

VOLLEYBALL NEW BRUNSWICK OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION

POLICY AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

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About This Handbook

Purpose

The Volleyball New Brunswick Officials Association (VNBOA) Policy and Procedures Handbook establish consistent governance, education, and conduct standards for volleyball officials throughout New Brunswick.

It defines:

- Executive and Zone structures and responsibilities
- Referee education and badge development (Level 1 through 4)
- Assignment and evaluation processes within and beyond the province
- Professional conduct and accountability

This handbook reflects the framework and philosophy of Volleyball New Brunswick (VNB) and Volleyball Canada (VC) to ensure national consistency.

Scope

This applies to all:

1. VNBOA members,
2. Zone Assignors,
3. Clinicians,
4. Evaluators,
5. the Referee Chair,
6. Executive Members,
7. and serves as a reference for partner organizations such as School Sport New Brunswick (SSNB) and local volleyball clubs.

Acronyms and Definitions

VNBOA: Volleyball New Brunswick Officials Association

VNB: Volleyball New Brunswick

VC: Volleyball Canada

SSNB: School Sport New Brunswick

Referee Chair: Provincial leader responsible for assignments and development coordination.

Zone Assignor: Executive appointed official who assigns and manages referees within a geographic zone.

Clinician: Certified instructor who conducts Volleyball Canada referee clinics.

Badge Level: Certification category (Level 1-Local, Level 2-Provincial, Level 3-Regional, Level 4-National).

Executive Committee: VNBOA leadership group responsible for policy and strategy.

SECTION 1 – GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

1.1 Executive Committee Composition

The VNBOA Executive Committee governs the administration, development, and coordination of volleyball officiating within New Brunswick.

Members include:

1. Chair
2. All level 4 or higher Referees
3. Zone 3 Assignor (If not a level 4 or higher referee)
4. Zone 4 Assignor (If not a level 4 or higher referee)
5. Zone 5 Assignor (If not a level 4 or higher referee)

1.2 Executive Selection and Appointment

- Regional Referee Chair
(RRC) Serves two-year terms and are appointed or elected by the VNBOA Executive Committee members.
- Vacant positions are filled by the executive until the next regular appointment cycle.
- Cycles begin each September. Election would take place during the September meeting.

- Criteria to be a member of the Executive Committee includes:
 - Registered official with VNB and VC.
 - A member in good standing.
 - Able and willing to fulfil the role and responsibilities.
 - Level 4 referee or higher or a zone assignor in zones 3, 4, 5.

1.3 Executive Roles and Responsibilities Overview

- Chair: Leads the VNBOA Executive, oversees major assignments and budget, represents VNBOA to VNB and VC.
- Treasurer: Manages finances and reporting.
- Clinicians (Level 1 – 4): Deliver training and evaluation programs.
- Materials Coordinator: Tracks and supplies officiating equipment and resources.
- Member at Large: Supports special projects and represents membership.

1.4 Executive Meetings and Decision-Making Procedures

- Minimum of three meetings per year
 - Meeting is conducted either in-person or virtually.
- Quorum: 50 percent of Executive members plus one.
- Chair is the Ex Officio and casts tie-breaking vote if needed.
- Minutes recorded and maintained by the Secretary and are available on the VNB website.

1.5 Zone Assignors

Appointment:

- Appointed by the VNBOA Executive prior to each season based on organizational and communication skills within the volleyball community.
- Assessed by the executive committee annually based on professionalism, zone efficiency, roles and responsibilities.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Provide the practical portion of the Level 1 (Local Badge) Clinic in their zone.
2. Recruit and retain referees; develop relationships with schools and clubs.

3. Assign referees within their zone based on skill, training and availability.
4. Work with other Zone Assignors and the Referee Chair to coordinate province-wide coverage.
5. Collect SSNB fees and pay referees in a timely manner.
6. Complete and submit VNB tournament expense forms and bi-weekly pay sheets to VNB.
7. Attend Provincial Assignor meetings.
8. Provide regular communication to the Referee Chair and Executive on zone activities.

Accountability

- Reports to the VNBOA Chair and Executive.

Collaboration Between Zones

- Share officials and coordinate coverage for multi-zone events.
- Communicate pertinent information to other zones.
- Engage in planning for coverage, development and recruitment.

SECTION 2 – OFFICIALS’ RESPONSIBILITIES, ELIGIBILITY AND CODE OF CONDUCT

2.1 Eligibility for Certification Clinics

Eligibility for certification clinics includes the following:

1. Individuals wishing to become certified officials in New Brunswick must be registered members in good standing with VNB and, where applicable, VC.
2. Prospective officials must demonstrate to the Executive Committee through their previous involvement, actions, behaviors and communications characteristics consistent with the values of honesty, respect, professionalism, and fair play.
3. The VNBOA Executive reserves the right to deny an applicant from participating in a officiating clinic, or any clinic operated under VNBOA authority, if it is determined that the applicant’s participation would not be in the best interest (member safety, association safety, brand protection and or undue hardship) of the VNBOA.
4. Eligibility decisions must be made collectively by the Executive.
5. Eligibility decisions will be based on the reasonable person standard through previous conduct, communication, conflicts of interest, or behaviors, and expressed values.
6. Any individual denied entry will receive written communication from the Executive Committee or delegate and may in response submit a written request for

reconsideration to the VNBOA Chair. Further appeals will be processed via the VNB Appeal Policy.

2.2 Professional Conduct and Responsibilities

All certified officials are expected to:

1. Uphold the rules and values of VC and VNB at all times.
2. Maintain a high level of professionalism both on and off the court.
3. Show respect toward athletes, coaches, organizers, spectators, and fellow officials.
4. Avoid conduct that could damage the image or credibility of volleyball officiating.
5. Communicate respectfully in person and online, maintaining positive representation of the VNBOA.
6. Accept feedback from supervisors, assignors, and evaluators in a constructive and professional manner.

2.3 Neutrality and Conflict of Interest

2.3.1 Officials must:

- Avoid officiating matches where a real or perceived conflict of interest exists, defined as involving immediate family members, current club affiliations, or teams they coach, manage or participate.
- Disclose, in writing, potential conflicts to their Zone Assignor before accepting assignments.
- Maintain neutrality and impartiality in all officiating decisions, regardless of personal connections or preferences.
- Refrain from discussing ongoing matches, referee assignments, or disciplinary matters publicly or on social media.

2.3.2 Overrides and Exceptions:

- In certain situations—such as limited availability of officials (volume issues) or when the most qualified referee is required for the skill level or importance of a match—the VNBOA Chair reserves the right to override neutrality considerations.
- Any such override must be made in good faith, prioritizing the integrity of the game and the overall officiating program.
- The Chair should inform the relevant Zone Assignor and document the rationale for the decision.

2.4 Attendance and Commitment

Officials are expected to:

1. Honor all accepted assignments and arrive on time for matches or events as the league or event protocol requires.
2. Notify their Zone Assignor as soon as possible if unable to fulfill an assignment.
3. Maintain active membership through annual registration, participation in required clinics, staying informed of rule updates and abide by the association's policies and procedures.
4. Support officiating development by mentoring newer referees whenever possible.

2.5 Dress Code and Equipment

1. Officials must wear the approved VC uniform and maintain a professional appearance.
2. Uniforms and equipment must be clean, complete, and consistent with current standards.
3. Officials must bring all required tools (whistle, cards, timing device, score-sheet supplies, etc.) required for the assignment.
4. VNBOA and VC insignia are to be worn as directed.

2.6 Representation and Ambassadorship

All VNBOA officials serve as ambassadors of the sport and are expected to:

- Promote respect for officiating within the volleyball community.
- Encourage new referee development and foster a supportive learning environment.
- Demonstrate composure, fairness, and consistency in all match situations.
- Exemplify the values of integrity, inclusiveness, and sportsmanship that define VNB.

2.7 Disciplinary Considerations for Section 2

The VNBOA Executive may investigate and act upon reports of items outlined in section 2 (Professional Conduct) including sub sections 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6.

Disciplinary actions may include:

- Verbal or written warning
- Temporary suspension from assignments
- Denial or delay of clinic participation or certification upgrade

- Reporting to VNB for overarching policies application such as VNB Code of Conduct and Ethics, Discipline and Complaints Policies.
- Decisions of the Executive may be appealed occurring to the VNB Appeal Policy.

SECTION 3 – REFEREE DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

The VNBOA follows the developmental framework established by VC, tailored to the needs of officials within the province.

This pathway provides a structured, performance-based approach to education, mentorship, and evaluation, ensuring consistency and professionalism across all levels of officiating in New Brunswick.

3.1 Overview

Certification within VNBOA progresses through four badge levels recognized by VC:

Badge Level	Official Certification Title	Representative Scope
Level 1	Local Badge	Entry-level referees active in local and regional play
Level 2	Provincial Badge	Intermediate referees active in regional and provincial events
Level 3	Regional Badge	Advanced referees active throughout the province and inter-regional play
Level 4	National Badge	Referees recognized for competition at the national level

Each badge level builds upon the previous one, developing rule knowledge, decision-making, and leadership ability.

Advancement is earned through successful evaluation, professionalism, and a commitment to ongoing development

3.2 Level 1 – Local Badge

Purpose:

To introduce new referees to the fundamental rules, mechanics, and responsibilities of officiating volleyball.

Training Components:

- Completion of the VC Level 1 Clinic delivered by a certified Level 1 Clinician.
- Classroom or online learning sessions covering essential rules, positioning, and signaling.
- Supervised on-court officiating with feedback and mentorship.

Competency Expectations:

- Understands basic VC rules and terminology.
- Demonstrates correct hand signals for standard calls.
- Applies basic positioning and teamwork with partners and score tables.
- Shows professionalism, attentiveness, and willingness to learn.

Assignment and Development:

- Local Badge referees are primarily assigned to community and regional events at appropriate competitive levels.
- Experienced Local referees may, under the discretion of the Referee Chair or Executive, serve as minor officials (line judge, scorer, assistant scorer) at college or university events where suitable.
- The Referee Chair and Executive may assign Local Badge referees to developmental tournaments outside their zone for experience and mentorship.

Certification Outcome:

Successful completion grants certification as a Local Badge Referee, eligible for officiating assignments within their home zone under the Zone Assignor.

3.3 Level 2 – Provincial Badge

Purpose:

To expand the referee's rule knowledge, mechanics, and ability to manage matches confidently and consistently at higher levels of play.

Training Components:

- Completion of the VC Level 2 Clinic led by a certified Level 2 Clinician.
- Referees may apply to take the Level 2 Clinic only at the discretion of their Zone Assignor and with approval from the VNBOA Executive.
- On-court officiating experience during sanctioned competitions, supported by mentorship and written evaluations.

Competency Expectations:

- Demonstrates strong understanding of Volleyball Canada rules and applications.
- Performs accurate, confident hand signals.
- Displays professionalism, teamwork, and communication with co-officials.
- Shows developing control in handling coach and player interactions.

Assignment and Development:

- Provincial Badge referees may officiate regional tournaments, VNB-sanctioned league play, and Provincial Championships.
- Strong Provincial Badge referees can serve as minor officials at college or university matches to broaden experience.
- The Referee Chair and Executive may assign Provincial Badge referees to advanced or out-of-zone events to accelerate growth and prepare for potential promotion to Regional Badge.

Certification Outcome:

Provincial Badge Referees are certified for regional and provincial-level competitions and may be recommended for candidacy toward the Regional Badge (Level 3).

3.4 Level 3 – Regional Badge

Purpose:

To prepare referees to officiate at the college level and to strengthen leadership and mentorship within the Provincial officiating community.

Eligibility and Selection Process:

- Entry into the Regional Badge (Level 3) program is by selection only.
- Referees and Zone Assignors may recommend candidates to the VNBOA Executive and Referee Chair.
- The Executive and Referee Chair will review all candidates and select those ready for potential advancement.
- Selected referees will be assigned to high-level events across the province to determine whether they possess the skill set, consistency, and composure required for Level 3 officiating.
- Only those demonstrating readiness and maturity will be invited to enroll in the Level 3 Clinic and development program.

Training Components:

- Completion of the VC Level 3 Clinic facilitated by a certified Level 3 Clinician.
- Evaluations at college-level, provincial-championship, and major invitational events.
- Coaching and mentorship from senior referees and evaluators focusing on advanced match management.

Competency Expectations:

- Demonstrates very strong knowledge of VC rules and procedures.
- Exhibits high level positioning, signaling, teamwork, and professionalism.
- Shows mastery of game-management principles including communication, conflict resolution, and bench control.
- Accurately judges play above the height of the net (blocks, jousts, interference, and net contact).
- Demonstrates leadership, confidence, and mentorship qualities.

Assignment and Development:

- Newly upgraded Regional referees must demonstrate the ability to officiate college-level matches.

- Over time, referees may be grandfathered out of this requirement if they transition into evaluator or mentorship roles.
- Regional Badge referees continue to officiate major events, VNB Provincial Championships, and senior-level tournaments as appropriate.

Certification Outcome:

Regional Badge Referees are qualified for championship-caliber competitions and are eligible for nomination to the National Badge (Level 4) program.

3.5 Evaluation and Advancement

- Evaluations and advancements are based on clinic completion, performance, and recommendations from Evaluators, Clinicians, Executive Members (including the Referee Chair), and the Level 4 Program Coordinator.
- Recommendations are collectively reviewed by the Level 3 Clinician(s), the Executive (including the Referee Chair), and the Level 4 Program Coordinator for fairness and accuracy.
- Evaluations focus on competency, communication, leadership, and professionalism.
- Referees must maintain active registration and attend annual rule updates to remain eligible for upgrade consideration.

3.6 Ongoing Development and National Badge Entry (Level 4)

- VNBOA promotes lifelong learning through education, mentorship, and opportunity.
- Nomination to VC's National Badge program may be initiated by the Level 4 Program Coordinator or the Referee Chair.
- Final approval requires a majority vote of the VNBOA Executive, who will prioritize nominees based on performance, leadership, and professionalism.
- A points-based ranking system may be used for transparency.
- The Referee Chair holds final authority in confirming and submitting the selected candidates to VC.

3.7 Assignments

3.7.1 Assignment Authority

- All officiating assignments must be issued by the Zone Assignor or the Referee Chair.

- Referees are prohibited from accepting assignments directly from schools, clubs, coaches, or external organizations unless approved by the Zone Assignor or Referee Chair.
- Major event assignments are coordinated by the Referee Chair in collaboration with Zone Assignors, including:
 - All major VNB events (e.g., Provincials and high-performance tournaments)
 - All University assignments (e.g., ACAA, AUS, RSEQ competition)
 - School Sport New Brunswick (SSNB) Varsity Regional and Provincial Championships

3.7.2 Assignment Guidelines

1. Zone Assignors assign referees within their zones based on ability, experience, and availability.
2. Assignors may occasionally “push the limits” of referees to test readiness for advancement while ensuring appropriate guidance and support.
3. Assignments may also depend on volume issues or coverage needs.
4. Assignors should place referees at matches that fit their skill level while supporting positive development.
5. Referees may receive out-of-zone assignments to broaden experience and mentorship exposure.
6. The Referee Chair may override neutrality restrictions if coverage or skill-match demands require.
7. Major events prioritize Regional and National Badge officials, with developing referees placed in supportive or mentorship roles.

3.7.3 Assignment Expectations

1. Referees must confirm availability promptly and fulfill all assignments professionally.
2. Any changes or cancellations must be reported immediately to the Zone Assignor.
3. Accepting assignments directly from unapproved organizers may result in Executive review and possible disciplinary action.
4. Repeated lateness, failure to appear, or unprofessional conduct will also be subject to review.

Out-of-Province Assignment:

3.8.1 Authority and Oversight

- All out-of-province assignments are coordinated by the Referee Chair with consultation from the VNBOA Executive.

- The Referee Chair must approve and sign off on all out-of-province university matches and events before participation.
- The VNBOA Executive may provide financial assistance where feasible to support referees representing the province.

3.8.2 University and Inter-Collegiate Events

- Assignments to university or inter-collegiate events outside New Brunswick require prior Referee Chair approval.
- Officials are selected based on demonstrated competence, professionalism, and representation of VNBOA standards.
- VNBOA may, when resources allow, assist with travel or accommodation expenses.

3.8.3 Volleyball Canada National Championships

- The Executive identifies referees demonstrating the skill, consistency, and potential for national-level performance.
- All suggested names are compiled, and the Executive conducts a vote ranking nominees from highest to lowest priority using a points-based system.
- The number of referees selected depends on Volleyball Canada's allocation.
- The Referee Chair retains final authority on all national selection approvals to ensure representation reflects VNBOA priorities.

3.8.4 Expectations for Representatives

1. Referees selected for out-of-province events act as ambassadors for VNBOA, VNB, and VC.
2. Officials are expected to model professionalism, integrity, and leadership.
3. Returning referees are encouraged to share their knowledge and experiences to help mentor others across all badge levels.

SECTION 4 – EVALUATION, UPGRADING, AND MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION

The VNBOA utilizes assessments based on Volleyball Canada criteria and upgrading process that promotes fairness, consistency, and continuous improvement among all officials

Evaluations ensure referees perform at the level appropriate to their badge certification and provide opportunities for professional growth based on performance, experience, and engagement in development activities.

4.1 Purpose

The evaluation and upgrading process is designed to:

1. Assess the competency, consistency, and professionalism of officials at all badge levels.
2. Identify referees who are ready to progress to higher certification levels.
3. Support lifelong learning and mentorship through constructive feedback.
4. Ensure VNBOA maintains a qualified, progressive pool of referees across New Brunswick.

4.2 Evaluation Process

Evaluations may be conducted by certified Clinicians, Evaluators, or Executive-approved assessors at sanctioned tournaments, leagues, or designated events.

Evaluations will consider:

1. Rule knowledge and on-court application.
2. Mechanics, positioning, and timing of signals.
3. Communication, teamwork, and composure.
4. Judgment and consistency in applying the rules.
5. Professionalism and attitude on and off the court.
6. Referees will receive verbal and/or written feedback outlining strengths, areas for improvement, and development goals.
7. Important evaluations will be recorded and submitted to the Referee Chair and the VNBOA Executive for review and updating of provincial officiating records.

4.3 Criteria for Upgrading

Officials may be considered for upgrading under the following conditions:

1. Successful completion of the required Volleyball Canada clinic for the next badge level.
2. Positive evaluations demonstrate that the official meets or exceeds expectations for advancement.
3. Recommendation from the appropriate Zone Assignor, Clinician, Evaluator, or the Referee Chair.
4. Display of professionalism, reliability, and integrity consistent with VNBOA standards.
5. Approval from the VNBOA Executive with consideration of available development opportunities and performance history.

4.4 Upgrading to Each Badge Level

Local Badge (Level 1):

- Entry point for new referees.
- Completion of the Level 1 Clinic and successful on-court performance.

Provincial Badge (Level 2):

- Application and approval by Zone Assignor with Executive consent.
- Demonstrated competence in mechanical execution and match management at regional levels.
- Successful completion of the Level 2 Clinic and positive evaluation feedback.

Regional Badge (Level 3):

- By Selection Only.
- The Executive and Referee Chair jointly select candidates based on recommendations from Zone Assignors and performance at the Provincial Badge level.
- Selected referees are placed in high-level events across the province to be evaluated for potential entry into the Level 3 program.
- Completion of the Level 3 Clinic upon approval.
- Successful evaluation(s) demonstrating proficiency in college-level officiating, advanced rule application, and leadership behavior.

National Badge (Level 4):

- Nominations may be initiated by the Level 4 Program Coordinator or the Referee Chair.
- A formal vote will be held among the VNBOA Executive Members to determine which nominees will represent New Brunswick within the VC National Officials Program.
- A points-based ranking will be used to ensure transparency and prioritize officials who demonstrate the greatest potential for success and growth.

- Final confirmation and submission to VC rest with the Referee Chair.

4.5 Approval and Documentation

- The Level 3 Clinician(s), Executive Members, and the Referee Chair maintain all records related to evaluations, upgrades, and certifications.
- A master list of certified officials will be updated annually, including badge level, clinic participation, and upgrade eligibility.
- Written confirmations of upgrades shall be communicated to the referee and recorded in VNBOA's official database for historical tracking.

4.6 Maintenance of Certification

To maintain active certification status at any badge level, officials must:

1. Register annually with VNB and VC.
2. Attend annual referee update clinics or online review sessions.
3. Remain active in officiating a reasonable number of matches, as defined by the Referee Chair and Executive.
4. Model the VNBOA's Code of Conduct and uphold high standards of professionalism.
5. Maintain current knowledge of VC's Rules of the Game and procedures.
6. Officials who fail to meet annual maintenance requirements may be listed as Inactive and required to complete a refresher clinic or supervised evaluation before reinstatement.
7. Inactive officials must complete refresher or evaluation to return.

4.7 Re-Certification and Downgrading

Officials who have been inactive for more than two seasons or fail to demonstrate competency may be temporarily downgraded at the discretion of the Executive and Referee Chair.

To regain certification, referees must:

1. Attend the appropriate clinic for their last active badge level.
2. Complete an on-court evaluation approved by the Zone Assignor and Clinician.
3. Officials who successfully complete retraining and performance requirements will be restored to their previous level or reassigned appropriately based on assessment.

4.8 Appeals

- Officials who wish to appeal an evaluation or upgrade decision must submit a written request to the Referee Chair within 30 days of receiving their result.
- The appeal will be reviewed by the Referee Chair and a minimum of two other Executive Members not directly involved in the original decision.
- The review committee may uphold, modify, or overturn the original decision.
- The outcome of the appeal will be communicated in writing, and all decisions of the VNBOA Executive on appeals are final within the provincial officiating structure.

Review and Amendment

The VNBOA Executive Committee reviews this handbook annually, or sooner as required following Volleyball Canada rule changes or policy updates.

Amendments are recorded in the Revision History at the conclusion of this document.

Prepared by: Volleyball New Brunswick Officials Association Executive

Approved by: VNBOA Executive Committee

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Revision Date: _____

Version: 1.0

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