



Ohio Water Polo Referees Association: Conflict of Interest Statement

Philosophy: OWPRA recognizes that anything which may lead to a conflict of interest, either real or apparent, presents a situation which could cause athletes, coaches, or spectators to make false assumptions about the interests of the OWPRA official(s) working the contest. Gifts, favours, privileges, employment, or a personal relationship with a school or team can compromise the impartiality of the official; to that end, OWPRA will endeavour to avoid these conflicts of interest at all local matches, tournament, and post-season assignments.

Purpose: The purposes of this statement is to protect the integrity of the OWPRA's decision-making process, to enable our member teams/coaches/athletes to have confidence in our integrity and protect the integrity and reputation of officials working the contest(s).

Guidelines: These guidelines seek to provide a transparent approach to the process of referee assignment by the Director of Officials and by Head Referees when applicable. OWPRA has directed the assignors, et.al. to avoid game assignments whenever possible that would cause a real or apparent conflict of interest situation:

- 🏊 A team participating has a coach, assistant coach, or player who is an immediate family member of an official.
- 🏊 A team participating is from a school with which the official is current employed in any capacity or a school at which the officials' children attend.
- 🏊 A team participating has a discernable number of athletes whom the official has coached in the previous two (2) calendar years/seasons.
- 🏊 A team participating has a coach who is a close, personal friend of the official. (e.g. The official engages in social activities outside of the sport with a coach of one of the team.)
- 🏊 A team participating is one from which the official graduated within the last four (4) years. This prevents the official from potentially officiating individuals he/she may have played with during that time.
- 🏊 A team participating can be directly tied to another team with which the official has a personal tie (e.g. An official volunteers for Team A. The outcome of the assigned contest would play Team A at a future point.)

A Final Word: An important point to note regarding conflict of interest is it is natural for conflicts of interest to occur. In tackling conflicts of interest, the goal is to *manage* them rather than *prevent* them from happening at all. The fact that a conflict of interest exists, may not in itself, be evidence of any wrongdoing. For many officials, it would be impossible to avoid having conflicts of interest from time to time.