

**UNITED STATES JUDO
REFEREES CODE OF ETHICS, STANDARDS AND CONDUCT**

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INTRODUCTION

Olympic Judo has its origins in Kodokan Judo, and the ancient jujutsu martial arts, and amongst the Olympic Sports, is fairly unique. It was developed by its founder to extend the ancient martial arts of jujutsu to be a complete form of physical, mental and moral education. Kodokan Judo has its own inherent codes of ethics and conduct and therefore must be an integral part of these codes: the principles of maximum efficient use of mind and body (seiryoku zenyo) and mutual welfare and benefit (jita kyoei). As referees and teachers, we must strive to constantly instill these basic principles into our athletes and coaches. In considering whether or not this approach will translate into winning contests, one need only consider that in that in other sports, it is well known that the most talented do not always win. It is often those with the “right” spirit that prevail. While it is beyond the scope of this document to define that spirit, suffice it to say, the referees must manifest that spirit.

For applicability to a Code of Ethics, these principles must be understood in the broadest possible light. The tenet ‘jita kyoei’, mutual welfare and benefit (or you and I shining together) connotes a spirit of interdependence. The second principle that is commonly referred to as maximum efficiency and minimum effort refers to the right use of one’s energies. At the very least, it seems clear that individual referees cannot act alone, but should depend upon a network of others in order to produce the best officiating possible.

When considered in their fullest extent these principles are consistent with the codes of ethics that exist for other organizations and constitute guiding principles of action both on and off the mat. Above all, referees can have great influence on developing athletes who are reliant on the integrity of the referee. Referees can have tremendous power over these athletes in their quest to the top. This power must not be abused. Therefore we have set forth these codes of ethics and conduct to guide our referees and protect our sport for the mutual benefit of all concerned.

What must also be understood is that the assumption of a code of ethics based on the tenets of Judo is not sufficient. Actions based on the interpretations of individual referees can be divisive. In order to avoid the possibility of widely disparate interpretations of the IJF Judo contest rules and regulations, and in the best interests of the athletes and coaches, it is necessary to codify a set of principles to guide the actions of judo referees.

This code establishes that referees must follow ethical standards of teaching and officiating. It does not state what these standards are, but is left to the USAJudo referee commission to fairly implement these rules. Criteria must be established as to just what constitutes the best interests of the judo athlete and the sport of Judo. The referees must firmly establish their performance end goals.

This Ethics Code is intended to provide standards of ethical conduct that can be applied by United States Judo and its member organizations. Whether or not a referee has violated this Code of Ethics, Standards and Conduct, does not by itself determine whether he or she is legally

liable in a court action, whether a contract or agreement is enforceable or whether other legal consequences occur. These results are based on legal rather than ethical rules

This Code is intended to provide both the general principles and the decision rules to cover most situations encountered by Referees. It has as its primary goal the welfare and protections of the individuals and groups with whom referees work. This Code also provides a common set of values. It is the individual responsibility of each referee to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct and performance. Referees should respect and protect human civil rights, and should not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

A: Competence

Referees strive to maintain high standards of excellence in their work. They recognize the boundaries of their particular competencies and the limitations of their expertise. They provide only those services for which they are qualified by education, training, certification or experience. In those areas in which recognized professional standards do not yet exist, referees exercise careful judgment and take appropriate precautions to protect the welfare of those with whom they work. They will maintain knowledge of relevant scientific and professional information related to the services they render, and they recognize the need for ongoing education.

Referees will make appropriate use of scientific, professional, technical, and administrative resources.

B: Integrity

Referees seek to promote integrity in the practice of refereeing.

Referees are honest, fair, and respectful of others.

Referees do not make statements that are false, misleading, or deceptive.

Referees strive to be aware of their own belief systems, values, needs, and limitations and the effect of these on their work. To the extent feasible, they attempt to clarify for relevant parties, the role they are performing and to function appropriately in accordance with that role.

Referees avoid improper and potentially harmful dual relationships.

C: Professional Responsibility

Referees must uphold professional¹ standards of conduct, clarify their professional roles and obligations and accept appropriate responsibility for their behavior.

Referees should consult with, refer to, or cooperate with other professionals and institutions to the extent needed to serve the best interest of athletes and the sport of Judo.

Referees' moral standards and conduct are personal matters to the same degree as is true for any other person, except when referees' conduct may compromise their responsibilities or reduce the public's trust.

Referees are concerned about the ethical compliance of their colleagues' conduct. When appropriate, they should consult with their colleagues in order to prevent or avoid unethical conduct.

1. Of, engaged in, or worthy of high standards

D: Respect for Participants and Dignity

Referees respect the fundamental rights, dignity and worth of all participants².

Referees are aware of cultural, individual and role differences, including those due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language and socioeconomic status.

Referees try to eliminate the effect on their work of biases based on those factors, and they do not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

E: Concern for Others' Welfare

Referees seek to contribute to the welfare of those with whom they interact. In their actions, referees consider the welfare and right of athletes and other participants. When conflicts occur among referees' obligations or concerns, they attempt to resolve these conflicts and to perform their roles in a responsible fashion that avoids or minimizes harm.

Referees are sensitive to differences in power between themselves and others, and they do not exploit nor mislead other people during or after their relationships.

F: Responsible Refereeing

Referees are aware of their ethical responsibilities to the community and the society in which they work and live.

Referees try to avoid misuse of their work.

Referees comply with the law and encourage the development of law and policies that serve the interest of the sport of Judo.

2. Those taking part in sport (athletes and their family members, coaches, officials, referees, administrators, and spectators).

ETHICAL STANDARDS

1. General Standards

These General Standards are applicable to the activities of all referees.

1.1 Applicability of the Ethics Code

While many aspects of personal behavior and private activities seem far removed from official duties of refereeing, all referees should be sensitive to their position as role models for referees, coaches and athletes. Private activities perceived as immoral or illegal can influence the referee environment, and referees are encouraged to observe the standards of the Ethics Code consistently.

1.2 Boundaries of Competence

1.2.1

Referees provide refereeing services only after first undertaking appropriate study, training, supervision, and obtaining the appropriate certifications.

1.2.2

In those events, which require refereeing education and specific certification, Referees take reasonable steps to ensure their attendance at appropriate refereeing education clinics.

1.3 Maintaining Expertise

Referees maintain a reasonable level of awareness of related referee information and undertake ongoing efforts to maintain competence in the skills they use.

1.4 Basis for Professional Judgments

Referees rely on professionally approved referee rules and knowledge when making judgments or when engaging in referee endeavors.

1.5 Describing the Nature and Results of Refereeing Services

When referees provide refereeing services to the organization, they should utilize language that is reasonably understandable and appropriate to the event and consistent with the IJF contest rules and procedure.

1.6 Respecting Others

Referees respect the rights of others to hold values, attitudes and opinions that differ from their own. This is especially important at competitions where unfavorable judgments and other decisions may arise.

Referees shall not endorse attitudes on the part of others, which demonstrate a lack of respect for any participant. Such comments are not allowed by contestants toward one another during a competition and should not be tolerated by a referee.

1.7 Nondiscrimination

Referees do not engage in discrimination based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, socioeconomic status, or any basis proscribed by law.

1.8 Sexual Harassment

1.8.1

Referees do not engage in sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature, and that either:

1.8.1.1 is unwelcome, is offensive, or creates a hostile environment, and the referee knows or is told this;

1.8.1.2 is sufficiently severe or intense to be abusive to a reasonable person in the context. Sexual harassment can consist of a single intense or severe act or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts. The threshold for conduct toward minors to be considered abusive is much lower than the threshold for conduct toward adults.

1.9 Other Harassment

Referees do not engage in behavior that is harassing or demeaning to persons with whom they interact in their refereeing based on factors such as those persons' age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, or socioeconomic status.

1.10 Personal Problems and Conflicts

1.10.1

Referees recognize that their personal problems and conflicts may interfere with their effectiveness. Accordingly, they refrain from undertaking an activity when they know or should know that their personal problems are likely to lead to harm to athletes or other participants to whom they may owe a professional obligation.

1.10.2

Referees have an obligation to be alert to signs of extreme stress, and to obtain assistance for their personal problems at an early stage, in order to prevent significantly impaired performance.

1.10.3

When Referees become aware of personal problems that may interfere with their performing work-related duties adequately, they take appropriate measures, such as obtaining assistance, and determine whether they should limit, suspend, or terminate their work-related duties.

1.11 Misuse of Referees' Influence

Because referees' professional judgments and actions may affect the lives of others, they are alert to guard against personal, financial, social, organizational, or political factors that might lead to misuse of their influence.

1.12 Multiple Relationships

1.12.1

In many communities and situations, it may not be feasible or reasonable for Referees to avoid social or other nonprofessional contacts with athletes and coaches and other participants. Referees must always be sensitive to the potentially harmful effects of other contacts on their work and on those persons with whom they deal. A referee refrains from entering into or promising another personal, professional, financial, or other relationship with such persons if it appears likely that such a relationship reasonable might impair the referee's objectivity or otherwise interfere with the referee's effective performance of his or her functions as a referee, or might harm or exploit the other party.

1.12.2

Where ever feasible, a referee must refrain from taking on professional

obligations when preexisting relationship would create a risk of such harm.

If a referee finds that, due to unforeseen factors, a potentially harmful multiple relationship has arisen, the referee should resolve it with due regard for the best interests of the affected persons and maximal compliance with the Ethics Code.

1.13 Exploitative Relationships

1.13.1

Referees do not exploit athletes or other referees over whom they have supervisory, evaluative, or other authority.

1.13.2

Referees do not engage in sexual/romantic relationships with referees, coach's athletes or other participants over whom the referee has evaluative, direct, or indirect authority, because such relationships are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative.

1.14 Consultations and Referrals

When indicated and professionally appropriate, referees cooperate with other professionals in order to serve athletes or other referees effectively and appropriately.

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2.0 Avoidance of False or Deceptive Statements or Actions

Referees do not make public statements that are false, deceptive, misleading, or fraudulent, either because of what they state, convey or suggest, or because of what they omit, concerning their work activities or of others.

When referees provide advice or comment by means of public lectures, demonstrations, radio or television programs, prerecorded tapes, printed articles, mailed material, or other media, they take reasonable precautions to ensure that the statements are consistent with this Ethics Code.

Referees must insure that they make clear that whatever comments or advice that are made by the Referee are solely representative of their own personal beliefs and opinions, and do not represent the opinions, beliefs or position of USA Judo or the USA Judo Referee Program, unless the Referee is specifically authorized to speak for USA Judo or the USA Judo Referee Program by the USA Judo Board of Directors or the USA Judo Referee Education Committee.

This shall include any situation where a Referee is viewing or coaching or observing a match when not refereeing that match and not present as a member of the official jury or other official technical supervisory body, and any situation where a Referee (while not actively functioning as a Referee) shall be coaching a match. Any Referee in any of these situations shall refrain from commenting on the performance of any other Referee involved in said match.

3.0 Descriptions of Referee Training Programs

Referees are responsible for implementing training programs for other Referees to ensure that there is a current and accurate description of the program content, training goals and objectives, and requirements that must be met for satisfactory completion of the program. This information must be readily available to all interested parties.

3.1 Accuracy and Objectivity in Refereeing

When engaged in refereeing, referees present information accurately and with a reasonable degree of objectivity.

When engaged in refereeing referees recognize the power they hold over athletes and coaches and therefore will make reasonable efforts to avoid engaging in conduct that is personally demeaning to coaches, athletes and other participants.

3.2 Honoring Commitments

Referees take reasonable measure to honor all commitments.

4.0 Resolving Ethical Issues

4.1 Familiarity With Ethics Code

Referees have an obligation to be familiar with this Ethics Code, other applicable ethics codes, and their application to the referees' work. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of an ethical standard is not itself a defense to a charge of unethical conduct.

4.2 Confronting Ethical Issues

When a referee is uncertain whether a particular situation or course of action would violate the Ethics Code, the referee ordinarily consults with other referees knowledgeable about ethical issues, with USAJudo or USOC ethics committees, or with other appropriate authorities in order to choose a proper response.

4.3 Conflicts Between Ethics and Organizational Demands

If the demands of an organization with which referees are affiliated conflict with this Ethics Code, coaches clarify the nature of the conflict, make known their commitment to the Ethics Code, and to the extent feasible, seek to resolve the conflict in a way that permits the fullest adherence to the Ethics Code.

4.4 Informal Resolution of Ethical Violations

When a referee believes that there may have been an ethical violation by another referee, they must attempt to resolve the issue by bringing it to the attention of that individual. An informal resolution may be appropriate when intervention does not violate any athlete or coaches rights.

4.5 Reporting Ethical Violations

If an apparent ethical violation is not appropriate for informal resolution under Standard 4.4 or is not resolved properly in that fashion, referees take further action appropriate to the situation, unless such action conflicts with athlete rights in ways that cannot be resolved. Such action might include referral to USAJudo or USOC committees on professional ethics.

4.6 Cooperating With Ethics Committees

Referees must cooperate in all ethics investigations, proceedings, and resulting requirements of the USOC and USAJudo. Failure to cooperate is itself an ethics violation.

4.7 Improper Complaints

Referees do not file or encourage the filing of ethics complaints that are frivolous and are intended to harm the respondent rather than to protect the public.

5.0 Process Relating To Violation of Code

The referee acknowledges that the Ethics Code is administered under the authority of USAJudo and that a violation of this Code subjects the referee to the processes of USAJudo to be provided in the event of disciplinary action.

The Referee Education Committee has the authority and responsibility to administer discipline for violation of this code.