



2011-12 Minnesota State Referee Committee

Referee Training Clinic Guidelines and Policies

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Edited October 1, 2011

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Part 1: Introduction

Welcome to the 2012 Minnesota State Referee Training Program guide! I want to thank you for your interest in utilizing this year's program.

First, some background. This is my first year as State Director of Instruction, and I am looking forward to working with all of you. I live in Duluth and am a veterinarian, running a pair of clinics in the area. I am married with two kids and two dogs (pets are required information when naming family members, when you are in my profession). I have been a soccer referee for 14 years. I first certified as a teenager in Dayton, Ohio in 1987, but abandoned the profession due to the usual distractions that affect teenagers. I re-certified in Minnesota in 2000 and am currently a state-level referee and state instructor. I have been instructing referees since 2004.

Many of you know me because I designed the website and published much of the online material on the site. I will continue to work in this capacity for 2012, in addition to my SDI duties.

2011 was a year of big change for the program. We finally consolidated the many online functions that we had been slowly implementing in previous years under a solitary site. We feel that was a major step forward for the program, eliminating a great deal of confusion. www.minnesotasrc.com is now a one-stop shop for all things relating to US Soccer certification for Minnesota referees. Referees were able to register, test, and complete part of their training online, allowing us to shorten the classroom sessions and increasing flexibility for clubs.

At the same time, 2011 also caused some frustrations. Certain policies that the SRC implemented were difficult to clubs and referees. While the technological advancement of the program into an online training format was generally well-received, it also created challenges for people without access to broadband Internet.

I want you to know that we listened. We at the SRC sat down and looked at the things that caused the most problems in 2011 and sought to resolve those issues. Our goal is to provide a quality referee education to those in the state that desire to become referees, and we believe we need to find ways to make the program accessible to as many people as possible.

Having said that, we also needed to make some adjustments that some of you may not find all that helpful. Hopefully that is not the case, but we need to be smarter about how we schedule. The simple reality is that we have a budget, and we need to meet it. The biggest expense for the instructional program is reimbursement of instructors for teaching and travel. In order to meet that budget, the SRC must maintain a target cost-per-referee-trained ratio.

What this means is that you will find certain limitations on how and when you can schedule clinics. Date preference may be given to bigger clubs that have trained and require larger numbers of referees. If, in the past, you have hosted small clinics (i.e., less than 10-15 referees) and do not have an instructor close to your area, you may be asked to coordinate with larger nearby communities, instead of hosting in

2012. Both the Twin Cities and the state as a whole have been divided into zones, and the goal will be to not duplicate clinics in the same “zones” on a given weekend. This should give referees the flexibility they need to finish their training, but it will require planning on your part when scheduling your clinics. All of this is explained in Chapter VI, 2012 Classroom Requirements.

This is why this document is being released in October. I realize that the 2012 USSF/MYSA season is several months away, but I want to get a jump on planning to help everything go smoothly. For those of you who leap at this opportunity to plan now, you will find very few problems next spring. For those of you who wait until the last minute and hope to throw together a clinic two weeks before you want it to happen, I cannot make any guarantees that we will be able to accommodate you. So please, read through this document, understand it, and let’s work together to make sure problems are minimal in 2012.

Again, I look forward to working with you!

Doug Marshak
Minnesota State Director of Instruction

Part 2: 2012 Certification Requirements

Few of the certification requirements for the assorted grades have changed for 2012, but there are some minor differences that will be mentioned briefly here. Below that you will find the specific requirements for each individual grade.

The most significant change for 2012 is the elimination of the Bridge course. A referee wishing to move from Grade 9 to Grade 8 will now simply take the Grade 8 course. It was impossible to provide the mass of information in the Bridge course in a compressed format.

We have expanded the online depth of the Grade 8 program and shortened the classroom session to 8 hours, which can be completed in a single day. Essentially, half of the Grade 8 course will be placed online, with the classroom portion being devoted to more difficult topics. By reducing the Grade 8 to eight hours, it has essentially become equivalent to the Bridge course, negating the need to offer the Bridge any longer.

As opposed to past years, Grade 9 referees may elect to remain Grade 9 referees. There is no longer a requirement to advance to Grade 8. However, there is no "Grade 9 recertification" program. A Grade 9 referee who remains a Grade 9 referee will have to re-take the entire Grade 9 class and pay the full registration fee. While we recognize that some people may prefer the 4-hour classroom commitment to the 8-hour classroom commitment of the Grade 8 (not to mention increased online requirement of the Grade 8), your referees should be aware that, once they get their Grade 8 badge, they will be limited to only 2-hour recertification courses in the future AND have access to more games to work. The Grade 9 program still makes sense for younger officials, who will work mostly solo small-sided youth games, but maintaining a Grade 9 badge will require repeating the Grade 9 program in its entirety every year, and one would imagine this would get a bit boring after a while.

You will also find what will likely be a welcome change to the 2012 instructional program: the elimination of required on-field training for entry-level classes. After seeking feedback from clubs and instructors, it was decided that, while on-field has incredible value, the way in which it was implemented was of dubious and variable quality.

On-field training was designed out of a program we developed in Duluth, but it was something added on (though required) of our new referees and implemented in conjunction with local club preseason scrimmage days in the Duluth area. Logistically such a requirement is almost impossible on a state-wide level. Gymnasium programs do not accurately simulate game situations, and it is not possible to schedule instructors to return to your clubs to finish a clinic months later for the on-field portion.

We will be implementing some exercises into the classroom portion of the course, to help referees try certain procedures and techniques under an instructor's supervision. However, we recognize a classroom has limited space and do not hope to simulate game situations in this setting.

We would still encourage you to consider some form of on-field training for your new referees. If your club's teams do play in scrimmages, you can enlist experienced volunteers from your club to come out and work with new referees at those scrimmages. Contact your club coaches and get new referees out to practices to officiate scrimmages under the supervision of a mentor.

Furthermore, MNSRC has worked with Peter Jarnstrom and Urule Igbavboa's Minnesota Youth Soccer Association Referee Mentor program to fill in this gap, and you can request trained mentors from Peter or Urule for these training days. I would certainly encourage anybody to take advantage of this opportunity. I know new referees in Duluth are better prepared after being exposed to real game situations in a no-pressure scrimmage environment.

Finally, as we no longer have an on-field, all of the basic recertification courses are now classified as a simple "recert" and will last 2 hours, all in the classroom. We have eliminated the +3/<3 distinction. The topics to be covered in recert courses will be listed on the clinic signup page so that referees may try to select a course that has topics of interest to them.

Training Requirements for New Referees

- 1) Pay the \$60 registration fee online.
- 2) Select either the Grade 9 or Grade 8 track
- 3) Complete online training for the chosen track
 - a. Grade 9- four credit hours of online training
 - b. Grade 8- seven credit hours of online training
- 4) Select a classroom session to attend
 - a. Grade 9- four hours of classroom
 - b. Grade 8- eight hours of classroom
- 5) Complete the MYSA background check (if working MYSA games and > 18 years of age)

Training Requirements for Returning Grade 9 Referees

- 1) Pay the \$60 registration fee online.
- 2) Select either the Grade 9 or Grade 8 track
- 3) Complete online training for the chosen track
 - a. Grade 9- four credit hours of online training
 - b. Grade 8- seven credit hours of online training
- 4) Select a classroom session to attend
 - a. Grade 9- four hours of classroom
 - b. Grade 8- eight hours of classroom
- 5) Complete the MYSA background check (if working MYSA games and > 18 years of age)

Training Requirements for Returning Grade 8 Referees (non-upgrading)

- 1) Pay the \$60 registration fee online.
- 2) Pass the Online Recertification test
 - a. Passing score is 75%
 - b. Score of 75-84% mandates a video review of all missed questions
 - c. Unlimited attempts; no delay between attempts
 - d. Open book
 - e. 90 minute deadline from initiation of test
 - f. Incorrect responses and correct answers are shown after every completion
- 3) Complete 3.0 credit hours of online training (minimum 1.25 hours of new topics)
- 4) Select and attend a 2-hour recertification classroom session
- 5) Complete the MYSA background check (if working MYSA games and > 18 years of age)

Training Requirements for Upgrade to Grade 7

- 1) Pay the \$60 registration fee online.
- 2) Request upgrade from the SRA by March 15.
- 3) Once SRA tags for upgrade, pay the \$50 upgrade fee.
- 4) Pass the Online Recertification test
 - a. Passing score is 85%; no video review trigger
 - b. Unlimited attempts; no delay between attempts
 - c. Open book
 - d. 90 minute deadline from initiation of test
 - e. Incorrect responses and correct answers are shown after every completion
- 5) Complete 4.0 credit hours of online training (minimum 1.25 hours of new topics)
- 6) Select and attend a 5-hour advanced recertification classroom session
- 7) Complete the MYSA background check (if working MYSA games and > 18 years of age)
- 8) Pass the physical test.
- 9) Pass a referee assessment.

Training Requirements for Returning Grade 7 Referees (non-upgrading)

- 1) Pay the \$65 registration fee online.
- 2) Pass the Online Recertification test
 - a. Passing score is 85%
 - b. Score of 85-94% mandates a video review of all missed questions
 - c. Unlimited attempts; no delay between attempts
 - d. Open book
 - e. 90 minute deadline from initiation of test
 - f. Incorrect responses and correct answers are shown after every completion
- 3) Watch the 2011-12 Changes to the Laws of the Game and MYSA Rules online presentations
- 4) Select a 5-hour advanced recertification classroom session to attend
- 5) Complete the MYSA background check (if working MYSA games and > 18 years of age)
- 6) Pass the physical test.

Training Requirements for Upgrade to Grade 6

- 1) Pay the \$65 registration fee online.
- 2) Request upgrade from the SRA by March 15.
- 3) Once SRA tags for upgrade, pay the \$100 upgrade fee.
- 4) Pass the Online State Recertification test
 - a. Passing score is 75%
 - b. Unlimited attempts; no delay between attempts
 - c. Open book
 - d. 90 minute deadline from initiation of test
 - e. Incorrect responses and correct answers are shown after every completion
- 5) Complete 4.0 credit hours of online training (minimum 1.25 hours of new topics)
- 6) Attend 15 hours of advanced recertification classroom sessions. These include:
 - a. Advanced recertifications
 - b. Advanced mentoring sessions (number required determined by SRA)
 - c. FIFA Club membership and participation (by invitation of the SDA only!!!)
- 7) Complete the MYSA background check (if working MYSA games and > 18 years of age)
- 8) Pass the physical test.
- 9) Pass two referee assessments and one assistant referee assessment.

Training Requirements for Returning Grade 6 Referees (non-upgrading)

- 1) Pay the \$95 registration fee online.
- 2) Pass the Online Recertification test
 - a. Passing score is 75%
 - b. Unlimited attempts; no delay between attempts
 - c. Open book
 - d. 90 minute deadline from initiation of test
 - e. Incorrect responses and correct answers are shown after every completion
- 3) Watch the 2011-12 Changes to the Laws of the Game and MYSA Rules online presentations
- 4) Select a 5-hour advanced recertification classroom session to attend
- 5) Complete the MYSA background check (if working MYSA games and > 18 years of age)
- 6) Pass the physical test.

Training Requirements for Upgrade to Grade 5

- 1) Pay the \$95 registration fee online.
- 2) Request upgrade from the SRA by March 15.
- 3) Once SRA tags for upgrade, pay the \$100 upgrade fee.
- 4) Pass the Online State Recertification test
 - a. Passing score is 85%
 - b. Unlimited attempts; no delay between attempts
 - c. Open book
 - d. 90 minute deadline from initiation of test
 - e. Incorrect responses and correct answers are shown after every completion
- 5) Watch the 2011-12 Changes to the Laws of the Game and MYSA Rules online presentations
- 6) Attend 10 hours of advanced recertification classroom sessions. These include:
 - a. Advanced recertifications
 - b. A USSF Pro Clinic
 - c. FIFA Club membership and participation (by invitation of the SDA only!!!)
- 7) Complete the MYSA background check (if working MYSA games and > 18 years of age)
- 8) Pass the physical test.

Training Requirements for Returning Grade 5 Referees (non-upgrading)

- 1) Pay the \$95 registration fee online.
- 2) Pass the Online State Recertification test
 - a. Passing score is 85%
 - b. Unlimited attempts; no delay between attempts
 - c. Open book
 - d. 90 minute deadline from initiation of test
 - e. Incorrect responses and correct answers are shown after every completion
- 3) Watch the 2011-12 Changes to the Laws of the Game and MYSA Rules online presentations
- 4) Select a 5-hour advanced recertification classroom session to attend
- 5) Complete the MYSA background check (if working MYSA games and > 18 years of age)
- 6) Pass the physical test.

Training Requirements for Returning State/National Emeritus Referees

- 1) Pay the \$95 registration fee online.
- 2) Pass the Online State Recertification test
 - a. Passing score is 75% (Grade 16) or 85% (Grade 15 or higher)
 - b. Unlimited attempts; no delay between attempts
 - c. Open book
 - d. 90 minute deadline from initiation of test
 - e. Incorrect responses and correct answers are shown after every completion
- 3) Watch the 2011-12 Changes to the Laws of the Game and MYSA Rules online presentations
- 4) Select a 5-hour advanced recertification classroom session to attend
- 5) Complete the MYSA background check (if working MYSA games and > 18 years of age)

Part 3: 2012 Online Registration

Registration will once again take place through the MNSRC website, www.minnesotasrc.com. Payment through the site is only accepted by credit card. The SRA will accept money orders, but they need to be mailed to the SRA, and therefore turnaround time is delayed. The money order option is not advertised on the site because we discourage its use, but as a club coordinator, we are making you aware of the option. Referees who need to use this option should contact the SRA directly.

In 2011 the only problem encountered with the payment process was the strictness of the site with regards to address matching on credit card payments. This requires a bit more explanation.

Most websites that accept payment look to match a credit card number, name, card type, expiration date, and CVV number. In addition to these parameters, the MNSRC site insists on an address and zip code match as well. If these do not match, the card will be declined. The address entered should be the exact same as what is printed on the card owner's credit card statement.

Sadly, many credit card banks make mistakes when they enter a holder's address. Last year, around three dozen people contacted the SRC complaining that the website would not accept their card. **In every case, the problem was a mistake on the card holder's address with the bank.** The MNSRC website works fine; the problem will be with the bank, or the information that is passed on to the data center.

We understand that this can be frustrating to people, but the SRC agreed when the new site was released in late 2010 that we need to be very aggressive with regards to privacy protection and guarding referees from credit card fraud. The website only stores the last four digits of a credit card and no other information when accepting a card. The first 12 numbers, the expiration date, the CVV number... they are all used to clear the transaction and then immediately discarded. This way, no sensitive information can be stolen from our site. Considering Official Sports International's recent expansive case of credit card theft (of which I was one of the victims), the SRC will not bend on this rule.

We understand that many other online vendors do not use the same fraud controls we do, and that makes using a credit card on their site easier. That is their choice. We feel protecting our referees from credit card fraud is in the best interest of both the SRC and the people who use our website.

Creation of new accounts for new referee training will tentatively be closed on Sunday, April 15, 2012 at midnight, unless sufficient remaining entry-level clinic spots are available to allow this to remain open (e.g., 100 G8/G9 clinic slots remain and only 25 new accounts are actively using the system to progress without having been registered for a clinic... we could keep new account creation open long enough for up to 75 new accounts). That will be evaluated at that time.

Registration for the 2012 season will be closed at midnight on Sunday, June 3, 2012. It will not be possible to initiate certification for 2012 after that date.

Refunds: While this pertains primarily to individual users, I would like to explain the SRC's refund policy for registrations for 2012 so that all of you are aware of them.

As with last year, only the USSF portion of the registration fee is refundable. The registration fee for a majority of referees is \$60, broken into \$20 for the State Administration fee and \$40 for the USSF fee. If a user pays this fee, and then decides not to certify for 2012, only the \$40 portion of the fee is refundable. The \$20 portion is used to defray costs of operating the website, office supplies, etc., and in using the website the user is electing to support those expenses.

The site has been set up to protect users from double payment of the fee. If a user submits payment and an invoice is generated, the site locks the account from a second payment for 15 minutes. Furthermore, the user is told in the right-hand column of their screen that they have completed this step. Due to these protections, it is assumed that double payment of fees will be a result of user error. For this reason, while we can refund accidental double payments, we will deduct a \$5 processing fee due to the office time to do so.

If a user decides not to certify, there is a graduated deduction in the amount that they may be refunded, based on the date they request the refund (NOT the date they paid!!!). This scale is as follows:

- Requested prior to March 1: full refund of USSF portion of registration
- Requested March 1-15: refund of USSF portion minus \$5
- Requested March 16-31: refund of USSF portion minus \$10
- Requested April 1-15: refund of USSF portion minus \$15
- Requested April 15-30: refund of USSF portion minus \$20
- Requested May 1-June 30: refund of USSF portion minus \$25

June 30 is the deadline for any refunds. After June 30, no 2012 fees can be refunded, as the fiscal year ends on that date for the SRC and the books must be closed.

Any registrations from 2011 that were not completed are not refundable. The SRC's fiscal year from 2011 closed on June 30, 2011, and it is impossible to track accounting under these circumstances if refunds are issued from the prior year. Unused registration payments from 2011 may not be carried over to 2012.

Part 4: 2012 Online Testing Requirements

Testing requirements for 2012 will be almost identical to 2011. The tests have been modified by US Soccer and have been uploaded to the MNSRC site.

The online testing protocol allows me to see every referee's test attempt, their score, when they started, and when they finished.

This becomes quite handy when evaluating the effort put forth by an individual. For example, I had several referees last year contact me telling me how "important" it was for them to finish their certification. In numerous cases these individuals had to take the test three to four times and clearly failed to take their time on retakes, starting new tests minutes after failing the last attempt, finishing the 100-question retake in less than 30 minutes, and then improving their score only marginally. This suggested they did not review the questions they missed.

Grade 9/Grade 8: As with the past two years, part of the entry-level tests will be taken embedded in the online material. Introductory-level students do not have to take a separate online test. They will have to pass the tests with 100% accuracy before advancing through the online material.

8/7 Recertification and Upgrading: Once again, the online test will be required before proceeding to online material requirements. Passing score depends on the referee's grade and intent to upgrade.

As with last year, we will expect referees to score a certain score on the test that will allow them to avoid a video review of the questions that they missed. While US Soccer considers 75% a passing score, we feel that a referee who only knows the rules in three out of four situations is destined for trouble.

A recertifying Grade 8 official scoring a passing score of at least 75% but less than 85% will have to watch a video review of each question missed... anywhere from 16 to 25 questions. The video reviews will be available to all referees, but is only required of those who score 75-85%. As before, a score of 74% is failing and will require a complete retake of the test.

For referees upgrading from Grade 8 to Grade 7, they must score at least 85% to meet upgrade requirements. There is no review trigger for upgrading to 7.

For referees returning as Grade 7, they must score an 85% to pass but a mandatory review is triggered for any passing score less than 95% (85-94%). We expect these Grade 7 referees to demonstrate an excellent grasp of the rules on the standard recertification test.

6/5 Recertification and Upgrading: The rules for the state test will be the same as in 2011. Grade 6 and Grade 7s upgrading to 6 must score a minimum of 75%. Grade 5 and upgrading to 5 must score a minimum of 85%. There is no mandatory review trigger for the state test. State referees are supposed to be self-motivated enough to figure out why they missed any questions.

Emeritus: Emeritus referees must score either 75% (Grade 16) or 85% (Grade 15 or higher) on the state test.

Part 5: 2012 Online Training

An online training component is only required for the following groups of referees:

New Referees/Returning Grade 9 Referees-

Grade 9: 4.0 credit hours of Grade 9-specific material

Grade 8: 7.0 credit hours of Grade 8-specific material

Returning Grade 8 Referees- 3.0 credit hours of recertification material

Referees Upgrading from 8 to 7- 4.0 credit hours of recertification material

Referees Upgrading from 7 to 6- 4.0 credit hours of recertification material

Grade 7, 6, and 5 referees must complete the Changes to the Laws of the Game presentation and the MYSA Rules Modifications presentation as their only online requirements. They will have full access to the recertification materials if they choose to use them. Referees upgrading from 6 to 5 are the only upgrades which do not have additional online requirements.

There are four ways to complete the online training requirements...

- 1) *Online streaming:* This is the traditional way. The individual referee can simply watch the videos on the website, streaming them to his/her computer and receiving credit upon completion.
- 2) *Club Coordinator (CC)-provided DVD:* CCs may request DVDs from MNSRC at no charge. The DVD will have all of the online presentations on it (grade-specific), for viewing from either the DVD or after they are copied to a computer hard drive. This is done through the clinic/material request page on the website. The CC can then either make duplicates of the DVD themselves, or simply pass on originals (provided by MNSRC). The CC must notify me (the SDI) by email who is using a DVD so that I can activate a switch on the referee's account allowing them to enter passcodes to receive credit for completing presentations. Again, the CC may request a single DVD and make copies, or may request multiple copies from the SDI to pass on, both at no charge to the club.
- 3) *MNSRC-provided DVD:* Similar to (2), except the referee requests the DVD directly from the SRC. However, in this case the referee must pay \$10 for production, shipping, and handling of the DVD from the SRC. This fee will be paid through a link on the Online Training Center page.
- 4) *CC-hosted "Mini" Clinic-*The CC may choose to host a viewing session with multiple referees present to allow everybody to receive credit for their online work. These sessions must be requested through the clinic/material request page on the website a minimum of 3 days prior to hosting them, the roster must be submitted before the start of the clinic, and attendance and topics must be reported with 24 hours of scheduled completion for those attending to receive credit. These can be used for any level of the online topics.

I am encouraging CCs to take an active role in this process. This is why it costs the referee \$10 to request a DVD directly from me, but will cost them nothing if you provide it. I want to help you run an effective program, and part of that is being actively involved in the training of your referees. I will provide as many DVDs as you want at no charge to you, but if your referees request the DVD through me, they will

be charged. I am more than happy to work with you directly to help your referees, but I do not have time to entertain hundreds of additional requests without the SRC being appropriately compensated for that work.

Mini-Clinics

The Mini-Clinic is an option designed for outstate areas where referees may not have access to sufficient bandwidth to stream the videos at home. The CC can arrange for a showing of the presentations off the DVD and then simply report to me who was present. However:

- 1) The host of the Mini-Clinic must be a designated club coordinator
- 2) The host must notify the SDI of the intention to host the Mini-Clinic at least 3 days prior to the clinic
- 3) A clinic roster, compiled by the host, must be submitted to the SDI prior to the scheduled start time of the clinic
- 4) Attendance confirmation must be reported within 24 hours of the scheduled time and date

There is no maximum number of mini-clinics that a CC may host, and there is also no minimum number of attendees. If you wish to help your referees out by hosting 4 mini-clinics with two referees at each, that's your choice. The key here is to give you the flexibility needed to certify officials for your club by eliminating some of the online obstacles we ran into last year in rural areas.

Once a mini-clinic is scheduled, it will be the responsibility of the CC to promote it to local referees and maintain the clinic roster. Mini-clinics will not be posted on the SRC site; they are local opportunities that fall under the jurisdiction of the club coordinator.

The clinic roster must be submitted by the CC prior to the start of the clinic. No add-on's will be permitted after the scheduled start time; if you are not sure if a local referee can make it, make sure they are on the roster beforehand, and if they do not show, report them absent afterward.

Finally, please note that a referee cannot be credited for Mini-Clinic attendance if they have not completed prior steps... this means they must have paid their registration, and in the case of recertifying officials, have passed their test.

Upon completion of the mini-clinic, the CC has 24 hours to report attendance. **Only referees who were listed on the original roster can be credited.**

IMPORTANT: I will not credit attendance if a CC emails me and says, "I hosted a Mini-Clinic last night and the following 8 people were there," after not properly notifying me of it previously. I will not credit attendance if the list is sent to me 4 days after the date. I will not credit attendance for somebody who shows up for the clinic without being on the CC's submitted roster. I will not credit an attendee who has not paid their registration fee yet. The process must have integrity, and I hold the CC responsible for maintaining that integrity.

Part 6: 2012 Classroom Requirements

For 2012, MNSRC will offer three types of clinics that can be requested by clubs:

Grade 9: a four-hour classroom session with the end result being the Grade 9 badge.

Grade 8: an eight-hour classroom session with the end result being either upgrade of Grade 9 to Grade 8, or the new referee receiving the Grade 8 badge; **we would like to have one parent present for the first 30-45 minutes of the Grade 8 class**

Recert: a two-hour classroom session for the purpose of recertifying as a Grade 8 referee

MNSRC will also offer Advanced Recertifications for higher-level referees and Grade 8 referees who want to be a bit more challenged by the classroom session, but these will be scheduled by MNSRC independent of club requests. There will be at least five Advanced classes, three in the Twin Cities, one in Duluth, and one in Rochester.

MNSRC will also run physical tests in late April and early May for referees who need to pass the physical test to maintain their grade or upgrade.

Finally, MNSRC will also offer some club-independent Grade 9, 8, and recert courses.

Student Responsibilities

Students must be present for the entire duration of the classes. Attending a partial class is not acceptable and attendance will not be granted by the instructor.

In rare circumstances a student may be allowed to make up a portion of the missed class instead of having to take the full class from scratch. Such circumstances will be limited to family emergencies or illness that might develop during the class or between class dates (on multiple-day clinics) and are subject to the direct approval of the SDI or SRA only, not the instructor.

Requests to attend make-up dates will be denied for any other circumstances. It is not possible to attend a four-hour Day 1 of a Grade 8 for Clinic A and then the four-hour Day 2 of the Grade 8 at Clinic B. Such situations are simply too difficult to track logistically. If a student cannot attend a course in its entirety due to other commitments, a different course should be selected.

Clinic Zones

In order to maximize clinic attendance, MNSRC will be restricting clinic types based on 9 zones. These zones are as follows:

Zones 1-4: Twin Cities (communities listed as examples)

Zone 1: Northwest (Anoka, Coon Rapids, Blaine extending to Rogers, St. Michael, and Buffalo)

Zone 2: Southwest (Minnetonka, Edina, Eden Prairie, Shakopee, Burnsville)

Zone 3: Southeast (Inver Grove Heights, Cottage Grove, Eagan, Apple Valley)

Zone 4: Northeast (Shoreview, White Bear Lake, Stillwater)

Zones 5-9: Outstate

Zone 5: Northeast (Duluth)

Zone 6: North Central (Bemidji, Brainerd)

Zone 7: Northwest (Detroit Lakes, Moorhead, Fergus Falls, Alexandria)

Zone 8: West Central/Southwest (St. Cloud, Willmar, Marshall)

Zone 9: Southeast (Rochester, Mankato, Albert Lea)

The purpose of this zoning is to ensure that we do not duplicate a specific clinic type within any zone on a certain day. For example, if there is a Grade 8 clinic scheduled for Rochester on Saturday, March 17, then we will not schedule a Grade 8 clinic anywhere else in Zone 9 on March 17 (unless we suspect the Rochester clinic will fill). If Eden Prairie schedules a Grade 9 clinic for April 15, then no other clubs in Zone 2 can schedule a Grade 9 on that day (unless we suspect the Eden Prairie clinic will fill).

It does not make sense to have, for example, a Grade 8 clinic with a capacity of 50 but an enrollment of 25, and then another Grade 8 clinic on the same day, within 40 miles, with a capacity of 50 and an enrollment of 15. This is damaging in two ways: (1) MNSRC has to pay for two instructors (and mileage) when one would have sufficed; (2) anybody living in that zone that was unable to attend a Grade 8 clinic on that particular day due to prior commitments (hockey, basketball, etc.) now will potentially have to travel to another zone in order to certify on another weekend.

Clinics may be duplicated within zones on specific dates if (and only if) the SDI approves and there is numerical justification for doing so. Again, it is my job as SDI run a fiscally responsible program, so duplicating clinics on the same date in nearby communities is an inefficient use of resources.

Clinic Dates

The 2012 Clinic season will officially start with a MNSRC-sanctioned Winter Break 2-hour recertification held in December. This will take place between Christmas and New Year's and will be held midweek as an option for college-aged officials who are often out-of-town during the heart of the rest of the clinic season.

The weekend of January 28/29 is the first weekend that clubs may request clinics. Clinics may be scheduled for Saturday or Sunday of every weekend thereafter through June 10, with the exception of Easter Sunday (April 8) and Memorial Day weekend (May 26/27). Midweek clinics may also be scheduled.

However, there will be some exceptions to this...

- **Grade 9 clinics:** No Grade 9 clinics may be scheduled prior to the weekend of March 17/18, and no Grade 9 clinics may be scheduled after the weekend of May 5/6.

- **Grade 8 clinics:** Grade 8 clinics may not be scheduled after the weekend of May 5/6. Grade 8 clinics may be scheduled in February and early March, depending on past attendance at that club's Grade 8 clinics scheduled early in the season.
- **Recert clinics:** Recerts may be scheduled from January 28/29 through June 10, on any day (weeknight or weekend), with the exception of the designated holidays (Easter Sunday and Memorial Day weekend)
- Outstate areas may be granted exceptions to these limitations in order to better utilize instructors driving great distances to those areas (or better utilize local instructors from those areas).

The reason for these date limitations are threefold. With regards to the Grade 9 specifically, MNSRC found last year that Grade 9 (and many Grade 8) clinics scheduled prior to mid-March were generally poorly attended. Therefore, in an attempt to improve the per-referee expense average, we will not be offering any Grade 9 clinics before March 17, and will only offer Grade 8 clinics prior to that date with support of prior good attendance.

Second, because a majority of Grade 9 and Grade 8 attendees are under the age of 19, many of them play on MYSA teams in the summer as well. Holding entry-level clinics deep into May will not likely be well attended due to interference with players' seasons. Furthermore, most assignors have told us that new referees joining the referee pool after the first week in May are unlikely to get many assignments for that season.

Third, most of our instructor corps is made up of some of the state's best referees as well. Once we hit May, these instructors are needed to referee at Minnesota State Cup. The state simply cannot afford to have them in the classroom on May weekends working 8-hour courses.

Therefore, we will be focusing our entry level training courses to be held between March 17 and May 6, a period of eight weekends.

While this may seem difficult, please keep in mind that the Grade 8 has been shortened to eight hours of classroom, and the Grade 9 is shortened to only four hours of classroom. Because of this, each can be taught in a single day. It also may be an option to spread these classes out over several days using mid-week dates (e.g., the Grade 8 could be taught as a pair of four-hour weekend days or even a pair of 5 PM to 9 PM weeknight sessions). With 15 potential weekend clinic dates and nine regions, that means there are 135 options for each type of clinic (Grade 9 and Grade 8), more than enough to cover what the state needs. And please keep in mind that early-season Grade 8 clinics may be approved pending past attendance at those clinics in your club.

Mid-week options will also be available to clubs who wish to utilize them:

Recerts: Any recert can be scheduled for a weeknight; these are only 2 hours in length.

Grade 9: Grade 9 clinics may be scheduled (during the Grade 9 window) as weeknight clinics, either a single 4-hour clinic or a pair of 2-hour sessions.

Grade 8: Grade 8 clinics may be scheduled over multiple days, one of which may be a weeknight. This

could be a 4+4 format (Tue/Thu, Sat/Sun or Thu/Sat or any other combination suitable to the club), or 2+6 (Thu/Sat, for example).

College-aged referees: As previously mentioned, there will be a mid-week clinic in the Twin Cities the last week in December available to college-aged officials home from break. MNSRC will be offering recert clinics in St. Paul through the month of May to also accommodate college students returning home from out of state.

We strongly recommend college-aged referees be pro-active in scheduling their 2012 clinic. MNSRC will offer the December clinic plus clinics in the first two weeks of June to try to catch these returning officials when they are home. These clinics will be advertised very early in the season on the website. If an out-of-state college-aged referee cannot attend any of those offerings, we are recommending they contact the Minnesota SRA (Paula Hildman) and work to finish their requirements in the state where they are attending college. As a club coordinator or assignor, it is probably in your best interest to figure out who these individuals are, if they plan to officiate for you in 2012, and make sure they know their options well in advance!

Club Requirements

Clinic requests should be made through the website, using the Clinic/Material Request page. Certain details must be filled in on each clinic request:

- Site name and address, including zip code
- Type of clinic requested
- Maximum classroom size
- Requested class size limit
- Requested date(s) for class
- Available facilities (laptop, screen, whiteboard/chalkboard, lunch facilities)
- Whether lunch will be served (if Grade 8 clinic on a single day) and if there is an additional cost for it

At a minimum, the facility used must have an LCD projector to use with a laptop (the instructor will provide their own laptop) and a suitable surface for projection. At least one clinic in 2011 intended to use a green-tiled wall for projection last year; this was not acceptable.

Clubs are responsible for any facility costs, and facility fees **MAY NOT** be charged to the attendees. Clubs may offer lunch and may offer that lunch as an option with a fee to the attendees. The SRC covers instructor fees.

Minimum Enrollment Requirements

As previously stated, in order to meet budgets, the SRC must get smarter about how it schedules clinics. This means that we have to have a certain number of attendees in a given clinic to justify the expense that will be taken on for that clinic.

For entry level clinics (Grade 8/9) there needs to be a minimum number of 10 attendees enrolled within one week of the scheduled start date. For recertifications, there needs to be a minimum of 15 students enrolled within one week of the scheduled date. Failure to meet these numbers will put the clinic in jeopardy of being canceled. Exceptions may be granted for outstate areas (>100 miles from the Twin Cities).

If these limits are not met by the one-week deadline, the SRC will contact the clinic coordinator to find out if they are expecting further attendees. **If the minimum is not met by four days prior to the clinic, the SRC reserves the right to cancel the clinic.** Attendees would be contacted and advised of the cancelation, and recommended to find alternate options.

We understand that there are always people who wait until the last minute, but as previously stated, the SRC has to make sure its clinics are not net losses. If an instructor is paid \$120 to teach a recertification that only has four students (\$30 per student), this is not a productive use of SRC resources. We realize those four students will be inconvenienced by the cancelation of their clinic, but the motivation to retain that clinic must be driven by the expansion of that area's soccer program and recruitment of other referees within the area (which is why the minimum is lower for entry-level clinics). Until those levels are met, that area's officials will have to make a longer journey to an area with a larger clinic, with less risk of being canceled.

Please, PLEASE, be proactive in talking with your referees and figuring out a date for your clinics. Be proactive in recruiting officials to your clinics.

Availability of Clinic List

This was probably the greatest source of grief last year for both the SRC and CCs. For 2012, the full clinic list with date(s), city, clinic type, and enrollment status will be posted on the SRC site and will be visible regardless of log-in status or progression through the enrollment process. Additionally, the SRC will publish the topics to be covered at the clinic. However, as with last year, sign-up and reservation of a seat in the clinic will only be available upon completion of all online pre-requisites for the referee's grade.

As an added feature this year, when a user is logged in the site will be able to list first the clinics that are within a 40-mile radius of their home zip code, making it simpler to find convenient clinics.

It will not be possible to reserve a seat in the clinic until online materials are completed for new referees and returning Grade 9 or 8 referees. There will be no exceptions to this rule. In order to gain entry to a class and receive credit for attendance, the referee must have completed any pre-class testing and fulfilled credit-hour requirements prior to attendance.

Clinic Sign-Up Deadline

This was also a bit of a problem last year. At the end of 2011 we moved the sign-up deadline to Thursday midnight, and we plan on retaining this deadline for all of 2012 for clinics which take place Saturday through Monday.

For clinics scheduled to begin Tuesday-Friday, the deadline for those clinics will be midnight two days before the start date.

In a slight change of policy for 2012, this deadline will not be hard and fast. Exceptions will be more liberal, but it will involve a process that puts the onus of exception on the clinic coordinator, not the SRC. If a referee is seeking entry to a class for the coming weekend after the deadline is passed...

- 1) There must be slots available in that class. We will not add referees to classes that are full. The club coordinator, however, may choose to open up more slots if the classroom can accommodate it. This will be up to the club coordinator.
- 2) The referee in question must have completed all pre-class work. Recertifying referees who have not passed and completed the online recertification test, or any referee who has not completed pre-class online materials (that is required to do so) will not be enrolled in a class, no exceptions. The SRC will not be chasing students down after a class to remind them to finish the online work.
- 3) The request for the exception must be made either by email to either the SDI or the SRA **PRIOR TO THE START OF THE CLINIC.** SRC Instructors will be informed that any referee who is not on their roster at the time the class starts may not be approved for attendance.
- 4) No referee will be granted an exception **without the approval of the clinic coordinator.**

This last requirement is key, as it restores control over who attends clinics to you, the clinic coordinator.

It is the job of the SRC to provide training for referees, make sure they meet minimum requirements for both registration payments and training, and assist assignors and clubs in making sure they have enough officials by providing adequate numbers of classes and instructors. As long as those requirements are met, this needs to be and will be the focus of the SRC. The determination of individual exceptions, as long as these requirements are met, is not the concern of the SRC.

If a specific individual fails to meet a deadline for sign-up for a clinic, but prior to the start of that clinic finishes all pre-requisites, as far as the SRC is concerned, we will add that individual to the clinic... on the premise that the club is OK with it. We at the SRC do not feel it is appropriate to lock out referees who have finished their pre-requisites from attending classes, but the club should have the final say on whether an exception is granted. Perhaps your club is trying to eliminate procrastinators, or perhaps your club has an excess of referees and adding others will make it harder to get everybody enough games. Or maybe you are in need of more referees and need as many warm bodies as you can get, regardless of their responsibility level.

This is your call. We certainly do not encourage clubs to be lenient on individuals who are unable or unwilling to be pro-active in terms of dealing with registration difficulties, or who wait until the last minute, or miss deadlines. Such behavior is likely to be repeated during the season. But it will be behavior that you, the club, have to deal with, rather than the SRC, so it is your choice.

Recommendation: If any referee needs to get into a class after the deadline has passed, that individual should contact the clinic coordinator and then have the coordinator contact the SDI by email. If a

referee contacts the SDI or the SRA directly, there will be a delay while we have to contact the clinic coordinator first. The process can be expedited if requests for exceptions come directly from the clinic coordinator.

SRC Notification of Clinic Dates to Students

If clinics are requested prior to January 1, 2012, the SRC will use its database to contact referees who attended your clinics in 2011, as well as referees in nearby zip codes, to notify referees of clinics in their area. If clinics are requested after January 1, however, no such mass emails will be sent out. Again, early planning will help move the process forward.

Part 6: Conclusion

It's our hope that providing this document well in advance of the clinic season will help club coordinators provide answers to questions from their referees. If this document seems to be missing any information or requires additional clarifications, please contact the SDI at sdi@minnesotasrc.com so we can fix this document.

Probably the absolute best advice we can give you for 2012 is to be organized and plan ahead. The sooner you submit clinic date requests, the more likely you will get the dates you want. If you submit requests prior to January 1, we will assist you in getting the word out to referees that live nearby and would utilize those clinics. The sooner the word goes out, the sooner people can plan.

We recognize that there will always be people who wait. We also understand that in Minnesota, the focus is on hockey and basketball through March, so we have revamped our program to provide as much training as possible during the months of April and May. We are not going to hold clubs' feet to the fire because their referees like to procrastinate. But we will hold a clubs' feet to the fire if the club chooses to procrastinate.

The SRC has worked very hard to roll out the 2012 Guide well in advance of clinic season. We are doing the very best we can to make sure that we smooth out the rough edges of our training process. All we ask from the clubs is that they take a proactive role in making 2012 as positive an experience as possible. If you can do that, we can guarantee that you will have all of the support you need to make your referee program the best it can be.