

*People Choose to Referee to:*

- 1. Stay involved with the game they love, create friendships, and have fun*
- 2. Feel good knowing that they are giving something back to your club and county*
- 3. Stay fit – mentally and physically*
- 4. Develop personally and professionally*
- 5. Inspire the next generation of players*

*Many people start their referee journey and fall away after the first 6 months from completing a course due to a lack of support or lack of knowledge of the next step.*

**County Executives** need to sign up to an aftercare programme once they book a referee course for their county before it being approved and it will cover the following steps.

### Step 1: Appoint a Referee Support Coordinator

The referee support coordinator role would be as follows:

- Keep in contact with newly appointed referees
- Appoint new referee a buddy/mentor (Experienced referee)
- Ask buddy to attend newly appointed referees first games where possible
- Encourage new referee to attend mentor's game and act as umpire or linesperson again if possible
- Ensure new referees are appointed to age and competition appropriate games as quickly as possible and add them to the counties referee list
- Keep new referees up to date with referee education in the county
- Invite new referees to annual referee refresher course and encourage a community of practice among referees where they can communicate and support each other
- Provide regular updates on these new referees at county board meetings
- Encourage further development of referees
- Monitor the activity levels of the referees including games assigned to or refused
- Identify key contact in each club in relation to referee recruitment/development

## Step 2: Book Referee Education in the county

- Liaise with referee support coordinator and clubs in relation to referee education requirements annually
- Plan when Go Games/Youth Club/Adult courses will be required for new referees, establish if this is needed annually or every X number of years.
- Book an annual referee refresher course every year for the county
- Complete an annual audit of number of referees in county, how many are active and number of referees required with the county to facilitate games. See template 1

## Step 3: Support the Referee Support Coordinator

- The recruitment, retention and standards of referees will only improve with support, guidance and advice. It is essential that there is joined up thinking and that the County Executive/Fixtures Committee support the Referee Support Coordinator in this process

### **Introduction to Buddy/Mentoring System.**

Counties may decide to appoint a buddy/mentor to new referees to guide them through their first few games and get them active.

### **Role of Buddy/Mentor**

Counties may decide to appoint a buddy/mentor to new referees to guide them through their first few games and get them active. As a buddy/mentor they will be allocated a trainee referee who has successfully completed the LGFA referee course and is ready to begin their initial challenge of refereeing matches.

As a mentor they will need to contact the trainee and make themselves available as someone they can call upon for help, advice and support. Mentors are asked to try and watch at least one and preferably two of their trainee's initial six matches if possible and give informal feedback afterwards. They should also invite the new referee to shadow them and learn from what they are doing on the pitch.

The key points for any Buddy/Mentor to remember when watching a referee are to:

- Say "well done!"
- Ask the referee how he or she feels about the game, two things they feel they done well and two things they would like to improve
- Congratulate the referee on the two strongest features of his or her game, encouraging them to maintain those strengths
- Discuss possible solutions to the area of improvement of the referee's game

*Mentoring is all about encouragement!*

The relationship with the trainee is ongoing and not limited to occasionally watching their matches. It is important that mentors are accessible for the trainee only when available as this role should not feel like a chore to the buddy/mentor.

The benefits to the new referee (mentee) include:

- Increased confidence and motivation
- Feeling of being supported through the process of their refereeing
- Constructive feedback on performance
- Helps translate theory into practice in a supportive environment
- Helps retain referee in the long term

### Role of the New Referee

*How will they get appointments?*

- The attendance lists from education courses will be forwarded to county but advised for referees to also contact the Referee Support Coordinator and Fixtures secretary and provide them with their name, email address and telephone number plus inform them of the course they just completed
- Once a referee has completed their course, make sure they know who to contact to inform them that they have completed the course and are available for appointment. Referee must provide them with their name, email address and telephone number plus inform them of the course they just completed
- Referee Support Coordinator should follow up with referees who have not made contact to find out when they will be available
- Referee should be giving details on how many games they can expect (minimum) and at what age grade they will be appointed as well as how appointment and reporting should be made.

*Knowledge and Rules*

- The referee must continuously revise the rule book throughout the year and pick out any rules that are troubling them and talk to their buddy about it or contact LGFA to clarify
- Referees are expected to attend the Annual refresher course in their county to be appointed games
- Knowledge is key to improvement
- LGFA have an online referee handbook that outline the roles of a referee and covers all aspects of refereeing including video clips of fouls. Referee can download this here

### *Self-reflection and evaluation*

- New referees need to reflect after each game and talk to their buddy for advice and support. It is also important that they evaluate their performance and set goals for improvement.

*The LGFA have a bi-monthly newsletter and all new referees have the option to opt in to receiving this by ticking a box beside their name on attendance sheet at LGFA referee education courses or alternatively can sign up by login on to the link below*

*<https://ladiesgaeltic.ie/lqfa-hub/referees/grab-your-whistle-newsletter/>*

# County Referee Aftercare Form



County:

*Referee Support Coordinator*

<i>Name</i>	
<i>Phone</i>	
<i>Email</i>	

*Course the county are signing up for:*

- Go Game*
- Youth Club course*
- Adult course*
- Club Mentor course*

***I have read the LGFA referee aftercare guidelines and we agree to support and develop are referees in line with the LGFA guidelines.***

***Signed:***

*Please have this signed by whoever books a referee course for the county and returned before any referee course dates are provided to counties.*