

NorCal Women's Lacrosse Officials Policies and Guidelines

Updated 10/01/2018

Mission Statement

The purpose of this document is to define guidelines and establish optimum standards of business practices, assigning procedures, and conduct of officials under the NorCal Women's Lacrosse Officials (NCWLO). By addressing the issues of procedures and grievances, it is hoped to facilitate a more consistent process and better understanding between the NCWLO board, officials, clubs, teams and schools involved in this process.

The NCWLO is a California not-for-profit corporation and is the currently recognized US Lacrosse organization for girls/women's lacrosse officials in Northern California. The NCWLO is the organization of lacrosse officials that trains, educates, assigns and provides officials for girls interscholastic and club lacrosse games in Northern California. In connection with assigning game officials, the NCWLO acts as an agent for the officials, receiving payment from various organizations (including leagues, schools, clubs, and private lacrosse organizations) for contracted officiating services and paying the game and travel fees (when applicable) to the officials.

The NCWLO does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, religious belief, gender/gender expression, sexual orientation, military status, age, disability, marital status or national origin or ancestry.

Article I. Official's Responsibilities

Section 1.01 Officials Membership and Rating

- A. Each official will be a member in good standing with US Lacrosse, as per the US Lacrosse Women's Game Officials Policy & Procedures Manual. (Non-compliance will terminate an official's rating.)
- B. Each official will fulfill the requirements within his/her earned rating as per the US Lacrosse Women's Game Officials Policy & Procedure Manual. (Non-compliance will terminate an official's rating.)

- 1) New and 2nd year umpires will be evaluated at a Play day only.
 - 2) New umpires will only be given an Apprentice rating.
 - 3) 2nd Year umpires will be re-evaluated and only given a L1, if warranted.
 - 4) Umpires with 3 seasons or more of experience will be evaluated during an “in season” game or at a local tournament. The umpire must request this through an email to the Umpire board so that it is documented. Once requested the umpire will be told which game they will be evaluated on.
 - 5) Alternatively, umpires can be rated at a US Lacrosse LEAD event.
- C. Each official will also fulfill the following NCWLO requirements to be considered a member in good standing. Non-compliance will terminate an official’s participation for assignments.
- 1) An “Officials Acknowledgement of NCWLO Policies and Procedures” form (Appendix B) must be signed annually.
 - 2) Have a current rating as per the US Lacrosse rating system.
- D. Pay training fees and dues to the NCWLO. Dues and fees shall be developed by the NCWLO, reviewed and approved by the board.
- E. Wear the proper uniform as outlined in the US Lacrosse Women’s Game Officials Training Manual.
- F. Complete all training required for his/her rating.
- 1) Training/Certification Program:
 - i. Juniors/Youth – USL standards
 1. Classroom training – min. 6 hours per season
 2. Field Training (PlayDay Junior/Youth game level)– 4 hours per season
 3. Rules test review – 3 hours
 4. Rules test online– 1 hour
 - ii. Adults – CIF – USL & NFHS standards with minimum 18 hours/season
 1. Classroom training – 6-8 hours per season
 - a. 2 or less years’ experience minimum of 8 hours
 - b. 3 or more years’ experience minimum of 6 hours
 2. Rules test review – 3 hours
 3. Rules test online– 1 hour
 4. Field Training (PlayDay CIF game level) - minimum 6 hours
 - a. PlayDay 4 hours

- b. Ropes - 1 hour
 - c. Field scenarios - 1 hour
 - 5. Online video training – (minimum 2 hours)
 - a. Major & Minor Fouls - call & placement (1hr.)
 - b. Restraining Line Penalty Administration (1hr.)
 - c. Conducting a Draw (1hr.)
 - d. You Make the Call (1 hr.)
 - e. Illegal Contact webinar (1hr.) on USL e-learning
 - 6. Mandatory classroom training for umpires selected for post season assignment (2 hours)
 - a. League timing, procedures, sportsmanship policies
 - b. Review 2 & 3-person mechanics and positioning
 - c. Special situations and review of penalty administration
- G. Pass the current US Lacrosse WGOSC written exam as per his/her rating.
- H. All adult umpires must pass a background check per current US Lacrosse and NorCal Chapter of US Lacrosse, Inc. NCWLO guidelines.
- I. Be aware of and follow the Assigning Policies of NCWLO
- J. Attend all required umpire meetings.
- K. Fulfill volunteer service hours as defined by the NCWLO.
- L. Each official may suspend or terminate his/her association with the NCWLO by informing the NCWLO President. Re-admittance to the NCWLO's roster of rated umpires to be assigned for the current or subsequent season can transpire with notice to the NCWLO President and his/her confirmation, provided the umpire has fulfilled all current requirements and is in good standing. NCWLO will vote on approving re-admittance.
- M. Annually complete conflict of interest form identifying schools or teams that they should not be assigned to that upcoming season.

Section 1.02 Officials Assignments and Game Conduct

- A. Officials in order to officiate games shall:
 - i. Complete NCWLO registration.
 - ii. Attend required classroom and on field training. Extenuating circumstances

that prevent such attendance will be reviewed by the NCWLO on a case by case basis.

- iii. **Be on field, properly dressed and prepared** at least 30 minutes prior to a game. Note: officials must notify the host school or club's team's head coach and assignor of extenuating circumstances that will prevent them from adhering to this policy.
- iv. Keep games as assigned by the assignor. Changing game assignments may only be done with the assignor's approval.
- v. Provide current information to the assignor and schools.
- vi. Honor his/her commitments, be on time for games, and keep current with assignments. Follow established "turn back" procedures as established by the NCWLO.
- vii. Not accept more than one assignment per day if the timing will likely delay the start of the second game.
- viii. Adhere to additional assigning policies as published by the NCWLO and fulfill all requirements of the NCWLO.
- ix. Act in a way that is established to be in the best interest of the NCWLO.

Section 1.03 Officials Professional Conduct

A. Officials shall:

- 1) Take responsibility for his/her decision-making role, which includes proper application of the rules.
- 2) Be neutral, honest, and fair and not demonstrate any bias for or against a team, individual player/s, coach/s, or team personnel.
- 3) Avoid anything which may lead to a conflict of interest, either real or apparent. Gifts, favors, special treatment, privileges, employment or a personal relationship with a school or team, which can compromise the perceived impartiality of officiating, must be avoided. Report any possible conflicts of interest to your assignor.

- 4) Insist on language and conduct during a game that does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, and marital status or against a qualified person with a disability.
- 5) File proper accurate claims according to the umpire's contract for mileage and/or game fees.
- 6) Be free of the influence of illegal drugs, tobacco, or alcohol while on assignment.
- 7) Refrain from making inappropriate physical contact towards players, coaches, or spectators.
- 8) Refrain from making statements about players, coaches, spectators, or other umpires that detract from the spirit and respectability of the sport.
- 9) Adult officials to complete a NCWLO designated background check on a timely basis and not have been convicted of a sexual offense, a crime against a minor, or a crime involving illegal drugs which would prohibit contact with minors. No person with such a conviction may hold a USL official's rating or be assigned games.
- 10) Adhere to the US Lacrosse "Officials Code of Conduct" as stated in the US Lacrosse Women's Game Officials Training Manual as well as the "Corporation Policies and Guidelines" of the NCWLO
- 11) Use Arbiter to access game assignments, set blocks and report game conditions as needed. The Official may access and use the contact information for fellow officials assigned to the same game. The list of officials in the Arbiter for the NCWLO is proprietary, as such, the Official is prohibited from downloading the names and contact information for fellow officials without written authorization from the President of the NCWLO. Further, the OFFICIAL may not use the names and contact information for any official listed in the NCWLO Arbiter account for personal use or the assigning of any of those officials without written authorization from the President of the NCWLO.

Article II. Assigning Policies

Section 2.01 Qualifications of an Assignor

- A. Be a current US Lacrosse member.

- B. Have a current working knowledge of the game.
- C. Have knowledge of the officials and their skills by attending at least one Play Day to observe them.
- D. Have knowledge of the skill level of teams being assigned.
- E. Have the ability to develop and continue a good working relationship with coaching staffs and administrations.
- F. Have the ability to facilitate effective lines of communication with CIF schools, the Northern California Junior Lacrosse Association (NCJLA) and its clubs and team's leadership.
- G. Have good organizational skills.
- H. Have the ability to administer fairly to both the officials and the schools.
- I. Have the ability to provide necessary written communications and documents for officials and schools, the NCJLA and its clubs and teams leadership.

Section 2.02 Job Responsibilities of an Assignor

- A. Request school and NCJLA team schedules and umpire availability forms in a timely manner.
- B. Assign qualified officials to appropriate games.
- C. Provide an answering service and/or voice mail service so that messages can be left during non-office hours.
- D. Conduct all activities related to the role of the assignor in a professional business-like manner; including maintaining accurate records and verifying games, pay rate, per diems and any special circumstances weekly.
- E. Compile and maintain a current Official's Roster as well as CIF school Athletic Directors and business office contacts and NCJLA club and team contacts.
- F. Only assign games to officials who are in good standing with US Lacrosse and the NCWLO by following the US Lacrosse Code of Conduct and policies established by the Women's Games Official's Sub-committee and written within the US Lacrosse Women's Game Officials Training Manual and "NCWLO Policies and Guidelines".

- G. Communicate with officials in a timely manner and provide the following information:
 - a. A Fact Sheet regarding game fees and official responsibilities.
 - b. A Directory of Schools serviced with game-day contact information.
 - c. An Officials Roster with contact information.
 - d. A final statement of games worked with game fees assessed each official (if applicable).

- H. Communicate with schools in a timely manner and provide the following information:
 - a. A Fact Sheet regarding game fees and schools' responsibilities.
 - b. An official's roster with contact information.
 - c. Official's assignments.
 - d. A final statement of games assigned, and fees assessed (if applicable).

- I. Assign Fall Ball contests if asked to do so.

- J. Assign Post-Season Tournaments.

- K. Attend games throughout the season so as to assess the needs of games as well as to assess the strengths of each official.

Section 2.03 Guidelines for Assigning Officials

- A. Do not give game assignments to an official who is not in good standing with US Lacrosse and/or who has not adhered to the policies of NCWLO
 - a. Officials are members in good standing with the NCWLO or another US Lacrosse Local Officiating Board who have a current US Lacrosse rating.
 - b. Annually, names of Local rated umpires will be collected by the NCWLO for consideration as probationary college officials. Recommendations must

come via a college official. A probationary member is not eligible to vote on corporation business or hold office within the corporation. The NCWLO will ensure all prospective members are in good standing.

- B. Consider the following goals when making assignments:
 - a. The official's rating, experience, and availability when making assignments.
 - b. The continued growth and development of officiating personnel.
 - c. Utilize outside staffing (officials from outside the geographic area) when needs warrant doing so and where possible. These contacts should be made through the established assignors.
- C. The Assignor shall direct questions, concerns and/or problems occurring in games, to the NCWLO Chair, so that these situations can be quickly resolved.
- D. Do not make more than one assignment for an official that will put that official in a position to be potentially late for the second contest.
- E. Consider the official's rating, geographic location, availability, and the level of competition when making assignments.
- F. Adhere to NCWLO "blocking" criteria
 - a. Blocking a school by an official:
 - i. An official blocking a school due to conflict of interest is expected.
 - ii. Blocking a school due to unwillingness to travel is not in the spirit of the assigning policies.
 - iii. In case of personality conflict with a coach, blocking is permitted with the understanding that his/her total # of assignments will be affected.
 - iv. An official may not block a school for consecutive seasons.
 - b. Blocking an official by a school:
 - i. It is not the policy of the NCWLO to allow a school to change official's assignments mid-season. It is the judgment of the assignor whether adjustments are warranted for mutual benefit of the school and official.

- ii. Blocking must be in writing by the coach (not e-mail or fax) with specific concerns stated.
- iii. A school may not block an official for consecutive seasons.
- iv. Blocking is not in effect for away games that are not assigned by the NCWLO assignor.
- v. The blocking letter and specifics of the concerns will be discussed with the official via the assignor.

G. Criteria for post season assignment

- a. Junior/Youth Postseason
 - i. Only officials Level 2 and above will be used for playoffs games 14U and high school. For playoff games below 14U Junior officials can be assigned if deemed adequately skilled.
- b. Officials must have officiated at least 10 games at or above the level of the playoff game.
- c. Any potential for conflict of interest will be considered.
- d. The final list of qualified officials will be reviewed and approved by the NCWLO. Any concerns with officials deemed qualified will be reviewed prior to the final selection.
- e. CIF Postseason
 - i. Only officials Level 2 or above will be used considered for postseason JV or Varsity games.
 - ii. Officials must have attended mid-season post season classroom training.
- f. Officials must have officiated at least 10 JV and/or Varsity games during the regular season.
- g. Any potential for conflict of interest will be considered and reviewed for a final resolution by the NCWLO before final list is completed.
- h. The final list of qualified officials will be reviewed and approved by the NCWLO and Local Assignors before April 1st. Any concerns with officials deemed qualified will be reviewed prior to the final selection.
- i. Selection of officials will be a combination of fellow officials' ratings, coaches' ratings and assignor ratings.

Section 2.04 Cancellation Policies and Unique Situations

- A. Officials Game Fees and Cancellation Policies and Procedures will be established each pre-season and added as Appendix C Fact Sheet.

Section 2.05 Assignors Code of Conduct

- A. Adhere to the guidelines for assigning officials and job responsibilities of an assignor
- B. The names of the umpires listed in the NCWLO Arbiter account and NCWLO League Athletics registration system along with their connected contact information such as phone numbers, emails, home addresses as well as their umpire requirement status is the property of the NCWLO. The use of any names and contact information for any purpose other than assigning games, related assignment follow up and NCWLO announcements is prohibited without written authorization from the NCWLO.

Article III. Schools and League Code of Conduct

- A. Schools and Leagues shall:
 - a. Supply a game schedule to the assignors by the date requested by the Assignor.
 - b. Supply complete contact information to the assignor, to include date and time of contest, location of contest, game day personnel contact information.
 - c. If applicable, pertinent parking and locker room information
 - d. Notify officials immediately of changes to game times and or cancellations.
 - e. Keep contact information current with the assignor, including game day on site personnel and their cell phone numbers.
 - f. Pay game, assignor and administrative fees as agreed.

Article IV. NCWLO Umpire Ethics Sub-Committee Grievance Policy and Procedures

Section 4.01 The Intent of this grievance policy is:

- A. To establish standards of ethical behavior for umpires;
- B. To provide an avenue for grievance against officials and assignors when policies and guidelines have not been followed;
- C. To provide due process for officials and assignors.

Section 4.02 Grievance Procedure

- A. Any person interested in the sport of lacrosse may report any official who abuses or who is suspected of abusing this Code of Ethical Conduct and/or the policies of the Board. The completed report (“Ethical Behavior Grievance Form” Appendix A) should be given to the NCWLO Chair who will call a meeting of the Umpire Ethics Sub-Committee.
- B. The Umpire Ethics Sub-Committee (a minimum of three persons) will be composed of the NCWLO Chair (acting as the Umpire Ethics Sub-Committee Chair), the Interpreter, and the Assignor. In the event there is a conflict of interest, the corporation Board of Directors will decide on the replacement or additional person to complete the committee.
- C. The Umpire Ethics Sub-Committee will determine whether the grievance is regarding a misapplication of the rules. A misapplication of the rules is not a grievance. In no event will any grievance under this procedure change the outcome of a contest.
- D. Grievances must be submitted in writing on the prescribed grievance form (Appendix A) that is available from the Umpire Ethics Sub-Committee Chair. No oral grievances will be considered until submitted in writing.
- E. Incidents should be reported within 10 calendar days. The Umpire Ethics Sub-Committee Chair may accept grievances beyond that time if s/he determines that reasonable grounds exist for delay.
- F. The Umpire Ethics Sub-Committee will convene within 7 days of receiving the written form to determine whether action will be taken and will then notify in writing both the grievant and the official of acceptance or denial of the grievance.
- G. If the grievance is accepted for review, the official will be given the opportunity to respond to the grievance in writing within a time set by the Umpire Ethics Sub-Committee.
- H. When it deems appropriate, the Umpire Ethics Sub-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.
- I. To the extent possible, grievances will remain confidential. However, the Umpire Ethics Sub-Committee may contact individuals with knowledge relevant to a complaint.

- J. The Umpire Ethics Sub-Committee will complete its findings and determination within 10 days of accepting the grievance for review.

Section 4.03 Appeal Procedure

- A. Any official aggrieved by the findings of the corporation NCWLO Ethics Committee may appeal any penalty assessed him/her within ten days of the date on the written notice of the outcome from the Ethics Chair. A grievant may not appeal the NCWLO Ethics Committee's decision.
- B. The appeal must be filed in writing to the NCWLO, Inc. Chair.
- C. The NCWLO Ethics Committee, chaired by the NCWLO president and two NCWLO board directors not associated with the appealing official's original grievance shall decide all appeals. Outcome of the appeal will be decided on the basis of the information gathered by the NCWLO Ethics Committee and the written appeal of the official.
- D. If a hearing is validly requested, an Appeals Committee shall be convened within ten days to conduct the hearing.
- E. At the hearing, NCWLO Ethics Committee Chair will present the evidence and findings of the NCWLO Ethics Committee but is not required to present witnesses in person. The official may be represented by legal counsel or another advisor and may present testimony, other evidence, or argument on his or her behalf. Board legal counsel who may serve as chair but will not have a vote may assist 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. The decision will be final.

Article V. Amendments to Policies and Procedures

- A. These "Policies and Procedures" may be amended by an affirmative majority vote of the NCWLO Board of Directors members present at a meeting held for the purpose of revising these policies and procedures.
- B. Any member in good standing may propose changes to these policies during a scheduled corporation meeting.

Appendix A

NCWLO Ethical Behavior Grievance Form

Appendix B

Official's Acknowledgement of NCWLO Policies and Procedures

(Date) _____

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and familiarized myself with the NCWLO policies, as well as the policies within the US Lacrosse Women's Game Officials Policy & Procedures Manual as they pertain to my rating and membership. I understand it is my responsibility to keep myself current with these policies and procedures.

I understand that if I fail to uphold and abide by these policies that action can be taken by the NCWLO to terminate my rights to be assigned and/or my rating as a US Lacrosse official. All benefits and incurred expenses will be lost.

(Official's signature)

(Official's full name ***printed***)

Note: This form must be completed annually to be considered a member in good standing with NCWLO. It may be signed electronically during the annual registration process or the completed form to the NCWLO Secretary at <mailto:secretary@ncwlo.org>