

OFFICIALS BURSARY PROGRAM – CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT

Officials across Ontario are critical to sport at all levels, and we know COVID has significantly impacted this element of our sport sector. That is why Ontario Sport Network (OSN) is launching the delivery of a comprehensive plan for referee and official recruitment and retention, including a province-wide promotional and funding initiative.

Third party research conducted by Scheffe Consulting, on behalf of OSN found that, regardless of sport, many officials face similar barriers and motivating factors to their involvement.

The top 3 reason for becoming an official were:

- The love and passion they have for the sport, and a desire to give back to the sport they loved playing
- To contribute to the sport community and its further development
- To progress their experience in sport further

But we also know that there are barriers and deterrent factors to becoming an official. The top 3 include:

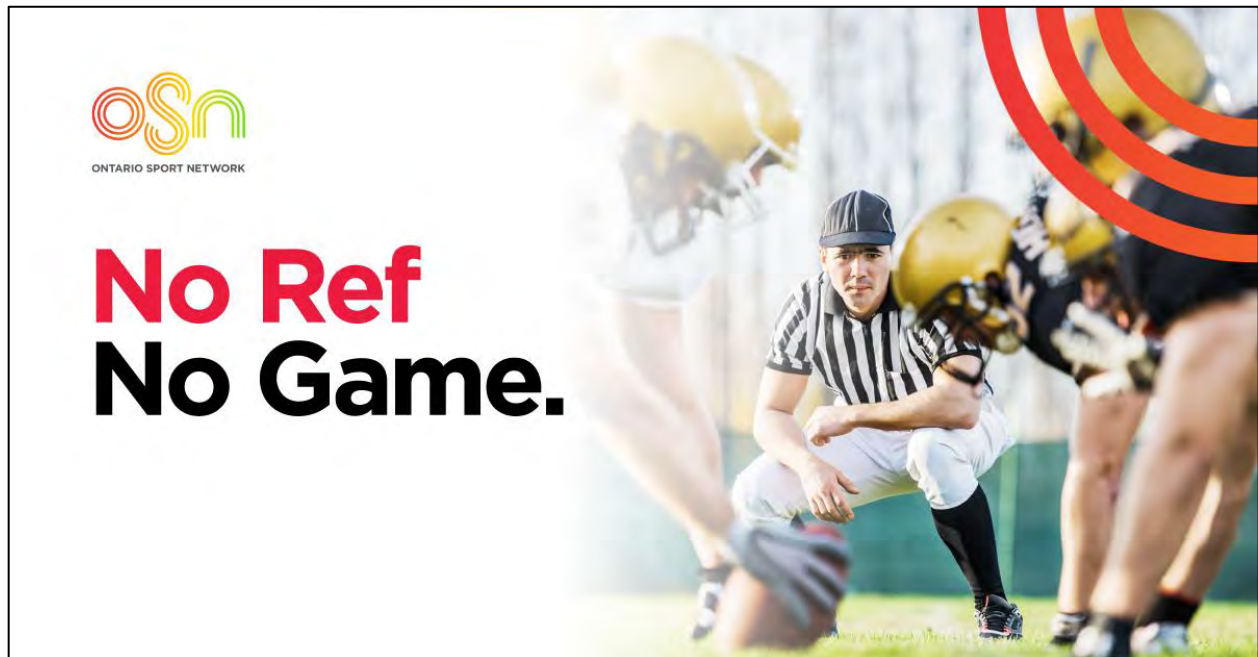
- Physical/verbal abuse
- Financial costs required to become/stay an Official e.g., course fees, equipment, uniforms
- The access to training clinics/courses

OSN has been entrusted with administering a subsidy programme, valued at over \$100,000 to support the training expenses of officials. The Officials Bursary Program launches publicly on August 22nd, 2022, and features many sports from across our province, putting Officials in the spotlight!

This campaign is part of an ongoing commitment to building a rewarding, safe, and respectful sport environment. The goal of the campaign is to acknowledge the critical role officials play across a whole host of sports around our province and make it easier for officials to get involved. Officials are one of the key ingredients needed for organized sport and without them there would be no match/game. OSN aims to provide financial support towards education and supplies for new and existing sport officials at all levels to help alleviate one of the main barriers of recruitment and retention.

WHAT DOES THE SUBSIDY INCLUDE?

Through the Official's Bursary Program – individuals can receive funding up to a maximum of \$500 per official. Individuals can use the funding to cover eligible course/clinic registration fees, supplies e.g., sport technical books, equipment, and uniform costs. Applicants will need to apply and must submit proof of payment for costs incurred this year from January 1st to October 15th, 2022.



THE ASK: HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Thank you for being part of OSN's officials' strategy campaign.

We are asking you to share the campaign with your members and clubs to help officials across the province become aware of the Officials Bursary Program. OSN has developed a toolkit of assets to help you leverage the campaign across all your channels. Specifically, OSN is asking for support with sharing the campaign on social and online:

1. **Social Amplification**
 - a. Original Content (see examples below)
 - b. Repost and share OSN's posts (on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn)

2. Direct Email

- a. You will find an email template included in The Officials Strategy campaign asset toolkit Dropbox. All you will need to do is copy and paste the copy into your email. Feel free to share with your members, highlighting the Official's Bursary Program as well as resources/courses you have available for those looking to get involved.

POSTING GUIDELINES

There're just a few things that must be in every post:

- Tag @OntarioSportNetwork in the photo and/or in the copy
- Please include the link to the Officials Program page, linked [HERE](#).
- Include the hashtag: #NoRefNoGame #NoRefNoMatch

And remember – the OSN team is here to help! If you'd like to run anything by us, need help finding more info or anything else, let us know! You can get in touch with our NSTF & Digital Manager Bianca at bianca@ontariosportnetwork.ca

POST SUGGESTIONS

Please share at least one social post between August 22nd (campaign launch date) and October 15th.

- Share how individuals can get into officiating through your organization (with the campaign social graphic)
- Have you got any courses coming up or did you run clinics this season that fall within the eligible window (Jan 2022- Oct 2022)? Let your members know they can avail of the Bursary Program!
- Engage your officials to share their sport journeys (through a video or post) and what got them involved (with a Campaign Social graphic) directing individuals to apply to the Officials Bursary Program
- Got an interest in officiating? The Officials Bursary Program will help fund your training, and equipment needs. This subsidy is open to new and returning officials to provide financial support for the costs of certification and training. Find out more about this opportunity today!

If you haven't already it would be great if you could follow us:

- [Facebook](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Instagram](#)



- [Youtube](#)
- [TikTok](#)

THE ASSETS

The Officials Strategy campaign toolkit is available [HERE](#).

- **BURSARY PROGRAM GRAPHICS:** Social graphics are provided in various sizes and will be created for the following nine sports: baseball, basketball, boxing, football, gymnastics, ice hockey, lacrosse, rugby, and soccer (graphics for all sports coming soon).
 - Each folder is labelled according to the respective sport, and each graphic file is named according to the social channel it is intended for.
- **GENERAL GRAPHICS:** General graphics are provided without reference to the Officials Bursary Program, so that you may continue to use these graphics with your logo after the campaign window.
 - Please refer to the logo placement guide linked [HERE](#) to see where to insert your organizations logo. Your logo needs to be inserted into the logo placeholder created and resized to fit the placeholder dimensions. Please ensure both OSN and your logo appear even in size.
 - OSN Logo guidelines
 - Please don't stretch, squeeze or skew the OSN logo
 - Please do not apply any other colour ways to match OSN's logo to your logo
- **PARENTAL CODE OF CONDUCT:** The purpose of the Parental Code of Conduct is to encourage fair and respectful conduct of parents/guardians towards all coaches, officials, referees, teammates, opponents, opposing coaches, opposing team officials and other participants in youth sports. We have provided you with a Parental Code of Conduct that you can share with your clubs or members to use to create and facilitate a safe, enjoyable sport environment for all. The Parental Code of Conduct is available [HERE](#).

SIGNAGE SUGGESTIONS

Acknowledging the important role officials play across all sports is an important step in helping to reduce some of the barriers to recruitment and retention. We have created some copy suggestions for signage if you wish to create posters or banners to display inside/outside your sport venue. Add or edit to make these unique to your sport or use them to spark inspiration for your own signs.



- BECOME A REF. STAY A REF.
- WITHOUT OFFICIALS, THERE WOULD BE NO GAME.
- WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU THANKED THE REF?
- REMEMBER....
 - TO HAVE FUN.
 - THIS IS JUST A GAME.
 - NO ONE IS TURNING PRO AT THE END OF THIS.
 - EVERYONE IS TRYING THEIR BEST.
 - TO THANK THE REF.
 - YOUR CHILD CAME TO HAVE FUN!
 - TO RESPECT ALL THE PLAYERS, COACHES, OFFICIALS, VOLUNTEERS AND FANS.

Example Post #1 – Facebook/Instagram (short copy)



Caption: Are you a sports official? Are you interested in becoming an official?

The Ontario Sport Network understands the vital role officials play and is now offering a subsidy of up to \$500 to support with the costs of certification and training for officials across the province. For more information or to apply, visit www.ontariosportnetwork.ca/officials-program.



Example Post #2 – Facebook/Instagram (long copy)



Headline: Become an Official today!

Caption: Have you ever wanted to be an official? Do you want to take your knowledge to the next level? Ontario Sport Network is here to help.


Officials are crucial for our sports. They ensure games are fair, safe, and fun!

OSN's Official's Bursary Program will provide reimbursement up to \$500 on any training, certification, and equipment/supply needs for the 2022 season.

Apply today and you could be on your way to becoming an official!
www.ontariosportnetwork.ca/officials-program/



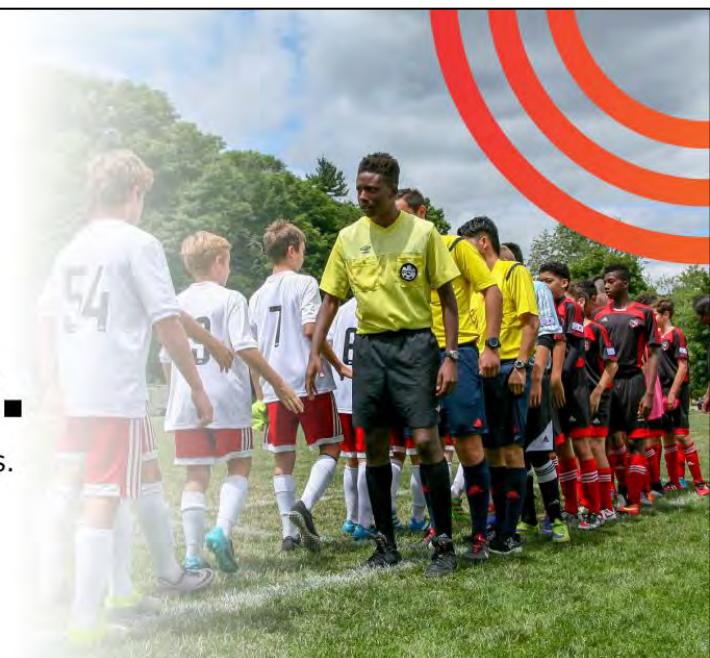
Example Post #3 – LinkedIn (short copy)



**No Ref
No Match.**

Subsidy Available for Officials.

Apply Now



Caption: You love to be on the field or on the court, OSN is here to help you get there. Supporting officials makes for a better game environment for players and spectators alike.

OSN is providing financial support to new and returning officials to help with the costs of certification, training, and equipment for officials. OSN will reimburse official's up to \$500 for these costs! For more information or to apply, visit the Ontario Sport Network website today.
www.ontariosportnetwork.ca/officials-program/