

Q: What is the Hockey Canada Officiating Program?

To gain a bit of background knowledge about the officiating program and how it works on a national level, you may visit this link: <http://www.hockeycanada.ca/e/develop/officials/index.html>

Q: What do I have to do to become an official in the Ottawa area? There are several steps associated with becoming a referee.

1. You must determine which ODMHA district you live in and then you can contact the local Referee-In-Chief (RIC) to be sure that they are accepting new officials. If you live in Nepean, the RIC is Andrew Douma, who can be contacted at Andrew.Douma@gmail.com.
2. You must decide where you are going to obtain your certification. You can either attend a one-day, eight-hour certification clinic, or the ODMHA Referee School. You must inform the RIC, which option you, will choose. The RIC is the only person who can sign you up for the clinic. You will be required to pay a fee for the clinic.
3. Once you have completed your certification, you must contact the RIC again so that he knows that you have successfully completed your course.
4. Look around for the proper officiating gear. Your RIC can provide hints where to shop. You might also contact existing officials in your area to obtain some quality second hand equipment.
5. If you live in Nepean, you will be required to attend two on-ice sessions in September. The purpose of these ice sessions is to practice some of the positioning and procedures that were taught in the classroom before your first game
6. The assignor will contact you to offer you your first set of games. You will have an experienced official shadowing you on the ice to offer pointers on positioning. The senior official is a volunteer who will not wear a whistle, but will be in uniform. The game is yours to officiate and you will be paid – just be sure to thank the senior official for giving his or her time to help you.

Q: What happens at a certification course (Referee School or clinic)?

At a certification course, you will be offered instruction on basic positioning, procedures, and rules. At the end of the day, you will have to take a rules examination. Everyone who attends the clinic and writes the exam will be awarded the level 1 certification.

Q: What is the difference between the referee school and a one-day clinic?

The one-day certification clinics are held in September and October. The clinic is eight hours long, with a break for lunch. At the clinic, officials will be provided basic instruction on positioning, procedures, and rules. The clinic takes place entirely in the classroom – there is no on-ice portion. The clinic schedule is at http://www.odharefs.com/clinics/clinic_schedule.html. There will be a fee of about \$115 for the course, which includes insurance and registration fees for 2006-2007.

The referee school is a three-day, more comprehensive version of the one-day course. While the same material is taught, the officials will spend more time on each subject. Additionally, they'll have the opportunity to meet and interact with other officials, administrators, and even some professionals from the NHL and OHL. There is also the opportunity to skate several times throughout the weekend. The course is held as an overnight camp from Aug 18-20 at Carleton University. The cost is approximately \$400.

Q: Does it matter which certification course I attend? Which is better?

No. Both have their advantages and disadvantages. The referee school is fun, and teaches a great deal. However, it is expensive, and can be overwhelming for some officials – especially if you haven't ever been on

the ice as a referee before. The one-day clinics are less expensive and shorter, but as a consequence, are less comprehensive. Therefore I recommend the following:

- If you are a fast learner, and have the time and money, go to the ref school. It is a blast and you will learn a lot.
- If you don't learn as fast, don't have the time, or don't want to commit the money, take a one-day clinic. You can always take the referee school next year once you have decided if you are going to stay with officiating.

Q: Does it matter which one-day clinic I attend?

Yes. Because we have ice time scheduled in September, it is strongly encouraged that new officials attend the September 23rd clinic.

Q: How many games will I get in Nepean? Will I recoup my clinic fees?

Most new officials will work 30-50 games this season. Combined, our referees will officiate about 2400 games in total per season. If you take the one-day course and are a frugal equipment shopper, you will likely recoup your start-up costs or make a bit of money. If you purchase more elaborate gear, have limited availability or interest, or attend the referee school, you will probably not recoup your start-up costs by the end of the season. As you become more experienced second or third year officials, you will start receiving more substantial pay cheques.

Q: How old do I have to be? What kinds of people become NMHA Officials?

Because we have so many people interested in officiating, we generally only allow those 14 and over to officiate in Nepean. Any interested 13-year olds will be placed on a waiting list, and may take any vacancies at the start of July.

In 2004-2005, we accepted four adults, seven teenagers (14-16 years old), and one 13-year old.

There are roughly 90 officials in Nepean. Our officials come from different personal backgrounds, cultures, and age groups.

Q: What equipment do I need?

You'll only need to purchase or borrow some of the basic equipment: a jersey, black pants, a black helmet with half-visor, and a whistle. You'll be given cresting for the jerseys. The cost of some of this equipment is sometimes prohibitive, so before investing a large amount of money, be sure you want to stick with officiating. For example, for the first season or so, you can probably get by with a pair of black cotton trousers from Winners or Mark's Work Warehouse – There is no need to invest \$100-\$220 in official referee pants. However, a couple of things to keep in mind:

- Hockey Canada does not permit its officials to wear the NHL-style jerseys, with black mesh under the armpits.
- Your helmet should be black, and you do need a half-visor. It is difficult to blow a whistle when you wear a full cage!
- It is strongly recommended that officials use a steel ACME Thunderer whistle instead of the plastic Fox 40. The pitch is deeper for hockey, and the whistle works better in the cold. Use a bit of tape on the tip so that it doesn't freeze to your lips on a cold day.

Q: How do I get assigned games?

Games are assigned by telephone or by e-mail, and usually occur on Saturday and Sunday mornings, although they can be at any time on evenings or weekends. They always have the opportunity to turn them down and we do accommodate their own hockey schedules. We are pretty flexible in this way.

Q: How do I get paid?

We'll have bi-monthly meetings starting in October, which last about an hour to go over rule emphases and administrative issues. Officials are not paid for meetings, but are expected to be in attendance. Paycheques are passed out at these meetings. We try to make them helpful and informative without getting too boring.

Q: How do I sign up or get more information?

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