



USA TAEKWONDO
REFEREE CODE OF OPERATIONS

March 20, 2019

USA Taekwondo Referee Code of Operations

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Article 1. Purpose of the Referee Code of Operations

The purpose of the Referee Code of Operations is to provide guidance and regulation for all matters related to the training, certification, promotion and administration of USA Taekwondo (USATKD) Kyorugi, Poomsae and Para referees, in accordance with the goals of the USATKD Referee Development Program, which are:

1. To develop USATKD Referees at all levels through education, standardization and practical application.
2. To certify and promote referees using a systematic approach based on participation and merit.
3. To ensure a fair competition environment for athletes in pursuit of competitive excellence.

Article 2. USATKD Referee Council

- 2.1 Overall responsibility for the direction and management of the USATKD Referee Development Program shall be the responsibility of the Referee Chair, reporting to the USATKD Executive Director through the USATKD Director of Events.
- 2.2 The Referee Chair will be assisted in his/her technical and referee development duties by three appointed Referee Leadership Groups: Referee Event Coordinators, Referee Evaluation Coordinators, and Referee Education Coordinators (including separate teams for Sparring, Poomsae/Breaking/Demo Team and Para Sparring/Poomsae), as well as by various *ad hoc* volunteer groups and individuals as may be assembled and called upon by the Referee Chair.
- 2.2 Collectively, the Referee Chair, Leadership Groups and actively supporting referee volunteers shall be known as the “USATKD Referee Council.”
- 2.4 The administrative office of the USATKD Referee Development Program shall be located at the USATKD national headquarters. Administrative matters related to the Referee Development Program shall be handled by designated USATKD office personnel under the direction of the USATKD Director of Events. In addition to other duties as may be assigned, the national office shall:
 - 2.4.1 Maintain an accurate, up-to-date digital database of all USATKD referees—active and inactive—including seminar attendance and tournament participation records.
 - 2.4.2 Administer the referee certification program and issue certificates in a timely manner.

- 2.4.3 Assist with scheduling, travel arrangements and personnel assignments for seminars, camps, events, etc.
- 2.4.4 Communicate to the referee corps details of upcoming USATKD and WT events, seminars and camps, as well as alerts about any changes to competition rules or referee procedures.
- 2.4.5 Maintain an archive of referee performance evaluations (both physical and digital, when available).

Article 3. Duties and Responsibilities of the USATKD Referee Council

The duties and responsibilities of the USATKD Referee Council shall include:

- 3.1 Developing, publishing and maintaining accurate, up-to-date Competition Rules for sparring, poomsae, breaking, demonstration teams and any other events that USATKD may choose to feature at national, regional and state competitions. These rules shall, in principle, be consistent with the current rules and interpretations published by the World Taekwondo organization, while also taking into account the particular competition requirements of USATKD (e.g., “no head contact” and “light head contact” rules, color belt poomsae divisions, etc.).
- 3.2 Ensuring standardized and consistent application of the USATKD Competition Rules at all USATKD-sanctioned competitions.
- 3.3 Conducting referee certification seminars, development camps, webinars and other professional development activities for referees.
- 3.4 Continually developing and improving tools and techniques for referee education and training, including:
 - 3.4.1 Creating and maintaining a library of online resources and materials for referees.
 - 3.4.2 Ensuring the quality and professionalism of seminar instruction through an ongoing “train the trainer” program.
 - 3.4.3 Integrating online learning into the training mix.
 - 3.4.4 Developing a structured referee training program that appropriately addresses the varying needs of referees of differing skill and experience levels.
 - 3.4.5 Increasing opportunities for practical experience and supervised ring-time for USATKD referees at all levels.

- 3.5 Developing fair and standardized processes for evaluating the performance of sparring and poomsae referees, and conducting regular evaluations at national and other USATKD events; this data shall be used to continually improve referee performance and referee training.
- 3.6 Providing for the selection, assignment, and supervision of officiating referees and judges at all USATKD-sanctioned national and international events; final determination shall be the responsibility of the Referee Chair.
- 3.7 Providing a definitive, well-marked path for referee advancement from first-time seminar participant to International Referee, ensuring adequate performance at each level and awarding the appropriate level of USATKD referee certification based on completion of seminars, training camps, refereeing experience and practical evaluation of abilities.
- 3.8 Developing procedures and merit-based criteria for selecting USATKD referees to participate at International Referee Certification Courses, and recommending eligible referees to attend these courses.
- 3.9 Developing procedures and merit-based criteria for recommending U.S. International Referees to officiate at International competitions conducted or sanctioned by the World Taekwondo organization (WT), and recommending referees for such events.
- 3.10 Recruiting new referees, retaining active, productive referees and recovering and rekindling the enthusiasm of inactive referees.
- 3.11 Serving as a technical advisory committee to USATKD for competition and refereeing matters, and assisting USATKD Tournament, Coaching and Athlete committees when asked to do so.
- 3.12 Developing and enforcing a Referee Code of Ethics to ensure the highest standards of professionalism for all USATKD-certified referees.
- 3.13 Publishing the Referee Code of Operations, and updating the Code when and as required, subject to the approval of the USATKD Executive Director.

Article 4. Referee Chair

- 4.1 The Referee Chair shall be appointed by the USATKD Executive Director. The Referee Chair serves at the pleasure of the USATKD Executive Director, and may be replaced at any time.

- 4.2 The Referee Chair shall serve as the spokesperson for the USATKD Referee Council and—in cooperation with the rest of the USATKD Referee Council—shall coordinate all functions of the USATKD Referee Development Program.
- 4.3 Working closely with the USATKD Director of Events and USATKD staff, the Referee Chair shall be responsible for all matters and decisions pertaining to USATKD referee activities, including:
 - 4.3.1 Coordinating and conducting referee certification seminars, training camps, webinars and other educational activities.
 - 4.3.2 Publishing and updating all USATKD Competition Rules, and communicating any changes to the Competition Rules to referees, coaches and competitors in a timely and effective manner.
 - 4.3.3 Approving referee promotion certificates, citations and commendations.
 - 4.3.4 Appointing referees for USATKD national and regional championships, Team Trials and, if needed, at certain USATKD-sanctioned events, as well as coordinating with World Taekwondo on the appointment of referees for USATKD-hosted international competitions.
 - 4.3.5 Managing and directing all referee activities at USATKD national and regional championships and Team Trials, and, as required, at USATKD-hosted WT competitions.
 - 4.3.6 Evaluating and approving referees for promotion and certification.
 - 4.3.7 Recommending and approving referees for International Referee Certification Courses and WT-sponsored international competitions, in consultation with the USATKD Executive Director and Director of Events, based on criteria specified in the Referee Code of Operations.
 - 4.3.8 Collaborating with the USATKD Executive Director and Director of Events on appointments to the various Referee Leadership Groups.
 - 4.3.9 Putting together and overseeing *ad hoc* working groups with appropriate professional skills to assist in achieving the goals of the Referee Development Program.
 - 4.3.10 Selecting the referee representative to serve on the Competition Supervisory Board and Extraordinary Sanctions Committee at USATKD National Championships, Team Trials and, if needed, at certain USATKD-sanctioned events.
 - 4.3.11 Creating, modifying, and/or amending policies in all matters related to the technical contest rules and referee certification, in collaboration with the USATKD Director of Events, and subject to the approval of the USATKD Executive Director.

4.3.12 Supporting the USATKD Executive Director in applying to the World Taekwondo organization to host kyorugi and poomsae International Referee Seminars and International Referee Refresher Courses.

4.5 Eligibility

4.5.1 The Referee Chair shall be a U.S. citizen, currently registered as a Referee Member of USA Taekwondo.

4.5.2 He/she must have a minimum of four years' history working as a USATKD referee and actively supporting the USATKD Referee Development Program.

4.5.3 He/she must be an active World Taekwondo International Referee in good standing.

Article 5. Leadership Group—Referee Event Coordinators

5.1 From five to eight senior referees shall be appointed as Referee Event Coordinators by the USATKD Executive Director, in consultation with the Referee Chair and Director of Events.

5.2 Each Referee Event Coordinator shall serve for a term of one year, and may be removed at any time, subject to approval of the USAT Executive Director, through the Director of Events. Upon completion of the one-year period, by mutual agreement and subject to approval of the USATKD Executive Director, the term of service may be extended.

5.3 The Referee Event Coordinators shall support and assist the Referee Chair in the performance of his/her duties. Their responsibilities shall include:

5.3.1 Assisting in the supervision of rings, weigh-in, inspection and other referee activities at USATKD national and regional championships, Team Trials and state championships (as needed) and, as required, at USATKD-hosted WT competitions.

5.3.2 Working closely with the Referee Chair, tournament staff and USATKD office staff on tournament management of event flow, as well as providing post-event feedback and evaluation.

5.3.3 Serving as instructors at referee certification seminars, training camps, webinars and other educational activities, after having successfully completed a Referee Instructor Training Camp.

5.3.4 Recommending referees for promotion and special recognition.

5.3.5 Advising and assisting the Referee Chairs of USATKD state organizations.

- 5.3.6 Assisting the Referee Chair in recommending referees for USATKD national and regional championships and Team Trials, as well as for USATKD-hosted WT competitions.
- 5.3.7 Performing other referee-related duties as the Referee Chair may direct.
- 5.4 Referee Event Coordinators will receive verbal and written evaluations by the Referee Chair upon completion of each event.
- 5.5 Eligibility
 - 5.5.1 Referee Event Coordinators shall be U.S. citizens or residents, currently registered as Referee Members of USA Taekwondo.
 - 5.5.2 Each Referee Event Coordinator must have a history of actively supporting the organization's Referee Development Program.
 - 5.5.3 Each Referee Event Coordinator must be an active World Taekwondo International Referee in good standing.
 - 5.5.4 Each Referee Event Coordinator must have taken a USATKD Referee Certification Seminar, or WT International Referee Refresher Course within the past two years.

Article 6. Leadership Group—Referee Evaluation Coordinators

- 6.1 From five to eight senior referees shall be appointed as Referee Evaluation Coordinators by the USATKD Executive Director, in consultation with the Referee Chair and Director of Events.
- 6.2 Each Referee Evaluation Coordinator shall serve for a term of one year, and may be removed at any time, subject to approval of the USAT Executive Director, through the Director of Events. Upon completion of the one-year period, by mutual agreement and subject to approval of the USATKD Executive Director, the term of service may be extended.
- 6.3 The Referee Evaluation Coordinators shall support and assist the Referee Chair in the performance of his/her duties. Their responsibilities shall include:
 - 6.3.1 Developing and implementing an effective referee evaluation process—including written and verbal assessments of center referees, corner judges Technical Assistants and Video Review Jurors for sparring, and assessments of referees, judges and ring coordinators for poomsae.
 - 6.3.2 Training each Referee Evaluation Coordinator to administer fair, accurate and constructive evaluations in a consistent manner.

- 6.3.3 Conducting evaluations at USATKD National Championships, National and Regional Referee Camps and Referee Seminars, and at other events as requested by the Director of Events and Referee Chair.
 - 6.3.4 Providing recommendations to the Referee Chair regarding the selection of referees for national events, Team Trials and USATKD-hosted WT competitions, as well as for WT International Referee Seminars.
 - 6.3.5 Ensuring that evaluation records are immediately transmitted to the Referee Chair and to USATKD staff for permanent archival, so that the information can be useful as a measure of individual professional development over an entire refereeing career.
 - 6.3.6 Preparing after-action event reports to be shared with the USATKD Executive Director and other members of the USATKD Referee Council.
 - 6.3.7 Serving in an advisory capacity to the Executive Director and Referee Chair, as requested.
- 6.4 Performance of Referee Evaluation Coordinators will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by the Referee Chair and the Director of Events.
- 6.5 To ensure efficient and clear communication, the Referee Evaluation Coordinators will choose one member of the Leadership Group to be the spokesperson and day-to-day contact with the Referee Chair.
- 6.6 Eligibility
- 6.6.1 Referee Evaluation Coordinators members shall be U.S. citizens or residents, currently registered as Referee Members of USA Taekwondo.
 - 6.6.2 Each Referee Evaluation Coordinator must have a history of actively supporting the organization's Referee Development Program.
 - 6.6.3 Each Referee Evaluation Coordinator must be an active U.S.-certified World Taekwondo International Referee in good standing, Second Class or higher.
 - 6.6.4 Each Referee Evaluation Coordinator must have taken a USATKD Referee Certification Seminar, or WT International Referee Refresher Course within the past two years.

Article 7. Leadership Group—Referee Education Coordinators

- 7.1 From five to eight senior referees shall be appointed as Referee Education Coordinators in each of the following areas:
- Sparring
 - Poomsae/Breaking/Demo Team
 - Para-Taekwondo Sparring and Poomsae
- 7.2 Referee Education Coordinators shall be appointed by the USATKD Executive Director, in consultation with the Referee Chair and Director of Events.
- 7.3 Each of the Referee Education Coordinators shall serve for a term of one year, and may be removed at any time, subject to approval of the USAT Executive Director, through the Director of Events. Upon completion of the one-year period, by mutual agreement and subject to approval of the USATKD Executive Director, the term of service may be extended.
- 7.4 The Referee Education Coordinators shall support and assist the Referee Chair in the performance of his/her duties. Their responsibilities shall include:
- 7.4.1 Developing and implementing a comprehensive, standardized program of referee training for sparring, poomsae, breaking, demo team competition and Para-Taekwondo.
 - 7.4.2 Publishing and updating USAT competition rules for all disciplines, and communicating any changes to the competition rules to referees, coaches and competitors in a timely and effective manner.
 - 7.4.3 Developing curriculum and logistical requirements for referee certification seminars and training camps.
 - 7.4.4 Creating and implementing an effective online referee education program.
 - 7.4.5 Developing and implementing an effective “train the trainer” program to ensure the quality and consistency of all USATKD referee training.
 - 7.4.6 Creating and producing on-site and online training programs and educational materials.
 - 7.4.7 Conducting referee certification seminars, training camps, webinars and other educational activities, after having successfully completed a Referee Instructor Training Camp.
 - 7.4.8 Reviewing and updating the USATKD Referee Code of Operations, as necessary, including making recommendations for a clear, logical and structured path of certification and promotion for all USATKD referees.

- 7.4.9 Assisting in the development and implementation of an effective referee recruitment and retention program.
- 7.5 Performance of Referee Education Coordinators will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by the Referee Chair and the Director of Events.
- 7.6 Eligibility
 - 7.6.1 Referee Education Coordinators shall be a U.S. citizens or residents, currently registered as a Referee Members of USA Taekwondo.
 - 7.6.2 Each Referee Education Coordinator must have a history of actively supporting the organization's Referee Development Program.
 - 7.6.3 Each Referee Education Coordinator must be an active USATKD A-level referee or World Taekwondo International Referee in good standing.

Article 8. Referee Staffing at USATKD Competitions

- 8.1 Referee staffing requirements will vary, depending on the size and nature of the competition. In consultation with the Referee Chair, the USATKD Executive Director and the Director of Events will determine the number of referees that will be required for each event.
- 8.2 The USATKD Referee Chair has primary responsibility for selecting qualified referees to be appointed to officiate at national events based on criteria for selection and appointment detailed in Article 11, below.
 - 8.2.1 Accommodations, meals, and daily stipend will be provided by USATKD for all participating referees and duly appointed Referee Council members.
 - 8.2.2 The daily stipend shall be \$100 per day for International Referees, \$75 per day for A level Referees and \$50 per day for D, C and B Level Referees who work the full competition day.
 - 8.2.3 USATKD shall provide hotel room (double occupancy), and meals to all referees appointed by the Referee Chair, from the evening before the referee's first day of refereeing through the morning after the referee's last day of refereeing. (USATKD reserves the right to schedule some referees to leave the event during the last day of competition, where practical, and may not provide the final night's hotel room in those cases. These arrangements will be made in advance, with agreement of the Referee Chair and the referees involved.)

In lieu of meals, USATKD may elect to provide referees a *per diem* allocation based on current U.S. Government Services Administration rates for the city in which the event is held.

- 8.2.4 USATKD shall provide full expenses (i.e., airfare, meals, hotel and stipend) for Referee Council members—Referee Chair, Referee Event Coordinators and Referee Evaluation Coordinators—appointed to a USATKD event according to the guidelines in Section 8.4, below.
- 8.2.5 Additionally, USATKD shall provide airfare, lodging and meals for seminar instructors who must arrive at national certification seminars prior to the arrival of the appointed referees for national events.
- 8.3 The Tournament Organizing Committee for each USATKD event has the following responsibilities:
- 8.3.1 USATKD (or the local organizing committee, where applicable), will arrange transportation services for all appointed referees from the airport to the hotel headquarters, and from the hotel to the airport on the day of departure; referees must provide their travel itineraries by the published deadline date.
- 8.3.2 USATKD or the local organizing committee will provide transportation from the hotel to and from the tournament site on the days of the competition.
- 8.3.3 In addition, USATKD or the local organizing committee will register applicants and will provide an appropriate venue for the on-site Referee Certification Seminar, if scheduled, including:
- Seating for all participants and sufficient space for practical training; typically, one full-size competition ring for each 20 participants.
 - Equipment for the seminar, including: computer projection system, projector screen, electronic scoring system(s)—sparring or poomsae as required, large flip chart or blackboard; working IVR system if required.
 - Athletes, electronic body protectors and safety gear for simulated sparring sessions; for poomsae seminars, poomsae athletes will be available for scoring practice and demonstration.
- 8.4 Minimum Referee Council staffing requirements for events of varying sizes:
- 8.4.1 One to two competition rings
- One Referee Chair
- 8.4.2 Three to seven competition rings
- One Event Referee Chair
 - Three rings: One Referee Event Coordinator, one Referee Evaluation Coordinator
- Four or more rings: Two Referee Event Coordinators, two Referee Evaluation Coordinators

- 8.4.3 Eight or more competition rings
 - One Event Referee chair
 - One Referee Event Coordinator for every four rings
 - One Referee Evaluation Coordinator for every four rings
- 8.5 Referee staffing for a particular event may be increased, subject to the approval of the USATKD Executive Director and Director of Events.

Article 9. Kyorugi Referee Certification Requirements

- 9.1 Basic requirements for USATKD referee certification are as follows:
 - 9.1.1 Must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
 - 9.1.2 Must be a current USATKD member.
 - 9.1.3 Must be at least 16 years old.
 - 9.1.4 Must complete and pass USATKD-approved background check every two years (18 years and older only).
 - 9.1.5 Must complete and pass U.S. Center for Safe Sport training every two years (all ages).
 - 9.1.6 Must hold the rank of 1st Dan or higher.
 - 9.1.7 Must be physically able to perform the activities required of a Taekwondo referee. *(Note: Referees who are unable to serve as center referees due to disability or injury may be able to work as corner judges, Technical Assistants, or Video Review Jurors.)*
- 9.2 Provisional Certification: Non-Black Belts Over 16 Years of Age

Non-Black Belt students, parents, and other interested persons over 16 years old may attend Referee certification seminars and Referee Training Camps for sparring and poomsae. Upon successful completion of promotion requirements, they can earn provisional certification up to C level and participate as referees at local events and USATKD state championships; they may also serve as computer operators at USATKD national events. Upon attaining 1st Dan, they can receive official USATKD referee certification appropriate to their level.

9.4 Requirements for D Level Kyorugi certification

Seminar Requirement	1 seminar
Written Test	Online*
Practical Test	At seminar or associated event
Required Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corner Judging• Inspection• Weigh-In
Online Courses / Webinars* (When available)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to Conduct Weigh-Ins• Inspection Checklist• How to Judge Breaking

* Online requirements may be completed after certification seminar.

9.3 Requirements for C Level Kyorugi certification

Time Requirement	Minimum of 12 months at D level
Seminar/Camp Requirement	2 seminars & 1 Referee Camp
Written Test	Online
Practical Test	At seminar or associated event
Required Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hand signals• Center referee procedures• Computer operation
Online Courses / Webinars	(TBD)
Evaluation	At Referee Camp
Sanctioned Events*	Minimum of 4, including at least 1 USATKD State Championships

* Includes USATKD State Championships, NCTA Championships, Junior and Senior National Championships, USATKD Team Trials, and other USATKD-sanctioned events.

9.4 Requirements for B Level Kyorugi certification

Rank Requirement	1st Dan
Time Requirement	Minimum of 18 months at C level
Seminar/Camp Requirement	2 Seminars & 1 Referee Camp
Written Test	Online
Practical Test	At Nationals
Required Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent hand signals and procedures • Superior match management ability • Basic T.A. skills
Online Courses / Webinars	(TBD)
Evaluation	At Nationals and/or Referee Camp
Sanctioned Events*	Minimum of 4, including at least 1 USATKD National Championships

* Includes USATKD State Championships, NCTA Championships, Junior and Senior National Championships, USATKD Team Trials, and other USATKD-sanctioned events.

** To receive promotion credit for Nationals, referees must work a minimum of three days.

9.5 Requirements for A Level Kyorugi certification

Rank Requirement	1st Dan
Time Requirement	Minimum of 24 months at B level
Seminar/Camp Requirement	2 Seminars & 1 Referee Camp
Written Test	Online
Practical Test	At Nationals
Required Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemplary hand signals and procedures • Outstanding match management ability • Expert T.A. skills • Competent IVR proficiency
Evaluation	At Nationals and/or Referee Camp
Online Courses / Webinars	(TBD)
Sanctioned Events*	Minimum of 6, with at least 1 USATKD State Championships per year and at least 2 National Championships

* Includes USATKD State Championships, NCTA Championships, Junior and Senior National Championships, USATKD Team Trials, and other USATKD-sanctioned events.

9.6 Dual Citizenship

Referees who relocate to the U.S. from another country may participate in USATKD-sanctioned events, as long as they meet the requirements to become a referee as detailed in the Referee Code of Operations.

9.6.1 Individuals who are already nationally certified referees from their native country will be evaluated by the USATKD Evaluation Group at a USATKD National Championships or Referee Camp to determine the equivalent referee level in accordance with USATKD referee standards.

9.6.2 The referee may then continue to develop and progress through the USATKD promotion levels.

9.6.3 A WT International Referee from another country who has relocated to the U.S. may request to have their IR country of record changed to the USA.

Article 10. Poomsae Referee Certification Requirements

10.1 Basic requirements for USATKD referee certification are as follows:

10.1.1 Must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.

10.1.2 Must be a current USATKD member.

10.1.3 Must be at least 18 years of age.

10.1.4 Must complete and pass USATKD-approved background check every two years (18 years and older only).

10.1.5 Must complete and pass U.S. Center for Safe Sport training every two years (all ages).

10.1.6 Must hold rank of 1st Dan or higher.

10.1.7 Non-Black Belts over 18 years old and Red Belts over 16 years old can earn provisional Poomsae Referee certification according to the guidelines in section 9.2 and 9.3, above.

10.2 Requirements for D Level Poomsae certification

Minimum Age	16
Rank Requirement	1st Dan
Seminar Requirement	1 Poomsae Seminar
Written Test	Online (Passing Grade: 70%)
Required Competencies	Rules, Judging
Must Be Able To Judge	• Taeguek 1-8 • Keumgang • Koryo
	• Breaking

10.3 Requirements for C Level Poomsae certification

Time Requirement	Minimum of 12 months at D level
Seminar/Camp Requirement	1 Poomsae Seminar & 1 Poomsae Camp
Written Test	Online (Passing Grade: 70%)
Required Competencies	Rules, Judging, Ring Coordinator
Evaluation	At camp or event
Must Be Able To Judge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taeguek 1-8 • Koryo • Keumgang
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taebaek • Pyongwon • Sipjin
Sanctioned Events*	Minimum of 4, including at least 1 USATKD State Championships

* Includes USATKD State Championships, NCTA Championships, Junior and Senior National Championships, USATKD Poomsae Team Trials, and other USATKD-sanctioned events.

10.4 Requirements for B Level Poomsae certification

Time Requirement	Minimum of 18 months at C level
Seminar/Camp Requirement	1 Poomsae Seminar & 1 Poomsae Camp
Written Test	Online (Passing Grade: 70%)
Required Competencies	Rules, Judging, Ring Coordinator
Evaluation	1 at camp or event
Must Be Able To Judge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taeguek 1-8 • Koryo • Keumgang
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taebaek • Pyongwon • Sipjin
Sanctioned Events*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jitae • Chungkwon • Hansu
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking • Demo Team • Freestyle with Eval
Sanctioned Events*	Minimum of 6, including at least 1 USATKD State Championships and 1 USATKD National Championships

* Includes USATKD State Championships, NCTA Championships, Junior and Senior National Championships, USATKD Poomsae Team Trials, and other USATKD-sanctioned events.

10.5 Requirements for A Level Poomsae certification

Time Requirement	Minimum of 24 months at B level
Seminar/Camp Requirement	2 Poomsae Seminars plus 1 Poomsae Camp
Written Test	Online (Passing Grade: 70%)
Required Competencies	Rules, Judging, Ring Coordinator, Ring Management
Evaluation	1 at camp or event, plus 1 at event
Must Be Able To Judge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taeguek 1-8 • Taebaek • Jitae • Koryo • Pyongwon • Chungkwon • Keumgang • Sipjin • Hansu
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking • Demo Team • Freestyle with Eval
Physical Evaluation	Poomsae Performance
Sanctioned Events*	Minimum of 8, including at least 2 USATKD State Championships and 2 USATKD National Championships

* Includes USATKD State Championships, NCTA Championships, Junior and Senior National Championships, USATKD Poomsae Team Trials, and other USATKD-sanctioned events.

10.6 What if you are already certified as a Level 1 or Level 2 Poomsae Referee?

Referees who are currently certified at Level 1 or Level 2, or who are WT International Poomsae Referees, do not have to “start over” with the new certification schedule. They will be awarded new certification based on current Poomsae Referee level, number of seminars/camps already attended and the number of USATKD-sanctioned events worked to date, as follows:

Current Level	Seminars	State Championships and other Sanctioned Events	Number of Nationals Worked as Poomsae Referee	New Equivalent Rank
Level 1	1	0	0	D
	1	1	1	C
Level 1 or 2	2	0	0	C
Level 2	2	1–3	0 or 1	C
	2	4–5	At least 1	B
	3*	6 or more	At least 2	A

* Audited seminars may be applied toward conversion from Level 2 to new A Level.

Those Referees who are eligible for equivalent B Level or A level certification will also be required to pass a written and practical test at a Poomsae Referee Seminar or Camp, and must also be evaluated by the Referee Evaluation Coordinator. Please note that A level certification does not automatically qualify a referee for recommendation to a WT International Poomsae Referee seminar (see *Article 12 for requirements.*)

Article 11. Selection and Appointment to Nationals and Team Trials

- 11.1 Selection and appointment of referees to Team Trials and national events is the responsibility of the Referee Chair, in consultation with the Director of Events. They will consider the following criteria when making appointments to these events:
 - 11.1.1 Must be U.S. citizen or resident (*Note: International Referees from other countries invited to USATKD Nationals as special "goodwill guests" are not subject to U.S. citizenship or USATKD membership requirements.*)
 - 11.1.2 Must be a current USATKD Referee Member.
 - 11.1.3 Must have participated as a referee at a minimum of one USATKD- or WT-sanctioned event over the past twelve months.
 - 11.1.5 Must have successfully completed one of the following within the past eighteen months (or more recently when there have been substantial rule changes and upon timely announcement by USATKD): a USATKD referee certification seminar, WT IR refresher or WT-appointed event.
 - 11.1.6 Must demonstrate understanding of and adherence to the Referee Code of Ethics (see Section 16).
- 11.2 Referees of all certification levels will be considered for USATKD National Championships based on demonstrated superior performance. Evaluations from previous Nationals and/or Referee Camps will be taken into account.
 - 11.2.1 For multi-day events, priority will be given to those who are able to work more consecutive days.
 - 11.2.2 Depending on the needs of the event, priority may be given to those who are certified in poomsae as well as sparring.
- 11.3 Team Trial selection is by invitation only. Only proven referees of B level or higher will be considered; however, exceptions may be made for outstanding C-level referees. Any level referee may be selected as a computer operator.

Article 12. Recommendation for International Referee Course

12.1 In order to be eligible for recommendation by USATKD for an International Referee Certification Course conducted by the World Taekwondo organization, a USATKD referee must meet the following qualifications:

	Kyorugi	Poomsae
Citizenship	U.S. citizen or permanent resident	
USATKD Membership	USATKD Referee Member	
USATKD Referee Level	A Level	
Age	21 years old (based on year when IR seminar is held)	25 years old (based on year when IR seminar is held)
Kukkiwon Black Belt Certification	Males: 4th dan or higher Females: 1st dan or higher	4th dan or higher
Record of Participation	Must have participated as a Kyorugi referee at a minimum of three USATKD National Championships or Team Trials within the previous five years	Must have participated as a Poomsae referee at a minimum of three USATKD National Championships or Team Trials within the previous five years
Demonstrated Abilities	Consistent competence in weigh-in, inspection, center referee, corner judge, T.A. and Review Jury—as reflected in Referee Evaluation Coordinators' evaluations over the preceding three years*	Consistent competence as a Poomsae judge, Poomsae referee and ring coordinator—as reflected in Referee Evaluation Coordinators' evaluations over the preceding three years*
Physical Test	Must successfully pass a physical test that approximates the physical testing required as part of the International Referee certification course**	Demonstrate detailed knowledge of all Poomsae from Taeguek Il Jang through Hansu, based on current WT standards and practices**
Recommendation	USATKD Referee Chair	
Approval	USATKD Executive Director	

* Effective as of January 1, 2020.

** Test to be administered at a USATKD Referee Camp, or by special arrangement with the Referee Chair.

- 12.2 USATKD will publish the announcement of WT International Referee Seminars and application deadlines in a timely manner. Interested referees should apply in writing to the Referee Chairman, with a copy to the USATKD Referee Programs Manager.
- 12.3 A USATKD referee with dual citizenship who elects to become a WT International Referee through their native country without meeting USATKD requirements for IR recommendation will continue to be recognized at their highest USATKD referee level attained.

Example: An individual with New Zealand citizenship relocates to the USA and enters the USATKD Referee Program, attaining C level. Wishing to attend the WT IR Certification Course, they secure a recommendation from the NZ TKD Federation, and become certified as a WT International Referee from New Zealand.

The referee may be selected for a USATKD-certified event, but for administrative purposes will be considered to be a USATKD C-level Referee, and will receive a stipend for that level. In order to be paid at the rate for WT International Referees at USATKD-sanctioned events, they will have to meet USATKD promotion criteria up to A level.

Article 13. Recommendation for Appointment to International Events

- 13.1 For World Taekwondo-sanctioned events—including international championships, selection camps, special training, etc.—requiring NGB nomination or recommendation, the Referee Chair will prepare a list of qualified U.S. International Referees. This list will form the basis for recommendations to WT, with the number of referees determined by WT, and the order based on evaluation of skills, service to USATKD and record of participation in USATKD national events. Final determination will be made by the Referee Chair, with the approval of the USATKD Executive Director. All international recommendations are subject to World Taekwondo approval.
- 13.2 Selection of U.S. International Referees for the U.S. Open will be made by the Referee Chair in consultation with the USATKD Executive Director and Director of Events.
- 13.2.1 In order to ensure a truly international competition experience, 70% of International Referees appointed to the U.S. Open shall be from non-USA countries, with no more than 30% from the U.S.
- 13.2.2 Selection priority will be given to those U.S. IRs who have consistently refereed at USATKD national events.

- 13.2.3 Poomsae IRs will be given priority over non-poomsae IRs.
- 13.2.4 Appointed referees must have attended an International Referee Refresher Course within the past three years, with priority given to those who have attended the most recent WT Refresher Course if there have been substantial rule changes.
- 13.2.5 A-level USATKD Referees and new IRs are encouraged to participate at the U.S. Open as Computer Operators, in order to gain experience at an international event.
- 13.2.6 Referees appointed to serve as computer operators will receive hotel room and meals as usual, but not a daily stipend.

Article 14. Referee Certification Seminars and Development Camps

- 14.1 The Referee Chair will have full authority concerning the operation of USATKD Kyorugi and Poomsae referee certification seminars and training camps, under the direction of the USATKD Executive Director through the Director of Events. All seminars—Kyorugi and Poomsae—will be taught by instructors who have been trained and certified by USATKD.
- 14.2 **USATKD National Referee Certification Seminars**
 - 14.2.1 USATKD referee certification Kyorugi and Poomsae seminars shall be conducted in conjunction with all USATKD National Championships.
 - 14.2.2 National referee seminars shall be taught by the Referee Chair, or an approved, USATKD-certified seminar instructor.
- 14.3 **State and Local USATKD Referee Certification Seminars**
 - 14.3.1 Any organization wishing to sponsor a local USATKD referee certification seminar for Kyorugi or Poomsae must submit an application to the USATKD Referee Programs Manager at the USATKD national office. This application will be forwarded to the Referee Chair for approval a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the proposed seminar.
 - 14.3.2 The host organization must be a current USATKD State Association or USATKD Club member.
 - 14.3.3 The host organization is responsible for paying for approved instructor's expenses (airfare, meals, etc.) in advance, and will be reimbursed for expenses based on the following schedule:

Number of Participants	Reimbursement
15 – 24	Up to \$200.00
25 – 44	Up to \$750.00
45 +	Up to \$1000.00

- 14.3.4 Local Kyorugi or Poomsae USATKD referee seminars shall be taught by the Referee Chair, or a USATKD-certified seminar instructor appointed by the Referee Chair. The host may request to have the seminar taught by a specific instructor; in that case, the host organization will be liable for any additional instructor travel expenses that may be incurred—such as additional airfare, etc.
- 14.3.5 When a USATKD referee certification seminar is held in conjunction with a USATKD-sanctioned tournament, those referees requiring practical tests or evaluations will be evaluated by the seminar instructor, a Referee Evaluation Coordinator or other qualified person designated by the Referee Chair.
- 14.3.6 The host organization must submit a full written financial report to USATKD, itemizing the following:
- Total number of seminar participants and seminar fees collected.
 - Total surcharges collected, if any; these are fees collected to help the sponsor recoup costs if there are fewer than 15 participants.
- 14.3.7 Seminar application and roster forms supplied by USATKD must be used for each certification seminar. At the completion of the seminar, all finances, applications, tests, and documents pertaining to the seminar must be submitted to the seminar instructor by the end of the seminar.
- 14.3.8 The host organization will forward all fees collected and materials to the USATKD national office, and submit a full report to the Referee Chair and USATKD Member Services Manager within ten days of the completion of the seminar.
- 14.3.9 Appropriate Competition Rules documents and Seminar Participation Certificates will be sent in electronic form to the hosting organization prior to the seminar. It is the host’s responsibility to a) print out an appropriate number of Participation Certificates; and b) if desired, print out an appropriate number of Competition Rules books to distribute to participants. The USATKD office will also send electronic copies of the Competition Rules to all registered seminar participants prior to the seminar. Seminar presentation materials will also be available online.

- 14.3.10 Upon completion of each Referee Seminar, the instructor will present a Certificate of Participation to each of the attendees.
- 14.4 All USATKD Kyorugi and Poomsae certification seminars must be conducted using the appropriate USATKD Referee Instructor's guidelines, PowerPoint presentation and other educational materials developed and approved by the USATKD Referee Council.
- 14.5 The USATKD national office will issue appropriate referee classification certificates to all successful participants within 60 days.
- 14.6 **USATKD Kyorugi and Poomsae Regional Referee Development Camps**
- 14.6.1 In addition to USATKD-sponsored Referee Camps, any recognized USATKD State Organization or registered club may host a multi-day Kyorugi or Poomsae Referee Development Camp, by arrangement with the Referee Chair and USATKD, using application and roster forms provided by the USATKD.
- 14.6.2 The host organization must guarantee at least 25 camp participants. If there are 25 or more seminar participants, USATKD will handle staffing, administrative and travel arrangements, and will bear all reasonable financial obligations of the instructors' travel, up to a maximum of \$1,250.00. (Exceptions may be made with prior approval by both USATKD CEO and Referee Chair.)
- 14.6.3 The host organization will be responsible for all support facilities and equipment needed to conduct the camp, including:
- An amply-sized venue with at least two full-sized matted rings, both equipped with fully-functional Protector and Scoring Systems (for sparring camp), or Poomsae Pro scoring systems (for poomsae).
 - Tables, chairs, projector, screen, easel, etc. for the lecture portion of the camp.
 - Capabilities for videotaping and playback of matches or poomsae
 - A separate room for review and individual critique of videotaped sparring matches.
 - Athletes for sparring matches, or at least 2-3 national-caliber poomsae competitors for scoring practice.
 - Administrative and logistical support—distributing seminar supplies, collecting participant applications and fees, arranging for any group meals, etc.
- 14.6.4 The host will forward all fees collected and materials to the USATKD national office, and submit a full report to the Referee Chair and USATKD Member Services Manager within ten days of completion of the seminar.

14.6.5 The camp instructors shall be responsible for all administration, instruction and reporting involved with conducting the referee development camp, including:

- Applications, USATKD membership paperwork and any other paperwork and collection of fees that may be required on-site.
- Teaching theory and practical camp curricula.
- Evaluation of individual matches and personal coaching appropriate to the participants' level of expertise.
- Preparing and administering any written and/or practical tests.
- Submitting all applications, fees, and any other paperwork to the USATKD national office within ten days of completion of the camp.
- Making recommendations to USATKD for each participant's certification and upgrade.

14.6.6 Camp participants shall be responsible for:

- Making their own housing arrangements; the instructor and host organization will provide a list of local hotels, and may be able to secure a special group rate.
- Making their own transportation arrangements to and from the airport and hotel, and to and from the hotel to the venue; the host organization may also be able to lend transportation assistance in some cases.

14.6.7 Referees who successfully complete the camp shall receive appropriate credit towards promotion.

14.7 Seminar and Camp participation fees

14.7.1 The fee for USATKD Referee Certification Seminars shall be \$70. Participants may audit the seminar for a \$40.00 fee; no credit will be given to referees that choose to audit. *(Subject to change without notice.)*

14.7.2 The fee for USATKD Referee Development Camps shall be \$140. *(Subject to change without notice).*

14.7.3 Registration should normally be conducted online prior to the seminar or camp; however, instructors and host organizations will make every effort to accommodate late registration on the day of the event.

14.8 Instructor honoraria

14.8.1 Kyorugi and Poomsae seminar instructors shall receive an honorarium of \$200.

14.8.2 The chief Referee Development Camp instructor shall receive an honorarium of \$300; each assistant instructor shall receive \$200.

14.9 Authorized expenses

14.9.1 All authorized expenses for appointed seminar or camp instructors will be paid by the host organization upon completion of the event. If specified minimum attendance requirements are met, USATKD will reimburse the host for these expenses and for the instructor honorarium.

All funds collected for the seminar or camp must be accounted for and remitted to USATKD. *Under no circumstances is the host to deduct any expenses from the funds collected.*

14.9.2 All requests for individual reimbursement must be accompanied by receipts.

14.9.3 Authorized expenses include:

- Air and/or ground transportation; only advance purchase coach airfare tickets will be eligible for reimbursement.
- Ground transportation; the reimbursement rate will be determined by the current IRS standard mileage rate when the seminar instructor chooses to drive his/her privately owned vehicle.
- Hotel accommodations and meals; where meals are not provided the reimbursement will be based on current U.S. Government Service Administration rates for the city in which the seminar is held (if meals are provided by the host organization, there will be no reimbursement for food).
- Miscellaneous expenses, e.g., parking, tolls, etc., not exceeding 20% of the total expenses of the trip (Note: Except by special arrangement, the cost of car rental will *not* be covered.)

Article 15. Protests, Sanctions and Disciplinary Matters

15.1 Protests, sanctions and any other formal disciplinary matters arising at USATKD-sponsored events shall be dealt with in the manner prescribed in the current version of USATKD Competition Rules. The handling of these matters shall be consistent with due process protections guaranteed by the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act and by USATKD bylaws.

15.2 The Referee Chair and Referee Event Coordinators have full authority to investigate any misconduct, violations of the rules, and/or misjudgments committed by any referee while officiating at USATKD National Championships, Team Trials or other USATKD-sponsored event, and to take any appropriate action deemed necessary.

15.2.1 In the case of unintentional misconduct, misjudgment or misapplication of

the competition rules by a judge, referee, or TA, the following actions may be taken by the Referee Chair or any of the Referee Event Coordinators:

- Verbal discussion and immediate instruction and correction.
- Verbal warning.
- Written evaluation of misapplication of Competition Rules.
- Temporary removal from the current ring assignment or reassignment of ring duties.
- Recommendation for permanent removal from the competition and request to proceed with a formal Extraordinary Sanctions Committee.

15.2.2 In the case of severe or repeated misconduct, misjudgment or misapplication of the competition rules by a judge, referee, or TA, the following actions may be taken by the Referee Chair, in consultation with the Referee Event Coordinators:

- Verbal warning and immediate instruction and correction.
- Written warning and evaluation report.
- Temporary or permanent removal from current ring assignment or reassignment of ring duties.
- Recommendation to proceed with a formal Extraordinary Sanctions Committee (see Section 15.3).

15.3 If a duly-convened Extraordinary Sanctions Committee finds that the referee's misconduct, misjudgment or misapplication of the competition has not been severe enough to warrant strong disciplinary action, the referee may still be required to undergo remedial training; e.g., attendance at one or more Referee Camps or seminars, individual coaching, or other corrective training as needed.

15.4 If a duly-convened Extraordinary Sanctions Committee finds that the referee has committed severe, repeated and/or intentional misconduct, misjudgment or misapplication of the competition rules, the following actions may be taken:

15.4.1 Probation of a period not to exceed three years. During the probationary period, the referee must attend from one to three Referee Development Camps, or other training as may be required, as determined by the Referee Chair and Extraordinary Sanctions Committee. The referee may be appointed to USATKD-sanctioned events, where his/her actions and conduct will be closely monitored to determine that errors in misjudgment or misapplication of the competition rules have been corrected.

15.4.2 Temporary or permanent revocation of referee certification. All referee certification will be revoked, and the referee will be prohibited from participating in any USATKD referee activities.

15.4.3 Temporary or permanent suspension of USATKD membership.

- 15.4.4 If the referee is a WT International Referee, the Referee Chair and the USATKD Executive Director shall report the findings of the Extraordinary Sanctions Committee to the Referee Office of the WT, with a copy to the WT Referee Chair.
- 15.5 A referee facing an Extraordinary Sanctions Committee has the following rights:
- 15.5.1 He/she may elect to appear before the committee with the USATKD Referee Director, or with another senior referee representative who is knowledgeable about the Competition Rules and familiar with the sanctions procedure, who shall serve as his/her advocate and who will be available to offer advice and support.
- 15.5.2 There shall be a complete written record of the proceedings, including a full statement of sanctions and penalties.
- 15.5.3 If the Extraordinary Sanctions Committee determines that the referee is to be removed from the competition, USATKD may deny the referee's stipend for any days not worked, but shall not revoke the referee's room and board. Alternately, USATKD may elect to compensate the referee for any incremental travel expense incurred for leaving the competition early.
- 15.5.4 If the referee disagrees with the finding of the Extraordinary Sanctions Committee, he/she may appeal the decision to the USATKD Executive Director, and the Executive Director may refer it to the USATKD Ethics Committee.
- 15.6 In the case of an Extraordinary Sanctions Committee, the Referee Chair must report any disciplinary or corrective action taken to USATKD National Office of any actions within five business days.

Article 16. USATKD Referee Dress Code

- 16.1 The official USATKD referee uniform for USAT National Championships, Regional Championships and State Championships shall be a black suit or black slacks and black blazer, with a plain white dress shirt or blouse, and solid red tie and plain white Taekwondo or athletic shoes.
- No suspenders.
 - No hats.
 - No use of cell phones or pagers while on duty in the ring area.
 - Center referee shall remove jacket, as well as jewelry, rings, watches, etc.
 - Corner judges may remove jackets for comfort.
- 16.2 Official referee polo shirt may replace the white shirt/blouse and red tie at the discretion of the Referee Chair, except for Team Trial events.

Article 17. USATKD Referee Code of Ethics

17.1 All USATKD referees shall adhere to the following Referee Code of Ethics:

- As a referee, I will enforce the current Competition Rules in a fair and impartial manner, showing no favoritism to one competitor over another competitor.
- Competitor safety is of the utmost concern as I perform my duties as Referee.
- I will conduct myself as a professional in all of my actions during a competition event.
- I will not accept favors of any kind in return for my actions as a referee.
- I will maintain proper physical conditioning in order to be able to perform my duties and responsibilities as a referee.
- I will respectfully accept critiques from duly-appointed referee supervisors in order to improve my abilities as a referee.
- I am an ambassador for Taekwondo and, as such, I will perform my duties in a positive and professional manner, using tact and diplomacy.
- I will not have any contact with competitors and coaches during the course of any tournament other than basic greetings and shall not dine or socialize with participating competitors and coaches during the course of any tournament.
- I will recuse myself from any match in which my personal or professional relationship with a contestant or coach may give an appearance of conflict of interest or lack of impartiality.
- I will be familiar with and bound by the Rules and Regulations of USA Taekwondo, including but not limited to the Competitive Rules adopted by USA Taekwondo, the anti-doping rules and procedures adopted by the United States Anti-Doping Agency and World Anti-Doping Agency, and the rules, policies and procedures adopted by the U.S. Center of Safe Sport, as such rules may be amended from time to time.

Article 18. Matters Not Covered by the Code of Operations

18.1 Matters and situations not covered by this Code of Operations will be resolved by consideration of similar Taekwondo precedents and interpretations of the World Taekwondo Competition Rules.

18.2 If the situation is not covered by the World Taekwondo rules, the USATKD Executive Director will make the final decision after meeting with the appropriate parties.

Article 19. Amending the Referee Code of Operations

- 19.1 The Referee Code of Operations may be amended by agreement of the Referee Chair, USATKD Director of Events and USATKD Executive Director. All amendments shall be in writing, and shall be publicized to the USATKD membership.