

# National Race Officer Certification Requirements



A National Race Officer (NRO) is expected to be able to go anywhere in the country and serve as the race officer or race management consultant with any race committee to properly run any race or regatta, including national championships. This includes organizing the event and the race committee, writing correct notices of race and sailing instructions, and doing the scoring.

## A US Sailing National Race Officer must:

- be a member of US Sailing and at least 21 years old
- be a person of good character and integrity as described in the [US Sailing Race Official Personal Attributes](#) document
- be an experienced racing sailor (no time limit)
- maintain current [SafeSport training and background screening](#)
- possess or have access to physical or digital editions of the current US Sailing *Racing Rules of Sailing*, *Race Management Handbook*, *US Sailing Appeals Book*, and *World Sailing Case Book*

## To qualify as a National Race Officer, you must:

- meet at least one of the following requirements in the last four years:
  - pass the US Sailing Advanced Race Management Seminar at 90% or higher
  - be the lead instructor at a US Sailing Advanced Race Management Seminar
- Submit an [application](#) for certification or recertification that includes the name of an officer or race committee leader at a local sailing organization who is familiar with race management and has observed your work on the water
- for initial certification only, be [recommended](#) by both:
  - a competitor at an event where you were the course race officer (the person in charge on the water) of their race area, and
  - a US Sailing National Race Officer, National Judge, National Umpire or World Sailing official who has observed your work as a course race officer  
*(These recommendations may not be provided by a member of your local sailing organization, your ARO, or a member of the Race Management Committee (RMC).)*
- receive a positive [National Race Officer On-the-Water Evaluation](#) by any US Sailing National Race Officer (for initial certification) who has observed your work on the water as a course race officer throughout a regatta. For renewal certification, this evaluation may be completed by any US Sailing National Race Officer, National Judge or National Umpire.
- for initial certification only, successfully complete the NRO Problem Solving Panel. This is a live panel discussion with other National Race Officers that will be arranged after the RMC approves your application. This option is not available for recertification.
- be recommended without reservation by your [Area Race Officer](#)

**An up to date [SOARS log](#) is required, showing that you:**

- have been a course race officer, course or fleet representative, WS ITO or NTO, or race management consultant<sup>1</sup> at a minimum of five events in the last four years, including at least one national, continental or world championship
- have been a course race officer at two or more events in waters other than those in which you customarily work, including one where current is a factor. See “Out-of-Venue Events” below.
- have had race committee experience (not necessarily as the race officer) at a regatta of one or more of the following disciplines: windsurfing, match racing, team racing, radio sailing, kiteboarding or scholastic sailing.
- have taught at least two race management training offerings. These are not required to be US Sailing seminars – they may be training at your local sailing organization, for example.
- have the breadth of experience necessary to properly run races for various types of boats, competitors, racing formats, and events anywhere in the country

**Additional Recommended Qualifications (not required):**

- maintain current first aid and CPR training
- take a US Powerboating class or equivalent
- attend a US Sailing judge seminar, roundtable or Protest Day
- have experience with race management technology such as autonomous marks, automated starting systems, and tracking or course management apps

<sup>1</sup>*To use an event at which you were the course or fleet representative, ITO or NTO, or race management consultant, you must attach a letter of appointment for that role from the organizing authority and a brief statement describing your responsibilities and identifying the PRO. You may use a maximum of two events at which you held one of these roles.*

**Notes:**

**Experience:** All the experience except racing must take place during the four-year period ending when US Sailing receives your complete application. A majority of the qualifying events must have originated in the United States.

**Out-of-Venue Events** demonstrate a race officer’s ability to work with a variety of volunteers, organizing authorities and classes in unfamiliar locations, with varied sailing formats, boat types and competitors, and in wind, sea and geographic conditions that are different from their customary experience.

You should list events that show varied experiences, including at least one, but preferably more, of the following:

- Varied organizing authorities and race management teams
- Different groups of competitors and/or boat classes
- Wind, sea and geographic conditions different from those of your customary waters
- Varied race formats
- An out-of-venue event should be in a different region of the country; at a minimum it must be far enough from home to require significant travel

A candidate for NRO certification or recertification who lives in and serves on race committees in separate areas at different times of the year, or who belongs to multiple, geographically separate clubs, must record at least two out-of-venue events in locations other than ones where they customarily work.

The intent of this requirement is to ensure that a race officer candidate has the technical and interpersonal skills to work successfully with a variety of volunteers, organizing authorities, competitors, boats, other officials, and coaches in varied conditions. A National Race Officer must be able to quickly assume leadership of an unfamiliar race committee and form a high-performing team that can deliver quality race management.

The Race Management Committee shall have discretion to determine which of an applicant's events meet the out-of-venue requirement.

**SafeSport training and background screening:** You must renew [SafeSport training](#) annually and [background screening](#) every two years. US Sailing covers the cost. If your SafeSport training lapses, your race official certification will be suspended until you renew your training.

**Recommendations:** Recommendations are required only for initial certification at the NRO level unless the RMC requires new recommendations for renewal. The NRO On-the-Water evaluation is required for all initial and renewal certifications.

**Deadlines:** The Area Race Officer Working Group (AROWG) and the Race Management Committee (RMC) consider applications for Regional and National Race Officer certification and renewal in March, June, September, and December. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Please ensure that all application materials, including references, are submitted at least six weeks before the meeting. (See the [table of meeting dates](#).)

**Applications and Certification Renewal:** All candidates for initial or renewal certification must submit an application. Race officials are certified for a four-year term ending on December 31 of the fourth year. To ensure uninterrupted certification, US Sailing must receive renewal applications by November 1 of the expiration year. Certifications expire on December 31 of that year.

Applications received after November 1 but by May 1 of the following year will be treated as renewals and will be reviewed by the AROWG and RMC at their next meetings. Certification will be restored upon approval. Applications submitted after May 1 may be required to meet all requirements for initial certification, at the discretion of the Race Management Committee.

**Membership:** You must maintain your [US Sailing membership](#) to keep your race official certification current.

## [Apply to be a race officer](#)

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