

USA Pickleball Officiating

OP-003

International Official Credential Policy

Policy Title	International Official Credential Policy
Policy Number	OP-003
Effective Date	October 1, 2026
Last Reviewed	September 21, 2026
Approved By	Managing Director of Officiating
Applies To	International Officials; Affiliate Officiating Organizations; Section Leaders; Tournament Directors; Head Referees; Officiating Staff

Document Control

Version	Date	Description of Change	Approved By
1.0	August 26, 2026	Initial release	Managing Director of Officiating
1.1	September 6, 2026	Clarified Affiliate training, assessment, OCE, ATS, and uniform requirements; updated governance references and FAQ.	Managing Director of Officiating
1.2	September 20, 2026	Added separate application routing and issuance timeframes for Pickleball Canada and other Affiliate Officiating Organizations.	Managing Director of Officiating
1.3	September 21, 2026	Updated application processing timeframes, international uniform provisions, photograph requirements, and formatting.	Managing Director of Officiating

1. Purpose

This policy establishes the requirements and approval process for USA Pickleball International Official Credentials issued to qualified officials of approved Affiliate Officiating Organizations.

A USA Pickleball International Official Credential is required for an international referee to officiate at a USA Pickleball-sanctioned event or participate in USA Pickleball-approved officiating training in the United States. The credential also establishes eligibility for applicable USA Pickleball insurance coverage while participating in approved activities.

2. Authority and Governance

This policy is issued under the authority of the USA Pickleball Officiating Program.

2.1 Oversight Authority for this Policy

- Managing Director of Officiating (MDO)

2.2 Administrative Responsibility

- Referee Database and Credentialing Staff

2.3 Approval Authority for this Policy and Any Changes

- Managing Director of Officiating

2.4 Enforcement Authority

- Managing Director of Officiating
- Section Leaders
- Tournament Directors (TDs)
- Head Referees (HRs)

3. Scope

This policy applies to individuals who:

- Maintain a permanent residence outside the United States.
- Are members in good standing of a USA Pickleball Affiliate Officiating Organization.

- May participate in USA Pickleball officiating activities within the United States.
- Compliance with this policy is required for issuance and continued use of an International Official Credential.

4. Definitions

Affiliate Officiating Organization (AOO): An officiating organization recognized by USA Pickleball through an approved international affiliation agreement and authorized to train, certify, or manage officials within its jurisdiction.

Credential: Official identification issued by USA Pickleball authorizing an individual to perform officiating duties at USA Pickleball sanctioned events. All credentials remain the property of USA Pickleball. International credentials are temporary with expiration dates noted on the credential.

International Official: An official whose permanent residence is outside the United States and who has been approved to officiate at a USA Pickleball sanctioned activity within the United States.

Section Leader: An official responsible for oversight of all referees within a designated section.

National Referee Database Manager: A contractor for USA Pickleball that manages the National Referee Database and has some limited support to Sport80.

Administrator for Credentials: A contractor for USA Pickleball that has responsibility for the issuance of USA Pickleball Officiating Credentials.

5. Policy Statement

USA Pickleball may issue temporary officiating credentials to qualified international officials who meet the requirements of this policy.

5.1 Recognition of Affiliate Credentials

Equivalent Credential Recognition:

Approved Affiliate Officiating Organization credential levels are recognized at their equivalent USA Pickleball level for purposes of this policy. Issuance of an International Official Credential does not constitute USA Pickleball certification unless separately granted by USA Pickleball.

Training, Assessments, and Evaluations:

- Credentialed and approved Affiliate TRRAs may assess members of their own Affiliate organization in the United States, subject to applicable USA Pickleball event and facility requirements.
- Credentialed and approved Affiliate Evaluators may conduct an On-Court Evaluation (OCE) for an Affiliate Certified Referee credential in the United States, subject to applicable USA Pickleball event and facility requirements.
- Assessments or OCEs conducted across Affiliate organizations require prior written approval from the USA Pickleball Managing Director of Officiating (MDO) and the applicable Affiliate organization.
- Affiliate officials may participate in USA Pickleball-run Advanced Training Sessions (ATS), and approved Affiliate ATSAs may conduct ATS sessions for Affiliate candidates in the United States, when authorized by the applicable Affiliate organization and USA Pickleball.
- Affiliate referees may not organize or conduct training for U.S. referees without approval from the appropriate USA Pickleball Section Leader.

6. International Officials with Previously Issued USA Pickleball Credentials

All international officials must obtain an International Official Credential under this policy, regardless of any USA Pickleball officiating credential previously issued.

7. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must:

- Maintain current USA Pickleball membership at Challenger or Champion level.
- Maintain current membership in their Affiliate Officiating Organization.
- Be in good standing with both organizations.
- Possess officiating qualifications recognized by their Affiliate Officiating Organization to attain a credential.
- Affiliate non-credentialed trainees are not eligible for an International Official Credential. They may participate in USA Pickleball officiating training in the United States provided they are current USA Pickleball members.

- Applicants requesting a Certified Referee credential must successfully complete a USA Pickleball-authorized background check at their expense.
- Background checks are initiated through the referee's USA Pickleball Sport80 account.
- At the time of application, the applicant's USA Pickleball membership, Affiliate membership, and Affiliate credential must each have at least four months remaining before expiration.

8. Application Process

8.1 Pickleball Canada Applicants

The applicant shall complete Attachment A and submit it electronically to USA Pickleball Referee Data Staff and the Managing Director of Officiating at the email addresses listed on Attachment A.

USA Pickleball will verify the applicant's USA Pickleball membership number, membership level (Champion or Challenger), and USA Pickleball membership expiration date.

Within 15 business days of receipt, USA Pickleball will return the application to Pickleball Canada. Upon receipt of the signed and completed application from Pickleball Canada, USA Pickleball will issue the International Official Credential directly to the applicant within 30 business days.

8.2 Other Affiliate Officiating Organizations

The applicant shall complete Attachment A and submit it to the appropriate Affiliate Officiating Organization for verification and approval.

The authorized Affiliate representative shall complete and sign the Affiliate approval section and submit the completed application to USA Pickleball Referee Data Staff, with a copy to the USA Pickleball Managing Director of Officiating.

Upon receipt, USA Pickleball will review the application for compliance with this policy. If all requirements are satisfied, the Managing Director of Officiating will authorize issuance of the International Official Credential within 15 business days.

8.3 Credential Records

All International Official Credentials issued under this policy will be recorded in the National Referee Database by Referee Data Staff.

Incomplete applications will not be processed until all required information has been received.

9. Credential Fees and Payment

There is no fee for the credential.

10. Uniforms

- International officials shall comply with the current **OP-001 Referee Uniform Policy** while officiating at USA Pickleball events.
- Credentialed International Officials may purchase approved USA Pickleball referee uniform items from the USA Pickleball store at their own expense. International Officials are not eligible to receive complimentary or Skechers-branded USA Pickleball referee uniform items.
- When an approved USA Pickleball uniform is unavailable, the official shall wear a white polo shirt with black pants or shorts, black socks, and black shoes unless otherwise directed by the Head Referee.
- USA Pickleball officiating uniforms and credentials may not be worn or used internationally unless specifically authorized in writing by USA Pickleball.

11. Photograph Requirements

The applicant must provide a current photograph that meets USA Pickleball credential-photo requirements.

12. Credential Issuance

- Upon approval, USA Pickleball will issue an International Official Credential via email directly to the applicant at the address provided on the application. Referees are not permitted to contact the Database Manager or Credential Administrator to expedite this process.
- Credential issuance timeframes are established in Section 8. Expedited processing is not available.
- An International Official Credential expires on the earliest expiration date of the official's USA Pickleball membership, Affiliate membership, or Affiliate officiating credential.
- Issuance of an International Official Credential does not provide or imply authorization to enter, work, or remain in the United States and does not satisfy any U.S. immigration or visa requirement.

13. Conditions of Use

The credential:

- Remains the property of USA Pickleball.
- Shall be carried by the official while performing officiating duties at USA Pickleball sanctioned activities and presented upon request by authorized USA Pickleball personnel. Display of the credential on the officiating uniform is not allowed.
- May only be used at USA Pickleball sanctioned activities within the United States.
- May not be altered, transferred, reproduced, loaned, or reassigned.
- May not be used at international events.
- Will be destroyed after expiration.

The credential holder agrees to comply with all USA Pickleball rules, policies, procedures, and officiating standards while carrying or using the credential.

14. Revocation and Recall

USA Pickleball may suspend, revoke, or recall a credential at any time for cause.

Grounds may include:

- Policy violations.
- Misrepresentation.
- Misuse of the credential.
- Conduct detrimental to USA Pickleball.
- Loss of eligibility.

Upon notice, the credential holder must immediately surrender the credential as directed by USA Pickleball. Failure to surrender a recalled or revoked credential may affect future authorization to officiate USA Pickleball events within the United States.

15. Replacement Credentials

Lost, stolen, or damaged credentials may be replaced at USA Pickleball's discretion. Replacement fees may apply.

16. Compliance and Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- Denial of credential issuance.
- Suspension of credential privileges.
- Revocation or recall of credentials.
- Removal from officiating assignments.
- Additional corrective or disciplinary action deemed appropriate by USA Pickleball.

17. Appeal Process

If a credential is denied, the referee may appeal in writing directly to their Affiliate Managing Director of Officiating.

18. Related Policies and Documents

- OP-001 Referee Uniform Policy
- OP-002 Certified Referee Credential Renewal Policy
- USA Pickleball Code of Conduct
- USA Pickleball compliance policies and procedures

19. Contact Information

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the appropriate USA Pickleball Officiating representative. Current contact information for USA Pickleball Officiating leadership is available on the [USA Pickleball Officiating Organization webpage](#).

USA Pickleball Officiating Policy OP-003A
International Official Credential Application

This form is to be completed by the referee applying for a USA Pickleball International Official Credential. Complete all information available to you and follow the submission instructions below.

Pickleball Canada applicants: Submit Attachment A to Referee Data Staff at usaparefdata@gmail.com and the Managing Director of Officiating at ttadler@usapickleball.org.

All other Affiliate applicants: Submit Attachment A first to the appropriate Affiliate Officiating Organization for verification and approval.

A1. Applicant Information

Full Legal Name [Full legal name]	Email Address [Email address]
Mobile Phone with Country Code [Mobile phone]	Country of Permanent Residence [Country]

A2. Membership Verification

USA Pickleball Membership Number [USAP member number]	USA Pickleball Membership Expiration Date <i>Must be at least 4 months from application date</i> [Expiration date]
Affiliate Officiating Organization [Organization name]	Affiliate Membership Number [Affiliate member number]
Affiliate Membership Expiration Date <i>Must be at least 4 months from application date</i> [Expiration date]	Current Affiliate Credential Level [Certification level]
Affiliate Credential Expiration Date <i>Must be at least 4 months from application date</i> [Expiration date]	USA Pickleball Background Check Confirmation Number (CRs Only) [Number]

A3. Permanent Mailing Address

Street Address [Street address]	City [City]
State/Province [State / Province]	Postal Code [Postal code]
Country [Country]	

A4. Digital Picture Submission

Photograph Requirements

A current digital headshot photograph must accompany the application.

Photographs must:

- Be high-resolution and in color.
- Be current and taken within the past six months.
- Be submitted in JPG or PNG format.
- Display head and shoulders only.
- Use a neutral background.
- Show the referee wearing a white, blue, or black shirt for contrast.
- Not include hats or sunglasses.
- Not display a non-USA Pickleball uniform.
- Not display logos other than an official USA Pickleball uniform logo.
- Not display commercial or affiliate branding.

USA Pickleball reserves the right to reject photographs that do not meet credential production standards.

A5. Applicant Acknowledgment

By digitally signing below, the applicant acknowledges and agrees that:

- The credential remains the property of USA Pickleball.
- USA Pickleball may revoke or recall the credential at any time for cause.
- The credential must be carried while performing officiating duties and presented upon request by authorized USA Pickleball personnel.
- The credential or uniform will not be worn internationally, including at GPF events, unless specifically authorized in writing by USA Pickleball.
- The credential must be surrendered immediately upon revocation or recall as directed by USA Pickleball.
- Loss of the credential may result in administrative service and replacement fees as determined by USA Pickleball.
- The owner agrees to comply with all USA Pickleball rules, policies, and officiating standards while carrying or using the credential.

Referee Digital Signature [Referee digital signature]	Date [Date]
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A6. Affiliate Officiating Organization Approval

The authorized representative of the Affiliate Officiating Organization certifies that the applicant is a member in good standing and is qualified to officiate at the credential level identified in Section A2. The completed and signed application shall be returned to USA Pickleball in accordance with the applicable process in Section 8 of OP-003.

Authorized Representative Name [Name]	Title [Title]
Affiliate Officiating Organization [Organization]	Digital Signature [Digital signature]
Date [Date]	Representative Email [Email]

A7. USA Pickleball Approval Section

Referee Data Staff Name [Name]	Received Date [Received date]
Documentation Verified By [Verified by]	Managing Director of Officiating Name [Approver name]
Digital Signature [Digital signature]	Final Approval Date [Final approval date]
Credential Number Issued, if required [Credential number]	Verified by Credential Administrator [Verified by]

Routing:

Pickleball Canada: Referee → USA Pickleball Verification → Pickleball Canada → USA Pickleball → Credential Issuance
 Other Affiliates: Referee → Affiliate Verification/Approval → USA Pickleball → Credential Issuance

Pickleball Canada: USA Pickleball will return the initial application to Pickleball Canada within 15 business days. USA Pickleball will issue the credential within 30 business days after receiving the signed and completed application from Pickleball Canada. Other Affiliates: USA Pickleball will issue the credential within 15 business days after receiving the completed application. Expedited processing is not available. The credential will be emailed directly to the referee.