communication with coaches. Typically, risk is better managed by good communications among decision-makers. This starts from the moment you greet the coaches upon arrival. The basis of decisions and “what’s the most reasonable thing to do here” may include coaches, present ADs and field managers.

4) **Player Altercations**

The game, the athletes, parental passion and the expected range of conduct of female participants has evolved. Officials should be prepared for player and/or participant confrontation at any game. The guidance is simple: An official should respond reasonably. This is true in a fight, and is true in any decision you will make.

First, you should enforce the rules throughout the game to manage growing player frustration. Missed fouls are to be expected but an official philosophy to “let them play” beyond or contrary to the bounds of the rules increases the risk to the participants and the potential liability of an official. Secondly, beyond rule enforcement, do not ignore demonstrated growing frustration with any player(s). Take action by discussion with coaches, captains and/or the player(s) as appropriate, including your partners in the process. The best way to deal with confrontations is to diffuse them before they escalate to physical.

If a physical confrontation occurs, you are not required to physically intervene if you would be placing yourself at risk of injury. A “reasonable” official response to a fight does not require that you place yourself in harm’s way. Moreover, if you elect to physically intervene and get hurt, you may be held to have assumed the risk of your injury. This means that you may not be able to hold anyone else responsible for your injuries.

There is no “hard and fast” rule about what an official should do if a physical confrontation occurs. Reasonable steps would include blowing your whistle, verbally insisting the players stop or separate, walking between and redirecting players potentially headed to an altercation, and/or seeking assistance from coaches or field personnel. You should attempt to address the confrontation as a team with one or two officials focused on the altercating players and the remaining/distant official(s) strongly directing the other players, benches and coaches. The official(s) farthest from the altercation should:

- Send all players to their benches after dropping their stick
- Get near the benches and direct the coaches to keep players off of the field
- Note the numbers of players leaving the bench or moving toward the altercation

After the altercation, the officials should:

- Send all players to their bench after dropping their sticks (if play is to resume as ended)
- Direct coaches to get players under control
• Meet with your official team to decide upon penalties, sequence, set up and
game resumption

• Take your time to jointly decide if the game can be safely resumed and how it
will resume.

• Once the decision has been made, jointly inform both coaches of your
decision

It ultimately is the home team’s site management personnel’s responsibility to
manage an altercation. Once the altercation has been brought under control, the
official team should work together to administer the most appropriate cards, fouls or
game-continuation decisions. After the game, complete thorough game reports on
the incident(s) and immediately inform your Local Board Chair and/or Assigner.

Remember, officials may terminate games at any point for any safety concern,
including threatened or actual violence.

5) **Injured Players**

Officials should respond immediately to player injuries by blowing your whistle,
stopping play and summoning medical help. Your partners should continue to
manage the other players and game. You should not assist or treat player injuries.
The only exception is that medically-qualified officials may assist injured players
if medically necessary under the circumstances. Otherwise, home field medical
personnel should be the sole responders to injury. Inappropriate official intervention
may result in further injury to the player. Do not move players; allow training/medical
personnel to make decisions regarding how and when to move the player. (Officials
should require players with minor injuries and visible blood need to leave the field.)
Do not encourage non-personnel to move an injured player so that you can “get the
game going.” You must allow a sufficient amount of time for the player to be treated
and moved by medical personnel. Finally, do not discuss the potential cause of the
injury with anyone other than your official team in private.

6) **Spectators**

If a spectator is disrupting the game, engage the site/field manager to address and/
or remove the spectator. You should not confront the spectator nor be involved with
his/her removal. It is not your responsibility and is fraught with unnecessary risk. It
is best to avoid discussions, even pleasant ones with spectators. Any discussion
between an official and spectators can give the appearance of impropriety.

7) **Misconduct After the Game**

If a flagrant/altercation situation occurs after the game ends and before the officials
leave the playing venue, the official(s) can issue a post-game ejection to the
offending player or coach to be served in the team’s next two games. From a risk
management standpoint, officials should err on the side of safety and card issuance
to help prevent further escalation.
BASICS … A Reasonably Prudent Official

a. Knows the rules;
b. Knows and accepts her/his responsibility in enforcing the rules; and
c. Does not permit anyone to prevent her/him from doing her/his job in the best possible manner.

If Suit is Filed Against You

1) Notify your Local Board Chair and US Lacrosse

2) Notify your USL liability insurer or broker (In 2011, the USL broker is Bollinger (www.bollingerlax.com) who can be contacted at 866-267- 0093, and any other insurance carrier with which you have liability coverage

3) Who locates and pays for the defense of the official?
   a. NO – School, Association, USL, Home insurance
   b. POSSIBLY – Official insurer (USL Insurer, NASO, Local Board etc)

4) Who pays if an official is found liable to a plaintiff for damages?
   a. NO – School, league, local board, USL
   b. YES – Official liability insurer (When the liability insurance is exhausted (In 2011, $6 Million in coverage), an official personal assets are exposed but this is very rare.)

Some states have immunity laws that protect officials from liability for game-calling decisions. This varies state by state and laws are ever-changing.

CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS - DOs and DONT's CONSIDERATIONS

Avoiding conflicts of interest is part and parcel of risk management. Although engaging in a conflict of interest rarely results in legal liability, it “exposes” officials and may be considered as evidence of poor judgment in a legal liability setting. The rules are simple. Do not engage in anything that can give even the appearance of impropriety. For instance, despite the fact that you are confident you can official your ole’ alma mater fairly, you shouldn’t in any game of consequence. The following are typical potential conflict guidelines:

- Officials should not work a game of an institution where the official is employed. Should the official cease employment from that institution the official may work there after four (4) years time.

- Officials should not work a game involving a member of the official’s family. This includes a family member who works/worked or attends/attended the institution playing (whether playing in the game).
  - It can be appropriate for an official to work a game if four (4) years have passed since the family member was associated with the institution.
• Officials should not work a game involving a team coached by an official’s former coach.
  
  - Again, it might be appropriate after a number of years have passed since the official was coached. (Officials should consider six (6) years or longer.)

• Officials should not work a game of consequence (i.e. in-season or scored) of her/his high school or undergraduate alma mater ever.

• Officials should not work graduate institutions until after seven (7) years of time has passed.

• Officials should not work a game of a team whose personnel is a member of the official’s family or household.

• Officials who additionally are coaches, should not work a game for the school where s/he coaches or in the same league/conference.

• Officials should notify the assigner or board chair of any potential conflict sufficiently in advance of a game so that the official may be reassigned.
ETHICAL CONDUCT

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

PART TEN
Women’s Game Officials Subcommittee

Code of Ethical Conduct

The Intent of this guideline is:

1. To establish standards of ethical behavior for officials.
2. To provide an avenue for grievance against officials.
3. To provide officials with due process when a grievance is brought against them.

Officials shall:

1. Not use language or conduct themselves in a manner, or, during a contest, permit players, coaches, or spectators to conduct themselves in a manner that discriminates on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, and marital status or against a qualified person with a disability.
2. Be neutral, honest, and fair and not demonstrate any bias for or against a team, individual players, coaches, or team personnel.
3. Not be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while on assignment.
4. Not use inappropriate physical contact towards players, coaches, or spectators.
5. Take responsibility for their decision making role which includes proper application of the rules.
6. Not make statements about players, coaches, spectators, or other officials that detract from the spirit and respectability of the sport.
7. Not have a criminal conviction involving inappropriate behavior with a minor or other criminal conduct deemed by the WGOSC to represent conduct unbecoming an official. No person with such a conviction may hold a USL official rating.
Grievance Procedures

1. General
   a. Any person may report any official who violates or who is suspected of violating this Code of Ethical Conduct to the Chair of the official’s Local Board of Officials.

   b. Absent allegations of bias or dishonesty, complaints of misapplication of the rules will not be accepted. In no event will any grievance under this procedure change the outcome of a contest.

   c. The Chair of a Local Board in consultation with the Region Chair and the Super Region Chair shall determine the rating of the official accused of the violation.

   d. Accusations regarding officials with a rating of Local, Apprentice, or Youth shall first be handled at the Local Board level.

   e. Accusations involving officials with ratings of District or higher shall be referred by the Local Board Chair to the Region Chair, Super Region Chair and the WGOSC Chair within five (5) days of receipt.

   f. Accusations involving the Chair of the Ethics Committee for the Local Board shall be reported to the Region Chair and Super Region Chair. Accusations involving the Region Chair shall be reported to the Super Region Chair and the WGOSC Chair. Accusations involving the Super Region Chair shall be reported to the WGOSC Chair. Accusations involving the WGOSC Chair shall be reported to the Women’s Game Committee Chair and the Director of the Women’s Game.

   g. All grievances must be submitted in writing. Note: Email is considered in writing. No oral grievances will be considered until submitted in writing.

   h. Incidents should be reported within 10 calendar days of the incident giving raise to the grievance. Grievances first reported beyond that time may be accepted if it is determined that reasonable grounds exist for delay.

2. Local Board Procedure for Officials with Ratings Local and Below
   a. The Local Board Chair will convene a three-person Ethics Committee within seven (7) days of the date of the grievance and will serve as head of the Ethics Committee.

   b. The Ethics Committee shall comprise the Local Board Chair and two individuals appointed by the Local Board Chair.

   c. The purpose of the initial meeting is to determine whether there exists reasonable basis to conduct an inquiry into the grievance.
After the Ethics Committee has made a determination, both the grievant and the accused official will be notified in writing whether the grievance has been accepted or denied.

d. If the grievance is denied, the person may appeal in writing to the Ethics Chair of the WGOSC, who shall conduct an inquiry into whether the denial was warranted.

e. If the grievance is accepted, the official will be given the opportunity to respond to the grievance in writing within a time set by the Ethics Committee.

f. When it deems it appropriate or necessary, the Ethics Committee may take written or oral statements from any witness, including the official, the grievant, other officials, coaches, players, or spectators; may procure game tapes or other evidence; or may take other actions to obtain information relevant to the grievance.

g. If the Ethics Committee determines that a violation of the Code of Ethical Conduct occurred, the Ethics Committee shall determine the appropriate penalty which may include, for example, suspension, reduction, or termination of the official’s rating.

h. The Ethics Committee shall notify both the grievant and the involved official the outcome of the grievance in writing within thirty (30) days of the date of the grievance. The Ethics Committee shall also provide a copy of the written notification to the Ethics Chair of the WGOSC and the Chair of the official’s Super Region.

i. Any official found to be in violation of the Code of Ethical Conduct by an Ethics Committee of a Local Board may appeal the outcome by sending written notification of intent to appeal to the Region Chair and Super Region Chair within ten days of the written notice of the outcome by the Local Board.

j. To the extent possible, grievances will remain confidential. However, the Ethics Committee may contact individuals with knowledge relevant to a grievance. In addition, the outcome of a grievance may become public or may be shared with others if the Ethics Committee determines disclosure would be appropriate. If the decision involves suspension or termination of an official’s rating, the Ethics Committee may also notify other Local Board Chairs or the Super Region Chair, and Region Chair in an area where the official has been known to officiate or belong to Local Boards/Associations.

3. WGOSC Procedure for Officials

   a. The Chair of the WGOSC shall appoint an appropriate Ethics Committee as needed. The WGOSC Ethics Committee shall be composed of three individuals: the WGOSC Chair or her designee,
PART TEN  ETHICAL CONDUCT/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

the official’s Super Region Chair, and a WGOSC representative not from the official’s Region.

b. The WGOSC Ethics Committee will convene within seven (7) days of the date of receipt of a grievance (subject to the availability of the Ethics Committee) involving an official with a District rating or higher for the purpose of determining whether there exists reasonable basis to conduct an inquiry into the grievance. After the WGOSC Ethics Committee has made a determination, both the grievant and the accused official will be notified in writing whether the grievance has been accepted or denied.

c. If the grievance is accepted, the official will be given the opportunity to respond to the grievance in writing within a time set by the WGOSC Ethics Committee.

d. When it deems it appropriate or necessary, the WGOSC Ethics Committee may take written or oral statements from any witness, including the official, the grievant, other officials, coaches, players, or spectators; may procure game tapes or other evidence; or may take other actions to obtain information relevant to the grievance.

e. If the WGOSC Ethics Committee determines that a violation of the Code of Ethical Conduct occurred, the WGOSC Ethics Committee shall determine the appropriate penalty which may include, for example, suspension, reduction, or termination of the official’s rating.

f. The WGOSC Ethics Committee shall notify both the grievant and the involved official the outcome of the grievance in writing within thirty (30) days of the date of the grievance.

g. Any official found to be in violation of the Code of Ethical Conduct by a WGOSC Ethics Committee may appeal the outcome by sending written notification of intent to appeal to the Chair of the WGOSC within ten days of the written notice of the outcome by the WGOSC Ethics Committee.

h. To the extent possible, grievances will remain confidential. However, the WGOSC Ethics Committee may contact individuals with knowledge relevant to a grievance. In addition, the outcome of a grievance may become public or may be shared with others if the WGOSC Ethics Committee determines disclosure would be appropriate.

4. Appeal Procedure

a. The Chair of the WGOSC or her designee shall receive all appeals from decisions by a Local Board Ethics Committee or the WGOSC Ethics Committee.
b. The Chair of the WGOSC or her designee may also receive appeals from any person whose grievance was denied at the Local Board level.

c. In the written notification of intent to appeal (“Appeal”), the official shall indicate if s/he requests an oral hearing.

d. Upon receipt of a timely request for appeal, the Chair of the WGOSC or her designee will appoint an Appeals Committee, within five days of receipt of the Appeal. The Appeals Committee shall comprise the WGOSC Chair or her designee and a minimum of two National Officials who did not take part in the inquiry into the initial grievance.

e. The Appeals Committee will attempt to conduct a hearing within ten (10) days of appointment, subject to the availability of the Appeals Committee members and the official. At the hearing, the Ethics Chair will present the evidence and findings of the Ethics Committee but is not required to present witnesses in person. If the official requested an oral hearing, the official may attend and present testimony, other evidence, or argument on his or her behalf. At the hearing, the official may be represented by legal counsel or another advisor. The Appeals Committee may be assisted by legal counsel who may attend but need not be a voting member of the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee may establish other rules for the conduct of the hearing to ensure that the hearing is fair, timely, and not burdensome to anyone.

f. Within ten days after the hearing, the Appeals Committee will issue a written decision that will be final and not further appealable.
WGOSC US Lacrosse Approved Uniform

With the advent of many different types of striped shirts and kilts available for umpiring women’s lacrosse, the WGOSC has developed these guidelines for the WGOSC members. We all should strive for a professional, consistent dress. Whereas special considerations can be given for the entry level official, it is expected they will strive to look professional as they eventually do accumulate the appropriate articles of the approved uniform.

Styles are changing from the old pleated kilts to a more athletic non-pleated style kilt. We should continue to strive for a neat but athletic appearance.

All officials shall be in uniform when arriving and leaving the field. We highly suggest matching kilts to shorts, pants to pants, and sleeve length, but also understand heat tolerances differ within body types.

Shirts:
- One inch black and white vertical stripes on the body and sleeves.
- It is preferred to be the traditional black Byron or polo collar with black cuffs or the V neck. However, the V neck basketball shirt is acceptable, if both officials wear them.
- The sleeve style shall be long, short, or sleeveless
- The material will be standard or small mesh

Kilts/Shorts:
- Pleated or wrap kilts are acceptable.
- The length of the kilt or shorts should be professional.
- The fabric should be of a substantial substance so as to hang smoothly, to resist fading, and to be in good repair.

Pants:
- Nylon or other material, neat. Preferably not gathered at ankles.

Shoes:
- Predominantly black shoes, black laces. If shoes have white on them, try blacking it out with marker, paint or other indelible substance. They should be polished, and clean for every game.

Socks:
- White or black, low style. Or solid black knee socks

Undershirts:
- Long or Short sleeve = solid black. Small logos are unavoidable.
Hats/Visor/Earbands:
- Solid black. Knit hats/earbands may be worn when cold and should be solid black.
- Sunglasses, conservative in style and color.

Jackets:
- Standard black and white poly, one-inch vertically striped jackets with knit black Byron collar and black cuffs or a solid black jacket may be worn for inclement weather.
- Crew members should match in their selection of jackets.

Mandatory Accessories:
- Whistle - solid black Fox 40 preferred. The umpiring team must not mix whistle tones i.e. not Fox 40 regular and Fox 40 Pearl. Carry back up whistle inconspicuously.
- Flag - Yellow approximately 14”x14” with bound hem. Weighted or un-weighted.
- Cards - Green, Yellow, Red
- Pencil to record warnings
- Coin

Optional Accessories:
- Lanyard, if used solid back
- Kilt pin -1 small, discrete
- Gloves - solid black if needed
- Spandex should be solid black and preferred not to show below kilt or shorts, unless for medical purposes.
- Small equipment bag holding current rulebook, any league modifications, lighting policies etc should be black.
- Water bottle
- Watch - wrist style stopwatch with countdown feature strongly suggested.
- Sunglasses

Dress To And From Games:
In order to uphold the well-respected, professional image of the USL Women’s Game Officials Sub-Committee, members are required to wear appropriate clothing to and from the game sites.
Clinicians, Trainers, & Raters

Hints When Judging New Or Renewing Candidates

Some day you may be called upon to rate or judge another official. Watching and rating other officials is beneficial for all of us, as no official ever stops learning. By watching and teaching other officials we continually redefine our own officiating personalities and styles while improving upon our own officiating procedures and techniques.

Evaluation by one's peers can be an intimidating experience so when meeting a candidate be sensitive and supportive. Ask about the candidate's officiating history. Give her the opportunity to ask questions while you complete the top portion of the rating form. It is important that candidates, especially those at the local and district rating levels, know that this is a learning situation and that the raters are there to help. Take a sincere interest in what the candidate is doing and how she is reacting. Watch the candidate carry out her pre-game responsibilities. Does she set a good tone for the game? Is she professional and friendly or is she overly officious and controlling?

As the game begins, watch for a while before writing comments. Let the candidate get settled into the game, but note if it takes her too long to respond to the tempo of the play. As the rater, you must evaluate the tenor of the game. Is it a rough game? Are the teams skilled or unskilled, equally matched? Is it a low key game or an intense cross town rivalry? You must determine what conditions confront the candidate before you can fairly judge her response to the game.

Next, watch how the candidate moves on the field. Is she in position to see the ball? Is she in the players' way? Does she anticipate play? Is she in quiet control of the game? Is there a purpose for her positioning? What can she see and what can't she see because of her positioning?

Evaluate her whistle use, whistle tone, arm signals and use/quality of her voice. Do all players respond to her whistle or only those players nearby? Is her voice effective in communicating with the players? Do her whistle and arm signals communicate confidence in the calls she is making? Once play is stopped, are players positioned correctly before play is restarted? Is play stopped and started efficiently?

The goal circle is critical. A bad call or poor judgment in this area can mean the difference between wins and losses. Is the candidate aware of the importance of being in the correct position to make the calls in this area? Does she position herself on the tangent to see potential far side and near side goal circle fouls by the ball carrier? Is the signal for a goal distinctive? Does she react quickly when the ball is cleared to make the transition from lead to trail?
The candidate’s evaluation of fouls is important. Are her calls and interpretations correct, and more importantly, consistent? If you disagree with a call, be sure to check her positioning. She may be incorrect because of poor positioning. She may also be correct and you may be wrong because of what you can and cannot see from where you are standing. If you disagree with a call, be sure to give the candidate an opportunity at half time or the end of the game to explain what she saw and why she made the call. Don’t simply write her off as an unqualified official.

How you actually do the rating is based on individual preference and/or local practice. Some judges mark down every foul missed and called. Others will write when there is a pause in the game and give general impressions with few specifics. However you use the rating form, be sure to identify specific weaknesses and strengths both for the candidate’s benefit and to assist the individual who must give the candidate a verbal or written report. The raters may stand together or may choose to stand in different areas of the field to get different perspectives.

When rating Local candidates, the raters should confer just prior to half time to compare observations. During half time a spokesperson for the ratings group should talk with the candidate. Give the candidate an opportunity to convey her own reactions to the game. This may be helpful to you. Give your impressions of what she did well and offer your suggestions for improvement in the second half. Try not to distract the candidate with too many details. If you offer a few suggestions and she copes well with them in the second half, this will indicate to you her willingness to risk change and her potential for continued growth. Discuss both the candidate’s strengths and weaknesses. Be honest in indicating mistakes, but also suggest ways to improve.

Remember that you are not only a rater but a teacher as well.

When rating a candidate, the Head rater will ask the candidate if she desires half time feedback. While the raters may offer suggestions for improvement to candidates for lower level ratings, a candidate for a National rating should come to the rating game fully prepared and not expect “on the job” training suggestions or ideas. The candidate may speak with the raters immediately following the game if she chooses.

When the second half begins watch carefully for a response to half time suggestions. Notice the level of concentration during the second half. Does the game get more intense in the closing minutes? Does she respond and is she able to maintain control throughout the entire game? If an unusual circumstance occurs, does she respond appropriately and calmly?

At the end of the game talk to the candidate and summarize your observations for her. Be helpful, sincere, not too harsh, and remember that nobody is perfect. If rating a candidate, do not initiate a post game conversation, but be available should the candidate request a constructive verbal follow up to the game.
Finally, before writing your recommendation, stop and think about the game that you just saw. Was it safe? Was it fair? Did the players and coaches respond well to the game? Did you see any of the game or did you only see the official? Does the candidate possess each of the qualities listed for the rating she is attempting? Be certain to sign the rating form, recommend a rating, indicate rating duration, and return the form to the designated individual. Simply writing “see again” on the form is not enough. If you feel that the game was not challenging enough, or that the candidate had very little action in her goal area, indicate this on the form and make a decision on a rating. Each member of the rating team should fill out her own rating form indicating her rating recommendation for the candidate.

See Part One of the US Lacrosse Women’s Game Officials Policy and Procedure Manual for a description of each rating level.
Junior Officials

Junior Officials are a great way to involve young athletes in the game. For players learning how to officiate can help them improve their own game while playing. Where youth programs are prolific, Junior Officials can ease the burden that a robust game schedule can create for a Local Board trying to cover all levels of lacrosse from 6U to post collegiate. While there are many positives to engaging Junior Officials, it needs to be done with certain guidelines in place to assure they have a positive experience that will bring them back to officiating for many years.

Local Board Considerations for Establishing a Junior Official Program

At the organizational level Local Boards need to engage with leagues and tournaments to assess their willingness to utilize Junior Officials. The Local Board should determine if there are limitations or restrictions for minors to work the games and specify the expectations for Junior Officials.

- Ask the League about certification requirements for coaches; at a minimum coaches should be USL Coach’s Education Program Level 1 certified (this will assure that coaches have been through a background check, and taken the Positive Coaching Alliance class)
- The league should provide additional adults who are not coaches to be Game/Site administrators. This is the adult who will deal with any unruly parents or fans, and who will escort the official to their car, or assure they are picked up by an adult should the need arise.
- Leagues should discuss with the assigner the abilities and requirements of Junior Officials working their games (Will one official always be an adult? Will Junior Officials be tracked and evaluated so that two new Junior Officials are never together?). As with any program, time must be invested, and requirements can change and grow as the program evolves.

Specific Requirements of Junior Officials

- In order to comply with most state minimum age requirements for employment, Junior Officials must be at least 14 years of age prior to taking a game assignment.
- Junior Officials must complete all of the Junior Official certification and re-certification components annually.
- Junior Officials must pass the Junior Official on-field rating
- Junior Officials will only call games where the athletes are a minimum of two years younger than they are (ie a 14 year old will only work 10U play and below, a 17 year old may work 14U and below)
- Junior Officials can only work games which are being played by the appropriate USL rules for the age level of the athletes on the game
• In order for a Junior Official to work a full checking game an adult official with a Local Rating needs to also be on the game

**Local Boards Working with Junior Officials**

Junior Officials are part of the officials team/group, and should be treated as part of the team/group. The Junior Officials should have the opportunity to meet with, interact, and network with the adult officials in the group. This is an important part of official’s development for both the Junior Officials as well as the adults. However, this does not mean that the Junior Officials should be treated exactly the same as the adult officials. Include them in the portions of the meeting which will be relevant to them, and then let them go for the remainder of the meeting. Junior Officials need to learn that officiating is not a hobby, it is a part time profession, they need to learn the administrative aspects of the job (e.g. receiving assignments, paying dues/fees, receiving game fees, tracking payments, general standards of professionalism).

The Local Board should utilize one or two specific individuals who will be the main supervising trainers and points of contact for the Junior Officials. It is important for these trainers to educate the junior officials that they are responsible for their own progress. While it is appropriate for their parent or guardian to be involved and have information, the supervising trainer will work directly with the junior official, expect them to take responsibility for their progress. These supervising trainers should also be working with the adult officials in the Local Board to pair them with appropriate mentors, and to create an environment that is welcoming to them where they can learn and improve.

Including Junior Officials in the Local Board means taking some additional responsibility to protect their well-being. It is recommended that Local Boards have a background check procedure in place for all officials. USL offers a background check for purchase on its website at time of renewals, and the Local Board Chair can verify the successful completion of a background check. An unsuccessful background check with the National Center for Safety Initiatives may result in an immediate termination of USL membership.

**USL Membership – Notes for Junior Officials**

Many Junior Officials are already members of US Lacrosse as players. Being a player member does not provide them the proper insurance coverage to officiate games. Players must update their membership records (working on a way to do this at renewal – for now they should email officials@uslacrosse.org) by sending an email indicating they are training to become an official, who their trainer is, and what Local Board they belong to. Once USL processes the upgrade in membership, the child's membership will now expire on 9/30, with all other officials.
OEP and USL have Junior Officiating Supplements that can be ordered free of charge by trainers. It has been designed with the teenager in mind. Likewise when you engage with this group to conduct training try to utilize tools which are easy and relevant for them to use.