



Pickleball Australia Association

Officiating Policy

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Policy Brief and Purpose

The Pickleball Australia Association Ltd. (PAA) Officiating Policy outlines the standards and guidelines for individuals serving as referees in pickleball tournaments, events, and matches within the authority of PAA. Highlighted are the roles, responsibilities, and requirements of all referees in PAA sanctioned and recognised events. This policy aims to ensure fair play, consistency, and professionalism of all officials and in all officiating activities.

Principles

- Implementation of a clear officials pathway is essential for attracting and retaining an effective officials team.
- Officials must be provided with a respectful, appreciative, and supportive environment in which to undertake their role.
- Officials need to be appropriately recognised and rewarded for performing their role.
- PAA and the sport of pickleball must remain flexible and inclusive in facilitating innovative strategies in the recruitment, development, and retention of officials.
- High quality officials make the difference between continuous and uninterrupted action and competition that is tense with frustrated competitors, coaches, and spectators.

Definitions

- **Match:** A competitive encounter between two individuals or teams playing pickleball.
- **National Head of Officiating:** The chief official responsible for overseeing the services and performance of all Referees in Australia. Responsible for the Accreditation of Referees in accordance with the Referee Accreditation Levels approved by PAA. Responsible for (with the National Officiating Secretariat) the allocation of Head Referees to all PAA sanctioned and recognised tournaments. Responsible for the approval of course materials used in continuing education and accreditation of Referees.
- **National Officiating Secretariat;** Working closely with the National Head of Officiating, responsible for the coordination of Referee Accreditation and on-going education. Responsible for (with the National Head of Officiating) the allocation of Head Referees to all PAA sanctioned and recognised tournaments. Responsible for sourcing referees for all PAA sanctioned and recognised tournaments.
- **Tournament Director:** The individual responsible for managing and organising pickleball tournaments and events.
- **Tournament Head Referee:** The chief official responsible for overseeing the services of referee/s and making final decisions in any questioned or disputed matter concerning rules and player conduct at tournaments. The Tournament Head Referee will be a “non-playing” official. Tournament Head Referees must have the minimum PAA Referee Accreditation status as:
 - **T4 (National) – Level 3**
 - **T3 (State) – Level 3**
 - **Prize Money Tournaments – Level 3**
 - **T2 (Regional) – Level 2**
 - **T1 (Recognised) – Level 2**
- **Tournament Head Referee (ALTERNATE):** An Alternate Tournament Head Referee will be appointed to all larger tournaments (registrations expected to exceed 250). The Tournament Head Referee (Alternate) responsible for overseeing the services of referee/s and making final decisions in any questioned or disputed matter concerning rules and player conduct at



tournaments (in the absence of the Tournament Head Referee). The Tournament Head Referee (Alternate) will also ideally be a “non-playing” official*. Tournament Head Referees (Alternate) must have the minimum PAA Referee Accreditation status as:

- **T4 (National) – Level 3**
- **T3 (State) – Level 3**
- **Prize Money Tournaments – Level 3**
- **T2 (Regional) – Level 2**
- **T1 (Recognised) – Level 2**
-
- **Referee:** An accredited individual designated by Pickleball Australia to oversee and enforce the rules and regulations of pickleball during tournaments, events, and matches.

*** The National Head of Officiating (in conjunction with the National Officiating Secretariat) may approve the appointment of a Tournament Head Referee (ALTERNATE) that is deemed “playing” as long as it is in a maximum of one event only and it can be clearly demonstrated that duties as a Tournament Head Referee (ALTERNATE) are not compromised.**

Policy

1. Officiating Roles

Pickleball Australia recognises the following officiating roles within its jurisdiction:

National Head of Officiating:

The chief official responsible for overseeing the services and performance of all Referees in Australia. Responsible for the Accreditation of Referees in accordance with the Referee Accreditation Levels approved by PAA. Responsible for (with the National Officiating Secretariat) the allocation of Head Referees to all PAA sanctioned and recognised tournaments. Responsible for the approval of course materials used in continuing education and accreditation of Referees.

National Officiating Secretariat;

Working closely with the National Head of Officiating, responsible for the coordination of Referee Accreditation and on-going education. Responsible for (with the National Head of Officiating) the allocation of Head Referees to all PAA sanctioned and recognised tournaments. Responsible for sourcing referees for all PAA sanctioned and recognised tournaments.

Tournament Head Referee:

The chief Refereeing official responsible for overseeing the services of referee/s and making final decisions in any questioned or disputed matter concerning rules and player conduct at tournaments. The Tournament Head Referee will be a “non-playing” official.

Tournament Head Referee (ALTERNATE):



An Alternate Tournament Head Referee will be appointed to all larger tournaments (registrations expected to exceed 250). The Alternate chief refereeing official responsible for overseeing the services of referee/s and making final decisions in any questioned or disputed matter concerning rules and player conduct at tournaments (in the absence of the Tournament Head Referee). The Tournament Head Referee (Alternate) will also ideally be a “non-playing” official*

Referee

An accredited individual designated by Pickleball Australia to oversee and enforce the rules and regulations of pickleball during tournaments, events, and matches, responsible for:

- overseeing the conduct of a match,
- making decisions on rule interpretations,
- ensuring the overall fairness of play,
- overseeing the scorekeeping process,
- managing any disputes that arise during a match.

2. Referee Levels

Pickleball Australia recognises the following levels of referee accreditation:

Level 1 Referee: Certified to officiate at local, regional, and state events.

Level 2 Referee: Certified to officiate at local, regional, state, and national events.

Level 3 Referee: Certified to officiate at local, regional, state, national and international events.

Level 4 Referee: Certified to train and assess referees and officiate at local, regional, state, national and international events.

3. Referee Qualifications and Accreditation Process

Pickleball Australia emphasises the importance of trained and knowledgeable officials. Pickleball Australia offers a comprehensive referee training program at 4 levels that cover rule interpretations, match management, conflict resolution, and communication skills. Referee candidates must complete these training programs to be considered for accreditation.

Officiating candidates must meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrated expertise in the official rules of pickleball.
- Completion of an official PAA officiating training program.
- Attendance at refresher training sessions to stay updated on rule changes and best practices.
- Active participation in refereeing matches.
- Demonstrated ability to handle match scenarios and disputes effectively.

The certification process for Pickleball Australia referees includes the following steps:

- Completion of the referee training program.
- Passing an approved exam that tests knowledge of the rules and scenarios, exam testing to be completed at least annually.



- Demonstrating practical on-court officiating skills.
- Undergoing an evaluation by experienced referees (Accreditation Level 4) during actual matches.

4. Continuing Education

Certified referees are required to participate in regular refresher training sessions and workshops to stay updated on rule changes, best practices, and officiating techniques.

5. Code of Conduct

All officials are expected to uphold a high standard of conduct, including:

- Treating all players, coaches, and spectators with respect and professionalism.
- Remaining consistent, impartial, and unbiased in decision-making.
- Maintaining composure under pressure.
- Acknowledge and comply with reasonable player requests during a match.
- Refraining from using inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Avoiding conflicts of interest and disclosing any potential biases.
- Refraining from intervening in a match to which the Referee is not allocated.

6. Responsibilities and Duties

Pickleball Australia referees are responsible for the following duties:

- Conducting pre-match briefings with players to explain match procedures and address any questions.
- Ensuring proper attire, as approved by the Tournament Director, and equipment regulations (including Paddles).
- Overseeing the player choices and determining the initial server and side.
- Interpret and enforce the current rules of Pickleball.
- Maintain control of the Match.
- Managing the pace of play and monitoring timeouts between points and games.
- Addressing rule violations, ruling on disputes (including appealed line calls), and ensuring player conduct is in the spirit of Pickleball where fair play is observed.
- Making final decisions on score discrepancies and tiebreak situations.
- Keeping accurate scoring during the match
- Calling non-volley zone and/or any other technical violations or faults
- Ensuring the court environment/equipment is appropriate for fair and safe play.

7. Fees and Compensation

1. PAA will compensate referees for expenses incurred including travel, accommodation, meals, and tolls (as outlined in Appendix 1).
2. PAA will compensate referees:
 - a. commensurate with their referee level and the level of event being officiated.



- b. who have been accredited by PAA as a referee and perform refereeing services during PAA sanctioned and recognised tournaments and events.
 - c. for games and events designated by the PAA Tournaments and Officiating Committees as events appropriate to attract referee fees, prior to assigning referees to those games/events.
3. Referees-in-training (typically assigned as a buddy or trainee referee during a game) are not eligible to claim referee fees.
 4. Referee payments will be processed at the end of each competition, or more often as determined by the PAA EO, based upon a submitted claim form from each Referee.
 5. Fees will be paid in accordance with the fee structure outlined on the PAA Referee Fee Schedule (Appendix 1). These will also be published on the PAA website and will be reviewed and/or amended by the Committee periodically.
 6. Fees are paid on the basis that the individual providing the service is doing so as a private recreational pursuit and/or hobby (Appendix 2).

A completed invoice, with attached Australian Taxation Office form “Statement by a supplier”, must be provided before any payment is made (Appendix 3).

8. Identification

All officials must wear clear identification badges indicating their Officiating Accreditation Status. Referees shall also wear attire approved by Pickleball Australia in matches officiated.

9. Reporting and Feedback

Officials are encouraged to submit match reports and feedback to the Tournament Head Referee after each tournament or event. The Tournament Head Referee is to provide any such reports to the National Officiating Secretariat. This information helps PAA assess the quality of officiating and make necessary improvements.

10. Violations and Disciplinary Actions

Any violation of this officiating policy or instances of misconduct will be reviewed by PAA (Executive Officer) and the PAA Officiating Committee (National Head of Officiating and National Officiating Secretariat). Disciplinary action may range from warnings and temporary suspension to permanent removal from officiating duties, depending on the severity of the violation. Any Referee dealt with in accordance with this section will be afforded due process. Any decision may be appealed to the PAA Board of Directors

11. Amendments

PAA reserves the right to amend or update this Officiating Policy as needed. All officials will be notified of any changes, and updated policies will be made available on the official PAA website.

By adhering to this Officiating Policy, PAA aims to ensure the highest standard of officiating and promote the fair and competitive spirit of pickleball tournaments and events.



APPENDIX 1. REFEREE FEE & EXPENSES SCHEDULE

1. PRIZE MONEY TOURNAMENTS

Tournament Head Referees (including Alternate):

Expenses	\$
Air/Transport Accommodation Meals	At Cost. Referees are expected to demonstrate discipline with respect to expenses incurred. By way of example (and not an exhaustive list); air flights are to be booked on a “discount economy” basis where available. Accommodation is expected to be of a moderate not extravagant standard.
Mileage	ATO Rate

Compensation for Time:

\$150 per four (4) hours, or part thereof, bracket of time. By way of example, a 7-hour time commitment, compensation would be \$300. Referees are expected to outline hours in an Expense Claim Sheet.

Referees:

Expenses	
Interstate Travel Required	\$250 per day appointed
Regional Intrastate Travel Required	\$150 per day appointed
Within Same City Travel Required	\$50 per day appointed

Compensation for Time:

\$100 per four (4) hours, or part thereof, bracket of time. By way of example, a 7-hour time commitment, compensation would be \$200. Referees are expected to outline hours in an Expense Claim Sheet.



2. SANCTIONED/RECOGNISED (OTHER THAN PRIZE MONEY) TOURNAMENTS

Tournament Head Referees:

Expenses	\$
Air/Transport Accommodation Meals	At Cost. Referees are expected to demonstrate discipline with respect to expenses incurred. By way of example (and not an exhaustive list); air flights are to be booked on a “discount economy” basis where available. Accommodation is expected to be of a moderate not extravagant standard.
Mileage	ATO Rate

Compensation for Time:

\$150 per four (4) hours, or part thereof, bracket of time. By way of example, a 7-hour time commitment, compensation would be \$300. Referees are expected to outline hours in an Expense Claim Sheet.

Referees:

At tournaments that may be considered “amateur” or “voluntary” in nature, specific Expenditure Reimbursements and Compensation for Time will be agreed between the PAA (Executive Officer) and the PAA Officiating Committee (National Head of Officiating and National Officiating Secretariat). Such amounts will be advised ahead of any tournament. The following amounts are to be considered as guidance only:

Expenses	
Interstate Travel Required	\$250 per day appointed
Regional Intrastate Travel Required	\$150 per day appointed
Within Same City Travel Required	\$50 per day appointed

Compensation for Time:

\$100 per four (4) hours, or part thereof, bracket of time. By way of example, a 7-hour time commitment, compensation would be \$200. Referees are expected to outline hours in an Expense Claim Sheet.



3. NON - SANCTIONED/RECOGNISED TOURNAMENTS

Referees are required to carefully consider whether they will officiate as a Referee in Non-Sanctioned/Recognised tournaments. Any involvement is to in **no way reflect adversely** on PAA nor the broader Officiating team of Referees. It is expected that any Referee so requested would advise and discuss any approach with the National Officiating Secretariat prior to any commitment.

At such tournaments, Expenditure Reimbursements and Compensation for Time are **NOT** under the authority of PAA. The following amounts are to be considered as guidance for individuals only:

Tournament Head Referees:

Expenses	\$
Air/Transport Accommodation Meals	At Cost. Referees are expected to demonstrate discipline with respect to expenses incurred. By way of example (and not an exhaustive list); air flights are to be booked on a “discount economy” basis where available. Accommodation is expected to be of a moderate not extravagant standard.
Mileage	ATO Rate

Compensation for Time:

\$150 per four (4) hours, or part thereof, bracket of time. By way of example, a 7-hour time commitment, compensation would be \$300. Referees are expected to outline hours in an Expense Claim Sheet.

Referees:

Expenses	
Interstate Travel Required	\$250 per day appointed
Regional Intrastate Travel Required	\$150 per day appointed
Within Same City Travel Required	\$50 per day appointed

Compensation for Time:

\$100 per four (4) hours, or part thereof, bracket of time. By way of example, a 7-hour time commitment, compensation would be \$200. Referees are expected to outline hours in an Expense Claim Sheet.



APPENDIX 2. REFEREE DECLARATION FORM

I hereby declare that, in relation to any services made by me to Pickleball Australia Association Ltd. (PAA) (ABN 59638355825) regarding the refereeing of pickleball, such services are performed out of my interest in pickleball and does not constitute an employment relationship between myself and PAA.

Furthermore, I declare that payments received by me from PAA in respect of supplies referee services do not constitute taxable income in my hands on the basis that said supply is made in respect of a private recreational pursuit or hobby. Therefore, I am not required to quote an ABN to PAA, nor is PAA required to withhold an amount from any payment due to me for said supply.

I have completed the Australian Taxation Office form “Statement by a supplier” to this effect. See link [HERE](#) for the form and sample in [APPENDIX 3](#).

This declaration is in effect for the period commencing [Date], and until advice to the contrary is received in writing by PAA, I agree to immediately notify PAA in writing if circumstances change such that this declaration becomes invalid.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

