

USA KARATE OFFICIALS POLICY



*Member
United States Olympic Committee*

USA KARATE Referee Committee Vision Statement:

Honesty * Integrity * Training

USA KARATE Referee Committee Mission Statement

- To encourage USA Karate-ka to become referees.
- To provide USA Karate referees with ongoing training.
- To develop opportunities for referee skills development and advancement.
- To provide USA Karate referees with the latest in WKF rules and modifications.
- To provide a fair and competent method of testing referee skills.
- To supply sanctioned events with skilled and licensed referees.

Reasons to be a USA Karate Referee:

- To join the numerous volunteers of USA Karate.
- To be a part of a winning team to lead karate to the international level.
- To offer to use your skills in a respected way.
- To be a representative of your club, state or country.
- To know the rules of competition and how to apply them fairly.
- To have the commitment to become a competent official.
- To be placed in highly charged, challenging situations.
- To be able to play a positive role when opportunities arise.

An effective Referee shall:

- Resolve conflict and deal with challenges and pressure.
- Make instantaneous decisions.
- Be in a position to be a positive role model for athletes.
- Improve skills and confidence level.
- Understand fairness.
- Promote safety.
- Encourage good sportsmanship.
- Be of sound character.
- Handle responsibility without being overbearing.
- Control the competitors, not be controlled by them.
- Stay calm when confronted by others who are not in control of themselves.
- Take verbal criticism without becoming defensive.
- Understand the nuances of the game.

1. General Rules and Requirements for USA Referees and Judges

a. General Requirements for USA Kumite Judge/Referee Certification

- i. Minimum of 18 years of age.
- ii. 1st Dan in Karate.
- iii. Current official member of USA Karate.
- iv. Active member of USA Karate as an Official.
- v. Sign the Code of Conduct, provide 1 copy to the national office and 1 copy to the Secretary of the Referee Committee.

b. National Categories for USA Kumite Judge/Referee Certification

Judge D
Judge C
Judge B
Judge A

—

Referee D
Referee C
Referee B
Referee A

c. Requirements for USA Kumite Judge D & C Licenses

- i. Achieve 70% or higher on the written and practicum tests.
- ii. Licenses up to and including Kumite Referee “D” are attainable at USA Karate Regional Referee Courses conducted by members of the USA Karate Referee Committee.

d. Requirements for USA Kumite Judge B & A Licenses

- i. Achieve 80% or higher on the written and practicum tests
- ii. Licenses up to and including Kumite Referee “D” are attainable at USA Karate Regional Referee Courses conducted by members of the USA Karate Referee Committee.

e. Requirements for All USA Kumite Referee Licenses

- i. Achieve 90% or higher on the written and practicum tests.
- ii. Kumite Referee C, B & A licenses are attainable only at Referee/Judge Certification courses administered at the USA Karate Signature Events, i.e., USA Karate National Championships, US Open.
- iii. A mandated list of eligibility requirements applies to each level of certification.

f. General Requirements for USA Kata Judge Certification

- i. Minimum of 18 years of age.
- ii. 1st Dan in Karate.
- iii. Current official member of USA Karate.
- iv. Active member of USA Karate as an official.
- v. Sign the Code of Conduct, provide 1 copy to the national office and 1 copy to the Secretary of the Referee Committee.
- vi. A mandated list of eligibility requirements applies to each level of certification.

g. National Categories for USA Kata Judge Certification

Judge D
Judge C
Judge B
Judge A

h. Requirements for Kata Judge D & C Licenses

- i. Achieve 80% or higher on the written and practicum tests.
- ii. Kata licenses up to and including Kata Judge C are attainable at USA Karate Regional Courses conducted by members of the USA Karate Referee Committee.

Requirements for Kata Judge B & A Licenses

- iii. Achieve 90% or higher on the written and practicum tests.
- iv. Kata Judge B and A licenses are attainable only at USA Referee/Judge Certification courses administered at the USA Karate Signature Events, i.e., USA Karate National Championships, US Open.

i. USA License Certification, Participation and Recertification

- i. Upon receiving Kumite Referee A, B, C license and/or Kata Judge A, B license, officials must recertify once every year by taking a written examination at a USA Karate Signature Event Referee Course and by officiating at that USA Karate Signature Event, as defined by USA Karate as the US Open or the USA Karate Nationals/Team Trials.
- ii. Upon receiving any license up to and including Kumite Referee D license, and/or up to and including Kata Judge C license, officials must recertify once every year by taking a written and practicum examination. As such, officials shall either (1) recertify up to and including Kumite Referee D license, and/or up to and including Kata Judge C license at a USA Karate Regional Referee Course; or (2) recertify at a USA Karate Signature Event; or (3) test for a license upgrade from a current Kumite Referee D to Kumite Referee C and/or from Kata Judge C to Kata Judge B at a USA Karate Signature Event.

j. Code of Conduct

- i. Upon receiving a USA Karate Judge/Referee license, officials must adhere to the USA Karate Referee's Code of Conduct.
- ii. The USA Karate Referee's Code of Conduct is effective immediately upon licensure of an official and governs that official's conduct at all times.

k. Referee Course/USA Karate Signature Events – Participation and Exemptions

- i. As deemed appropriate by USA Karate, exemption consideration for the inability to attend all or part of a USA Karate Signature Event may be afforded to those officials who are engaged in conducting authorized business for USA Karate or as otherwise provided by the terms of this Policy, as stated herein.
- ii. International officials must actively support USA Karate Signature Events, among other considerations set forth by the Referee Committee, in order to be considered for international travel by the USA Karate Referee Committee and/or Administration.

l. USA KARATE International Referees/USA Karate Signature Event Participation, Exceptions

- i. USA Karate Referees who hold International (PKF or WKF) Referee Licenses, who attend USA Karate Signature Event(s), shall participate as referees or judges for the duration of USA Karate Signature Event(s), unless otherwise exempted pursuant to the terms of this Policy, as stated herein.
- ii. Failure to participate as a referee or judge in a USA Karate Signature Event that the international official attends, may result in a Referee Committee recommended reprimand to include, but not be limited to the immediate mandatory forfeiture or suspension of the individual's USA Referee/Judge License. An official whose license is not current and/or is not in good standing is ineligible to participate in International (WKF or PKF) Events or Seminars for the time period set forth.
- iii. Exceptions to this Policy must be submitted in writing and received by USA Karate no later than 60 days prior to the USA Karate Signature Event in which the individual requests an exception. The written request should be submitted simultaneously to the Referee Committee Chairman, the Referee Director to the Board, the President, and the Chief Executive Officer. For an exception to be approved and issued, all four (Referee Committee Chairman, Referee Director to the Board, the President, and Chief Executive Officer) must unanimously agree and approve the request.

2. General Rules and Requirements for Referees and Judges of the Pan American Karate Federation (PKF)

a. **General Requirements – Kumite**

- i. Must be at least 21 years of age and 2nd Dan in Karate.
- ii. Must be a current official member of USA Karate.
- iii. Must have approval of the USA Karate Referee Committee.

b. **General Requirements – Kata**

- i. Must be at least 21 years of age and 2nd Dan in Karate.
- ii. Must be a current official member of USA Karate.
- iii. Must have approval of the USA Karate Referee Committee.

c. **Pan American Categories for Kumite Certification:**

Judge C
Judge B
Judge A
Referee B
Referee A

d. **Pan American Categories for Kata Certification:**

Judge C
Judge B
Judge A

Important:

A Pan American Judge or Referee can be absent in three consecutive Pan American events without losing his/her category, but must assist and renew his/her license in the fourth Pan American event.

3. General Rules and Requirements for Referees and Judges of the World Karate Federation (WKF)

a. **General Requirements - Kumite:**

- i. Must be at least 25 years of age and 3rd Dan in Karate.
- ii. Must be a current official member of USA Karate.
- iii. Must be USA Karate Dan certified.
- iv. Must have current Pan American Kumite Referee “A” license.
- v. Must have approval of the USA Karate Referee Committee.

b. **General Requirements – Kata:**

- i. Must be at least 25 years of age and 3rd Dan in Karate.
- ii. Must be a current official member of USA Karate.
- iii. Must be USA Karate Dan certified.
- iv. Must have a current Pan American Kata Judge “A” license.
- v. Must have approval of the USA Karate Referee Committee.

c. **World Karate Federation Categories for Kumite Certification:**

Judge B
Judge A
Referee B
Referee A

d. **World Karate Federation Categories for Kata Certification:**

Judge B
Judge A

e. **World Karate Federation Category for Karate Referee Certification**

Karate Referee (Qualified in both Kata and Kumite at the “A” level)

f. **Explanation:**

- i. Provided that an official keeps his/her license current, attends WKF Championships at least once every two years, attends the pre-championship briefing and lecture, and officiates satisfactorily, then he/she will not be expected to undergo another practical examination at the end of the pre-Championships briefing.
- ii. WKF Referees must renew their licenses every four years.
- iii. USA Karate Officials - Eligibility for WKF Referee/Judge Examination: (Effective 1/1/13).
- iv. Eligibility of USA Karate officials to be considered for the WKF Referee/Judge licensing examination, is based on seniority. A USA Karate official who holds a current PKF Kumite Referee “A” and PKF Kata Judge “A” license is considered to have established seniority for WKF Referee/Judge licensing examination purposes. Within the roster of USA Karate officials, seniority is further established by each official’s date of PKF Kumite “A” and PKF Kata “A” licensing. In the event that PKF Kumite “A” and PKF Kata “A” certification was awarded to

more than one USA Karate official on the same date, the USA Karate Referee Committee shall determine which USA Karate/PKF Kumite “A” and PKF Kata “A” official(s) shall be eligible over the other(s) for WKF Referee licensing examination purposes.

- v. A USA Karate official who fails the WKF Referee licensing examination in a given year shall be immediately positioned at the end of the USA Karate/PKF Kumite “A” and PKF Kata “A” officials’ roster for future WKF Referee/Judge licensing examination consideration by the USA Karate Referee Committee.

The scheduled WKF events are as follows:

WKF Junior and Cadet World Championships
WKF Senior World Championships