



# Pickleball

# Officiating

# Structure





This document, titled Pickleball Officiating Structure, delineates the current and ongoing structure for maintaining, operating and reviewing the complete officiating process with Pickleball Canada.

Comments and corrections are welcomed anytime at:  
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## 1. Introduction

The primary objective of the Pickleball Canada Officiating Program is to provide a development and training environment for individuals wishing to become pickleball game officials. There is also an ongoing *operating* aspect to the officiating program aimed at sustaining and maintaining officiating at a high level.

It is expected that the 3 levels of authority for the program (National, Provincial and Club or local) will each contribute to both the development (and updating) of the program as well as the operational needs.

It should be noted that this is an OFFICIATING program and not designed as a rules development or learning program.

## 2. Officiating Structure Within Pickleball Canada

To ensure broad and top to bottom inclusion of a structure consisting of National, Provincial, and Club components will be established.

### a. Competition Chief

- Authority granted by Pickleball Canada Organization (PCO) board
- Responsible for all aspects
- Present program concepts for approval
- Ensure central registry is maintained.

### b. National Leader of Officiating (NLO)

- Works under the auspices of the PCO Competitions Chair
- Has broad responsibility with respect to the pickleball officiating development programs
- Has broad responsibility with respect to tournament game officiating
- May liaise with other organizations with respect to any or all officiating matters

### c. Provincial & Territorial Organizations (PTO)



The PTSOs have sole responsibility for all aspects of the delivery of the PCO Officiating Program as it pertains to recruiting, training, maintenance of qualifications and assignment of duties. Awarding of and maintenance of Level 3 Official status to be in consultation with the NLO.

Each PTSO, on their own or in conjunction with other Provinces/Territories, should assign a 'head referee' or 'chief official' to manage the officiating program in their jurisdictional area.

Included in the jurisdiction of the PTOs are:

- Oversee the delivery of the officiating program within their PTSO,
- Encourage the development of the officiating program in all areas of their Province/Territory
- Final authority for vetting individual(s) before any officiating status is granted
- Encourage Clubs to take an active role in the development of the officiating program
- Responsible for:
  - Training coordination
  - Reporting certification results to PCO
  - Granting authority to clubs or individuals (Officiating Trainers) to deliver the program, including all vetting requirements and reporting procedures
- Serve on the National Officiating Advisory Council

#### **d. Club Level**

It is at the club level that most of the actual delivery of the officiating program will take place.

Clubs have a responsibility to:

- Deliver the program as authorized by the Province/Territory
- Report results to the Province/Territory

Clubs should consider:

- Having a member of their management team responsible for officials development
- Implementing a program specifically for the development of officials



- Designating court time or play opportunities where game officiating is encouraged

In addition clubs should:

- Be in communication with their Provincial or Territorial association to stay up to date with program developments
- Encourage the use of recognized and trained officials for all tournament play

In areas where no formal or affiliated club exists, individuals may be assigned the same authority as a club vis a vis the deliverance and maintenance of the officiating program.

**e. National Officiating Advisory Council (NOAC)**

An Officiating Advisory Council shall consist of one representative from each affiliated Province and Territory. Provincial or Territorial representation may be one person for developmental aspects and another for the operational side or it could be one person covering both aspects.

The Officiating Advisory Council members shall:

- Work under the auspices of their Province or Territory and keep their Provincial or Territorial organization informed and involved
- Encourage the use of recognized officials in all tournament matches
- Be in consultation with the NLO on all officiating development matters
- Communicate to the NLO significant advances within their Province or Territory with respect to officiating
- Communicate to the NLO all members achieving a recognized officiating level, for inclusion in the National database of officials
- Be the official communications conduit to and from the NLO
- Oversee the delivery of the officiating program with their Province or Territory
- Be the final authority for vetting individuals before any officiating status is granted
- Encourage the development of the officiating program and participants in the program in all areas of their Province or Territory



- Encourage all Clubs to take an active role in the development of the officiating program and officials as well

### **3. Officiating Levels**

There are three (3) recognized levels in the PCO Officiating Program.

**a. Level 1 Official**

An introductory level with some limitations, Level 1 is designed to give individuals adequate education, practice and vetting to be confident to officiate tournament matches up to certain levels.

**b. Level 2 Official**

This stage will be the 'destination' for most individuals wishing to officiate pickleball matches. More experience and higher compliance rates will be expected and verified through a more stringent vetting process. Fewer match type restrictions and reduced supervision levels will apply

**c. Level 3 Official**

This stage, also known as PCO Certified Referee, will be achieved after much more stringent practice conditions, rules and best practices compliance and vetting.

### **4. The Official Rules**

There is only one pickleball rule book, maintained by the International Federation of Pickleball (IFP). Pickleball Canada has adopted the rules per the IFP as the pickleball rules within Canada and works with IFP to maintain (revise) the rules from time to time.

The Pickleball Canada Officiating Program is designed as an officiating program and NOT a rules education program. Individuals wishing to officiate pickleball matches in Canada or just play pickleball are encouraged to study and learn the rules independently.

Links to the current IFP Rulebook are on the PCO website. Also on the PCO website are links to tests that individuals may take at any time to test their level of knowledge.



As an individual progress through the Officiating Program that individual's knowledge must be higher and greater as well.

## **5. History**

The Pickleball Canada Officiating program has been in development for nearly 24 months. Support of the following committee members and other supporting individuals is greatly appreciated.

Chuck MacDonald  
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