



**Ohio Water Polo Referees Association
Constitution and Bylaws**

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Article 1. Name

- 1.1 **Organization Name** - The organization shall be known as the Ohio Water Polo Referees' Association, hereafter referred to as OWPRA.

Article 2. Non-profit Status

- 2.1 **501c3** - The OWPRA is a Non-profit 501c3 organization established in September, 2017. OWPRA's mission is to foster the development of water polo officials; OWPRA will offer training to and provide the best available officials for water polo contests.

Article 3. Purpose, Mission and Goals

- 3.1 **Independent Contractors** - OWPRA shall consist of officials who are independently contracted to officiate water polo in the state of Ohio.
- 3.2 **Partnership** - OWPRA is a partnership and is not organized for the private gain of any individual. It is organized as an association for independently contracted water polo officials in Ohio, and incorporated herein these Bylaws by this reference. OWPRA reserves the right to service other entities, provided any such entities are under an existing contract with OWPRA and OWPRA's Board of Directors (hereafter referred to as the "Board," see Article 6) has determined providing such services is appropriate.
- 3.3 **Mission** - OWPRA's mission is to foster the development of water polo officials; OWPRA will offer training to and provide the best available officials for water polo contests.
- 3.4 **Goals** - OWPRA's goals are:
 - 3.4.1 Provide independently contracted water polo officials for athletic contests in Ohio and other states are requested;
 - 3.4.2 Develop materials and instructional programs to develop individual skills of water polo officials;
 - 3.4.3 Provide study methods for rules and their correct interpretation;
 - 3.4.4 Establish and assure consistent standards of quality for all events officiated by the members of OWPRA through clinics and observation;
 - 3.4.5 Foster a high standard of ethics by officials;
 - 3.4.6 Promote good fellowship among officials;
 - 3.4.7 Encourage cooperation and understanding among interscholastic administrators, coaches, the media, and the officials;
 - 3.4.8 Increase the number of officials by providing development programs that encourage new officials to continue as be a part of OWPRA;
 - 3.4.9 Further the interests of water polo through a proper spirit of sportsmanship and fair play among all stakeholders.

Article 4. Membership

- 4.1 Membership Requirement - The requirements for membership in OWPRA are outlined in OWPRA's Policies and Procedure document
- 4.2 Membership is subject to the discretion of the Board. Should an applicant be denied membership status, the Board will notify the applicant in writing. The applicant will have all dues paid for that fiscal year refunded at 100%.
- 4.3 Honorary Membership - Honorary membership may be conferred upon anyone, with the exception of current members of the Board, who has distinguished himself or herself by reason of service or attainment in the sport of water polo. Honorary members are not subject to a registration fee and/or dues. Honorary membership may be granted by a unanimous vote of the Board. The term of appointment shall be determined by the Board;
- 4.4 Guest Membership - Individuals traveling from other geographic areas who are members in good standing with credentials from other recognized water polo associations may be admitted as active members, providing their membership is approved by the Board. Such "guest members" are exempt from annual dues, provided that the annual number of days refereeing does not exceed five days;
- 4.5 Non-discrimination - OWPRA shall adhere to a strict policy of non-discrimination in the recruitment, training, and assignment of officials. No person will be denied membership in OWPRA based on his or her race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin or any other basis precluded by law;
- 4.6 Member Resignation - Each member of OWPRA shall have the right to resign at any time without penalty. Such resignation shall become effective upon the member's written notification to the OWPRA's Supervisor. OWPRA shall be entitled to retain any and all fees or other consideration paid to OWPRA prior to the member's resignation. The member's resignation shall not release him or her from liability accrued as of the date of withdrawal;
- 4.7 Member Termination - Participation in OWPRA shall terminate upon the member's failure at any time to qualify as specified herein (including the failure to pay annual dues). In addition, OWPRA shall have the right to terminate, suspend, or remove any member as set forth in Article 8, to the extent permitted under applicable law;
- 4.8 Member Disputes - Should any member of OWPRA have a dispute, disagreement, or in any way contest any action taken by OWPRA, including any action taken by any member of the Board, the member shall have the right and may exhaust his or her administrative remedies by having any issues, disputes or matters reviewed and decided first by the Supervisor and second by the Board. The member shall be bound by the decision of the Board.

Article 5. Officers

- 5.1 Officers - The officers of OWPRA shall be the Supervisor, Secretary, Treasurer and At-Large members as deemed necessary by the Board. The duties of each officer are summarized in OWPRA's Policies and Procedures.
- 5.2 Requirements - Officers of OWPRA shall be active (dues paying) members of OWPRA. OWPRA referees must be Level 3 or 4 members to be eligible for nomination to be voted upon during the Annual Business Meeting's elections, and be a member in good standing for 3 consecutive years or for 5 of the last 10 years.
- 5.3 Length of Year - Each officer shall hold office from January 1st until December 31st unless he or she dies, resigns, is removed, or is otherwise disqualified to serve.
- 5.4 Length of Term - The Supervisor, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected at OWPRA's annual business meeting for a three-year term, with one officer being elected each year. The At-Large member(s), as deemed necessary by the Supervisor, Secretary, and Treasurer, shall be appointed annually. Officers will be elected by a popular (simple majority) vote of the members attending the Annual Business Meeting according to the following schedule. Should there be a tie, a vote to the general membership will be held within 48 hours.
 - 5.4.1 Treasurer – begins term in 2008, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2021, etc.
 - 5.4.2 Secretary – begins term in 2008, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019, 2022, etc.
 - 5.4.3 Supervisor – begins term in 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017, 2020, 2023, etc.
 - 5.4.4 At Large - Annually
- 5.5 Term Limits - There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms an officer may be elected;
- 5.6 Vacancy - A vacancy of an officer's position shall exist on the occurrence of the following:
 - 5.6.1 The death or resignation any officer;
 - 5.6.2 When the number of authorized officers is increased;
 - 5.6.3 When the Board declares vacant the office of an officer who has been declared of unsound mind by a final order of court, or convicted of a felony;
 - 5.6.4 When the Board removes any officer with cause by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote of the entire membership for that fiscal year;
 - 5.6.5 When any officer resigns, effective upon giving written notice to the Board, unless the notice specifies a later time for the effectiveness of the resignation;
- 5.7 Appointments for Vacancies - When a vacancy occurs, the remaining members of the Board shall appoint a new officer by a majority vote. If for any reason a new officer is not elected, no further duties of the officers shall be done until a new member is elected; If the vacancy exists prior to the Annual Business Meeting, the members will elect the new Board member using the process in Article 5.4. If the vacancy occurs after the Annual Business Meeting, the Board shall appoint the new

Board member to serve until a special election will be held at the next Annual Business Meeting for the member to fill the remainder of the term.

Article 6. Board of Directors

- 6.1 Composition - OWPRA shall have a Board composed of *ex officio* members (OWPRA's Supervisor, Secretary and Treasurer) and, if appointed, a Coaches' Representative, hereafter referred to as CR (CR, see Article 6.3, below) and any At-Large member(s);
 - 6.1.1 The number of Board members may be changed by amendment of this Article, or by repeal of this Article and adoption of a new Article, as provided in these Bylaws;
- 6.2 Purview - Subject to the provisions of these Bylaws, the activities and affairs of OWPRA shall be managed, and all powers shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board; Without prejudice to the general powers, but subject to the same limitations, the Board shall have the powers to:
 - 6.2.1 Perform any and all duties imposed on them collectively or individually by law, or by these Bylaws;
 - 6.2.2 Appoint and remove, employ and discharge, and, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, prescribe the powers and duties and fix the compensation, if any, for any officer, agent or employee of OWPRA;
 - 6.2.3 Supervise all officers, agents and employees of OWPRA to assure their duties are performed properly;
 - 6.2.4 Meet at such times and places as required by these Bylaws;
 - 6.2.5 Register their addresses and contact information with the Secretary of OWPRA so notices of meetings may be communicated to them at such addresses shall be valid notices thereof;
 - 6.2.6 Relocate the principal office from one location to another;
 - 6.2.7 Authorize actions or recommendations of any standing committee and form *ad hoc* committees when necessary;
 - 6.2.8 Perform any other specific power granted under these Bylaws.
- 6.3 Coaches Representative - One person may be elected by the officers of OWPRA to serve as a CR on OWPRA's Board;
 - 6.3.1 The coaches may annually nominate a person to serve as the Coaches Representative. The nominee must be approved unanimously by the *ex officio* members of OWPRA's Board (i.e., OWPRA's officers).
 - 6.3.2 In the event the coaches fail to nominate a person to serve as the Coaches Representative, or in the event that the nominee is not acceptable to the OWPRA Board, the Board shall have no Coaches Representative.
 - 6.3.3 The term of service for the Coaches Representative shall be January 1 through December 31;

- 6.3.4 An individual Coaches Representative may serve an unlimited number of consecutive terms;
- 6.3.5 The Coaches Representative shall **not** be an active (dues paying) member of OWPRA;
- 6.3.6 Unless specified otherwise in OWPRA's Bylaws or Policies and Procedures, the Coaches Representative shall be a non-voting member of the Board.

Article 7. Meetings

- 7.1 Annual Meeting - An annual business meeting shall be held at the principal office of OWPRA unless otherwise provided by the Board. The annual business meeting shall take place between the last day of the Ohio High School Water Polo season (the last day of the state tournament) and December 31st. This meeting is to take place at a physical location. Written notice of the annual business meeting, stating the time, place and object, shall be emailed (or mailed if no email exists) to each member at such address as appears in the records of OWPRA, no less than fourteen (14) days before such meeting. Notice may also be given via OWPRA's web site if such a website exists;
 - 7.1.1 At each annual business meeting, the Board will review the progress of the organization towards its mission;
 - 7.1.2 At each annual business meeting, officers for the following calendar year will be elected (see Article 5.4);
 - 7.1.3 At each annual business meetings, officers will present reports of OWPRA's business for the current calendar year;
 - 7.1.4 Emergency business meetings can be called by the Board at any time if agreed upon unanimously by the Board. Emergency meetings may be at a physical location or they may take place electronically or via phone conversation (email, instant messenger, conference call, chat room, etc.);
 - 7.1.5 The annual business meeting will be conducted according to *Robert's Rule of Order*;
 - 7.1.6 A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting members of the Board plus those active (dues paying) members in attendance. Each member of the quorum shall have one vote. Any decisions made during the annual business meeting shall require a simple majority vote unless noted otherwise in these Bylaws;
- 7.2 Board Meetings - At each annual Board meeting, the Board will discuss and take action upon any business relating to the activities of OWPRA's Board;
 - 7.2.1 Quorum - A quorum shall consist of all voting members of the Board. Each member of the quorum shall have one vote. Any decisions made during any Board meeting shall require a simple majority vote unless noted otherwise in the Bylaws. In the event of a tie, the motion does not pass.

Article 8. Disciplinary Procedures

- 8.1 Definition - The OWPRA Board may censure, suspend for a definite or indefinite period of time with or without terms of probation, or expel any member or any person participating in any capacity whatsoever in the affairs of OWPRA, with or without cause, who aids, abets, or encourages another to violate any of its rules or regulations or who has acted in a manner which brings disrepute upon OWPRA or upon the field of sports officiating.
- 8.2 Reinstatement - Any member of OWPRA who has been suspended or expelled may apply for reinstatement. The application for reinstatement must be submitted in writing to the Board. The Board's decision in such matters is final.

Article 9. Committees

- 9.1 Purpose - OWPRA shall have committees as may from time to time be designated by the Board. Such committees may consist of persons who are neither officers nor members of OWPRA. These committees shall act in an advisory capacity and report to the Board;
- 9.2 Judicial - The Judicial Committee shall be a standing committee of OWPRA. The Judicial Committee shall investigate and resolve cases of alleged referee misconduct (i.e., violations of the Code of Conduct, see Article 11) from external parties and, when appropriate, impose sanctions. When a complaint is received, the Board, excluding any Board member named in the misconduct allegation, along with the coaches representative (should one exist and as long as they are not the individual making the misconduct allegation) will meet in Executive Session to determine if the complaint should be referred to the Judicial Committee Process as outlined in 9.2.5. It is a best-practice, although not required, for the Board to communicate to the complainant receipt of the referral and that the Board is referral. The vote must be unanimous by all voting members of the Board to have the complaint go through the Judicial Committee Process;
 - 9.2.1 Judicial Committee Composition - The Judicial Committee shall be composed of the three (3) members: OWPRA Secretary, the OWPRA Treasurer, and the Coaches Rep with the Chairperson being the Secretary. If one of the Judicial Committee members is a part of the allegation, the OWPRA Supervisor will serve as his or her replacement. If a committee composed of three (3) people cannot be established due to conflicts of interests due to being a party to the allegation, the Coaches Representative will name two (2) members agreed upon by all Board Members. If a vote is to occur, all members of the committee must vote.
 - 9.2.2 Confidential Approach - All matters brought before the Judicial Committee, including all correspondence and decisions, shall be held in the strictest confidence.

- 9.2.3 Type of Referrals – only those referrals bearing a complainant’s name will be considered (i.e. anonymous complaints will not be considered).
- 9.2.4 Judicial Committee Process – The following process shall be used when the Board refers a complaint to the Judicial Committee:
 - 9.2.4.1 The Judicial Committee will request witness statements as needed;
 - 9.2.4.2 The Judicial Committee will request a statement from the referee in reference to the allegation of misconduct;
 - 9.2.4.3 After the statements are gathered, the Secretary will convene a meeting (phone conference, face-to-face meeting, or other mode of group communication);
 - 9.2.4.4 A vote shall be taken on the Secretary’s suggested action;
 - 9.2.4.5 If the Judicial Committee determines the referee violated OWPRA’s *Code of Conduct*, by a simple majority vote (i.e. two) the Judicial Committee shall impose one of the following disciplinary sanctions:
 - 9.2.4.5.1 Probation - for a specified period (e.g., one season), the referee is permitted to officiate games, but any additional violation (even if probation has expired) will likely result in a more serious sanction;
 - 9.2.4.5.2 Interim Suspension - the JC may impose this sanction before the allegations are resolved via a formal hearing. This sanction remains in effect until the allegations are resolved via a formal hearing;
 - 9.2.4.5.3 Suspension - for a specified period, the referee is not permitted to officiate games (e.g., two game suspension, suspension for one season, etc.). Membership in OWPRA is not terminated, and the referee may continue as member of OWPRA as long as the suspension is in effect;
 - 9.2.4.5.4 Expulsion - referee is suspended permanently from officiating water polo games. Membership in OWPRA is terminated indefinitely.
 - 9.2.4.5.4.1 A member who has been expelled from OWPRA may apply to OWPRA’s Board for reinstatement as described in Article 8.2.
 - 9.2.4.8 The decision of the Judicial Committee is final and cannot be appealed.

Article 10. Records and Reports

- 10.1 Office Location - OWPRA shall keep at its principal office in the State of Ohio, or other area designated by the Board, copies of records as indicated herein these Bylaws;
- 10.2 Financial Report - OWPRA shall prepare annually and furnish to each of its members a statement of any transaction or indemnification of the following within one hundred twenty (120) days after the close of the fiscal year of OWPRA;
 - 10.2.1 The assets and liabilities, including the trust funds, of OWPRA as of the end of the fiscal year;
 - 10.2.2 The principal changes in assets and liabilities, including trust funds, during the fiscal year;
 - 10.2.3 The revenue or receipts of OWPRA, both unrestricted and restricted to particular purposes, for the fiscal year;
 - 10.2.4 The expenses or disbursements of OWPRA, for both general and restricted purposes, during the fiscal year;
 - 10.2.5 The annual report shall be accompanied by any report thereon of independent accountants, or, if there is no such report, the certificate of an authorized officer of OWPRA that such statement was prepared without audit from OWPRA's books and records.

Article 11. Code of Conduct

- 11.1 Original Artifact - OWPRA shall use the following code of conduct, based on the 2007 code of conduct by the National Organization for Sports Officials' *Code of Conduct for Sports Officials*. The Code of Conduct follows:
 - 11.1.1 Officials shall bear a great responsibility for engendering public confidence in sports;
 - 11.1.2 Officials shall strive to be free of obligation to any interest other than the impartial and fair judging of sports competitions;
 - 11.1.3 Officials shall hold and maintain the basic tenets of officiating which include history, integrity, neutrality, respect, sensitivity, professionalism, discretion and tactfulness;
 - 11.1.4 Officials shall strive to master both rules of the game and mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm, and controlled manner;
 - 11.1.5 Officials shall strive to uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interactions with student-athletes coaches, school administrators, colleagues, and the public;
 - 11.1.6 Officials shall strive to display and execute superior communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal;
 - 11.1.7 Officials shall recognize that anything which may lead to a conflict of interest, either real or apparent, should be avoided. Gifts, favors,

- special treatment, privileges, employment or a personal relationship with a school or team which can compromise the perceived impartiality of officiating must be avoided;
- 11.1.8 Officials shall strive to be prepared both physically and mentally, shall dress neatly and appropriately, and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession;
 - 11.1.9 Officials shall not be party to actions designed to unfairly limit or restrain access to officiating, officiating assignments or to association membership. This includes selection for positions of leadership based upon economic factors, race, creed, color, age, sex, physical handicap, country or national origin;
 - 11.1.10 Officials shall strive to be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual obligations;
 - 11.1.11 Officials shall strive to work with each other and their governing bodies in a constructive and cooperative manner;
 - 11.1.12 Officials shall resist every temptation and outside pressure to use one's position as an official to benefit oneself;
 - 11.1.13 Officials shall never participate in any form of illegal gambling on sports contest, may never gamble on any sporting event in which they have either a direct or indirect involvement, and may never gamble on events involving high school athletics;
 - 11.1.14 Officials shall not make false or misleading statements regarding their qualifications, rating, credentials, experience, training or competence;
 - 11.1.15 Officials shall strive to accept responsibility for all actions taken.

Article 12. Amendments

- 12.1 How Proposed - Any member of OWPRA may propose an amendment to these Bylaws. A proposed amendment must be in a form that shows the entire section as it will read if adopted, with any changes underlined if new or lined through if to be deleted, and shall contain a brief explanation of the purpose and impact of the proposed change;
- 12.2 When Acted Upon - OWPRA can act upon proposed amendments to the Bylaws only at the Annual Board meeting (see Article 7.2) or an emergency meeting of the Board.
- 12.3 Votes Required to Amend or Repeal - The Bylaws may be amended or repealed and new Bylaws may be adopted solely by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members of the Board.

Article 13. Organization Termination

- 13.1 How Completed - Upon termination of the association for any reason, the association will seek out other clubs or affiliated within Ohio and are related to water polo to handle the distribution of funds to ensure the further assistance of the sport within Ohio. OWPRA will first seek to find 501c3 organizations and then other not-for-profit organizations within the state of Ohio.

Article 14. Board of Directors Archive

14.1 Supervisor

2007 – 2010 – Greg Sanchez
2011 – 2013 – Greg Sanchez
2014 – 2016 – Greg Sanchez
2017 – 2019 – Chad Packer
2020 – 2022 – Chad Packer

14.2 Treasurer

2007 – 2008 – Pete Pappas
2009 – 2011 – Pete Pappas
2012 – 2014 – Pete Pappas
2015 – 2016 – Pete Pappas (resignation 2016)
2017 – 2017 – Greg Sanchez (elected)
2018 – 2020 – Greg Sanchez
2020 - 2023 – Greg Sanchez

14.3 Secretary

2007 – 2009 – Scott Allen
2010 – 2012 – Mike Jones
2013 – 2015 – Mike Jones
2016 – 2017 – Mike Jones (resignation 2017)
2018 – 2018 – Sam Mizener (appointment)
2019 – 2021 – Doug Reisenfeld

14.4 Member-at-Large

2015 - 2016 – Chad Packer

Dates of Updates/Voted Approvals

September 25, 2017

- A. This document was approved unanimously at the Ohio Water Polo Referees' Association Emergency Board of Directors Meeting.
B. Vote 3-0 (Packer, Sanchez, Jones – Yes)

December 23, 2019

- A. This document was approved unanimously by the Ohio Water Polo Referees' Association Board of Directors.
- B. Highlighted changes include:
 - a. Table of Contents
 - b. Spelling out of words (e.g. CR becomes "Coaches Representative")
 - c. Updated Committee Article
 - d. Updated references (e.g. Article 6.2 becomes Article 7.2 because of the new Not for Profit Article 2 which moved around some reference points)
 - e. Article 11 Code of Conduct Updated to include the words "strive to."
- C. Vote 3-0 (Packer, Sanchez, Reisenfeld – Yes)

February 14, 2021

- A. Updated BOD
- B. Cleaned up language, spelling, and grammar
- C. NO VOTE NEEDED.

December 3, 2021

- A. Removed references to articles which no longer exist or have been updated to the point of not being an area of reference.
- B. Adding sub article in membership which makes the membership of an OWPRA applicant subject to review by the Board.
- C. Removal of Board members must now be by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote of all members.
- D. Vote 2-0 (Packer, Reisenfeld, Sanchez - Did not vote)