

# THE PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE LICENSING OF FIBA REFEREES



**FIBA GAME OFFICIALS LICENSING 2017+**  
**OPERATIONS MANUAL FOR NATIONAL**  
**MEMBER FEDERATIONS FOR THE PERIOD 2019-2021**



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All references to Referees in the male gender also apply to the female gender, except when specifically differentiated. Please be aware that this is done for practical reasons only.

The content of this chapter is an excerpt from the FIBA Internal Regulations, Book 3, chapter VII.

In case of a conflict or discrepancy between the provisions of this manual and the FIBA Internal Regulations, the latter shall prevail.

Art. 150 This Chapter governs the licensing by FIBA of the following game officials:

- a. Referees
- b. Commissioners
- c. Referee Instructors
- d. Technical Delegates
- e. Table Officials

Art. 151 The FIBA Technical Commission shall supervise the implementation of the provisions of this Chapter.

Art. 152 Decisions on marginal cases, whether at national, regional or world level, are the responsibility of the Secretary General.

### LICENSE

Art. 153 FIBA Referee Licenses are granted by FIBA every two years (2017, 2019 etc.) and, subject to the provisions of this Chapter, are valid for a two-year period ("Licensed Period") starting on 1 September (e.g. 2017) and expiring on 31 August (e.g. 2019).

Art. 154 There are three categories of FIBA Referee Licenses:

**Black License:** Holders of a Black License are eligible to officiate international games of all senior and junior levels.

**Green License:** This special license has been created to promote women's refereeing for a transitory phase that will be determined by FIBA. This license can be obtained only by female referees. Holders of a Green License are eligible to officiate international games as follows:

1. All senior men games at sub-regional level
2. All senior women games
3. All junior games (men and women)
4. All senior and junior games of international preparation/friendly games

**White License:** Holders of a White License are entitled to officiate international games as follows:

1. All junior level games at regional level
2. All senior and junior level games at sub-regional level
3. All senior and junior level games of international preparation/friendly games

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- Art. 155 The following biennial procedure applies for the granting of a FIBA Referee License:
- a. On or before 31 January, FIBA shall open the licensing process and inform the national member federations accordingly;
  - b. Between January and March, national member federations shall organise tests and examinations in accordance with FIBA's guidelines, including at least a written test, a physical fitness test and a medical examination of the candidate referees;
  - c. By no later than 31 March, national member federations shall submit to FIBA all the required documentation for the candidature(s);
  - d. On or before 15 June, FIBA shall publish the list of FIBA Referees per category (black, green, white) of License.
- Art. 156 When opening the licensing process, FIBA shall communicate the maximum number of FIBA Referee Licenses per national member federation for a Licensed Period. In determining this maximum number FIBA shall consider primarily but not solely the following criteria:
- a. the position of the national member federation in the FIBA World Ranking;
  - b. the category/group of FIBA members to which the national member federation belongs;
  - c. the number of nominations of FIBA Referees from said federation in FIBA National Team Competitions during the preceding two years.
- Art. 157 For the first two Licensed Periods after the enactment of these Internal Regulations (2017-2019, 2019-2021) FIBA may implement transitional measures in relation to the maximum number of FIBA Referee Licenses in special cases (e.g. gradual reduction).
- Art. 158 The following conditions shall apply cumulatively to candidatures for FIBA Referees:
- a. FIBA may decide not to accept candidatures by national member federations which do not organise or endorse in their territory a championship of a sufficiently competitive level;
  - b. A national member federation cannot submit more candidatures than the maximum number of FIBA Referee Licenses allocated to it by FIBA;
  - c. Candidate referees must have officiated regularly in a national member federation for at least the preceding two seasons:
    - i. For Black License candidate referees, at the highest level for senior men;
    - ii. For Green License candidate referees, at the highest level for senior women;
    - iii. For White License female candidate referees, at the highest level for senior women;
    - iv. For White License male candidate referees, at the highest level for senior men.
  - d. Referees are not eligible to be candidates for a FIBA Referee License if
    - i. they have turned 50 before the License Period starts; or
    - ii. they are first time candidates and
      1. they turn 25 on or after the day the Licensed Period starts; or
      2. they have turned 35 before the License Period starts.
  - e. Candidate referees may not hold the position of president or secretary general of a national member federation or be involved directly or indirectly in the process of nominating FIBA Referee candidates by a national member federation;
  - f. Candidate referees must pass the following tests:
    - i. The FIBA written test;
    - ii. The FIBA physical fitness test;
    - iii. The medical examination;
    - iv. Any other tests determined by FIBA.
- Only the results of official tests and examinations established by FIBA are recognized as part of the FIBA Referee licensing process.

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- g. National member federations shall accompany the candidature with their own evaluation of the candidate referee's officiating during the last twelve months of national competitions. In case of multiple candidates, the national member federation shall also submit to FIBA its recommended evaluation ranking of the candidate referees.
  - h. National member federations shall ensure that all required forms are completed, stamped signed by their president or secretary general and by the FIBA Referee National Instructor (if any), and sent to FIBA by 31 March. FIBA may introduce an online administration system for the candidatures.

Failure to fulfil any of the above conditions may lead to the rejection of all candidatures by a national member federation or of any candidate referee, as appropriate.

- Art. 159 National member federations must immediately inform FIBA if a FIBA Referee for any reason loses his qualification as a referee at the national highest level (temporarily or definitively) required for his FIBA Referee License.
- Art. 160 In case of dispute between a referee and a national member federation, FIBA may intervene and take any measures it considers appropriate.
- Art. 161 FIBA will decide in its sole discretion whether a candidate shall receive a FIBA Referee License and, if so, which category of license. When taking its decision FIBA may take into account the recommended evaluation ranking and consult with the concerned national member federation.
- Art. 162 FIBA shall communicate its decision to the concerned national member federation. FIBA will also issue an invoice to the national member federation requesting payment of the license fee for the entire Licensed Period, corresponding to the number and category of FIBA Referee Licenses granted (see article 3-339).
- Art. 163 The category of the FIBA Referee License cannot be changed during the Licensed Period.
- Art. 164 Subject to the provisions of Article 3-168, the FIBA Referee License expires on 31 August of the FIBA Referee's 51st year of age or on the last day of the Licensed Period, whichever comes first.
- Art. 165 FIBA may establish additional, special training and education programs for FIBA Referees ("Refereeing Programs") and prioritise the nomination to senior FIBA National Team Competitions and FIBA Club Competitions of FIBA Referees that fulfil the requirements of these Refereeing Programs.
- Art. 166 Holding a FIBA Referee License does not give rise to a right of the FIBA Referee to be nominated in any games. The right of the Regional Office or of FIBA to decide in their sole discretion whether or not to nominate a FIBA Referee to games during the Licensed Period is reserved.

#### TRANSFER, REMOVAL OF LICENSE

- Art. 167 A FIBA Referee may request a change of his national member federation due to relocation or other important reasons. The consent of the involved national member federations is a condition for FIBA to approve the change, unless such consent is unreasonably withheld. In case of dispute, Article 3-161 shall apply.
- Art. 168 FIBA may remove a FIBA Referee's License temporarily or for the entire Licensed Period in case:
  - a. the national member federation fails to pay the entire applicable license fee;

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- b. the FIBA Referee has lost the qualification as a referee at the highest national level;
  - c. a sanction is imposed on the FIBA Referee in accordance with the Internal Regulations;
  - d. the FIBA Referee fails to participate in all FIBA Referees' training programs and activities required by FIBA;
  - e. there exist circumstances preventing a FIBA Referee from officiating (e.g. injury);
  - f. the FIBA Referee repeatedly refuses nominations;
  - g. the FIBA Referee performs poorly; or
  - h. for any other justifiable reason.

FIBA may act on its own initiative or upon application by the FIBA Referee or by his national member federation.

## DUTIES

Art. 169 FIBA Referees shall wear the official FIBA referee uniform when on duty in international games.

Art. 170 FIBA Referees represent FIBA on the court. They are obliged to conduct the games in accordance with the Official Basketball Rules and Official Basketball Rules Interpretations, and to respect the provisions of the FIBA General Statutes and Internal Regulations. They must do everything that is reasonably within their power to accomplish their mission in a satisfactory manner.

Art. 171 FIBA Referees shall cooperate with the organisers of competitions to ensure the smooth running of the game and must ensure that the interests of the two teams on the court are in no way encroached upon.

Art. 172 If FIBA has nominated a FIBA Commissioner or FIBA Technical Delegate at a competition, the FIBA Referee shall report to the FIBA Commissioner or FIBA Technical Delegate immediately upon arrival at the venue of the game.

Art. 173 If the FIBA Commissioner or FIBA Technical Delegate is not present, the FIBA Referee shall ensure that all of the players whose names appear on the score sheet have had their eligibility status approved by FIBA. If that is not the case, he shall report this to FIBA.

Art. 174 If the FIBA Referee deems it proper to make a report on the game, he shall do so immediately after the game and send it to FIBA or hand it to the FIBA Commissioner or FIBA Technical Delegate, if present.

## NOMINATIONS

Art. 175 Official Basketball Competitions can be officiated only by FIBA Referees of nationalities other than those of the two teams on the court.

Art. 176 All the nominations for the FIBA National Team Competitions and FIBA Club Competitions will be sent to the national member federation of the nominated FIBA Referee with copy to the concerned FIBA Referee. The national member federation shall confirm the nomination by the given deadline to FIBA or its respective Regional Office, as applicable. If the national member federation has not responded by the given deadline, FIBA or the respective Regional Office may either request the nominated FIBA Referee to confirm his nomination or nominate another FIBA Referee.

Art. 177 For all FIBA National Team Competitions and FIBA Club Competitions, except the FIBA Continental

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competitions and their qualifying games and tournaments, FIBA nominates an adequate number of FIBA Referees. In nominating FIBA Referees, FIBA shall ensure that all five continents are represented.

Art. 178 For the FIBA Continental competitions and their qualifying games and tournaments, the FIBA Regional Office nominates an adequate number of FIBA Referees from the respective continent, subject to FIBA's right to nominate a certain number of referees from another continent to the same competition.

Art. 179 Only FIBA can nominate FIBA Referees for:

- a. Official or friendly national-level senior games (e.g. national league/championship/cup, friendly tournament, etc.) held outside the territory of the referee's national member federation, or
- b. Friendly games between national teams, if the invited FIBA Referee(s) is (are) coming from a national member federation different than that of the competing teams.

For FIBA-Recognised national team competitions, organisers wishing to retain one or more FIBA Referees shall ask FIBA to nominate the number of FIBA Referees they consider necessary. The organisers will cover the travel and accommodation (board and lodging) expenses, as well as the officiating fees.

Art. 180 The procedure for nomination of FIBA Referees by FIBA to events falling under Article 3-179 shall be as follows:

- a. The inviting body must send to FIBA a written request to nominate FIBA Referees before the start date of the event. Unless exceptional circumstances require otherwise, the request must be received at least one (1) month before the start of the event. The inviting body must specify the details related to the event and to the invitation and may propose if it wishes the name of the referee(s) to be nominated.
- b. FIBA will take all the details of the request into consideration, decide whether to approve the request or not and, in case of approval, it will decide also on the name(s) of the referee(s) to be nominated. FIBA may consult beforehand the national member federation(s) of the said referee(s) or the national member federation(s) in which territory the games will be played and the respective FIBA Region(s).

The same procedure as set out in a. and b. above applies for referees registered with organisations outside FIBA.

Travel and accommodation expenses are to be covered by the organiser or inviting body.

Art. 181 Competition organisers shall communicate with FIBA Referees only through FIBA or the respective national member federation.

#### TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Art. 182 Unless otherwise provided herein, the organiser shall cover the travel expenses of FIBA Referees as follows:

- a. By train: the cost of a 1st class return ticket, which shall include sleeping accommodation (double chamber) if travelling at night;
- b. By car: the amount equivalent to the cost of a 1st class return train ticket;
- c. By plane: the cost of an economy class return ticket (unless otherwise stated in the applicable competition regulations);
- d. The organiser shall reimburse any fees for visas;
- e. It is recommended that the organiser sends to the FIBA referees pre-paid travel tickets; however, if a FIBA Referee has to purchase the ticket for his travel, reimbursement shall be made in the currency of the referee's country or in any convertible currency, as decided by FIBA.

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#### OFFICIATING FEES/ALLOWANCES

- Art. 183 Refer to article 3-338 for the applicable officiating fees. The Regional Offices may adapt the officiating fees to the specific needs of their region, subject to the Secretary General's approval.
- Art. 184 For all senior FIBA National Team Competitions the organiser shall pay the officiating fee and FIBA shall pay the travel expenses to all referees unless agreed differently in the Host Nation Agreement.
- Art. 185 For all youth FIBA National Team Competitions FIBA shall pay the officiating fee and the travel expenses to all referees unless agreed differently in the Host Agreement.
- Art. 186 For FIBA Club Competitions, the applicable competition regulations will determine the amount of the officiating fees and the organisation responsible to pay such fees and travel expenses to referees.



# REFEREE LICENSE ALLOCATION CRITERIA





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## 3. REFEREE LICENSE ALLOCATION CRITERIA

*In case of discrepancy between the three languages: English, Spanish and French, on the meaning or interpretation of a word or phrase, the English text prevails.*

### 3.1 General

As per the FIBA Internal Regulations Book 3 Chapter VII, FIBA Referee Licenses are divided into three (3) categories:

**Black License:** FIBA Referees (men and women) who are eligible to officiate international games for all senior and junior levels. Candidate referees for a Black License must have officiated regularly at the highest level for senior men in a national member federation for at least the preceding two seasons.

**Green License:** The special license for female referees for a transitory phase that will be determined by FIBA. Holders of a FIBA Green License are eligible to officiate international games of:

1. All senior men games at sub-regional level
2. All senior women games
3. All junior levels (men and women)
4. All senior and junior level games of international preparation/friendly games

Candidate referees for a Green License must have officiated regularly at the highest level for senior women in a national member federation for at least the preceding two seasons.

**White License:** FIBA Referees (men and women) who are entitled to officiate international games as follows:

- a. All junior level games at regional level
- b. All senior and junior level games at sub-regional level
- c. All senior and junior level games of international preparation/friendly games

Candidate female referees for a White License must have officiated regularly at the highest level for senior women in a national member federation for at least the preceding two seasons.

Candidate male referees for a White License must have officiated regularly at the highest level for senior men in a national member federation for at least the preceding two seasons.

The maximum number of FIBA Referee Licenses per national member federation allocated by FIBA gives a national member federation a right to apply for the particular designated number of License Spots. However, in each case FIBA, after the completion of the candidate evaluation process, will decide whether a candidate shall receive a FIBA Referee License and, if so, which category of License.

### 3.2 Validity of License

3.2.1 As per the FIBA Internal Regulations, a FIBA Referee License is valid for a two (2) year period ("Licensed Period") starting on 1 September (e.g. 2019) and expiring on 31 August (e.g. 2021) (same for the periods 2021-23, 2023-25 etc.).

3.2.2 Subject to the provisions of FIBA Internal Regulations Article 3-168, the FIBA Referee License expires on 31 August of the FIBA Referee's 51st year of age or on the last day of the Licensed Period, whichever comes first.

3.2.3 FIBA may remove a FIBA Referee’s License temporarily or for the entire Licensed Period in the event that:

- a. the national member federation fails to pay the entire applicable license fee;
- b. the FIBA Referee has lost the qualification as a referee at the highest national level;
- c. a sanction is imposed on the FIBA Referee in accordance with the Internal Regulations;
- d. the FIBA Referee fails to participate in all FIBA Referees’ training programs and activities required by FIBA;
- e. there exist circumstances preventing a FIBA Referee from officiating (e.g. injury);
- f. the FIBA Referee repeatedly refuses nominations;
- g. the FIBA Referee performs poorly; or
- h. for any other justifiable reason.

FIBA may act on its own initiative or upon application by the FIBA Referee or by his national member federation.

3.2.4 National member federations must immediately inform FIBA if a FIBA Referee for any reason loses his qualification as a referee at the national highest level (temporarily or definitively) required for his FIBA Referee License.

### 3.3 Number of Licenses

3.3.1 Each national member federation is allocated a limited number of FIBA Referee Licenses. As per the FIBA Internal Regulations, the maximum number of FIBA Referee License allocation spots is based primarily, but not solely on the following criteria:

- a. The FIBA World Ranking of national member federations. The combined ranking is based on sports results of each national member federation in FIBA competitions for men, women, boys and girls. The FIBA World Ranking is published and its principles explained on [www.fiba.basketball](http://www.fiba.basketball).
- b. The FIBA List of national member federations per category which is based on the status of basketball in a country, the assessment of national member federations and the potential growth. The List is approved by FIBA Central Board.
- c. The number of nominations for FIBA Referees of the respective national member federation in FIBA National Team Competitions, namely: the FIBA Basketball World Cup, the FIBA Women’s Basketball World Cup, the FIBA Continental Cups, the FIBA Continental Women’s Championships, the Olympic Basketball Tournaments, the FIBA Olympic Qualifying Tournaments for Men and Women, the FIBA U19 World Championships for Men and Women, the FIBA U17 World Championships for Men and Women.

3.3.2 In theory, the maximum number (the Core Number) of FIBA Referee Licenses of any category (Black, Green and White), according to the criteria listed in points 3.3.1, 3.3.2 and 3.3.3) is fourteen (14) per one (1) national member federation.

<b>SPOTS</b>	<b>FIBA COMBINED WORLD RANKING POSITION</b>
6	from position 1 to 20
4	from position 21 to 40
2	from position 41 to 60
1	from position 61 to 90
None	from position 91 onward

<b>SPOTS</b>	<b>FIBA LIST OF NATIONAL FEDERATIONS PER CATEGORY</b>
3	for national member federations group A
2	for national member federations group B
1	for national member federations group C
None	for national member federations group D

<b>SPOTS</b>	<b>NUMBER OF NOMINATIONS IN FIBA NATIONAL TEAMS COMPETITIONS</b>
1	Per national member federation represented* in the nominations** for the FIBA Basketball World Cup, the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup, the Olympic Basketball Tournaments, the FIBA Olympic Qualifying Tournaments for Men and Women, during the two preceding seasons (2016-2017 & 2017-2018);
1	Per national member federation represented* in the nominations** for the FIBA Continental Men's Cups during the two preceding seasons (2016-2017 & 2017-2018);
1	Per national member federation represented* in the nominations** for the FIBA U19 World Championships for Men and Women, the FIBA U17 World Championships for Men and Women during the two preceding seasons (2016-2017 & 2017-2018).

\*Note 1 – Any License Spot is allocated when a nominated referee fully participates in the preparation programme of the respective Competition and successfully passes all the tests related to the preparation for the Competition.

\*\* Note 2 – In case more than one referee from the same national member federation is nominated for the same FIBA National Team Competition it is only counted as 1 License Spot (e.g. 2 referees from one national member federation in the FIBA World Cup).

In case the same referee from the same national member federation is nominated for more than one FIBA National Team Competition it is only counted as 1 License Spot (e.g. 1 referee from one national member federation in the Olympic Qualifying Tournament and the FIBA U17 World Championship).

3.3.3 FIBA continues a promotion programme for female referees worldwide. Therefore FIBA, within the limits of the License allocation spots as per points 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, allocates up to two (2) designated spots for a Green License only:

- 1 spot for a national member federation with FIBA Licenced Female Referees on the FIBA List during the preceding two seasons;
- 1 spot for a national member federation represented by FIBA Female Referees in the nominations for the FIBA Continental Women's Championships during the preceding two seasons.

<b>SPOTS</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF FEMALE REFEREES</b>
1 (Green License)	Per national member federation with FIBA Licenced Female Referees on the FIBA List during preceding two seasons (2016-2017 & 2017-2018);
1 (Green License)	Per national member federation represented by FIBA Female Referees in the nominations* for the FIBA Continental Women's Championships during the preceding two seasons (2016-2017 & 2017-2018).

\*Note – Any License Spot is allocated when a nominated referee fully participates in the preparation programme of the respective Competition and successfully passes all the tests related to the preparation for the Competition.

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3.3.4 FIBA can, in addition to the Core Number of Licenses as per points 3.3.2 and 3.3.3, assign a maximum of four (4) additional License Spots per national member federation. These additional License Spots are designated for the White License category only and are not counted as part of the (Core Number of) 14 FIBA Referee Licenses mentioned in 3.3.2.

<b>SPOTS</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL WHITE LICENSES</b>
1 to 4	FIBA has the right to issue up to 4 additional White Licenses* per designated national member federation.

\*Note - A minimum of 50% of the additional White Licenses are designated for referees who are 30 years old or under. It is also mandatory to be enrolled in the FIBA potential national referees programme or a similar programme designated by FIBA.

For specific examples of how License Spots are calculated, please refer to the “Questions & Answers” and “Examples” sections.



