



USJA REFEREE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Going Strong for Fifty Years!

Rev. 2022.08

Purpose:

In order for Judo to grow and improve, there must be ongoing competition held through regularly scheduled sanctioned Judo Tournaments. There must be referees to officiate the contests at all Judo Tournaments.

This program is designed to not only train new referees, but to improve the skills and knowledge of certified referees so that they can move up the certification ladder.

Instructors and coaches should introduce all young judo players to refereeing during randori when they are in a rest cycle. This is not only valuable for the competitors to learn what the referee has to do, but also these shiai sessions are a good time to teach shiai tactics and etiquette.

This is part of the Referee Training Program that helps provide progressive levels of Referee Certification similar to Judo Belt Rank, which is comparable to the Mudansha (ranks below Black belt) System.

This system is designed to provide our Judoka with increasingly qualified referees at sanctioned Judo Tournaments. This program also provides certification for those seeking to go to higher certification levels such as National Referee, Continental (IJF-B) Referee and International (IJF-A) Referee.

Mission:

- To educate coaches and competitors on the rules of Contest Judo.
- To educate, train and certify those interested in refereeing, in order to provide certified referees for every sanctioned tournament.
- To continue the education of certified referees, allowing them to achieve a higher level of knowledge and certification.

Referee in Training:

A Judoka, who is training to be a certified referee and has no referee certification, may referee at any sanctioned tournament or in club (intramural) tournaments or scrimmages as long as he/she is paired with certified referee(s) to correct any errant judgments. The Referee-in-Training will be provided with feedback (critical performance analysis) by the referee(s) of a higher level. Corrective comments may include position, posture, gestures, judgment, etc.

Learning refereeing requires lots of practice at tournaments with quality feedback and the attendance at Referee Clinics and Seminars. All referees should review Judo competition videos and referee clinics from the internet.

Levels:

The USJA conducts Referee Examinations for referees at the Local and Regional Level. The USJA has at this time four levels of Certification. Local Referee, Regional 1 Referee, Regional 2 Referee and Regional 3 Referee.

 United State Judo Association Local and Regional Referee Certification Levels							
Level	Age	Rank	Examiner	Prerequisites	Fee	Written Exam	Practical Exam
Local	15-up	None	National or higher**	None	\$30.00	50q/60%	Yes
Regional 1	16-up	None	National or higher**	Local for a year*	\$30.00	50q/70%	Yes
Regional 2	17-up	Sankyu	National or higher**	Regional 1 for a year	\$30.00	50q/80%	Yes
Regional 3	17-up	Nikyu	National or higher**	Regional 2 for a year	\$30.00	50q/90%	Yes

** higher (PIC-C Level Referee, IJF (B) Continental Level Referee, IJF (A) International Level Referee

5.25.2022

A USJA Regional Referee is eligible to take the USA Judo National Referee Examination as long as all prerequisites are attained.

The USA Judo (through their SGBs or National) and USJF (through their Yudanshakai) conduct Local and Regional Referee Certification for their members as does USJA for their members. Each Referee Program (USJA, USA Judo and USJF) is independent and has no influence or control over the other. The National Referee License is only available through USA Judo. The basic requirements for the National Referee License are being: 18 years of age, U.S. Citizen or Green Card, Minimum rank of Shodan, Regional Referee (USJA, USA Judo, USJF) for a minimum of one-year, current USA Judo membership, current Background Check, SafeSport and Heads Up or NAYS Concussion courses.

Authority:

USJA Local and Regional Referee Certification is authorized through the USJA. The examination is conducted according to the standards required by the USJA Referee Certification Committee. This examination is to take place at sanctioned tournament(s) and is conducted by a National Referee(s) or higher-level referee(s) in good standing. After a successful examination the USJA will issue a Referee Certification.

Eligibility:

1. Must be a current member of USJA or provide their membership fee with the certification fee when sending in their Referee Certification Application Form.
2. Must meet the age requirement for each level as indicated on the Referee Certification Chart.
3. Must meet the rank requirement for the Referee level the candidate chooses to be examined for.
4. Must have Local Certification for one year in order to take the Regional 1 examination. (*exception)
5. Must have Regional 1 Certification for one year in order to take the Regional 2 exam.
6. Must have Regional 2 Certification for one year in order to take the Regional 3 exam.

Requirements:

1. Candidate must present for verification a current USJA membership card and a copy of their last Referee Certificate (received a minimum of one year prior to the next exam date) if required.
2. Candidates must referee for the whole competition. They cannot also compete in shiai, veterans or Kata during the examination event.
3. Candidates must wear the proper referee uniform. That is a black blazer, gray (medium) pants, white dress shirt, solid black tie and black socks.
The alternate dress code of gray slacks (pants), and a polo (referee) shirt (consistent with what all the other referees are wearing is allowed. A white judogi is acceptable at an exam at a Judo camp.
4. Candidates must bring their own Radio Communication System (Bao feng BF 888s) (Transceiver-Walkie-Talkie (\$10-\$20) with ear piece.
5. Bring a notepad, PEN and/or pencil. (No Pen/pencil, No Test!)
6. In order to be certified, candidates must have a current Back Ground Check every two years.
7. Candidate must have the current SafeSport Training (online).
8. Candidate must have the current Heads-Up or NAYS Concussion Training (online).

Examination:

1. Written Examination: A 50 question multiple choice written examination for Local and Regional (1,2,3) levels. This part of the Exam is given prior to the morning referee meeting. It takes approximately an hour. The same written examination is used for all levels.
2. Practical Examination: Observation of refereeing and judging during the competition by the examiner(s).
3. It is expected that all candidates will be observed a minimum of six contests as a referee and six as a judge. However, it is preferred that the examiner try to observe each candidate for at least 12 contests as a referee and 12 as a judge. The more observation time will provide a better overall evaluation of a candidates' performance.
4. The Practical Evaluation is based on performance in the following categories
 1. Voice – Clear, crisp, loud (appropriate), pronounced and annunciated commands.
 2. Presence – Demonstrate stage presence, confidence, control, coolness and calmness under stress.
 3. Gestures/Signals – Demonstrate correct, clear and crisp gestures.
 4. Mobility - Includes Position and Posture. Demonstrate movement on the mat in relation to the contestants, correct position during holds and throws, fluid and effective movement.
 5. Observations- Notices judogi problems, jewelry, ripped judogi, injuries, mat issues.
 6. Procedures - Follows the correct procedures and does them without hesitation or error. This includes the correct use of the radio to provide input from the judges and mat supervisor.
 7. Authority - Demonstrates command and control. Never loses control. Acts in charge. Must display confidence and not arrogance. Should have a humble attitude.
 8. Appreciation - This is the most important category. This includes judgment on throwing scores and counters, the calling of osaekomi and toketa and the correct use of *Mate*.
 9. Penalties - This includes actually comprehending and knowing when to give penalties that are deserved. Noticing each prohibited act and penalizing them as is required.
 10. Determination - When a call is made there is no doubt as to the referee's opinion, no wishy-washy calls, no monotone command, no slow gestures/signals.
 11. Team Work - Works well as a referee or judge with the other members of the team. Understands the principles of team work. Helps, but does not interfere.

12. Protocol - Demonstrates correct bowing procedures, appropriate dress, manners, attending clinics, asking questions, being on time for meetings and for rotation, not speaking ill of other fellow referees and listening to feedback and not making up excuses. A more detailed list can be found in the book, "Referee's Expected Behaviors".

Examination Location:

Local and Regional Certification should only be given at sanctioned tournaments. Scrimmages are included if they are sanctioned and are conducted like a normal tournament.

Fee: \$30.00 (2022)

The examiner should have the Candidates fill in the Application Form. The required Application fee is to be sent to the USJA National Office (address above) along with the Examiner(s) signed Application Form.

Renewal:

Certification is good for two years. To renew, one must retake the Written and Practical Examination. If Active (5 events or more a year), renewal can be endorsed by a Regional Examiner (National or higher).

E-Referee Examination (Not available at this time.)

Referee Examination and Certification is not available over the internet at this time. However, the viability of such a process is being looked into. It will require taking the written exam in a controlled manner similar to the SafeSport Program or Heads Up Concussion Course.

The Practical Evaluation Process is being researched. It may be possible if the venue has a decent Wi-Fi system that a Referee Examiner may attend the event through a Zoom set up or similar.

(Examiner/Evaluator Telepresence). The system would need to be very reliable. The other issues are finding someone to set the system up at the venue and maintain its operation and finding a Referee Evaluator/Examiner willing to sit in front of the computer for four to six hours.

Referee Examiner Protocols and Procedures

A Local and Regional 1, Regional 2 or Regional 3 Referee Examination can only take place at a sanctioned Judo Tournament. The Practical examination needs to be conducted so the candidates are refereeing "real" contests and the candidate is refereeing in a "real" tournament environment. (Crowds (with cheering and jeering), Coaches, Parents, working with other referees, participating in the rotation system and the many other real time experiences of refereeing, etc.)

A Referee certification **cannot** take place at a Referee Clinic or be given out just because someone attended a Referee Clinic (Under 3 hours) or a Referee Seminar (three hours or more).

Who Can Conduct USJA Local and Regional Referee Certification:

A current National Referee, PJC-C, IJF-B (Continental) or IJF-A (International) referee may conduct the Local and Regional 1, Regional 2 or Regional 3 Referee Examination and Certification.

In some areas the Referee Leadership have a team of examiners (2, 3, 4) conducting the Local and Regional Referee Examinations.

If there are any questions, please direct them to the USJA Referee Certification Committee Chair (email). Email available from the USJA Website, Referee Committee Page.

***Exception from Chart.** In some instances, a candidate who has been in Judo for years may have enough experience to jump the level of Local. This decision is solely up to the Referee Examiner.

If the candidate's written exam score meets the requirement for Regional 1 and their practical examination is that of a Regional 1 performance, then that candidate can be skipped one (Local) level. This decision is that solely of the Referee Examiner (s).

Referee Training Environment

All referee training like Judo starts in the Dojo.

Ideally, it is best that aspiring referees are in a referee enriched environment where they can work many tournaments and are provided with numerous more qualified referees to provide qualitative and quantitative feedback. In this situation, Referee Examiners can see the progression of Referees in Training and when they are "ready", the Referee Examiner (Chief Referee) (State Referee Chair) may recommend it is time to take the Referee Exam. In this case, there is a very low failure rate.

In the unenriched referee environment, the new referee or Local or Regional Referee must travel long distances to attend tournaments and examinations. Moving up the ladder of certification may take longer in these types of situations. There are fewer tournaments a year. Watch all the referee training video clinics and IJF competition videos on the internet to gain knowledge. Make every effort to officiate at more tournaments. That is the best way to become a better referee.

Quality Assurance – (Maintaining a good standard.)

Certification shouldn't be too difficult, but it should also not be given away. Maintaining the standard will maintain the integrity of the Certification Program. As an Examiner you must ask yourself would you trust this candidate to referee your students at a tournament? Do they meet the criteria of the level of referee certification they are requesting certification to?

Administration

The examiner should have the Candidates fill in the Application Form. The examiner should collect the fee: Check (made out to USJA), Cash or Credit card (provide proper information on the Application form. Check the candidate's current USJA Membership card. Verify age and rank if required.

Administer the Written Exam. Be sure to mention that Candidates are NOT TO WRITE or MARK the Written Examination. All answers are indicated on the Application Form Written Exam Section.

At the end of the examination some examiners mail the Application(s) to the USJA National office with the required fee(s).

Some examiners sign the Application indicating what level the candidate should be and give them back to the successful candidates. The successful candidates then mail them in with the required fee. This saves the examiner on stamps and envelopes. Keep the Applications of those who do not meet the standards set for the level of certification they were testing for.

Referee Examiner Costs

Those that choose to be Referee Examiners will have to spend some money to print up the Application Forms and Written Examinations as the entire fee for Certification is sent to USJA. The examiner can defray the cost of such expenses by conducting clinics during the year where they charge fees and use some of that money to pay for the Application Forms, Written Exams, stamps and envelopes.

There is no other compensation. The examiner is following the principles of *jita kyoei*.

In most cases, an Examiner may only need no more than ten Application Forms and five Written Examinations. Rarely do you have more than that at one examination site.

A good examiner will provide feedback and guidance to both the successful candidates and those that are unsuccessful. Provide to those that do not qualify the reasons why they didn't pass. Please be very specific with your feedback. This examination needs to be a learning experience. We are here to help the candidates to improve their refereeing knowledge and skills.

Written Examination:

The written exam should if possible be given in a quiet room. Sometimes this is not possible at all Judo Tournament Venues. This is a closed book exam.

Through years of experience, it has been found that most candidates complete the 50-question multiple choice written examination within one hour.

The USJA Referee Certification Written Examination for the Local and Regional Levels is available to only qualified Referee Examiners (National Referee and above). Please direct inquiries, for vetting and rules and protocol to receive a copy of the written examination and answer key, to the Chairman of the USJA Referee Certification Committee (email).

These are proprietary documents and are required to be secured and **not to be shared with anyone, not even other higher-ranking referees**. Each Qualified Referee Examiner **must contact** the Chair of the Referee Certification Committee (email) to receive a copy of the written examination. **No candidate can keep a copy of the written exam! (Abuse of this trust is an ethical violation.)**

Practical Examination:

On the back of the Referee Application Form there is an evaluation form which the examiner should write in all the pertinent minor, major and critical errors made during each contest. There is also an Evaluation Category Area in which specific comments should be entered for the candidate's abilities in each of the Examination Categories.

It is important that the examiner observe the candidate throughout the day. Watch them doing junior contests at all levels and senior contests at all levels.

The candidates should be encouraged to approach the examiner for feedback (critical performance analysis). Immediate and accurate feedback is the fastest way to improve one's performance. The examiner should provide qualitative feedback to help the candidate improve their performance.

Feedback should always be sought from other higher certified referees willing to provide feedback. The Examination Experience should be a valuable learning experience.

Examiners must also examine candidates in their Judging abilities. When at the table do they pay attention for each and every contest (match). Do they make corrections when necessary? Do they use facial or hand gestures when necessary? Do they use the radio appropriately when making changes?

USJA Membership

Certified Referees must maintain USJA membership to maintain their certification level. Being a USJA member also helps provide liability insurance for the referee when officiating at tournaments. In order to claim promotion point for certification levels one must maintain a current membership.

Each certified referee must also maintain their background check every two years. They must keep current their Safe Sport Training and Concussion Course (Heads Up or NAYS) Training which requires retraining every one to two years by taking the online course.