

North Carolina Mentoring Program for New Officials

In order to work for compensation in NC, a new official must have:

1. Passed appropriate written test
2. Attended a certification school
3. Participated in NC Mentoring Program

Rationale:

This program will provide On-court experience under the direction of a seasoned official, who has been approved as a Mentor who will serve as a resource and will facilitate a base of experience using hands-on training. This will in turn increase knowledge of rules, regulations, and professionalism which will lead to the umpire developing confidence and pride in both his technique and performance.

The results of this program hopefully will be increased retention of the highest quality of trained officials prepared to achieve the Sectional level by the end of their provisional year.

Program Components:

State Mentor/Area Mentor/Trainers:

The State Mentor/Area Mentor will oversee the Mentoring Program and be the liaison between the Officials Council and the Program Participants (Mentors & Participants). The State Coordinator will work closely with all aspects of the Program. Area Mentors will be designated for areas to better serve some geographical areas to ensure that quality of the program is maintained.

Mentors:

The Officials Council will designate Area Mentors from a pool of approved officials, certified in the categories in which the participants may work, who have agreed to participate in the program. Area Mentors will be paired with new officials (Participants) from their geographical area who will make themselves available to discuss rules and offer support and guidance regarding situations that arise on court as well as coach the participant in the Officials Code of Conduct. The Trainers (referees or officials) appointed by the Area Mentor will report progress to the Area Mentor regarding readiness of Participants to work once the minimum requirement for shadowing is met. A trainer may be either the Referee of an event or a designated umpire to supervise the new official. The Area Mentor will then contact the State Coordinator and recommend participant be approved for certification and NUCULA.

Mentor Program Participants:

All provisional officials will be required to volunteer/shadow assigned Trainer/Trainers for a minimum of three days at two or more approved events. The shadowing must be done at a minimum of two different events under at least two different referees/officials who have been approved by the Area Mentor.

Additional shadowing may be required as recommended by the Area Mentor to ensure readiness to work “on his/her own.” The State Mentor Coordinator should be notified of this action.

Area Mentors and Trainers will be given Checklists with guidelines of items to be covered during the training period. Area Mentors and Trainers are not limited to the items on the checklist. Participants must be advised that they must bring checklist to event to be evaluated.

Area Mentors and Trainers will also be provided with a (simple, user-friendly) report form designed to report the Participant’s progress. Trainers will send a report to the Participant’s Mentor following the event that was shadowed. Chair evaluations are not part of the mentoring program. Our main objective is to train rovers at this time. The Area Mentor will send a report to the State Mentor Coordinator after Participant has been approved for certification and NUCULA.

The Next Step:

Once the shadowing process is complete and the Mentor Program Participant has been deemed qualified as having sufficient skills by his/her Area Mentor, the Area Mentor will then notify the State Mentoring Coordinator of the Participant’s readiness. Participant may then be added to the list of officials, qualified to work for compensation, maintained by the District Chairman of Officials. Only then will the participant be allowed to work for compensation and to wear the USTA official’s shirt.

Completion of the NC Mentor Program hopes to ensure retention of newly qualified and certified officials within North Carolina, raise the standards of officiating as well as the expectations of tournament personnel, thereby promoting the growth and development of the profession of Tennis Officiating in our state.

Area Mentor Checklist:

- Contact Participant within 2 weeks
- Discuss training opportunities
- Discuss approved clothing (navy blue shirt without logo, khaki pants, etc.)
- Only after being approved are they allowed to wear USTA shirt
- Counsel on Professionalism and Officials Code of Conduct
- Make yourself available to Participant at a mutually agreeable time to answer questions, offer support, etc., during the Provisional Period
- Report progress to State Mentor Coordinator and/or Area Mentor on a regular basis until Participant is approved for certification and NUCULA.

Trainer Checklist to Cover at Event:

- Appropriate uniform (including outerwear)
- Required equipment
- Appropriate arrival time
- Limitations during training (**Participants should not make any rulings on court until approved to work for compensation, and are wearing the proper USTA attire.**)
- Pre-match tasks & procedures (prepare court, balls, single sticks, etc)
- Particulars as requested by Referee in Pre-match Meeting (warm-up, match format, etc.)
- Troubleshooting (staying calm during intense moments, how to handle parents/coaches, etc)
- Rotation/Coverage area (how many courts) only with trainer beside them
- Appropriate verbiage to be used on court (roving or chair)
- Implementation of PPS (incl. when to use caution)
- Post-match debriefing
- Report to Participant's Area Mentor at conclusion of event.

Provisional Evaluations

Provisional will be evaluated by their Trainers who report to Area Mentor or Mentor(s) throughout their first year of work. Evaluations will cover the following performance areas:

- Professionalism of the official
- On court techniques
- Verbiage
- After match activities

The following examples are provided to assist in the understanding of the performance areas important to new officials.

Professionalism

Punctuality - showed up at least 1 hour before match, or other designated time;

Appearance - wear proper attire, shirt tails tucked in, and be neatly groomed; must wear belt

Relationship with Others - listened, communicated calmly and clearly;

Conduct/demeanor - was composed, confident, not officious and had good posture;

Preparedness - have basic accessories, scorecard, and balls.

Roving Techniques

Court preparation - take care of net, single sticks, debris, and dangerous surface;

Pre-match with players - bring players to net, brief, confident, coin toss.

After match

Clearing the court - Clear the court of debris, balls, etc.;;
set up court for next match

PROVISIONAL OFFICIAL EVALUATION FORM

Provisional must bring this form to be filled out by trainer for each training evaluation and trainer must send to area mentor.

Provisional Official _____ Trainer/Referee _____
Area Mentor _____
Tournament/event _____ Date _____

Indicate level of performance by circling the appropriate number, where 1= unsatisfactory; 2= below expectations; 3= meets expectations; 4= above expectations; 5= excellent. *Starting point should be 3; then up or down based on performance.*

PROFESSIONALISM

Punctuality	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Appearance	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Relationship with Others	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Conduct/demeanor/confidence	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Preparedness	N/A	1	2	3	4	5

TECHNIQUES Rover only

Pre-match

Court preparation	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Meeting with players	N/A	1	2	3	4	5

During match

Keeping time	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Verbiage	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Adherence to rules	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Handling unusual situations	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Overall awareness	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Handling tie-break	N/A	1	2	3	4	5

After match

Clearing the court	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
Reporting to Referee/Desk	N/A	1	2	3	4	5

COMMENTS (Use reverse side if needed)

CODE OF CONDUCT

A USTA official is expected to maintain high professional standards. Violations of this code may result in decertification or suspension from USTA directed assignments.

An official shall:

- Wear the official USTA uniform unless otherwise designated by a tournament contract.
- Be prompt for all assignments.
- Not socialize with or become intimate with the players. (Officials are not prohibited from staying in the tournament hotel or from attending social functions where players may be present.)
- Not accept assignments to any match in which the official has a relationship with one of the players that may be considered a conflict of interest and may cast doubt upon his impartiality. Not only is a bona fide conflict of interest prohibited, but also the appearance of such conflict causes the assignment to be unacceptable.
- Not solicit special assignments in tournaments.
- Not accept an assignment at one event and then withdraw from that assignment in favor of another event.
- Not be interviewed by the media without permission of the referee or his designate.
- Not publicly criticize other officials.
- Not bet on anything concerning a tennis event in which he is involved.
- Not converse with spectators while on court.
- Not request favors or special considerations from a tournament sponsor.
- Not use title or position to abuse the rules or influence others to do so.
- Not consume alcoholic beverages or take drugs or medication that will inhibit performance before his/her assignment ends or while in uniform.
- Cooperate with the efforts of officials committees appointed by the National Chairman.
- Not take photographs of players while in uniform or at any time request players autographs.
- Conduct oneself in a professional, ethical manner.