



# Recruiting, training, recognising and retaining high quality officials

*Do you want to increase the number of officials at your club/association?*

*Officials are an essential part of sport. They make sure everyone plays by the rules and that the game is safe. High quality officials make the difference between continuous and uninterrupted action and play that is tense with frustrated players, coaches and spectators.*

*Increasing the number of qualified officials at your club requires a professional approach. This information sheet provide some best practice ideas for recruiting, training, recognising and retaining high quality officials.*

*It is important to create a respectful, appreciative and supportive atmosphere where officials can learn new skills and make a valuable contribution to your sport. These suggestions, however, will have limited impact if the environment is hostile and abusive.*



## WHAT CAN YOUR CLUB/ASSOCIATION DO?

- Present all new officials with a welcome pack that includes a copy of the *Codes of Behavior*, an outline of career pathways, information on training course dates and costs, how much they will be paid (if appropriate), uniforms, concessions and special events.
- Appoint an officials' coordinator or manager within the club/association so that someone becomes the single point of contact for all club officials. The coordinator could:
  - Help recruit the officials;
  - Organise the officiating each week;
  - Organise training courses, special events, and ongoing support;
  - Ensure the officials are recognised through awards, uniforms or perhaps through incentives such as payment;
  - Be a contact person for the club/association for officiating information;
  - Help with communication between officials and the club/association committee; and
  - Deal with any officiating issues that arise.
- Provide mentors or role models to work with juniors to encourage them each time they officiate.
- Invite parents to become officials and train them.
- Develop links with physical education teachers at local schools. Schools are key resources in recruiting officials and junior members.

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## DO YOU WANT QUALIFIED OFFICIALS TO HELP PLAYERS ENJOY THEMSELVES AND ENSURE GAMES ARE PLAYED IN A FAIR AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT?

### What can your club/association do?

- Show players and parents how they can become an accredited official. Let people know:
  - The official's career pathway;
  - What they need to do;
  - When the courses are on;
  - How much it will cost them; and
  - Any concessions the club/association will provide.
- Let them know that they will:
  - Have additional qualifications and learn new skills;
  - Feel more confident about being in charge of a game;
  - Become part of a special team within the club/association; and
  - Be making an important contribution to the club/association.
- Provide ongoing support through special events, mentors, role models, and specific training sessions with expert presenters and concessions for officials.
- Help officials to update their knowledge and skills regularly. Inexperienced officials could work with more experienced officials.
- Provide officiating checklists that document officiating procedures, safety procedures, and the equipment needed and highlight particular rules.
- Work through the club/association *Codes of Behaviour* booklet with officials, players, coaches and parents so that everyone is aware of the expected standard of behaviour.
- Provide officials with opportunities for training in conflict management, personal management skills and how to interpret the rules of the game.

## DOES YOUR CLUB/ASSOCIATION WANT ENOUGH QUALIFIED OFFICIALS TO COVER ALL COMPETITIONS?

### What can your club/association do?

- Provide rewards and incentives to become and remain an official (uniforms, concessions and recognition).
- Some sports have the resources to pay their officials. If you do, try to ensure the payment is comparable with similar activities.
- Outline the leadership role played by an official. Remind your officials that they are vital to keep the standards of the game high; they make it safer for players; they are essential to the conduct of the game; and one day they may officiate at the state championships, nationally or internationally.
- Promote an officiating award such as an official of the week, month or season.
- Make sure that you do not ask a person to officiate in a game beyond their experience, level of accreditation or ability. This may turn them off being an official.

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## Information

For further information refer to our website [www.dsr.wa.gov.au](http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au) or contact the Officiating Consultant at the WA Department of Sport and Recreation (08) 9387 9700.