

Dear Prospective Cycling Official,

The Northern California Nevada Cycling Association ([NCNCA](#)) would like to sincerely thank you for expressing an interest in becoming a bicycle race sports official and referee. NCNCA operates under the auspices of the greater organization, USA Cycling ([USAC](#)).

As a USAC certified bicycle race official, you work as an independent contractor and are eligible to be appointed by NCNCA to officiate competitive bicycle race events primarily in California.

The process to become a certified USAC race official involves several steps. We have outlined the general information below and included a [FAQ](#) section.

1. **USA Cycling Registration:** Create a USAC Account. This will allow you to receive your USAC member number. Please note that everything else that follows is dependent on you having a USAC member number. <https://auth.sport80.com/register>
2. **Sign up for training.**
In-Person will be offered in January 2026.
 - a. In person class on Saturday, January 17th, 2026 from 9am to 5pm in Fremont
[Sign up here](#)
 - b. Self Study Option Only.

After completing Step 1. Enroll in the course here
<https://usacycling.isportz.co/lms/course/view.php?id=241>

Print out the certificates for your records and send a pdf copy of each to the NCNCA Officials Assigner officials@ncnca.org and USA Cycling Officials officials@usacycling.org

3. **SafeSport Certification:** You need your USAC member number for this step. Sign up for SafeSport training and complete it (About 2 hours in total. You do not need to complete it all at one sitting). Your USAC officiating license will not be valid until this training is complete.

Follow instructions here:

USAC System Upgrade in progress. The Center for SafeSport Training can be access via your Sport80 account by navigating to your profile. Contact officials@ncnca.org for detailed instructions.

4. **Background Check:** After SafeSport is complete, you will submit a background check. This is a short process but be prepared to provide information about your current and previous residences.

Follow instructions here:

USAC System Upgrade in progress. The Center for SafeSport Training can be access via your Sport80 account by navigating to your profile. Contact officials@ncnca.org for detailed instructions.

5. **Application Form:**

Complete application form and submit to officials@usacycling.org and officials@ncnca.org when steps 1,2,3,4 are completed.

<https://assets.usacycling.org/prod/documents/Officials-License-Application.pdf>

6. **State Specific Requirements:**

The following certifications are specific to California. The training is online and free consisting of two short online video courses: Sudden Cardiac Arrest and Concussion in Sports (About 1 hour total)

Both are offered by NFHS - National Federation of State High School Associations.
<https://nfhslearn.com>

You need to register for an account to proceed with the training. When asked, your organization is **NCNCA**. You can leave the sport dropdown menu blank as there is no option for cycling.

Links for the courses:

<https://nfhslearn.com/courses/sudden-cardiac-arrest>

<https://nfhslearn.com/courses/concussion-in-sports-2>

Print out the certificates for your records and send a pdf copy of each to the NCNCA Officials Assigner officials@ncnca.org.

7. **Internships:** This can be done while steps 1 to 6 are in progress. Review the [race calendar](#) and work with the NCNCA New Officials Coordinator (officials@ncnca.org) to schedule your internships.

Thank you for getting through this long email. We hope you consider becoming a bicycle race official; it can be truly a fun and rewarding experience. Many of the best cyclists in the country come from California as we have the advantage of great all season weather and cycling venues across the state.

Below you will find some FAQs that may help provide additional information. If you have any other questions, comments, or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to officials@ncnca.org

Sincerely,
Ryan F
NCNCA New Officials Coordinator
officials@ncnca.org
www.ncnca.org
[Instagram](#)
[Facebook](#)

FAQs

[Why should I be an USA Cycling Official?](#)

[Do I need to have any cycling or racing experience?](#)

[Where are the races located?](#)

[How about my travel costs?](#)

[How much do I get paid?](#)

[Will there be food provided?](#)

[Who pays me?](#)

[What is an Assistant Judge?](#)

[What is the role of the Camera Operator?](#)

[What other positions are available?](#)

[Motor Refereeing?](#)

[What are my initial out of pocket costs?](#)

[Are there any other requirements beside the 7 mentioned?](#)

[What is involved with the internship?](#)

[How often can I work? How will I know? Where do I sign up?](#)

[What does a typical race day look like?](#)

[Who is the Chief Referee?](#)

[I have more questions?](#)

Why should I be an USA Cycling Official?

Becoming an official allows you to be a critical part of USA Cycling events all across the country. Officials are responsible for the sporting aspect of all of our competitive races, allowing USA Cycling's members to pursue their passion of competition. As a USA Cycling Official, you will learn to work within a team and manage an event with event organizers. You'll progress towards leading teams of officials through increased practice and training.

Delivering fun, safe, equitable and measured racing is our drive and passion. Fun-for all of us. Safe-for all of us; for our members on and off their bikes at events. Equitable-for all of us; ruling on regulations and riding conduct makes our sport understandable, predictable and fair. Measured-for all of us; accurate results, timing and placings create development and growth for our members and your officiating career.

But don't take our word for it, here are NCNCA officials sharing reasons why they officiate.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/19nw5VU_VIGCucxuupdHNgtvIZRn7qUHJwXGhQgFO5CU

Please follow us on Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/ncncacyclingofficials/>

Do I need to have any cycling or racing experience?

Nope. You do not need to know how to ride a bicycle nor have any racing experience whatsoever. The judging, scoring, camera positions can all be taught on the job.

Once you develop these skill sets, you will have a highly unique and sought after capability that only a few in the cycling community possess.

Where are bicycle races located?

USAC competitive events occur all across the NCNCA region. Please check out the [NCNCA calendar](#) or the [Chief Referee Assignment calendar](#) (**Column F**) to review where events are located. Traveling will be required to the venues.

How about my travel costs?

Your mileage will be reimbursed at the current [IRS](#) standard rate. Any fees for bridges and tolls will be covered as well.

If you are working the event as an official in a vehicle or on a motorcycle, your mileage will also be reimbursed at the IRS standard rate.

Your time to travel to and from the event are not part of the hourly rate as described in the next question below.

For events that are roughly over 150 miles or more than 2+ hour travel time, you may be provided with overnight housing. You would discuss these details with the Chief Referee.

How much do I get paid?

The NCNCA pay scale is [here](#).

C/D/E Level Races	< 5 Hrs	5-9 Hrs	10 Hrs	11 Hrs	12 Hrs	13 Hrs
Chief Referee	140.00	215.00	255.00	295.00	335.00	375.00
Chief Judge	90.00	160.00	200.00	240.00	280.00	320.00
Camera	85.00	155.00	195.00	235.00	275.00	315.00
Assistant Referee/Assistant Judge/Motor	80.00	130.00	170.00	210.00	250.00	290.00
Mileage is \$.655 per mile as of 1/1/2023 Lunch or \$20 for events over 5 Hours		For races over 9 hours overtime for all officials is \$40 per hour billable in 15 minute increments; \$40 per diem for multi-day races (when an overnight stay is required)				

Pay is based on three distinct buckets. Events less than 5 hours, between 5 to 9 hours and those over 9 hours.

Here are examples:

If you are an Assistant Judge and work 3 hours, you will be paid \$80. If you work 4 hours, you will also be paid \$80

Working 5 hours will be \$130; 9 hours also \$130.

9 hours and 15 minutes will be $\$130 + \$10 = \$140$

9 hours and 45 minutes $\$130 + \$30 = \$160$

The Chief Referee for the event will determine the hours and round up if necessary.

Most events on average are generally in the 8 to 10 hour range.

To put everything all together, if you are hired as an Assistant Judge for a criterium race that starts at 8am and ends 5pm and your round trip mileage is 100 miles plus \$6 toll, you would be paid the following:

Total time: 10 hours and 30 minutes. (*Generally, you are requested to show up 1 hour before the race and leave half hour after the final racer finishes. However, if you arrive late or are released earlier your actual onsite and working time will be used to determine hours worked*)

FEES:

- Base: 9 hours at \$130
- Over Time: 1 hour and 30 minute billable at 15 minute increments (\$10 + \$10 + \$10 + \$10 + \$10 + \$10) = \$60

MILEAGE: 100 miles x 0.655 = \$65.50

BRIDGE TOLL: \$6.00

TOTAL PAY = \$261.50

Will there be food provided?

For events lasting 5 hours or more, the race organizer must provide lunch. When you officiate at a race, there won't be sufficient time for you to take off for a lunch break and get food.

If you decide to bring or pack your own lunch or skip it, please inform the Chief Referee in advance so that \$20 is added to your invoice.

Who pays me?

The Chief Referee for the event will gather everyone's information and create an [invoice](#). The race organizer of the event will write a check for every individual at the conclusion of the event.

There are a few race organizers that host multiple races during the calendar year. If your payment received reaches a certain dollar thresholds from that race organizer, you may be requested to complete a [W-9](#) in order to file a [1099](#)

What is an Assistant Judge?

A judge or scorer for a race is the most critical and in demand position at a bicycle race. Despite advances in technology, from the Tour de France to our local races, the judge keeps track of the racers using a technique called scoring and helps to determine the order for finish. There is 0 bicycling, racing, or any experience required. A strong attention to details and patience are however.

More details can be found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Some people find this incredibly relaxing, almost meditative, but others might find it stressful. Mastery is *not required* but competence and understanding of the concepts is a must. All of these skills are learned and taught on the job.

If you would like to assess whether officiating could be a good fit for you, please fill out this race scenario questionnaire

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Elxf9GQGgi-szcZJ-gyMQR_-2ZZYLFI-X3MA2h245D-8/edit

What is the role of the Camera Operator?

Determining the race order of finish requires use of technical equipment including a camera and laptop. Camera Operators are [paid more](#) than the Assistant Judge / Assistant Referee due to the specialized skills required.

Having knowledge of Apple Macs, Canon digital cameras, and recording video software is a big plus; however, all of the camera operator skills are learned and can be taught on the job if you are willing to learn.

You do not need to purchase any equipment of your own.

More details on the equipment used can be found [here](#).

Camera Operators are expected to score while not using the camera / laptop equipment during the race.

What other positions are available?

The positions described thus far are judging based or those that manage the race results process. There are “referee” positions which essentially are officials that call “balls and strikes”. Typically, these officials work on a motorcycle or a vehicle to have the best field-of-play vantage point or are stationary (e.g. observing a sprint finish or a repair pit). They watch for conduct (e.g. pushing a rider, cheating, crossing the centerline etc...) and enforce race regulation (issuing warning, fines, relegations, disqualifications, suspensions)

If you know or know of someone who has excellent motorcycle handling abilities, this is a big plus and highly sought after in demand position. The [motorcycle referee](#) will require additional training.

Note that even as a referee, scoring will be an essential skill set, not up to the level of the judge

position but knowledge of the fundamental scoring concepts will be critical to understand what is going on in the race.

Motor Refereeing?

Read more about the [day in the life of a motorcycle referee](#).

If this sounds like fun or you know someone who might be interested, please contact us at officials@ncnca.org including providing us with details about the type of motorcycle(s) you own and how long you have been riding.

What are my initial out of pocket costs?

Background check fee \$30

First year license fee \$TBD (valid for 365 days from when you are licensed)

[Uniforms](#) are on average \$50.

If you successfully obtain your license and complete the internship, NCNCA may reimburse you (TBD depending on 2026 budget approval)

Are there any other requirements beside the [7 mentioned](#)?

It's important that new officials obtain practical on the job training. If you decide to pursue this avocation, there will be an internship requirement that can be completed in parallel while you obtain your license. At a minimum, you will be required to intern 2 races and possibly a 3rd event to be decided by the mentor assigned to you.

What is involved with the internship?

You and your mentor will determine race events where you will both be available to receive training with scoring, judging, and possibly camera / laptop practice. You will not be paid for these events, and the promoter will provide you with lunch if you are there for over 5 hours.

You do not need to be at the event for the entire race, and the schedule will be entirely dependent on working with your mentor. After 2 events, you will discuss with your mentor if a 3rd internship is required.

How often can I work? How will I know? Where do I sign up?

Once you are a licensed USAC official, you will be granted access to an internal spreadsheet where you will enter your availability and sign-up for races in Northern California and Nevada. There is typically a race every weekend from February to October (See [NCNCA calendar](#) or the [Chief Referee Assignment calendar](#))

NCNCA continues to face a shortage of officials as with all other amateur sports in the country. There are racing events that are at risk this season of cancellation without sufficient staffing.

If you sign-up, have a great can-do, willing to learn, and positive attitude, you most likely will be hired as an official for the event. The Chief Referee will plan to contact and hire you at least one month before the event date.

However, if you are not being hired or contacted by the Chief Referee, the NCNCA Officials Assigner (officials@ncnca.org) who oversees the assignment / hiring process will remediate on your behalf.

What does a typical race day look like?

You are expected to show up 1 hour before the first race starts, and yes, that 1 hour will include your total time worked. Races generally start at 8am, so that means being there at 7am

During that time, you will meet with the officials to plan the day and prepare for any necessary equipment setup (e.g. setting up the finish line, putting together the camera / laptop, etc...)

As the racers stage at the start line, you will help check that the racer's numbers are pinned correctly to their clothing and visible. You will help direct racers to the staging area. Once the race has begun, you will be scoring racers to help track their positions. In some types of races known as criterium, the event will happen sequentially (i.e. a race for a group starts and finishes, then the next group starts, etc...) A criterium typically has 9 events for the day or approximately 9 hours on average

In other types of races known as the road race, there may be multiple groups on the race course, the tasks described above are mostly the same. A road race is typically a 6 hour day.

During the event, you are working with other judges and the camera operator to make sure everyone the officiating crew is tracking and scoring riders accurately. You may sometimes work alone temporarily as other crew members are busy with other tasks, so it's important to be reliable and state any concerns you may have if you are not comfortable with scoring alone.

You will be working outside the elements, so it's important that you prepare accordingly in terms of what you wear and having the right equipment. Your assigned mentor will help you go through the appropriate checklists to make sure that you do.

After the last racer crosses the finish line, you will assist the officials in tear down or clean-up of any officiating equipment. There will generally be a debrief with the Chief Referee and the members of the crew where you will review any highlights or lowlights for the day and receive your payment in the form of a check.

Who is the Chief Referee?

The Chief Referee is the head official for a designated race event and is appointed by the NCNCA Officials Assigner. S/he is responsible for hiring the judges, referees, and assistants for that event, and generating an invoice for all officials fees prior to the conclusion of the event for the race organizer to write checks for everyone before leaving. S/he is responsible for working with the race organizer to ensure that the event conforms with USAC regulations and standards.

I have more questions?

Please don't hesitate to reach out to officials@ncnca.org