



MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The MFOA identified a concern with 1st year members not returning a few years ago. As a result it was determined many 1st year members felt abandoned, with nowhere to turn. They became frustrated and simply didn't come back.

The answer of how to address this is not a simple one, as some people after a year felt football officiating was simply not for them, and we respect that. The expectations for a person to work as an on field official within the MFOA are set very high. We expect a clean and proper uniform, a basic understanding of procedures and mechanics, and a basic understanding of the rules. We also expect members to attend bi-weekly meetings where rules and procedures are discussed. This all takes a great commitment. Not every wife or girlfriend appreciates what we are doing from August to November.

Once an individual indicates a willingness to join the MFOA they are provided an opportunity to attend a preseason meeting where the facts of life of an official are laid out. The costs, the time commitment and the pay expectations are provided. Some potential member's say that is too much expectation and we separate as friends. We encourage those people to contact the MFRA where the expectations are not as high.

For those that go on they are required to complete a level 1 course (if applicable). They must sign the Football Manitoba document and the MFOA Commitment form. They must complete the Sport Manitoba Respect in Sport policy. Then they must pay their MFOA dues. (In subsequent years the dues for the next year is taken off their year end payout.)

All of this takes time and at any point people being people may drop out, frustrated at the process.

Traditionally it has been the VP Training that is burdened with "mentoring" potential officials until they actually join us. This takes lots of time and in the case of mentorship delegation from the VP Training to a MFOA official at the earliest opportunity is a good thing.

Once a potential official indicates a willingness to join the MFOA they will be assigned a mentor by the VP Training. The mentor is a volunteer who will assist the potential official through his/her 1st year.

The mentor, upon accepting the request from the VP Training, will do the following:

- 1) Immediately contact the potential member **by phone** and welcome them. Offer to get together in person to review the process and how the MFOA operates. Ensure the potential member knows your ph # and email.
- 2) Keep in contact with the new official regularly and ensure they know when the level 1 clinic is (times, dates and cost), equipment required and how to obtain it, how to obtain a rule book, how the MFOA works internally (ie: assignments).

- 3) Ensure the potential member has completed all the steps necessary to become a member of the MFOA (forms, RIS, fee's, etc).
- 4) Once step 3 is completed, ensures the new member has access to the website and knows how to use it.
- 5) Upon receiving the 1st request for availability from the assignor touch base with the recruit and identify if possible several dates early where both are available and make these dates known to the assignor so that the mentor and new official can work 1 or 2 games together (this is not always possible)
- 6) Stay in touch the 1st year. Sit with the new member at meetings. Ask questions to ensure the new member understands the game and is learning.
- 7) Stay in touch with the VP Training as to your progress with the potential recruit.