



**International
Handball
Federation**

**XI.
Regulations
for International
and Continental
Referees**

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Close collaboration between the IHF, the continental federations and the national federations is a prerequisite for the smooth functioning of the referee system worldwide. Invitations of referees from one continent to another shall go through the IHF-PRC, with the acceptance and co-operation of the continental federation concerned.

1. Purpose of the Categories “International” and “Continental” Referees

- 1.1.** The purpose of recognizing a group of referees as “International” and to publish annually a “List of International Referees” is to make official which referees are eligible at a given point in time to be nominated for World Championships, Olympic Games, and other IHF events.
- 1.2.** It follows that only referees who currently (or in a near future are expected to) meet these high requirements should be considered for promotion to the International level and for inclusion in the List of International Referees. (The requirements for being considered and the contents of the examinations, are contained in the separate Regulations for Official IHF Referee Courses).
- 1.3.** The limited purpose of IHF involvement in the recognition of “Continental” Referees in the individual continents is to protect the interests of the IHF, for the event that some specific Continental referees may be given permission to handle games that form part of IHF competitions (such as qualifications for World Championships or Olympic Games).

2. Link to the IHF Global Referee Training Program

- 2.1.** The essential purpose of the IHF Global Referee Training Program (GRTP) is to recruit and train young, talented referees from all continents in a standardized and first-rate program that will enable these referees to progress to the “International” level and to form a pool of referees to be used for all IHF events.

2.2. Following the introduction of the GRTP, the List of International Referees will consist of: (i) referees who have reached the IHF level through the GRTP and (ii) referees who qualified for the International level prior to the introduction of the GRTP and fully meet the purpose enunciated in 1.1. above.

3. Recognition of Special Groups within the International Referee Category

3.1. Under the IHF Bylaws, the IHF/PRC is expected to recognize an “Elite” Group and a “Prospect” Group within the overall group of International Referees.

3.2. The Elite Group will essentially consist of the referees who have shown in previous IHF events that they already maintain the level required for nominations to “A” World Championships and Olympic Games. The members of the Elite Group will be announced periodically, at times appropriate to the nomination of referees for “A” World Championships and/or training groups for such events.

3.3. The Prospect Group will essentially consist of those referees who have reached the IHF level through the GRTP, and still remain under the age limit (40) for participation in Youth and Junior World Championships. Members of the Prospect Group who pass that age limit will be evaluated for possible inclusion in the Elite Group.

4. Eligibility for the International Referee Category

4.1. A referee can be promoted to the level of International Referee only through successful participation in an official IHF examination of candidates for such promotion (see Regulations for Official IHF Referee Courses).

4.2. Basically 3 referee couples per national federation may be nominated for inclusion on the Annual List of International Referees issued by the IHF Playing Rules and Referees Commission. Furthermore an additional female couple may be nominated as fourth couple. In genuinely exceptional cases, however, the IHF/PRC may take the initiative to authorize two or four additional referees from the same national federation to participate in an official IHF examination for the purpose of being promoted to the List of International Referees. The criteria in each such case are determined by the IHF/PRC.

- 4.3.** In line with the age limit for new participants in the GRTP (normal maximum 32), and the policy of requiring that nominees for Junior World Championships be below the age of 40, the normal maximum age for promotion to the International level has been set at 35. This allows a new GRTP participant to achieve the standards required prior to an examination for the International level, and it typically allows a new International referee the opportunity to be considered for at least two Junior World Championships prior to the age of 40. The age limit of 35 is a limit virtually without exceptions. Any exceptions are the exclusive prerogative of the IHF/PRC, with factors such as desirable gender and geographical balance being taken into account.
- 4.4.** Only GRTP participants are eligible to be nominated for participation in examinations for the International level. The nominations, on the basis of prioritizing among GRTP participants, are the prerogative of the IHF/PRC. As referees participate in the GRTP with the support of their respective continental and national federations, the IHF takes for granted that they enjoy the same support when nominated for examinations.

5. Removal of Referees from the International Referee Category

- 5.1.** In an annual review of the performance and potential of all International Referees (see point 6 for procedures), the IHF/PRC determines for each referee whether the continuation at the International Referee level can be justified. The IHF/PRC may decide to consult with the relevant, but the decision of the IHF/PRC is binding and not subject to appeal. A decision to remove a referee may not be an indication of problems; it may simply be a matter of a re-evaluation of future potential in light of a constantly changing competition.
- 5.2.** In addition, all referees who have reached the age of 50 must be automatically removed from the International level.
- 5.3.** Outside the routine annual review, on the basis of its review of problems related to performance and/or conduct, the IHF/PRC has the right to remove a referee from the International level. Such removal, which cannot be appealed, generally takes effect immediately after the decision has been announced, and may be permanent, 'until further notice', or for a specified period of time.

5.4. Similarly, on the basis of sufficient justification, the IHF/PRC will generally honour a request from a continental or national federation that a referee be removed from the International level. The action presupposes that corresponding measures are being taken by the continental and national federation.

6. Procedures Related to the Annual List of International Referees

6.1. The annual List is in effect from August 1 through July 31 in the following year.

6.2. The IHF/PRC undertakes its annual review on such a timetable that all national and continental federations are informed during the month of May about the IHF/PRC decision as to which International referees would be accepted for the following year.

6.3. No later than June 30, the respective continental federation must indicate to the IHF/PRC (through the IHF Head Office), which of the referees who were declared eligible by the IHF/PRC are being re-nominated by their national and continental federation. In the absence of timely confirmation, the referees will automatically be removed.

6.4. The re-nomination must be accompanied by an updating of the personal data for each referee, on the forms provided by the IHF.

7. Reimbursements at IHF Events

Referees nominated for IHF events shall be reimbursed for the following:

- return travel costs from their home to the duty destination (by air in economy class for distances exceeding 600 km, by train or boat/ferry in first class, or alternatively by private car); journeys must be coordinated with the organizer.

- visa costs
- vaccinations costs
- board and lodging costs
- any other costs as specifically agreed with the IHF in advance
- per diem according to the IHF Regulations for Travel Expenses
- amounts prescribed in the Regulations for IHF Competitions

8. The Continental Referee Level

- 8.1.** In principle, each establishes its own list of Continental Referees under its own procedures.
- 8.2.** A continent's list of Continental Referees may include both referees who are seen as prospective candidates for subsequent promotion to the International level (through the GRTP), and referees for whom (e.g., due to age, language skills or talent) there are no such expectations. Accordingly, a may wish to deviate from IHF rules regarding aspects such as language requirements and age limits.
- 8.3.** In the case of prospective candidates for the International level, continental federations are strongly urged to pay attention to the above regulations for International Level referees and to the separate 'Regulation for Official IHF Referee Courses', so that these referees are appropriately prepared to take advantage of possible opportunities for promotion.
- 8.4.** Continental federations are required to submit to the IHF annually, on the same timetable as for the International List, a copy of their List of Continental Referees, together with personal data of an extent and format similar to that which applies for the International level.
- 8.5.** The nomination of Continental Level referees to matches which are part of events controlled by the IHF requires explicit approval from the IHF/PRC. This approval is obtained either for the nomination of specific Continental Referees for a specific event, or for the general utilization of specific Continental Referee for one year at a time.

9. Intercontinental Referee Exchanges

- 9.1.** If a continental or national federation wishes to request the assistance from another continent with referees for a specific continental or national level event, this assistance must be sought from the continental federation concerned, through the IHF Head Office. In the case of referees for events under the control of the IHF, such as qualifying events for World Championships or Olympic Games, the assistance must be sought from the IHF.
- 9.2.** A request must be submitted at least 30 days prior to the start of the event for which assistance is being sought.
- 9.3.** It should be left to the continental federation that is being asked to provide the assistance to select the referees, in consultation with the IHF. In other words, it is not appropriate to request a specific referee pair.
- 9.4.** A continental or national federation must not contact a national federation in another continent directly. It is absolutely prohibited to contact a referee pair directly. National federations or referees receiving such prohibited inquiries are not allowed to accept an invitation and must turn the matter over to the IHF immediately.
- 9.5.** The conditions offered to the invited referees must be fully in accordance with point 7 above.