



Recruiting 101

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There's no time like right now to get started on recruiting new officials for the spring season. Whether your board or organization has hundreds of people or barely enough to cover the game schedule, every year is a recruiting year. A new officials class needs to start every year to keep your group robust and functioning on all levels, not just covering the games, but mentoring each other and growing as individuals and a group.

The fall is the best time to figure out a recruiting plan because once the US Lacrosse National Convention hits, we all hit the ground running and need to actually start the training of new officials. Fall is the time to find those new officials, so where do you start? Start by setting your training schedule and deciding what you will require of your newbies. Will you have four weeks of two hour classes, or two days of six hour classroom? Regardless of what you decide, get the space reserved, the schedule set, and the requirements advertised so that people can plan accordingly. The training should culminate in field work, live game training, and rating (for women's officials). Schedule the field work days at the same time you schedule your classroom sessions because you'll need to coordinate with local teams for live game action.

Once you know what your training looks like, it's time to advertise. USL has resources you can use to educate people about what they are getting into. Check out new posters and brochures from US Lacrosse [online](#).

Grab that low hanging fruit and seek out people who are already officials of other sports. These people come with officiating skills - you just need to teach them the game of lacrosse. Some sport organizations recruit heavily with police, fire and rescue personnel because they often work shift schedules that coincide nicely with game schedules, additionally, people who work these high stress professions don't get too stressed out by tense game situations.

If your officials organization is being asked to cover additional schools this season that were not part of the previous year's schedule, the additional schools should be encouraged to help recruit officials. Teachers have a great schedule for officiating, and schools need to be aware that adding teams not only means hiring coaching staff, but assisting in finding officials to cover those games.

Fitness centers and gyms are another good place to advertise, as fitness is a prerequisite to becoming an official. Officiating is a great part-time job, and with the economy in the state that it is in, it can't hurt to post the training at job banks. If you do this, be sure to mention that reliable transportation is key to working a game schedule, but let them know they can make their own availability while they continue to look for full time work.

Once you've recruited and have a training scheduled, keep those people by offering incentives like reduced dues in their first season, and supplying them with the basics to call their first game: whistles, cards, flags, and a tape measure. Check out the resources available on [US Lacrosse website](#) for continuing training and education of officials so your recruits can improve and gain knowledge.