USA Judo Referee Commission
Tournament Staff Roles and Responsibilities Guidance

CHIEF REFEREE

The Chief Referee is either requested by a Tournament Director when submitting the Examination Evaluation form request for an N1 event, or is appointed by the Referee Commission when asked by the Tournament Director for assistance with the appointment. The appointment of the Chief Referee is approved by the USA Judo Referee Commission by vote. In the case of the US Open, the President’s Cup, the Youth National Championships, the Senior National Championships, and the National Junior Olympics/International Junior Olympics, the Chief Referee MUST be a member of the USA Judo Referee Commission.

The Chief Referee ensures that the rules agreed upon in the preprinted flyer, and in accordance with the flier submitted for sanctioning, are adhered to. Acceptable USA Judo and International Judo Federation (IJF) rules and regulations, modified as specified for each specific event, and made clear to the referees and coaches, must be agreed upon by the Tournament Director, the Chief Referee and the sanctioning body.

The Chief Referee is responsible for overseeing the two evaluators, the mat assignments for Mat Chief and working referees, and Mat Chief assignments as needed. At National events, the Chief Referee also ensures that the weigh ins are assigned and manned, and that CARE system set up and tear down is coordinated. The Chief Referee is to uphold the integrity of the application of the rules with standard operating rules and regulations, and to monitor the conduct of the referee corps at the event.

Events that are examination events have additional responsibilities for the Chief Referee. The Chief Referee oversees the examination and weighs in on the passing or failing performance of each candidate. The Chief Referee is responsible for overseeing the administration and scoring of the written portion of the examination.

In the competition, when controversial situations arise, the Chief Referee will make the final technical decision using the best available tools to make the most logical, fair, unbiased, and prudent decision possible, consistent with the conduct and administration of the event.
Chief Referee is also responsible for completing and submitting the written report after the conclusion of an event.

The Chief Referee SHOULD NOT actually referee on the mat or as a side judge at the event unless there is an extreme shortage of referees on each mat. Should there be an insufficient number of referees on a mat, the Chief Referee may cover ONLY as a side judge for lunch and bathroom breaks.

The Chief Referee must conduct the official meeting(s) for the event and be present from the beginning of the event including the mandatory meeting prior to the competition, until the conclusion of the evaluations. Should a transportation emergency arise and the Chief Referee is unable to get to the meeting on time, he/she must designate an emergency substitute to conduct the meeting until arrival. NO ONE should accept a Chief Referee assignment if it is known in advance that he/she will be unable to attend the entirety of the event from preliminary meetings until the conclusion of the evaluations for that event. If a scheduling conflict presents itself, the Chief Referee designated must recuse him/herself and request that the Referee Commission assign a new Chief Referee for the event.

**EVALUATOR**

There are two official Evaluators assigned to Evaluation and Evaluation/Examination events. Periodically an event will request additional Evaluators. The primary job of each Evaluator is to give both positive and educational feedback to every US referee working the event, based on direct personal observation, and to complete a written re-evaluation on each of the USA IJF Continental “B”, and National 1-4 referees at the event. Most of these events are N1 level events.

The re-evaluation forms are to include specific written comments to aid the individual in monitoring and adjusting performance, behaviors, and communication skills as a member of a team for growth as a referee. The form also has a rating which much accurately reflect the level at which the referee performed at that specific event. This may be produced electronically with a hard copy back up.

The only events beginning in 2020 where on-mat working IJF International “A” referees will be validated will be the Youth Nationals, the Junior Olympics, and the US Open. The Evaluators for these three specific events will be members of the USA Judo Commission, and the evaluation is simply to acknowledge whether the IJF A referee is up to date enough to be permitted to request self-selected international referee travel.

If the event also is an examination site, Evaluators assist with the administration and scoring of the written examination as well as assessing the candidate mat performances. They help the Chief Referee ensure that all required documents are collected and forwarded to the Referee Commission’s record keeping assistants. Evaluators SHOULD NOT to referee at the event unless there is an extreme shortage of referees on each mat, in which case they may cover as a judge.
for lunch and bathroom breaks. Although they may get input from Mat Chiefs, comments and
evaluations should be based on personal observations by each Evaluator and the Chief Referee.
**Referees should be provided timely feedback with observed problems with performance with**
**his/her performance prior to the commencement of the formal evaluation meeting that is**
**shared with the Mat Chief for emphasis.**

Periodically a Chief Referee might ask an Evaluator to serve as a Mat Chief during a finals block
or to serve as a temporary Mat Chief as a Mat Chief or as a judge only or as a team supporter
to spell the assigned Mat Chief for a bathroom break or lunch, or to assist if a mat team
requests help rendering a decision. Evaluator **ARE NOT** to insert themselves into a fully staffed
match. Evaluator **are only to assist or insert themselves at the specific request of the Mat
Chief or by the direct request of the Chief Referee in a specific incident where the Evaluator
was present during the match in question.

Evaluator **must be present at the official meeting(s) for the event and be present from the**
beginning of the event including the mandatory meeting prior to the competition, until the
conclusion of the evaluations. Should a transportation emergency arise and the Evaluator **is**
unable to get to the meeting on time, he/she must contact the Chief Referee. NO ONE should
accept an Evaluator assignment if it is known in advance that he/she will be unable to attend
the entirety of the event from preliminary meetings until the conclusion of the evaluations for
that event. If a scheduling conflict presents itself, the Evaluator designated must recuse
him/herself and request that the Referee Commission assign a new evaluator for the event.

**MAT CHIEF**

The Mat Chief is assigned as the lead referee on the mat and serves to coordinate the actual
referee rotation on the mat and to support the referees as a direct line of communication as an
on-the-mat Mat Chief if the team of three needs assistance. If the Mat Chief is also a working
referee, he/she is to assign a person to serve as the assistant Mat Chief when the primary Mat
Chief is either refereeing or judging during a contest.

If time and circumstances allow, the Mat Chief is encouraged to provide feedback and words of
wisdom to the other working referees on the mat, however, the primary function is to get the
mat team functioning smoothly. The Mat Chief’s other main responsibilities are to get the team
on the mat to gel and to set up a positive, collegial, professional environment that will allow the
referees on the mat to work comfortably, interactively, and effectively. Doing so includes
offering technical assistance and advise when needed without overdirecting the referees on the
mat.

Should a controversy arise that the Mat Chief is not confident in handling, the assistance of the
Chief Referee should be requested. The Mat Chief should not request assistance from an
Evaluator unless the Evaluator was present during the entire match and directly observed the
action in question. The Evaluator should not insert him/herself into the discussion. Their input
should be requested by the Mat Chief. It is even more appropriate to request the assistance of the Chief Referee if help is needed.

It is appropriate for Evaluators to consult with Mat Chiefs about the performances of the working referees on the mat, but the comments written on the formal evaluations must be directly observed by at least one of the evaluation team members or directly communicated by the Mat Chief.

When an event has a specific finals block, the Chief Referee may choose to assign a specific Mat Chief to oversee the finals on a specific mat area. The Mat Chief serves to support the three working referees during a match to ensure that the decisions rendered are correct. Generally speaking, the Mat Chief intervenes when there is either a clear confusion or disagreement within the team of three working the match or when the team requests assistance in rendering a decision.

The Mat Chief assists when the team is challenged and/or when the team is struggling to officiate a match. The Mat Chief should not unilaterally intervene during the match, but should only involve themselves when (a) a mistake of award in action between the white and blue competitor takes place, (b) assess when awarding of direct hansokumake for actions contrary to the spirit of judo or which may have further consequences for the athlete who has committed an infraction, or (c) in any other exceptional cases. Should a conflict arise between the Mat Chief and a mat team, the Chief Referee should intervene and render the final decision for the given contest.

Sometimes a IJF International “A” referee is assigned to a mat to assist the Mat Chief, but for clarification in the delineation of the roles and responsibilities, these positions will be not recognized as the Mat Chief, and they are to defer to the wishes and decisions of the Mat Chief.

**WORKING REFEREES**

The Working Referees are those assigned to a mat who are refereeing and judging contest on that mats. They are to be professional on and off the mat and hold conflicting opinions to a team decision in confidence. They are to be current with the newest interpretations of the rules and strive to grow as a referee. They are supposed to know how to use their communication system and the CARE system. They are not to interfere in any match in which they are not directly involved. Working referees are to be present during the entirety of the tournament, unless being given specific dispensation by the Chief Referee and Evaluation team.

Working Referees may seek assistance from the Mat Chief, and from the Chief Referee as needed to ensure that a correct decision is rendered.

**COACH LIAISON**
This position was established by the Coaching Committee. To the best of our knowledge they serve as an intermediary between coaches and referees, explaining rules the coach may be unaware of or accompanying a coach who has a serious concern to the Mat Chief on a specific mat. They help a coach determine if they have a legitimate issue to discuss, or whether it is a misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the rules. In my experience, they typically listen in on the conversation between the coach and the referee and may input if requested.

In recent years, the Coach-Referee interaction has become much more collegial and mutually respectful, as we all want the same thing... for the most fair and correct decisions possible to be applied throughout a match.

At some events, coaches and Coach Liaisons may be invited or allowed to see CARE system reviews for educational and clarification purposes.

TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR & COMMITTEE

The Tournament Committee is responsible for obtaining the sanction, filling out the request for evaluation/examination site status, printing flyers, handling registrations, venue set up and take down with safe and appropriate mats and space, providing rooms for the referee meeting(s), hospitality arrangements, weigh ins and weigh in equipment, match setting, running pools, ensuring there are prepared and educated timekeepers, scorekeepers and match setters, and appropriate medical staff and equipment. The Tournament Committee ensure there is sufficient water and caffeine for the referees and candy is also helpful. The Tournament Committee must ensure the safety of the competitors, spectators, and working staff, including Referees, table workers, security personnel.

The Tournament Director is ultimately responsible for communicating before the event with the Chief Referee to determine that everyone is on the same page, that the rules for the event are clear, and that modifications to the IJF rules are clearly printed out and shared with tournament staff, referees, coaches, and athletes.

The Tournament Director, as a member of the Tournament Committee, has the responsibility to uphold the rules of the sport, even if it upsets a coach or competitor. When a Tournament Director becomes involved in a controversy, he/she must follow the rules which govern our sport. Generally speaking, the Tournament Director and the Chief Referee consult in highly controversial cases to ensure that they are acting as a united front in accordance with the rules.