

As we look at the value of officials, we first need to look at the foundation of our sport and officials' program, the rules and in turn the enforcement of those rules.

- First component, is the rule book, education and establishing the expectations of behavior and what is and is not allowed.
 - Second component, is knowing and understanding those rules, this encompasses the athlete and the officials.
 - Third component, athletes following the rules and officiating or enforcement of the rules at events.
-

Why do we have rules?

Rules are not designed to take the fun out of the sport, rules exist for the good of the sport. Rules are intended to promote and maintain sportsmanship, equal opportunity, fair play and the integrity of the sport.

Why should we enforce the rules?

Field of play is governed not only by the rules of competition, but also by a code of conduct established by the USAT competitive rules.

The athletes are our customers and our customers want the rules enforced. Through a consistent application of the competitive rules, we can best create a positive customer experience for our athletes.

The rules are in place to promote and support fair competition for athletes, enforcing the rules provides a level playing field for all competitors and maintains the integrity of competition. The presence of officials at a race, especially pre-race, is critical for creating a positive experience for all. All participating athletes enjoy a significant advantage and are more likely to experience a fair race when officials are present and actively engaged in open, proactive communication with the athletes.

Sports come with certain responsibilities, the enforcement process is an integral part of the process to ensure integrity and fair play among all participants. Establishing and following these rules honors our sport and safeguards it for future generations.

When it comes to the rules and enforcement, who is responsible?

Officiating is a partnership. This partnership is most effective when athletes, RDs and officials work together to ensure a smooth event.

By registering for a USAT Sanctioned event and subsequently signing the USAT waiver, athletes are required to abide by the Competitive Rules. It is the athlete's responsibility to know the rules.

RDs who sanction with USAT are required to enforce the Competitive Rules. It is the RDs responsibility to ensure the rules are enforced.

Officials operate in a supporting capacity. Officials are trained in the application of the Competitive Rules and provide consistent interpretation and enforcement, including documentation, due process, appeals, and protests.

This shared responsibility and commitment results in a great race enjoyed by our customers. It establishes an environment that encourages fair play and observance of the rules. When athletes know the rules and have clear expectations they can prepare for race day and respect the role rules play in our sport.

Why request USAT officials?

Relieves the responsibilities of enforcing USA Triathlon Competitive Rules:

Requesting USAT Officials allows the race director to focus on creating a safe and fun event and give the weight of responsibility for rules knowledge and enforcement to trained USAT Officials.

Triathletes are paying customers of the event organizer, and are entitled to courtesy and respect, even in the most difficult situations. The focus of a referee's effort is positive not punitive. Education of the athletes prior to the competition is a high priority.

Officials educate athletes about the rules, work to resolve rules violations prior to competition, ensure that the rules are observed during competition and will decide upon any matters which arise during the competition and for which is not specific in the rules.

Officiating is both an art and a science, rules can't cover every scenario, and not all rules are black and white; there are grey areas which require interpretation; officials will make hundreds of decisions determining when a violation occurs and determining the correct penalty. The official as the artist in the one who takes the gray areas and paints them decisively.

In doing so, the official fulfills the responsibility of the federation and sanctioned event to athletes, which is an invaluable resource to race directors and athletes.

Rules enforcement?

A certain level of officiating is required for any organized race to ensure fairness of competition. The best solution is to request the presence of a USAT official at the event

Whether or not USAT officials are present, every sanctioned event is required to ensure that the USAT Competitive Rules are enforced. Race directors have the option to self-enforce or to request that USAT provide USAT officials to handle all interpretation and enforcement of the rules.

Race directors should consider what is best for their events based upon size of field, availability of motorcycles, and budget limitations.

Every race needs a head official - a designated person with the authority to make decisions about the outcome of the race. RD should consider how these duties will be carried out at their event, and by who (certified officials or otherwise).

Race directors can request USAT Officials by checking the “USAT Officials are requested for this race” check box in the Race Information portion of the sanction application.

As an RD, you are busy with many other aspects of the race, by checking the box requesting officials you can take one big responsibility off your list, but should you wish to take on that responsibility, you are required to appoint someone as your head official and provide them the training and resources needed to enforce the Competitive Rules.

RDs and officials working together:

As race directors and officials, we provide a service to our athletes.

Working together produces events of the highest quality, combining great venues, safety, competition and fairness.

One of the toughest parts of being a RD is being responsible for policing your own event. USAT Officials are facilitators. The rules won't deal with every possibility. An unclear situation mustn't be forced to fit into an existing rule. Some rules concern judgement.

Although RDs are encouraged to utilize USAT Officials whenever possible, we also understand there are some costs involved that could present an obstacle to smaller or lower-budget races.

When you request officials, they officials will work efficiently on behalf of the athletes and RD. When an RD chooses the responsibility of self-officiating, they assume all the responsibilities of the officials. As you can see in this slide, that puts a lot more tasks on the RD's already full plate.

Requesting officials:

When Events Services receives a sanction where officials have been requested, they will notify the respective Regional Officials Coordinator (ROC). The ROC will coordinate the assignment of officials. There are many factors in determining the necessary number of officials needed. The course layout, participant numbers, and event type can all impact the number of officials needed.

USAT works to support each event that requests the presence of trained officials and it is suggested that the race director consult with Event Services and/or the Regional Officials Coordinator for direction and assistance in this matter.

Once a head official is assigned to your event, the HR will reach out to the RD no less than 3 weeks prior to the event to coordinate logistics and resources.

So, you have requested USAT Officials. What must the RD provide?

Effectiveness of enforcement depends greatly on; the level of competition, consideration of the course and available resources which may result in the inability to enforce some of the race. It can be a challenge for an official to observe the conduct of all athletes throughout the entire race.

- **Transition Area:** The RD is responsible for providing a supply of bar-end plugs and volunteers in the transition area. Officials are not allowed to repair or move athlete's equipment, but volunteers can assist by replacing missing bar ends and moving gear and bike placement when needed.
- **Pre-race rules briefing:** An opportunity for the head official to address participants at a pre-race rules briefing.
 - This can vary with event, from the day before the event or at the beach prior to the swim start, but education is a fundamental area of emphasis for compliance. Communication to the athletes is critical to establishing an environment that encourages fair play and observance of the rules.
 - **Penalty reporting:** Mutually agree upon a time to report penalties to the timer. Inform the timer that all penalties assessed by the head official must be applied prior to awards and included in final results. Additionally, there can be no adjustment to results outside of the addition of a penalty time.
 - **Rules Amendments:** If you are interested in requesting an amendment, modification or dispensation, it must be done in advance of the event, but the process is fairly simple. The request must be sent in writing to the Event Services during the sanction review process for an event. If approved, the dispensation must be posted on the event's website so that all athletes are aware of the adjustment and presented to the head official for the event. The head official cannot enforce a rule differently or apply a different penalty than what is written in the competitive rules without an approved rules amendment.
 - **Officials expenses:**
 - \$90 per official for sprint and international; \$150 for long and ultra
 - Head official receives an additional \$75 stipend
 - Mileage per mile/per referee (IRS Rate), round trip; or airfare and ground transportation
 - Tolls and parking
 - Lodging (no more than two officials, gender appropriate, per room)
 - **Support decisions of head official:** Any decision made by the head official is final and cannot be overturned by the RD; however, athletes who receive a penalty may discuss this with the head official who will post the list of penalties in the results area and be available for questions prior to the awards ceremony.
 - **Provide Feedback:** After the event, provide your feedback regarding the officials using the Evaluation form provided by ES, but you can also communicate with the ROC and/or Commissioner with feedback.
 - **Elite Rules:** When an event provides \$5,000 or more in prize money, elite rules are initiated and officials are required. There are also a few more processes

which must be followed by the officiating team, which will be discussed in advance with the head official and RD.

Role of officials on race day:

The role of USAT Officials is integral to the success of events and the growth of our sport. Officials help to create positive race experiences for all competitors by creating an atmosphere of sportsmanship, equality and fair play.

Pre-race day, review the event sanction and event website, provide cost estimate of officiating team and resources.

The head official will take the water temperature and determine if the event is wet suit legal or not, officials will work the transition area inspecting equipment/racking and offer advice on preventing infractions/violations. A pre-race rules briefing to provide what is expected from the athletes and what they can expect from officials. This will allow a more pro-active environment. The head official or designated official will watch the swim start. The bike course officials will stage and disperse onto the course to observe behavior - identifying violations while observing and/or timing athletes actions. Officials can also communicate accidents out on the course.

Prior to submitting the penalty report to the timer, the officiating team will debrief and complete violation reports. The assistant officials are supportive and strictly observe and document violations without the authority to apply penalties. Only the head official can apply penalties. Assistant officials report observations to HR who will review and determine penalty assessment. Once the penalty report is submitted to the Timer, the Head Official will post the report in the results area and remain through the awards ceremony.

Supporting the official's program:

As an RD you have many opportunities to help support and grow the officials program:

- **Request USAT Certified Officials at your sanctioned event:** Officials work with the RD to ensure a smooth execution of the event, ensure integrity of the event and promote fairness by requesting certified officials. Officials need experience, which means working events, your events. There is not a lot of consistency of rules and enforcement from race to race in our sport. Inconsistency of enforcement at events diminishes and erodes the authority of the official and respect for the rules of our sport. Athlete's uncertainty regarding the scope of their responsibility, their behaviors associated with the role responsibility, the process of how it will be evaluated and the consequences when not carried out, negatively influence athlete satisfaction and the growth of our sport.
- **Help recruit officials or consider hosting a USAT Officials Clinic at your event:** This a service to our sport and benefits the RD, athletes, USAT and the Officials Program, while paying it forward. When you host an official's clinic you are supporting our program and benefitting our sport, additionally you will benefit from a lower cost officiating team as clinic attendees are at no cost. There are still costs associated with the head official and perhaps an additional motorcycle, but new officials serve in a probationary period and will work their next two events at no cost. If you have multiple events within the region

you could benefit not only from the clinic but the subsequent probationary assignments and supports other events in the region. The goal is to recruit more officials and not only provide a cost benefit with local officials, but more officials to accommodate event requests.

- **Promote sportsmanship and respect for USAT Officials:** Our official has given up their time to get trained and travel to races. Sometimes they may come across as the bad guy because they have to make a call in the interest of safety or fairness. If you request officials, promote the USAT Officials Program and share the benefits of requesting certified USAT Officials for events and encourage other Race Directors to utilize the USAT Officials Program and request officials.

Where can I find motorcycle drivers to work my event?

- [Gold Wing Road Riders Association](#)
- [BMW Riders Association](#)
- [Finish Line Motor Escort](#)

What rights does the athlete have when they receive a penalty?

Participants should be encouraged to check the results board, prior to the awards ceremony, to see if their race number is listed on the Head Referee Report. If the participant received a penalty they will see what rule was violated and the penalty time assessed. Participants who receive a penalty have the right to see the Violation Report associated with their penalty and the Head Official will explain how the rule was violated.

While judgement calls cannot be protested or appealed, as defined in the rules, if there is a case of mistaken identity or clerical error in transcription of the race number, the penalty is removed.

Self-officiating:

How do I self-officiate the Competitive Rules at my event?

The rules for self-officiating are indicated in your sanction contract. Should you wish to take on that responsibility, you are required to appoint someone as your head official and provide them the training and resources needed to enforce the Competitive Rules.

If I choose to self-officiate can a USAT Official volunteer at my event as head official?

Yes, USAT officials may work at a sanctioned event as a volunteer, if mutually agreed upon by the official and the race director. When working under these circumstances, the USAT official may not wear any part of the USAT official's uniform nor may they identify themselves as a USAT official.

Can volunteers be used as marshals to report rule infractions?

The sport of triathlon is somewhat unusual in that it may use volunteers in the position of marshals who are empowered to report rule infractions. If a USAT Official is requested, the head official may deputize and train volunteers to serve as marshals for rules enforcement in transition or other areas. This works because the head official is the only person who actually assesses penalties and it is that trained official's judgement that will be relied upon for fairness.

How do I enforce the Competitive Rules at a USAT sanctioned event?

Whether or not USAT officials are present, every sanctioned event director is required to ensure that the USAT *Competitive Rules* are enforced. Race directors have the option to self-enforce or to request that USAT provide USAT officials to handle all interpretation and enforcement of the rules. Race directors should consider what is best for their events based upon size of field, availability of motorcycles, and budget limitations.

How can I be sure the Competitive Rules are properly enforced?

The best solution is to request the presence of a USAT official at the event. There are some costs involved that could present an obstacle to smaller or lower-budget races, but USAT works to support each event that requests the presence of trained officials.
