

USA KARATE OFFICIALS

LICENSING



INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES

The USA Karate Officials Program is designed to guide aspiring and experienced officials on an educational journey through our participation-based licensing system. The program offers a platform for eligible USA Karate members to serve as tournament officials and seminar instructors. The goal of USA Karate Officials Program is to staff karate tournaments with experienced, knowledgeable and responsible officials and to promote its ongoing growth and development with its Junior and Cadet recruiting efforts. The ultimate aim is to promote tournament safety, fairness and an enjoyable competition experience for everyone.

USA Karate encourages its officials to regularly participate on tournament referee panels. Frequent tournament participation and attendance at educational seminars are the benchmarks for licensing upgrades. To ensure the continued growth and development of the USA Karate Officials Program, USA Karate is proud to showcase many of its qualified officials as seminar instructors throughout the country and our Signature Events.

Age, Affiliation and License Recognition:

USA Karate offers its licensing program to Senior (18+), Junior (16/17) and Cadet (14/15) officials.

All USA Karate Officials are required to maintain current USA Karate membership, which is \$50 for USA Karate Regional Officials and \$75 for USA Karate National Officials.

Upon promotion from USA Regional Official to USA National Official, the difference of \$25 covers the membership.

Active USA Karate licensed officials will be recognized and transitioned into the program according to status, by application and approval.

USA Karate Regional and National Licensing Structure:

The USA Karate Officials program is built upon **two tiers**.

- The **first tier** is the entry and intermediate level Regional Officials program.
- The **second tier** is the National Officials program.

Tier 1: USA Karate Regional Officials Program:

The USA Karate Regional Officials program offers a total of three (3) Kata Regional Licenses and four (4) Kumite Regional licenses. Candidates can receive their licenses at our Signature Events and by participating in local/regional level tournaments and seminars.



USA KARATE REGIONAL KATA LICENSES	USA KARATE REGIONAL KUMITE LICENSES	
USA Karate Regional Kata Judge C, B, A	USA Karate Regional Kumite Judge B, A	USA Regional Kumite Referee B, A

Tier 2: USA Karate National Officials Program:

The USA Karate National Officials program consists of six (6) National license levels

USA NATIONAL KATA LICENSES	USA NATIONAL KUMITE LICENSES	
National Kata Judge B, A	National Kumite Judge B, A	National Kumite Referee B, A

National Kata Judge and National Kumite Referee licenses may only be obtained at our Signature Events. National Kumite Judge licenses may be obtained at the Signature Events and/or local events.

USA Karate Officials Licensing Age and Background Requirements:

Adults 18+: USA Karate authorizes licenses for officials in all levels of Regional and National categories. Safe Sport Training and NCIS background screening is required along with current USA Karate membership.

Juniors: USA Karate permits Juniors ages 16 and 17, the opportunity to attend seminars, officiate in beginner/novice and intermediate youth divisions and earn their USA Karate Regional Officials licenses up to **Regional Kata Judge B** and **Regional Kumite Judge A**. Safe Sport Training and underage screening is required.

Cadets: USA Karate permits Cadets, ages 14 and 15, the opportunity to attend seminars, officiate in beginner/novice and intermediate youth divisions and earn their USA Karate Regional Officials licenses up to **Regional Kata Judge C** and **Regional Kumite Judge B**. Safe Sport Training and underage screening is required.



Candidates for Regional Kata Judge C and Regional Kumite Referee Judge A and B must have received the rank of brown belt. Candidates for Regional Kata Judge B and higher and Karate Regional Referee B and higher must have received the rank of black belt.

Adults 18+	USA Karate Regional Kata Judge: C, B, A USA Karate Regional Kumite Referee: B, A USA Karate National Kumite Judge: B, A	* Safe Sport Training * NCSI Background
Juniors: 16/17	USA Karate Regional Kata Judge: C, B USA Karate Regional Kumite Judge: B, A	* SafeSport Training * SafeSport Underage Screening
Cadets: 14/15	USA Karate Regional Kata Judge: C USA Karate Regional Kumite Judge: B	* SafeSport Training * SafeSport Underage Screening

ALL OFFICIALS MUST SIGN AND COMPLY WITH THE USA KARATE OFFICIALS CODE OF CONDUCT.

USA OFFICIALS LICENSE UPGRADE PROCESS

Officials seeking license upgrades must provide proof of tournament participation between license upgrades, pass any examinations that may apply to the desired license level, and obtain the recommendation of the USA Karate Seminar Instructor.

Participation/Experience Requirements:

USA Karate Officials license upgrades require written confirmation of participation in a **minimum of three (3) approved tournament events between licenses**, in addition to any required practical and written examinations.

An approved tournament is defined as an all-day event based on the USA Karate Rules of Competition with **approximately 125 competitors**. Multi-day tournaments (such as the USA Karate Signature Events) count as a separate tournament event for each full day of participation. A full day of participation is met if the candidate participates as an official for at least six hours in any given tournament day.

USA Karate Officials shall obtain an approved Tournament Director or Chief Referee’s signature in their USA Karate Officials Passport for each full day of participation as an Official and maintain their participation records for future upgrades and recertification.



Examinations:

Online examinations are administered by USA Karate and are required for all Regional Licenses and National Kumite Judge licenses. There are separate examinations for Kata and for Kumite Licenses. Visit <https://www.teamusa.org/usa-karate/officials-and-coaches/officials-resources> to access the tests. You will need your USA Karate MemberID to Validate the exam.

Candidates must provide verification of a passing score prior to receiving their Regional Licenses or their National Kumite Judge Licenses. A minimum score of **80%** is required to receive a Regional Kata Judge B or C License and a Regional Kumite Judge A or B. A minimum score of **90%** is required to receive all other Regional Licenses and to receive the National Kumite Judge Licenses. Verification is provided by the Online Testing system and is available to print or save immediately following the Online test.

USA Karate National Kata Judge A and B Licenses and USA National Kumite Referee A and B Licenses require:

- Attendance at a USA Karate Signature Event Referee Seminar given by USA Karate Referee Education Committee
- Participation as an Official throughout the Signature Event
- Passing score on written and practical examinations conducted at the Signature Events
- Approval by the USA Karate Referee Certification Committee

Membership:

USA Karate Officials, as members in good standing, receive direct access to the USA Karate Officials website which contains a plethora of educational materials such as the USA and WKF Rules of Competition, study guides, practice examinations, as well as the USA Karate Officials mobile phone application which connects members to the rules, diagrams, tournament scoreboard and more for quick reference and convenience.

Registration:

Adult candidates for licenses must obtain an application from USA Karate and must participate in Safe Sport Training and undergo an NCIS Background screening. For Juniors and Cadets, the Safe Sport Training and underage screening applies. All Candidates must sign and comply with the USA Karate Officials' Code of Conduct. Information regarding this program and available educational seminars is available on the **usankf.org** website.

