

Guidelines for NERRS and High School Rugby Unions

NERRS Mission:

The New England Rugby Referees Society (NERRS) promotes the advancement and enjoyment of the game of rugby by providing qualified volunteer match officials to clubs at all levels within the Rugby Football Unions of New England and to USA Rugby. The Society recruits and trains referees, helping them achieve their highest potential by offering world class assessment and coaching and providing access and financial assistance to advanced referee courses, promoting exchanges and other networking opportunities, and by supporting Territorial and National Panel development opportunities.

Requirements of U19 State-Based Rugby Organizations (SBRO) and other High School Rugby Organizations wishing to Contract for NERRS Referees:

1. CIPP Registration

The SBRO is responsible for ensuring that all of its member clubs and coaches are USA Rugby CIPP registered prior to participating in any rugby match or competition. The SBRO itself must be sanctioned by USA Rugby as a Level 1, 2, 3, or 4. The SBRO must certify annually that all of its clubs are CIPP registered.

NERRS requires the SBRO to ensure that all players are CIPP registered prior to participating in any rugby match or competition. CIPP Registration certifies that players have health insurance and that they release liability and waive certain legal rights associated with the assumption of the risks from participating in the sport of rugby.

2. Disciplinary Committee:

The SBRO must establish a Disciplinary Committee that is responsible for reviewing and administering disciplinary action within its SBRO. The SBRO must adhere to the *USA Rugby Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures* set by the United States of America Rugby Football Union (USARFU). A full and up to date outline of these policies is available on line at:

<http://www.usarugby.org/media/EDocs/DisciplinaryRules1.pdf>

The SBRP must enforce all the laws and rules of the game as stipulated by the IRB and by USA Rugby.

The Disciplinary Committee must notify NERRS of the results of all hearings regarding reports submitted to the Disciplinary Committee by NERRS. NERRS has the right to appeal any decision of the Disciplinary Committee if it feels that the Committee has not

followed *USA Rugby Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures* or if it has not considered information provided by NERRS.

3. Contact

The SBRO must designate a point of contact for its SBRO. The SBRO must also provide contact information for all SBRO Directors and Officers.

4. Code of Conduct

The SBRO must establish a Code of Conduct for its members. This code of conduct must be enforced by the SBRO.

5. Reciprocity / Compliance

The SBRO must honor sanctions levied on its clubs or members from other USA Rugby or iRB recognized organizations. The SBRO will support fines and sanctions levied against its clubs as a result of their non-compliance with this agreement.

6. Tournaments

All Tournaments must be sanctioned by the SBRO. NERRS will not assign referees to tournaments of its member teams unless the tournament is sanctioned by the SBRO.

7. Medical Policy

The SBRO must establish a medical policy for its clubs. This policy must minimally comply with USA Rugby medical guidelines:

<http://www.usarugby.org/information/default.asp?NavPageID=58334>

NERRS Referees will not referee matches for clubs that are not compliant with the guidelines. Clubs that are not compliant will be required to pay the game fee in accordance with the fee schedule and will be fined an amount equal to one game fee.

8. Match Fee Schedule

Match fees are set for each calendar year prior to the spring season. The SBRO will be advised in writing of any fee changes at least 60 days prior to the new fee becoming effective. For the 2010 calendar year, Home Team clubs will be charged \$75 per match. If the same referee assigned to a second match at same location, the charge is \$50. Assignment to a second match must be confirmed with the referee and the Area Coordinator in advance.

9. Tournament Fee Schedule

Tournament referee fees are calculated at a starting rate of \$75 per assigned referee for a half day and \$125 per assigned referee for a full day. These rates can be adjusted on a case-by-case basis by the Area Coordinator for the Host Club. For example, if accommodations and meals are provided a price reduction may be in order. Many members of the Society like to donate their services to their home club for a large tournament. The Society encourages this once per year per referee.

10. Alcohol Beverage and Regulated Substance Policy

The SBRO will recognize and adhere to USA Rugby guidelines and any and all applicable local laws and regulations. The serving or selling of alcoholic beverages is forbidden for one hour before the match/event, during the match/event, and for one hour after the match/event.

It is the ultimate responsibility of clubs and local officials to ensure that their own regulations and laws are enforced.

Disciplinary action will be utilized to censure clubs, event hosts, and others who fail to take the necessary action to enforce these regulations.

Requirements of SBRO Clubs

1. Register with NERRS Website

SBRO member clubs must request referees from the New England Rugby Referees Society (NERRS) for all matches and tournaments that they host. This website is the mechanism for requesting referees from NERRS, and the mechanism through which NERRS will invoice clubs for fees for assigned referees.

The website is set up with one user account for each SBRU club. When Clubs first log in to their Club account, they will be required to provide contact information for **THREE** club officials before they will be able to conduct any business with the Referees Society. All three contacts will receive e-mail communications from us regarding referee assignments and other business with the Society. This contact information will be archived at the end of each season and must be re-entered at the start of each season.

2. Requesting Referees

Clubs are responsible for requesting a referee for all home matches and tournaments that they host. This must be done through the NERRS website.

All home Clubs are required to notify the New England Referee's Society with their respective referee requests no later than March 1 for the spring, and July 31 for the fall.

NERRS referees are volunteers. NERRS will make every effort to provide a referee for all matches submitted, but may not be able to do so due to lack of referee availability. Matches submitted after the deadline for scheduling will be prioritized after those submitted prior to the deadline. Teams submitting referee requests after the deadlines may also be subject to fines due to the additional administrative burden that they place upon NERRS.

3. Notifying Referees prior to the Match

Clubs are notified of referee assignments through automated e-mails to club contacts designated on the NERRS website. Clubs must then contact their assigned referees within 48 hours of receiving their referee assignment, and must provide their referees with the following information:

- a. Match Time
- b. Match Location
- c. Directions to the Match Location
- d. Uniform colors of *both* the home and away teams
- e. Emergency club contact telephone number

Referees may be reassigned if the Club does not notify them within 48 hours of the assignment. Clubs may also be subject to a fine due to the additional administrative burden that they place upon NERRS.

4. Notifying Referees of Match Changes and cancellations

Clubs are responsible for contacting assigned referees and their Referee Assignor in the event that a match time is changed, a match location is changed, or a match is cancelled. Clubs must receive acknowledgement from the assigned referee of any such change. Failure to acquire such acknowledgement less than 24 hours prior to previously schedule kick-off may result in the Club being charged a match fee and an additional fine equal to the amount of a match fee.

Changing scheduled matches places an administrative burden on NERRS and its referees. As a result, referees may be reassigned to other matches, and it may not be possible to assign any referee to a changed match.

5. Match Play Guidelines

Clubs are responsible for complying with the following match play guidelines.

- a. Clubs must comply with the Medical Policy.
- b. Clubs must have an adult over the age of 21 present.
- c. Matches must be played on adequately sized and properly lined fields (See "[IRB field specs](#)" in the USA Rugby field specification located on their website). While not recommended, matches are permitted to be played on a field no smaller than a High School football field (120 x 53.3 yards) and use football goal posts or posts attached to a soccer goal if no other options are available.

- d. Ropes or similar must be placed on both sides of the field, goal line to goal line, to keep reserve players and spectators a safe distance from the field.
- e. The playing enclosure must be free of any safety hazards.
- f. Player dress must conform with Player Dress Guidelines.

NERRS referees are instructed not to referee matches when Clubs do not comply with these guidelines. Clubs failing to comply will be charged a match fee for the referee and will be subject to an additional fine equal to the amount of a game fee.

6. Player Dress Guidelines

Uniforms that do not meet the minimum standards outlined here are a potential safety issue for players and portray a less than favorable image of the Game. The SBRO must abide by the standards set by the International Rugby Board for padding and other equipment. If any equipment or padding does not include an IRB Approval tag, the Referee will mandate its removal. For a complete outline of the International Rugby Board (IRB) Guidelines and for regulations regarding equipment and padding visit the following website - <http://www.IRB.com>

- a. Kits must match and be clean with no tears in shirts, shorts, and socks. Short or cut sleeves must be hemmed and must at least cover the player's biceps. No clothing may show below Rugby shorts (no boxer shorts); except for spandex shorts. If worn, the color of the spandex shorts must completely match the Rugby shorts.
- b. Numbers on jerseys (for the correct positions) are mandatory.
- c. In the event of a lack of contrast of color jerseys, the *home team* is responsible for providing alternate wear to the satisfaction of the referee. The match is liable to cancellation, at the referee's discretion, if contrast of jerseys is unacceptable to the referee.
- d. Clubs cannot have any reference to alcohol or tobacco related products or companies displayed on any part of their kit.

NERRS recognizes that compliance with all uniform guidelines may be financially impractical for new clubs. Therefore, clubs in their first year of existence may be waived from requirements a, b, and c noted above.

7. Billing and Payments

Invoices for each clubs referee fees are generated at the end of each season, around June 1 for the spring season and December 1 for the Summer/Fall season. Clubs are expected to make payments in advance of the next season. The deadline for payment is February 28 for fees due from the previous fall and August 1 for fees due from the previous spring season.

Clubs with past due payments may be subject to a fine of \$50 for each month that payment is past due. Clubs with outstanding bills from the previous season who have not made payment or contacted the Treasurer to arrange payments by the deadline will be the

lowest priority for referee assignment. Clubs with past due amounts older than for the previous spring or fall season will not have referees assigned.

Payments must be mailed to the Treasurer of NERRS and must be made payable to:

New England Rugby Referees Society

Administrative fines must be paid immediately upon receipt in order for a Club to remain in Good Standing.

8. Compliance with Disciplinary decisions

Clubs are responsible for complying with any disciplinary decisions made by its SBRO Disciplinary Committee or by any other disciplinary committee that has jurisdiction over matches in which it competes.

Requirements of NERRS

1. Maintain the NERRS Website

NERRS is responsible for maintaining the functionality of the NERRS website. Clubs will neither be fined nor otherwise penalized as the result of lack of functionality of the NERRS website.

2. Provide Contacts

NERRS will provide contact information to clubs and the SBRO for the following individuals:

- a. Area Coordinator(s) for match assignments
- b. Director of Assignments
- c. Treasurer
- d. President

Additionally, NERRS will make available someone to assist Clubs that have problems accessing or using the NERRS website.

3. Assign Referees

NERRS assigns referees for NERFU and all SBRO Clubs in New England that are in Good Standing. Clubs that are current with their payments and have no outstanding fines are considered to be in Good Standing.

NERRS referees are volunteers. There are occasions when it is not possible for NERRS to provide referees for all requested matches due to the high volume of matches scheduled matches or a shortage of available referees.

In order to manage schedules, NERFU will receive priority for all matches scheduled on Saturdays, and SBRO's will receive priority for matches scheduled on all other days.

To the extent possible, NERRS will notify Clubs in advance when it expects that it will not be able to assign a referee to a scheduled match.

NERRS reserves the right to reassign its referees as it deems necessary in order to provide the maximum referee coverage for all matches. In such cases, a substitute qualified referee will be made available.

On occasion, an assigned referee will not be able to perform refereeing duties due to an unexpected injury or illness. In such case, NERRS will make every effort possible to assign a replacement referee, but may not be able to in all cases.

4. Provide Qualified Referees

NERRS will assign only qualified referees to SBRO matches. All referees will be CIPP compliant, will have Level 1 Referee certification, and will be members of NASO. In rare circumstances, NERRS may assign a referee from another iRB territory who is on exchange to NERRS. Such referee will be similarly qualified in his or her own territory.

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6. Provide a forum for Club feedback on Referees

NERRS believes that constructive feedback is an important tool for referee development. Therefore, NERRS requests that Clubs complete the Evaluation of Referee on the NERRS website after each match. Additionally, Clubs may contact the NERRS president should they have any particular concerns regarding NERRS and its referees.

7. Provide reports to the SBRO Disciplinary Committee

NERRS Referees will submit a disciplinary report within 48 hours of their match for each yellow or red card issued. This report will be forwarded to the Disciplinary Committee for their consideration. NERRS will also furnish reports to the Disciplinary Committee for incidents involving actions or non-playing Club members or supporters that it believes may warrant disciplinary action.

The Disciplinary Committee may contact a NERRS referee who completed a disciplinary report to request additional clarifying information.

8. Communicate Changes in Law and Application of Law

NERRS will communicate all changes in Law and in the application of Law to all teams via the contact provided by the SBO. These will be distributed via the SBO contact.

9. Communicate with SBRO Contact

NERRS will provide timely reminders regarding due dates for referee requests and other requirements (financial). These will be distributed via the SBO contact.