

# **JUNIOR OFFICIALS PROGRAM**

**Participant & Parent/Guardian  
Handbook**



***USATF***<sup>TM</sup>



# **JOP Participant/Parent/Guardian**

## **Junior Officials Program Committee, USA Track & Field**

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## **BECOMING A JUNIOR OFFICIAL**

Welcome! Are you interested in learning more about your sport and officiating the many events of track and field? Then this is a program for you! Many of the current cadre of officials are former Track & Field athletes who wanted to stay involved after their athletic careers had come to an end. Many of our Officials are also Master athletes who not only officiate but are also still competing in the USATF Masters events at a very high athletic level. The one thing that is the common bond is that all of the current officials have a true love of the sport and want to give back to the sport the great experiences that Track & Field has given to them. So they became Officials.

### **VISION**

The vision of this program is to educate, train and provide for USATF members to serve as part of the Officiating team. Also to promote opportunities to encourage the participants of this program to continue to serving as USATF officials in the future.

Whether you are an athlete who currently competes and wants to learn more about your sport or you are simply looking for ways to be further involved in your sport, then this program will set you on your way to have a great experience in the sport of track and field.

### **BACKGROUND OF TRACK AND FIELD**

- Track and field is an international sport that dates back to the time of ancient Greece. Track and field was one of the main events that started the modern era of the Olympic Games. In Olympic competition, track and field is referred to as Athletics.



## **JOP Participant/Parent/Guardian**

- This sport offers a variety of events that allows the participation of many types of athletes as well as many ages.
- Track and field involves running, jumping, vaulting, throwing, and race walking.
- Track meets however cannot be staged without officials to run these events for the athletes, giving them a safe venue to showcase their talents.
- Officials are at the track hours or days prior to a meet to set up and ready the facilities for competition. This applies to high school meets as well as the Olympics and World Championships.
- Officials can specialize in one event or learn to officiate all the events and positions that are part of a track meet. You will be given the opportunity to learn most of the events and positions that allow a track meet to run smoothly for the athletes, coaches, and fans.
- You will be paired with a certified trained mentor to help guide you through the journey of becoming a knowledgeable, well-rounded track official.
- Once you reach the age of 18, you will be eligible to become a USATF Certified Official.
- YOU are the Future of Track and Field!!

## **Participant Information Guide**

### **Program Requirements**

- You must be between the ages of 14 and 17 to take part in this program.
- Must have a current USATF membership and in good standing.
- All Junior Officials in this program will receive a printed copy of the current competition rules.
- All Junior Officials in this program will be able to purchase a shirt.



## **JOP Participant/Parent/Guardian**

- All participants must complete the USOC SafeSport Course and agree to abide by the guidelines in the USATF SafeSport handbook .
- Those certified as USATF Junior Officials will be eligible to officiate Association meets under an adult USATF Certified Official who is at least a National Certified Level in good standing.
- You must be able to arrange for transportation to and from track meets in order to complete requirements (parent/self-transportation).
- Complete the Study Guides that are the skill outlines and the best practices for the different officiating events and positions.
- There are currently 17 Study Guides and you and your Mentor will design an individual program that fits into your needs. You will need to complete a minimum of 10 Study Guides, based on your time enrolled in the program. Alternative Study Guides can be assigned if needed. Throwing events will not be covered in the training due to safety issues.
- Single or multiple Study Guides may be covered at a track meet depending on logistics of the meet.
- A certified trained mentor(s) will be assigned to you by your local USATF Association (54 Associations across the United States).
- Complete the required number of meets set by USATF. These meets count each year for your total program meets.
- Total meets required are based on your time length that you are enrolled in the program. Six (6) meets per year - @ meets in the Fall, Spring, or Summer, or any combination equaling six (6) meets.
- Participants who have successfully completed the required hours and the Mentor Field of Play Evaluations will receive a Certificate of Course Completion. At age 18, your child will be able to join USATF as either an Apprentice (1-2 years in the program) or Association (3 or more years in program) level official.



## **JOP Participant/Parent/Guardian**

### **Program Benefits**

- Hours earned during this program could also be used for any school related community service hours. Check with your school's administration.
- You would receive a USATF Rulebook to help you learn more about an event as well as possible situations that could arise that have to be addressed during an event.
- You have the opportunity to work with a variety of athletes and officials.
- Future opportunities in track and field:
  - High school meets (depending on High School Associations for your state)
  - Officiate NCAA Championships (from NAIA up to Division 1)
  - Officiate USATF Championship Meets
    - Indoor Championships
    - Outdoor Championships (U20 and Senior)
    - Youth Championships (Hershey, Junior Olympics)
    - Masters Championship
    - Olympic Trials
    - World Junior Championships
    - Olympics and World Championships

### **Study Guides**

Each Study Guide covers a different track and field event. You are welcome to review all the guides, but the JOP program would like you and your



## **USATF CERTIFIED OFFICIAL JOP Participant/Parent/Guardian**

mentor to **select ten (10)** of these Guides to concentrate on as your primary focus while participating in the JOP program.

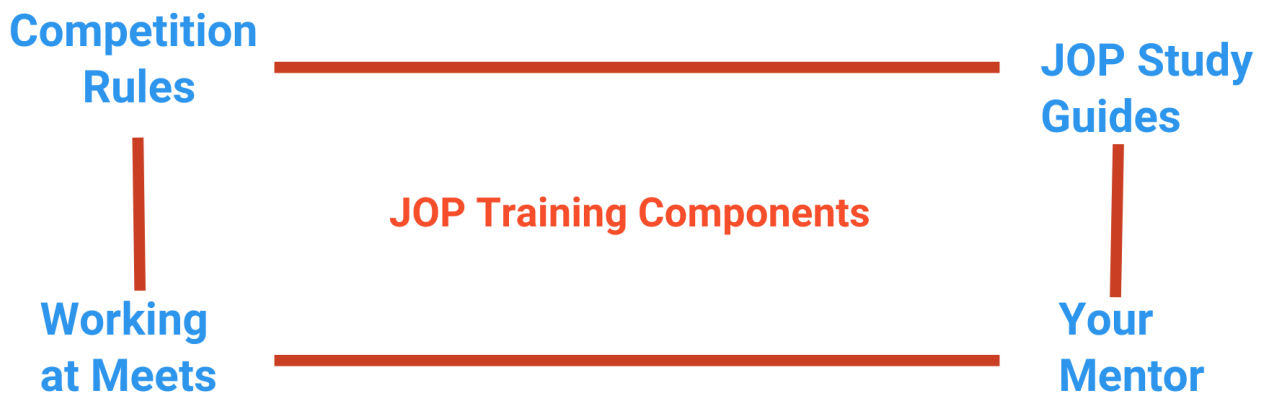
JOP Participants who are in the program for longer than two (2) years will have the opportunity to experience all of the 17 Study Guides. This will help you prepare for the Officials Association Level that the 3-4 year participants can qualify you to become. You will be evaluated by your mentor on your knowledge of your 10 Study Guide events.

Also, an Alternative List of Study Guides will be produced for your furthering your knowledge in your officiating experience.

The content of these Study Guides is primarily drawn from these resources:

- USATF Competition Rules
- Best Practices
- USATF Code of Ethics
- USATF Professional Guidelines

These Study Guides, your mentor, the USATF Competition Rules, and experience working track and field meets are the four key components of the Junior Officials Program.



### **STUDY GUIDE TOPICS**

- 1 – Umpire
- 2 – Starter
- 3 – Clerking
- 4 – Finish Line/ Lap Scorer



## **JOP Participant/Parent/Guardian**

- 5 – Field Events – General Rules
- 6 – Vertical Jumps Common Rules (High Jump & Pole Vault)
  
- 7 – High Jump
- 8 – Pole Vault
- 9 – Horizontal Jumps General Rules (Long & Triple Jump)
- 10 – Long Jump
- 11 – Triple Jump
- 12 – Combined Events General Rules
- 13 – Marshal
- 14 – Long Distance Running (Cross country & Ultras)
- 15 – Race Walking
- 16 – Meet Management
- 17 – Wind Gauge

## **Parent Information Guide**

### **Parent Information**

- Your child must be between the ages of 14 and 17.
- Must have a current USATF membership and in good standing.
- Your child must have a way to and from track meets (drop off/pick up or self-transportation).
- Your child will be paired with a Certified USATF official in Good Standing. (Has passed a background check and completed SafeSport training). Currently there is a “Youth” version of this training that is being developed. Participants will be able to take later on as the Youth Version is published.





## **JOP Participant/Parent/Guardian**

- Your child's mentor will try to have your child work track meets as close to home as possible, but it will depend on meet availability.
- This program provides an opportunity for your child to earn community service hours.
- The mentor assigned to your child will safely teach your child the ins and outs of running a track meet as well as specific events.
- Your child will have the opportunity to work various levels of track meets from High School to College to USATF.
- At the end of the program, if your child has completed all required hours, passed all of the Mentor Field of Play evaluations, and reached age 18, then they will be allowed to join USATF as a certified official.
- USATF/Local Association must have a signed **Waiver of Liability** on file before the participant can start the program. See the link to the wavier: \_\_\_\_\_

### **USATF/JOP Expectations**

- Provide a certified trained mentor that is in Good Standings with USATF (Mentor has passed a background check and completed the required SafeSport training).
- The mentor will provide frequent and timely communication to parents and JOP participants.
- The mentor will provide a safe environment for the participant to learn about track and field.
- The mentor will work with the parent to ensure that the participant has a ride home after the meet.

### **Contact Information**

Contact the National Junior Officials Program Committee for more information and how to apply for the program in your state.



## **JOP Participant/Parent/Guardian**

Committee Chairperson:  
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This is a very brief snapshot of the Junior Officials Program. Please visit this link to the Total Junior Officials Program online to see further specifics.

Link: \_\_\_\_\_