REFEREES
CODE OF CONDUCT

Waikato Touch Association Incorporated

Policy owner	WTA Executive Committee
Operational lead	Operational Co-ordinator
Status	Approved
Approved by	WTA Executive Committee
Effective date	19 August 2026
Review cycle	At least every two years
Related documents	Member Code of Conduct; Safety, Wellbeing and Integrity Policy; Representative Programme Policy; Referee Endorsement Requirements; Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure

Role-specific acknowledgement: This document adds the duties that apply to WTA referees, referee coaches and referee officials. It supports, and does not replace, the WTA Member Code of Conduct.

1. Purpose and application

Referees protect the safety, fairness and spirit of the game and are visible ambassadors for WTA. This Code applies to referees, referee coaches, mentors, assessors, coordinators and officials appointed, endorsed or representing WTA.

2. Core responsibilities

- Place participant safety and welfare above convenience, reputation or the outcome of a match.
- Apply the rules and spirit of Touch fairly, consistently and without bias.
- Act with integrity, objectivity, courage, courtesy and self-control.
- Respect players, coaches, managers, fellow officials, volunteers, spectators and hosts.
- Accept responsibility for decisions and use feedback to improve.
- Follow WTA, Touch New Zealand, tournament and venue requirements.

3. Fair and competent officiating

- Prepare physically and technically for appointments and arrive on time with required uniform and equipment.
- Officiate within your competence and honestly represent qualifications, experience and availability.
- Apply rules consistently while using appropriate communication and game management.
- Do not allow prejudice, pressure, crowd reaction, relationships or personal interest to affect objectivity.
- Manage mistakes professionally and use authorised review, coaching and feedback processes.
- Do not publicly attack or undermine another official's decision or performance.

4. Safety and participant welfare

- Act promptly where play, behaviour, weather, facilities or equipment creates an unreasonable risk.
- Follow concussion, injury, blood, emergency and incident procedures applying to the event.
- Use only necessary and appropriate physical contact.
- Recognise the needs of children, young people, new participants and people requiring support.
- Report serious incidents, threats, abuse, discrimination, injury or safeguarding concerns promptly.
- Never officiate, coach referees, supervise or drive while impaired by alcohol, drugs or medication.

5. Safeguarding and boundaries

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children, young people and adults at risk.
- Avoid isolated or unobserved one-to-one situations wherever reasonably practicable.
- Use approved communication channels and do not use secret or disappearing messages to bypass oversight.
- Follow WTA requirements for changing areas, travel, accommodation, images and digital contact.
- Do not use a position of authority to groom, exploit, favour or form an inappropriate relationship with a participant.
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately; do not investigate them yourself or promise absolute confidentiality.

6. Respectful communication and behaviour

- Use calm, clear and appropriate language, including when managing disagreement or misconduct.
- Do not ridicule, humiliate, threaten, retaliate against or deliberately provoke a participant.
- Address unsporting behaviour and apply available sanctions consistently.
- Reject violence, abuse, bullying, harassment, racism and discrimination.
- Do not engage in public arguments with players, coaches, spectators or other officials. Use reporting and complaint channels after the event where needed.

7. Conflicts, appointments and impartiality

- Declare any relationship, team connection, financial interest or other conflict that may affect, or appear to affect, impartiality.
- Accept, decline or return appointments honestly and promptly.
- Do not seek or accept an inducement, benefit or favour intended to influence an appointment or decision.
- Follow any direction used to manage a conflict, including reassignment or restricted involvement.
- Keep appointment, assessment, incident and disciplinary information confidential unless authorised to share it.

8. Integrity, betting and anti-corruption

- Do not manipulate, improperly influence or agree to affect any match, score, incident, appointment or competition outcome.
- Do not bet where your role, knowledge or influence creates an integrity risk.
- Do not share inside information for betting or improper advantage.
- Report any suspicious approach, threat, inducement, manipulation or corruption promptly.
- Comply with applicable anti-doping and sport-integrity requirements and cooperate with authorised processes.

9. Social media, privacy and representation

- Apply the same standards online as in person.
- Do not publish abusive, discriminatory or confidential material or target participants or officials online.
- Do not discuss confidential appointments, assessments, incidents or disciplinary matters.
- Use images in accordance with the Photography and Image Policy.
- Do not present a personal account, opinion or announcement as an official WTA communication.
- Wear approved uniform correctly and use WTA branding only as authorised.

10. Development and contribution

- Participate in reasonable education, coaching, fitness, assessment and development requirements.
- Attend and support Waikato modules, trials or referee-development activities as required for the role or endorsement.
- Give and receive respectful, evidence-based feedback.
- Support newer referees and help build a safe, welcoming officiating environment.
- Inform the authorised referee lead of any matter that may affect availability, suitability or WTA endorsement.

11. Reporting and breaches

- Call 111 where anyone is in immediate danger and take reasonable protective action.
- Submit required match, incident or misconduct reports accurately and promptly.
- Report concerns through the appropriate WTA, tournament, Touch New Zealand or external process.
- Preserve information and cooperate with authorised reviews; do not conduct an unauthorised investigation.
- A breach may result in education, conditions, removal from an appointment, loss of endorsement, suspension, ending a role or external referral, following fair process.

12. Acknowledgement

Acknowledgement: I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the WTA Member Code of Conduct, this role-specific Code and all policies and reasonable requirements applying to my role.

Full name	
Role and team/event	Referee / Referee Coach / Referee Official
Signature	
Date	

13. Approval

Approved by	Ani Nock
Approval date	19 August 2026
Effective date	19 August 2026
Next review date	30 June 2028
Version	1.0