



Referees Regulations and Guidelines (2021/2022)

Prior to matches

1. Appointment

- 1.1 *Registered Referee will be assigned to officiate as match official for 4 categories of matches: local matches organized by Hong Kong Football Association (HKFA), international matches, friendly matches and matches in which the organization invites the appointments of match officials by HKFA.*
- 1.2 *All appointments will be assigned by the Referees Department or by the Referee Committee's decision (except those instructed by FIFA or AFC).*
- 1.3 *All appointed Referees for matches organized by HKFA will be informed through the Scheduler System, in forms of email or telephone.*
- 1.4 *Referees for the international matches will be appointed by FIFA or AFC through HKFA. Referees for inter-ports matches will be assigned by the HKFA.*
- 1.5 *HKFA will assign Referees for international friendly matches, as there will be no fixture for these matches, the assigned Referees may be informed only by the Scheduler System or telephone.*
- 1.6 *All appointed Referees for which invites the appointments of match officials by HKFA will be informed through the Scheduler System, in forms of email or telephone.*

2. Acceptance or reject of appointment

- 2.1 *Referee should reply to the Referees Department whether he/she accepts or rejects the appointment as match official after he/she receives the appointment as soon as possible by confirmation through the Scheduler System. The Referees Department does not accept any verbal confirmation.*
- 2.2 *If the Referee cannot accept the appointment, he/she should reply to the Referees Department with reason as soon as possible.*

3. Appointment of Match Officials

- 3.1 *The appointment of the match officials for matches at different levels are as followings:*



Role	Class	Appointment
Men's Referees	FIFA Referee	- Referee and Other Match Officials for all local & international matches organized or co-organized by HKFA.
	FIFA Assistant Referee	- Other Match Officials for all local & international matches organized or co-organized by HKFA.
	Class 1	- Referee and Other Match Officials for all local matches organized or co-organized by HKFA (Women's Referee can officiate at the HKPL as Referee and Assistant Referee only if she can pass the respective men's fitness tests). - Referee and Other Match Officials for all local & international matches organized or co-organized by HKFA (except designated category of Referee is needed).
	Class 2	- Fourth Official and Assistant Referee 2 (if on the evaluation for promotion to Class 1 Referee) for HKPL - Referee and Other Match Officials for all 1 st Division matches and below (including all women's matches).
	Class 3	- Assistant Referee 2 and Referee (if on the evaluation for promotion to Class 2 Referee) for matches of 1 st Division. - Referee and Other Match Officials for all matches of the 2 nd Division and below (including all women's matches).
	New	- Assistant Referee 2 and Referee (if on the evaluation for the confirmation as Class 3 Referee) for matches of the 3 rd Division. - Referee and Other Match Officials for all matches of the U18 and below (including respective women's matches).
	Pre-registered	- As the Assistant Referee for HKFA organized U14 and as the Referee for HKFA U13 matches, as Referee and Assistant Referee for unofficial U12 and below matches - Promotion and confirmation assessments will not be considered for pre-registered Referees.

**No change on the appointment of women's referee for men's matches if she is under the men's promotion system*



Role	Class	Appointment
Women's Referee	FIFA Referee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Referee and Other Match Officials for all local & international women's matches organized or co-organized by HKFA. - Referee and Other Match Officials for all HKFA men's U18 and below matches.
	FIFA Assistant Referee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other Match Officials for all local & international women's matches organized or co-organized by HKFA. - Referee and Other Match Officials for all local & international women's youth matches organized or co-organized by HKFA. - Referee and Other Match Officials for all matches of HKFA men's U18 and below.
	Class 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other Match Officials for all international women's matches organized by HKFA (except designated category of referee is needed). - Referee and Other Match Officials for all local & international women's youth matches organized or co-organized by HKFA. - Referee and Other Match Officials for all matches of HKFA men's U18 and below.
	Class 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other Match Officials for all local & international women's youth matches organized or co-organized by HKFA (except specified). - Referee and Other Match Officials for all local women's matches organized or co-organized by HKFA. - Referee and Other Match Officials for matches of HKFA men's U16 and below or Other Match Officials for matches of HKFA men's U18.
	Class 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other Match Officials for the international women's youth matches (except specified). - Other Match Officials for all local women's matches organized or co-organized by HKFA. - Referee and Other Match Officials for matches of HKFA men's U14 and below - Other Match Officials for matches of HKFA men's U18 and below.



	<i>New</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Other Match Officials for all local women's youth matches organized or co-organized by HKFA.</i> - <i>Other Match Officials for all international women's youth matches (except specified).</i> - <i>Referee or Other Match Officials for the lowest level of women's youth matches</i> - <i>Other Match Officials for matches of HKFA men's U14 and below</i>
	<i>Pre-registered</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Referee for grassroots matches organized by HKFA, and as Referee or Other Match Officials for the unofficial matches</i> - <i>Promotion and confirmation assessments will not be considered for pre-registered referees.</i>

*If the women's referee is recommended by the Referee Committee to adopt the men's referee promotion system, she can officiate matches according to her achieved level in men's system. Nevertheless, she must fulfil the set fitness standard for women's referee in men's games.

<i>Role</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Appointment</i>
<i>Futsal Referee</i>	<i>FIFA Futsal</i>	- <i>Match Officials for all local & international Futsal matches organized or co-organized by HKFA.</i>
	<i>Class 1</i>	- <i>Match Officials for all local Futsal matches organized or co-organized by HKFA.</i>
	<i>Class 2</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Referee 2, Scorer and Time Keeper for all local Futsal matches organized or co-organized by HKFA.</i> - <i>Match Officials for all local Futsal matches (below top level) organized or co-organized by HKFA.</i>
	<i>Class 3</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Scorer and Time Keeper for all local Futsal matches organized or co-organized by HKFA.</i> - <i>-Match Officials for all local Futsal matches (below top level) organized or co-organized by HKFA.</i> - <i>Match Officials for all school level Futsal matches organized or co-organized by HKFA.</i>
	<i>New</i>	- <i>Match Officials for all school level Futsal matches organized or co-organized by HKFA.</i>



3.2 To facilitate the assignment of the referees' duties, all registered Referees are requested to inform the availability time slots during the registration or periodically update the Referees Department of the time slot of availability for appointment. For reference, the followings are the ordinary schedule of the matches which organized by HKFA (except for some circumstances):

Hong Kong Premier League Matches

Weekdays : 18:00-22:00

Weekends and Public Holidays : 13:00-22:00

Reserve League

Weekdays : 18:00-23:00

1st, 2nd and 3rd Divisions Matches

Weekdays and Saturday : 18:00-23:00

Weekends and Public Holidays : 13:00-23:00

Youth Matches & Others

Weekdays : 18:00-22:00

Saturdays : 09:00-23:00

Weekends and Public Holidays : 09:00-23:00

3.3 If the Referee works with irregular hours or shift, he or she is advised to submit his or her duty schedule 4 weeks in advanced of each round of matches. Otherwise, his or her chance to be assigned as official will be diminished.

4. Competition Rules

Referees should be familiar with the competition rules of the match being officiated, especially the followings:

4.1 Number of Players

4.1.1 A match may not start if either team consists of fewer than seven players except the competition states specifically. If this happens, the match should be abandoned and the Referee should send written report to the HKFA within 24 hours. The HKFA will deal with this accordingly.

4.1.2 If the number of players is less than seven players at the start of the match, the Referee can make his own discretion to allow the team to wait but not more than 10 minutes.

4.2 Age limitation



- 4.2.1 *The Referee should be aware that there will be some age limitations for some youth game. Therefore, the Referee is reminded to verify players against the registration book and photographs.*

Match Day:

5. Report Duty

Referees should arrive at the venue according to the following regulations:

- 5.1 *Hong Kong Premier League Match – Referees should arrive at least 90 minutes before the kick-off to carry out the field inspection to see whether it is suitable for the match and verify players of both teams with “Form B”. The Assessor should arrive at least 60 minutes before the kick-off to carry out the assessor duties.*
- 5.2 *Other matches – Referees should arrive 30 minutes before the kick-off to carry out the field inspection (including field markings, goal nets and corner flags etc.) to see whether it is suitable for the match and verify players of both teams with “Form B” 10 minutes before the match time. Assessor should arrive at least 30 minutes before the kick-off to carry out the assessor duties. Assessor should inform the Duty Officer on arrival.*
- 5.3 *If the match cannot start on time, the Referee should make a written report to the Competition Department and a cc copy to the Referees Department to state the reason of the delay.*

6. Field Inspection due to bad weather

- 6.1 *Hong Kong Premier League Match – If the weather is not stable on the match day, but the field is still possible be used for the match, the Referee should arrive at the venue 3 hours before the kick-off to inspect the field with the staff of secretariat and people concerned in order to make decision on whether the match can be played or not.*
- 6.2 *If the Referee of the match is not available for the field inspection, the Assistant Referee 1, Assistant Referee 2 or 4th Official will take up this duty according to the order of the above listed posts for the match.*
- 6.3 *Other matches – If the weather is not stable on the match day, unless being informed by HKFA, the Referee should arrive at the venue 30 minutes before the kick-off to have the field inspection in order to decide the match will be played according to the schedule.*



7. Verification of all Forms

7.1 *Prior to the kick-off, the Referee should verify all players against the starting lists (Form B) to see if the following items are correctly filled:*

- i. *Teams, date and venue;*
- ii. *Names of players, jersey numbers (number should be printed at the back of each jersey) and registration numbers;*
- iii. *To ensure there should be captain and game supervisor on the starting list. Their names should correctly be filled on the starting list and the form should be certified with their signatures*

The Referee should verify all substitutes during substitution against the starting list with the substitution card to ensure names appeared on the list. If substitute name is not registered prior to the kick-off, the Referee has the right not permitting the substitution.

7.2 *The following procedures will be taken to verify the starting list (Form B) for all matches except the HKPL matches:*

- i. *The Referee should contact the Duty Officer of the match when arriving at the venue.*
- ii. *To call in both game supervisors.*
- iii. *The Referee should be accompanied with the Duty Officer when verifying process of players is being carried out.*
- iv. *The Duty Officer should be informed if any problem arises during the verifying process.*

8. Delayed Kickoff

8.1 *Under any circumstance, if the kick-off is delayed, the Referee has to report the reason on the report form e.g. teams arrive late or the Referee arrives late etc.*

8.2 *If the match is delayed because of a team consisting of fewer than seven players or team's request for delay, the Referee can consider allowing 10 minutes of delay maximally.*

9. Management of the Field of Play

9.1 *Unauthorized persons enter the field of play*

To ensure the match to be played without external interference, the Referee ensures that no unauthorized persons enter the field of play or tracks before or during the match.



9.2 Number of Team officials and substitutes in Technical Areas

At all times, if the number of the team officials, substitute and substituted players exceeds the limit set by the Competition Rules, the Referee has the right to stop, suspend or abandon the match (only for Hong Kong Premier League matches).

10. Misconduct Behavior

- 10.1 *According to the Laws of the Game, the Referee can take disciplinary action against players or team officials if they are guilty of cautionable and sending-off offences.*
- 10.2 *If player/team official has another misconduct behavior other than the above-mentioned disciplinary sanctions during the match, the Referee should submit a written report on the misconduct behavior to HKFA Secretariat on that day or the day after the match for further disciplinary action.*
- 10.3 *Before, during and after the match, if accompanied spectators of team behave badly, the Referee should inform the Duty Officer and request the Game Supervisor of the team to control their companions and submit written report to the HKFA Secretariat the day after the match for further disciplinary action.*
- 10.4 *Before, during and after the match, if an outside agent who interferes with the play, the Referee should report this to the Duty Officer and request the ground staff or policeman on duty to stop the misconduct behavior and submit a written report to the HKFA Secretariat the day after the match for further action.*

11. Replacement of the Match Official (Except for Hong Kong Premier League Matches)

If the Referee is absent or unable to continue as a match official regardless the reason, inform the staff of the Referees Department immediately and the following procedures should be taken:

- 11.1 *If the Referee is absent, the AR1 will take up the position of the Referee, and AR2 will take up the duty of the AR1. The 4th Official will take up the position of the AR2.*
- 11.2 *If there is no 4th Official for the match, a registered Referee can be approached in the vicinity of the field. If there is no other appropriate personnel in the vicinity of the field, a person of neutral background (the*



Duty Officer, the Referee instructor or assessor) will take up the post as AR2.

11.3 *Due to the tight schedule of the HKFA competition, the match should not be abandoned without a valid reason.*

11.4 *For matches in Hong Kong Premier League, the replacement of match officials will be designated on the appointment system.*

12. Match Abandon or Cancellation

12.1 *In any of the following situations, the match should be suspended or cancelled:*

- *If the typhoon signal No. 8 or above is hoisted*
- *If the black rainstorm warning is issued*
- *If thunderstorm warning is issued (depends on real time situation)*

In any of the following situations, the Match Official has the right to abandon the match:

- *If team official, player or other agent which misconduct behavior is very serious (threatening or assaults)*
- *Mass confrontation which the match is not under control (group scuffle)*
- *Team refuses to play*
- *Team with players fewer than 7 players*

Prior to abandon or cancel the match, the Referee should consider conscientiously with appropriate reasons. Under normal circumstance, the Referee should try his best to complete the match.

12.2 *Procedures to abandon the match*

If the Referee decides to abandon the match, the following procedures should be adopted:

- *Inform the Duty Officer about the decision of the abandon*
- *Call team captains or game supervisors of both teams with best effort and inform the decision*
- *Whistle to indicate the termination of the match*

Post-match:

13. Report match result and return of related documents

After the match is ended, the Referee should report the result immediately and return related documents to corresponding departments:



- 13.1 *Report of match result (except matches of the Hong Kong Premier League)*
Verify the match details (especially yellow, red cards and other relevant information) with the Duty Officer immediately post-match. The Duty Officer will report the match result to HKFA and the Referee should check HKFA website about the result of his match to see if it is correct before midnight on the match day. The Referee should call 9502 2168 to make amendment only if the reported result is not correct.
- 13.2 *Starting lists (Form B) and substitution cards*
Original documents should be returned to the Competition Department within 48 hours post-match (These should be returned to the officer-in-charge of the Competition Department immediately for the matches of the Hong Kong Premier League).
- 13.3 *Referee's report should be returned to the Competition Department with cc copy to the Referees Department within 48 hours post-match (This should be returned to the duty officer of the Competition Department immediately for the match of the Hong Kong Premier League). Report should include the necessary details of the result of the match, names of the match officials, matches details, substitution records, caution and sending off records, goal records, special incidents and other remarks.*
- 13.4 *Misconduct Report*
According to the "Disciplinary Guidelines", the Referee should submit the misconduct report to the Competition Department and cc copy to the Referees Department within 48 hours post-match.
- 13.5 *Post-match Misconduct Behavior Report of Players and Team Officials*
- 13.5.1 *A report of post-match misconduct behavior of player or team official should be submitted to the Competition Department and cc copy to the Referees Department within 24 hours post-match.*
- 13.5.2 *If the match is abandoned or incident involving serious misconduct behavior of player or team official, assistant referees and the 4th official (if any) should also submit individual misconduct report in order to facilitate the disciplinary investigation of the involved personnel. Moreover, the assistant referees may be requested to submit supplementary misconduct behavior report for further disciplinary action especially the incident which is seen by the assistant referee and the Referee is requested for taking action).*



14. Attend the Disciplinary Committee

- 14.1 *Attending the hearing of the Disciplinary Committee Meeting is one of the duties of the Referee, the Referee should attend the hearing on time to assist the disciplinary operation if being invited.*
- 14.2 *If the Referee cannot attend the hearing, a written reply should be submitted to the Competition Department and a written report on the incident should be submitted to assist the hearing.*
- 14.3 *The Referee should be in proper attire, conduct and attitude when attending the hearing.*

Others:

15. Referees Registration

- 15.1 *The Referee can complete the application for registration at any time of the season. However, Referees can only participate into all activities organized by the HKFA (including the fitness test, practical training, seminar, lecture, workshop, etc.) after the registration. The Referee becomes registered Referee only if he or she passes the latest fitness test.*
- 15.2 *If the Referee does not apply for registration for 1 or more than 1 season and wants to refresh his or her membership in the HKFA, he or she has to renew the application for registration by taking the Laws of the Game test, paying the registration fee, and passing the fitness test.*
- 15.3 *If anyone from overseas wants to officiate as Referee in the matches organized by the HKFA, he or she must submit the documents certified his or her qualification as Referee for Referee Committee verification & approval. If accepted, the Referee should undergo the same registration procedures of the renewal membership of Referees in Hong Kong (If needed).*
- 15.4 *For Referee being invited from overseas participating the HKFA programs and officiating matches, the qualification should be accredited and endorsed by the Referee Committee to get the temporary registration in HKFA.*

16. Fitness Test

There will be 2 formal fitness tests for Referees every season, the standard of the fitness test for each category will be decided by the Referee Committee and the Referees will be informed. The standards will also be posted in the Refereeing



Section on the HKFA website. The result of the formal fitness test will be used as reference for promotion and all nominations. HKFA will organize fitness check regularly for whom cannot attend or fails the formal fitness test. The result will only be used for justifying the Referee is fit for refereeing. The result would not be considered for any referee's promotion and nomination.

17. Evaluation of Referee Performance

17.1 There are 3 types of assessments; they are confirmation assessment, standard assessment and promotion assessment.

Confirmation Assessment – *This assessment is for the confirmation of a New Referee to Class 3 Referee.*

Standard Assessment – *This is for the evaluation of the referee's performance to check whether the Referee can meet the standard.*

Promotion Assessment – *This is the assessment to confirm the promotion of referee to next category.*

17.2 The criteria for promotion of referees

In normal circumstance, the HKFA will consider the promotion of the referee according to the following criteria:

- a. Refereeing experience*
- b. Fitness test result*
- c. Laws of the Game test result*
- d. Should have to pass on the promotion assessment*
- e. The attendance of refereeing activities is at or 70% above*

17.3 The process of confirmation and promotion assessment

Men's Referee *should go through the following processes for confirmation or promotion:*

Confirmation as Class 3 Referee - *Grassroots Match: as Referee for 1 match → Youth Match: as AR for 1 match → U18: as Referee for 1 match → 3rd Division Match: as Referee for 1 match*

Promotion to Class 2 Referee - *Attend the promotion preparatory course and pass the respective tests - 2nd & 3rd Divisions: as Referee for 1 match → 1st Division: as Referee for 2 matches*

Promotion to Class 1 Referee - *AR on-field Pre-assessment → Attend the promotion preparatory course and pass the respective tests → 1st Division: as AR for 1 match → 1st Division: as R for 2 matches → Hong Kong Premier League: as AR for 2 matches*



Women's Referee should go through the following processes for confirmation or promotion:

Confirmation as Class 3 Referee - Women's Youth match (or match of same level): as AR for 1 match → Women's Youth match (or match of same level): as Referee for 1 match → Second top women's match: as Referee for 1 match

Promotion to Class 2 Referee - Top women's match: as Referee for 1 match → Second top women's match: as Referee for 2 matches

Promotion to Class 1 Referee - Top women's match: as Assistant Referee for 2 match → Top women's match: as Referee for 1 match

Futsal Referee should go through the following processes for confirmation or promotion:

Confirmation as Class 3 Referee - Accumulation of 8 hours of experience in School Futsal Matches

Promotion to Class 2 Referee - Can undergo promotion assessment if 20 hours of experience in School Futsal Matches after the Referee has been confirmed as Class 3 Referee

- Promotion assessment in 2nd Division Futsal Match for 3 matches

Promotion to Class 1 Referee - Can undergo promotion assessment if 20 hours of experience in all Futsal Matches (including Open matches) after the referee has been confirmed as Class 2 Referee

- Promotion assessment in 1st Division Futsal Match for 3 matches

18. Refereeing Activities

- 18.1 Referee should attend activities organized by the Referees Department of the HKFA (including seminars, practical training, fitness test.... etc.). If the Referee cannot attend the activity, he or she has to make a written explanation to the Referees Department for the absence.
- 18.2 The attendance will be valid only if the Referee actively attends half of the time of the activity or above. The attendance will not be counted if the Referee leaves earlier than the end time without informing the staff of the Referees Department or Referees Instructor.
- 18.3 If the attendance of the referee for activities is below 70% (including the immediate past season), the Referee Committee will not consider the promotion, FIFA nomination or appointment for being the match official for that Referee.



19. Code of Conduct and Regulations for Referees (in part)

- 19.1 *According to the FIFA guidelines, the Referee is the match official and should not become the focus of the match. The Referee, Referee Instructor or Assessor should seek the approval for interview or appearance on media from the HKFA. If he or she is approached by the media for interview and it is approved, the content should not involve the followings:*
- *Predict the result of the match*
 - *Criticize referees negatively*
 - *Comment or discuss the incidents which related to the match (e.g. the decision being made by the Referee)*
- 19.2 *Unless approval from the HKFA, the Referee, Referee Instructor or Assessor cannot comment on any decision being made by the Referee or any issue related to the corresponding match publicly.*
- 19.3 *In order to maintain the dignity of the Referee, the Referee should not request the autograph from and taking photograph with teams' players and officials which the match being officiated prior to, during half time and at the end of the match. The Referee should not discuss the sensitive issue and misleading topic which connected to the match publicly.*
- 19.4 *The Referee can register as a coach or/and a player of the member of the HKFA simultaneously, but it is necessary to declare any conflict of interest. In order not to impose any conflict of interest, the Referees Department appoints the respective registered Referee based on the declaration and the HKFA Referees Appointment Policy for officiating the game.*
- 19.5 *The Referee, Referee Instructor or Assessor should declare the relationship (personal or business) with affiliated referee associations, members of the HKFA and teams which participate into the HKFA's competitions.*
- 19.6 *The Referee should maintain a courtesy relationship with personnel of clubs to avoid misunderstanding.*
- 19.7 *All registered Class 1, 2, 3 Referees, Futsal Referees and New Referees HKFA Referee's Badges should be worn by attaching it on the left pocket of the referee jersey (for FIFA Referee, FIFA AR and FIFA Futsal, they have to wear the FIFA's badges according to the FIFA regulations). The Referee wears the badge only for matches organized or being invited to appoint the Match Official by HKFA. The badge cannot be worn at any time for matches not being organized by the HKFA.*
- 19.8 *Consistency is the foundation of referees, to maintain the consistency and*



professional image, all match officials are required to wear the designated uniforms while they are officiating the matches appointed by HKFA. HKFA will arrange the purchase or the distribution of uniforms.

19.9 The Referee Committee of the HKFA has the right to suspend, terminate the registration of the referee or permanently remove the registration from the list if the performance of the Referee does not meet the requirement, the Referee breaches the code of conduct or any reasonable discretion is made by the Referee Committee.

19.10 The Referee Committee has the right to appoint or not to appoint any registered Referee, Referee Instructor and Assessor.

19.11 Any decision on all refereeing matters made by the Referee Committee will be considered as final..

19.12 To register as a HKFA's Referee, Referee must consent with the clause of "Referees Regulation and Guidelines".

20. Parking Arrangement

For Match Officials in Hong Kong Premier League matches, the parking arrangement will be based on the practicability of the real situation. Generally, for matches in Mongkok Stadium and Hong Kong Stadium, only one car park may be reserved for Match Officials of that match. For Referee Assessor, he may check the availability of the carpark in the aforesaid venues if it is necessary. The concerned Match Officials should make the arrangement with our colleague the day before the match. For other matches at different levels, the HKFA will not arrange car park for Match Officials.

21. Tickets arrangement (HKPL)

Referee Assessor can have one complementary ticket for all HKPL matches. Nonetheless, it is on first comes first serves basis. For officiating Referees, he can have one complementary ticket for his relative or friend.

22. Emergency

If Referee cannot arrive to the venue on time or cannot attend the match due to unforeseen incident, the Referee should contact the staff of the Referees Department (office hour: 21937355 or 21937382, non-office hour: 94970945). In addition, the Referee should submit a written explanation to the department day after the match with proof if necessary. In case of bad weather, the Match Officials should arrive at the venue as schedule unless they receive the call from HKFA staff.



The Match Officials should not contact the venue personnel by themselves personally. If any emergency concerning the venue, Match Officials can contact HKFA staff who is responsible for venue arrangement at 64762438.

End