



Manual of Guidance

**Contributory League
Match Officials**

Season 2009-10

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FOREWORD

In the coming season, you will serve as a Referee or Assistant Referee on the National List of Contributory League Match Officials. By accepting the invitation to serve, there are certain commitments that have to be made on your part and in return you will receive the full support of The Football Association.

As many of you will already be aware, officiating on a Contributory League signals a big step in your refereeing career and represents many changes from that of being a Senior County Referee. A number of Clubs at this level have larger stadia, the skill factor is often higher and there is often a much larger attendance than at the lower levels of the game, with certain Clubs regularly attracting spectators in their thousands.

These factors bring with them certain responsibilities on your part. The Football Association expects that your standard of administration and communication will be of the highest level. You will also be expected to conduct yourself, on and off the field of play, in an exemplary and professional manner.

This booklet is designed to be a point of reference for you in your role as a Contributory League Match Official. You are strongly advised to take note of its content and regularly revisit it. By doing so, you will be in a position to approach each appointment with confidence, ensuring that you achieve the maximum performance level possible.

Finally, it only remains for me to wish you well for the coming season. I trust that you will enjoy your time officiating at this high level of the game.

Neale Barry
Head of Senior Referee Development

Updated May 2009

Introduction

This Manual of Guidance is designed to assist Match Officials who officiate on the National List of Contributory League Match Officials.

It is not a definitive document, but aims to provide help, advice and guidance on issues that Match Officials may encounter at this level of football. If, after consulting this document, you have still not been able to find the solution to your problem, you are strongly urged to contact your Contributory League Support Group Co-ordinator in the first instance.

Designated Appointments Officer

There are two Contributory League Appointments Officers. Every Referee and Assistant Referee on the National List of Contributory League Match Officials has been allocated an Appointments Officer. The general split of the country is North/South. The allocation of a specific Appointments Officer has been designated by the postcode of your home address.

The Post Codes are as follows:

North - B, BB, BD, BL, CA, CH, CV, CW, DE, DH, DL, DN, DY, FY, HD, HG, HR (part), HU, HX, L, LA, LE, LN, LS, M, NE, NG, OL, PR, S, SK, SR, ST, SY, TF, TS, WA, WF, WN, WR, WS, WV, YO

South - AL, BA, BH, BN, BR, BS, CB, CM, CO, CR, CT, DA, DT, E, EN, EX, GL, GU, HA, HP, HR (part), IG, IP, KT, LU, ME, MK, N, NN, NR, NW, OX, PE, PL, PO, RG, RH, RM, SE, SG, SL, SM, SN, SO, SP, SS, SW, TA, TN, TQ, TR, TW, UB, W, WC, WD

If your designated Appointments Officer is unavailable - in an emergency - you should contact the other Appointments Officer.

The details of the Appointments Officers are also contained in the Match Officials' Directory.

If you wish to make routine contact with either of the Appointment Officers by telephone, they are generally available between 1000am and 7.00pm Monday to Friday and up to 11.00am on Saturdays.

National List of Contributory Leagues

The Leagues which are included to form the Contributory Leagues are determined by The Football Association Referees' Committee annually. Leagues are deemed as "Contributory Leagues" suitable for the development of Referees at that level of the game – similar to "Panel Leagues" or "Supply Leagues".

The current Leagues are as follows:

Conference North and Conference South
Eastern Counties' League (Premier Division only)
Isthmian Football League
Northern Counties East (Premier Division only)
Northern League (Division One only)
Northern Premier League
North West Counties League (Premier Division only)
Southern Football League
Western League (Premier Division only)
Premier Academy League (Under 18)
Football League Youth Alliance (Under 18)

The List is a "national" list and, in theoretical terms, you will be available to be appointed to any of the Contributory Leagues. In practice, you will generally receive appointments to matches within a reasonable travelling distance from your home address. However, it is acceptable (and encouraged) to make yourself available for appointments if you are working or on holiday in another part of the country.

The distance travelled will vary, depending on geographic location, as well as your position within the Merit Table. For example, a top table match on the highest Division of a particular League may possibly attract a top performing Match Official from a more distant location.

Order of Precedence

Basically it is a “pecking order” for being appointed to games. The idea of it is to ensure some structure to the appointing system and to prevent it becoming a free for all amongst the different appointing authorities.

The Football Association Regulations for the Registration and Control of Referees sets the “Order of Precedence” of appointments for Referees and Assistant Referees, which is currently as follows:

- (1) The F.A. Challenge Cup Competition;
- (2) The F.A. Premier League;
- (3) The Football League;
- (4) The F.A. Challenge Trophy Competition;
- (5) The F.A. Challenge Vase Competition;
- (6) County Football Association Cup Competitions
County Football Association appointments only take precedence over Panel Leagues, the F.A. Youth and F.A. County Youth Challenge Cup Competitions, Contributory League and Supply League appointments if the appointment is in the Affiliated Association's nominated Senior Cup Competition or in the Semi-final and/or Final of any other Affiliated Association Competition whether the appointment is as a Referee or an Assistant Referee.
- (7) The Panel Leagues;
- (8) The F.A. Youth and F.A. County Youth Challenge Cup Competitions;
- (9) Contributory Leagues (recognised divisions only)
- (10) Supply Leagues (recognised divisions only)
- (11) All other Competitions of The Football Association.

“Fourth Officials” are appointed to certain rounds of F.A. competitions and all F.A. Premier League, Football League and Nationwide Conference matches. Such appointments form part of the Order of Precedence within the competitions listed above, but only apply to First Team games.

“Standby/Reserve Officials” may be appointed to other competitions but do not form part of the Order of Precedence and are not to be accepted by Referees in preference to an active appointment.

A number of Match Officials participate in FUTSAL competitions. Only FUTSAL International and National Finals appointments will take precedence over Contributory League football appointments.

The “Four Day Rule”

The idea of the “Four Day Rule” is to give Appointments Officers some protection against higher competitions taking their Officials right up to the day of the game, thereby giving them little chance of appointing them. You must remember that it only applies to the games in the Order of Precedence.

It works like this. If you get appointed to a Contributory League game and you are then wanted for an F.A. Cup game, you can be taken without any request being made, if that request is more than four days (96 hours).before the date of the game. In that example, the person taking you for the FA Cup game does not have to ask the Contributory League Appointments Officers for your release. If the request is less than four days (96 hours), there must be a request from the higher appointing authority to get your release. In that way, some negotiation can take place.

This applies all the way down the Order of Precedence and it is another way of keeping some semblance of order in the appointing process.

Once The Football Association or County Football Association has appointed a Match Official if, subsequently, the match is postponed, abandoned or results in a draw and the re-arranged fixture is then scheduled to take place less than four complete days from the date of the original match, The Football Association or County Football Association appointment will take priority

Personal Details

We appreciate that with so many Match Officials, there are many occasions when details change, from addresses and telephone numbers to e-mail addresses. Your personal details are held on MOAS, The Football Association's Match Official Administration System. If any of your personal details change, even if it is a temporary change, you must send the change to The Referees' Department at The Football Association immediately that change is known. This must be by e-mail to ContribDetails@TheFA.com.

COMMUNICATION

Electronic Communications

In this day and age, most people have access to an e-mail address. It is a pre requisite at this level of the game that a Match Official must have – at least Internet access – and ideally a personal e-mail address. The Football Association has the ability to conduct much of its business by e-mail and in fact encourages Match Officials to do so as well. All our reappointments are carried out by this method. However, there are some words of caution in respect of the use of e-mails.

- Only use an e-mail address that you have constant access to.
- Do not provide an address that emanates from an occasional visit to an Internet Café.
- Ensure that you type the address correctly before sending the message.
- If your e-mail account has an auto-acknowledge facility ensure this is activated to receive an acknowledgement from the recipient. If you have not received an acknowledgement within 72 hours, either re-send the transmission or, if urgent, seek some other means of communication.
- Similarly, if your e-mail requires a response, follow it up if a response is not received within 72 hours.
- If you ever suspect that a virus has corrupted your computer, cease sending e-mails until you can guarantee the integrity of your equipment.
- Do not use e-mail addresses that give the impression that you have an unprofessional, cavalier or flippant attitude to your role of referee (i.e. redcardrichards@aol.com is not acceptable). Remember Club secretaries see these e-mail addresses.
- The Football Association will not accept the sending of inappropriate e-mails to any of its addresses. The transmission of any such inappropriate e-mails may result in disciplinary proceedings being taken against the individual.
- Be aware that some Internet Service Provider (ISP) addresses do not return the full trail of the message when responding. With so many e-mails being received by Referees' Department staff, it is sometimes confusing to receive a reply that just says (e.g.) "Thanks, noted", without the original message being attached.
- When sending any e-mail to The Referees' Department, please quote your FAMOA number in the "Header" box.

Communicating by Telephone

Communication by telephone should be kept to an absolute minimum. The telephone should only be used in an emergency and as a last resort.

Under no circumstances will mobile telephone text messaging services be an acceptable form of communication with The Football Association.

Communicating with Clubs

Clubs will communicate with you to provide you with confirmation of appointments. This will sometimes be done via post, as the Club will be required to provide you with details of the location of their ground, usually in the form of a map. However, an increasing number of Clubs now communicate this information by e-mail. Once a Club has notified you of a fixture, you must immediately acknowledge with them that you have received this information.

Closed Dates

At this level of football, The Football Association operates a “closed dates” system. Fundamentally, this means that you are available to officiate on a football appointment, unless you make yourself unavailable by “closing” the date. It is appreciated that you have another life outside football and there will be times when you are unable to officiate. You do, however, have a very important role to play in providing us with the information as to when you cannot operate.

Dates may be closed for personal reasons or for the acceptance of other football appointments – **but only those defined within the Order of Precedence**. We appreciate that many Officials undertake a lot of refereeing that falls outside the Order of Precedence. As such, we would not acknowledge them as closed dates, because they are outside the Order. By all means, go ahead and accept these type of appointments, but you must understand that we may request you to undertake a game that falls within the Order of Precedence.

All Supply League appointments received must be closed with The Football Association. “Supply League” appointments only relate to those received as a Referee (not Assistant Referee) in the Recognised Division(s) of that League. Some Supply League Referee Secretaries send the dates they are using you to TheFA. However, this is only for monitoring purposes and we still **require** you to close these dates. Do not attempt to close dates for other football appointments outside the Order of Precedence, as these will not be accepted. In addition, do not attempt to disguise such appointments as other personal closed dates.

If you do not close it, you will show on our system as “Available” Generally, this will only become known if we contact you to undertake a reappointment. If you have not closed the date and are shown as “Available”, then The FA will take you for the Contributory League appointment. Unfortunately, it will be up to you to explain to your Supply League Referees’ Secretary! You must appreciate that with over 30,000 appointments and over 6,000 reappointments, we have to have some structure to the appointing.

There are various times during the year that you will be required to notify The Football Association of your closed dates.

In early May, you will get a Registration Pack and that is the time to send in any known personal or work commitments for the whole season, from 1 July to 31 May the following year.

Any other personal and football closed dates can be closed at any time – literally – by sending an e-mail.

We have a dedicated Closed Dates e-mail box, the address of which is closeddates@TheFA.com. You should always use this and no other address. When closing dates, do not copy in the Appointments Officers or other Referee Department colleagues, as this just duplicates work for them.

In the header of the e-mail, just put the words “Closed Dates” and your FAMOA number – nothing else

e.g. **“Closed Dates - FAMOA 12345”**

In the text box of the e-mail, please keep it very brief. We do not need explanations of the reasons, or in the case of football appointments, we do not need details of competing teams etc. Below are some examples of what should be in the text box.

21/9	-	Personal
22/10	-	Work
1/8 – 15/8	-	Holiday
21/11	-	County Senior Cup
8/10, 15/10	-	Supply League
6/12	-	Contributory League Football Meeting

We should always acknowledge an e-mail from you closing dates. Please remember that when the monthly appointments are published we can have over 2000 e-mails to deal with in a few days, so be patient. If you have heard nothing within 72 hours (three working days), then resend the e-mail, copying in your Appointments Officer.

The Appointment Process

Each of the Contributory Leagues has committed to providing The Football Association with a complete season's fixture list prior to the commencement of the season. There will, naturally, be a number of amendments to that programme, which will be made as the season progresses.

At a certain date each month, the matches to appear in the following month's Appointment Bulletin will be defined and "ring fenced". At this point, the Appointments Officers will commence the Referee and Assistant Referee appointments for the following month.

Referee appointments will be completed after those made by the F.A. Premier League, The Football League and the Panel Leagues competitions. Although the appointments will be made through the MOAS Appointments system, this does not negate responsibility for individual referees to notify these competitions of their Contributory League appointments.

Upon completion of the monthly appointments, the Appointments Officers will provide the dates they are utilising Supply League referees, to those respective Supply Leagues. This enables the individual Supply Leagues the earliest opportunity to commence their referee appointments. It should be noted that this does not negate the responsibility for individual referees to notify their Supply League of their Contributory League appointments.

Once the Appointments Officers have completed all the agreed appointments for the coming month, an electronic Appointments Bulletin will be published on TheFA website.

Monthly Appointments Bulletin

The Football Association will produce an electronic Appointments Bulletin each month during the season. At the start of the season, a list of dates will be published, allowing Match Officials and Clubs to ascertain which "week commencing ..." the appointments will be available. It will contain all fixtures for the coming month, as agreed with the Contributory Leagues.

There will be no production of a hard copy Bulletin, as it is a pre requisite of operating at this level to have Internet access.

These appointments will be available on the FA's website at the following page:

<http://www.thefa.com/ContributoryLeagueOfficials.aspx>

The appointments will be available as a PDF file, which can be easily downloaded from the website.

To search for monthly appointments in the PDF file:

1. Click on **Edit** on the toolbar across the top of the page.
2. Select **Search**
3. Enter your name and click **Search**.
4. The instances where that name appears in the bulletin will be listed on the right hand side on the page. These can be instantly accessed by clicking on them.

Previous months appointment bulletins will remain on-line on the FA's website.

The Football Association may also use the monthly bulletin to communicate important information to Contributory League Match Officials and Club Secretaries.

Acknowledging Appointments

We have a dedicated e-mail box and you should acknowledge your monthly appointments to contriback@TheFA.com . You should “head” the e-mail as follows:

Acknowledgement of Appointments – FAMOA 12345

In the text you should specify the dates of all the games and the two competing teams. Eg.

12/9 - Enfield Town .v. AFC Sudbury
26/9 - Chorley .v. Radcliffe Borough

Do not “copy in” your individual Appointments Officer – this only duplicates work.

Relinquishing an Appointment

There are only three occasions when you would be likely to relinquish a Contributory League appointment. They are:

- To accept another football appointment with higher priority within the Order of Precedence
- For personal or business reasons
- Due to injury or illness

If you receive a football appointment that takes precedence over a Contributory League appointment, you must immediately communicate this fact to your Appointments Officer and request permission for your release. You must ensure that you receive acknowledgement of that request and confirmation of your agreed release.

It is your responsibility to honour any Contributory League appointment. However, it is accepted that there may be occasions, due to personal or business reasons, when you will be unable to fulfil an appointment. The release from an appointment under these circumstances will only be accepted for genuine and valid reasons. In such a case, you must immediately contact your Appointments Officer.

If, unfortunately, you become ill or are injured, you must contact your Appointments Officer immediately, if it is likely that the illness or injury will prevent you from fulfilling a Contributory League appointment. In contacting the Appointments Officer, be prepared to provide him with an estimated date of resumption of duties. The Football Association, in certain situations, may require you to provide authenticated documentary medical evidence of your injury or illness.

Once you have been released from an appointment, it is your responsibility to personally contact all the other Match Officials on that fixture and inform them that you are no longer assigned to that game. In addition, it is your responsibility to contact the home Club Secretary and inform him that you have been released from that appointment and will not be fulfilling it. You should advise the Secretary that he should contact the appropriate Appointments Officer to confirm the details of the replacement Match Official.

The Football Association will maintain a database of withdrawals from appointments and may review the position of any Official on the List should a pattern of unsubstantiated withdrawal develop.

Team Sheets

The match Referee for any Contributory League game will be required to take part in the exchange of team sheets, with representatives of both Clubs, prior to the commencement of the game in accordance with the Competition Rules.

The team sheet is a multi part, self carbonating document, which acts as team sheets for both Clubs, also has facilities for the marking of the Referee (by the Clubs) and will accommodate details of Match Official expenses.

All Match Officials should make themselves conversant with the completion of the form. The Referee is responsible for ensuring that the Referees’ copy of the home club form is retained by him/her for the duration of the season. It should be fully completed with the match details.

Match Reports

At the conclusion of every game, the Referee will be required to complete a Match Report, whereby the cautions and sending offs for both teams are to be documented. It also has a facility for the Referee to record any breaches of League rules or directives in that particular game. The purpose of the Match Report is to ensure that the Clubs and the Competition has the information regarding disciplinary action taken against players. In addition, it facilitates the reporting of League Rule breaches to the individual League. This Report must be submitted after every game, regardless of whether there is any misconduct to report.

The Match Report is a three (3) part self-carbonating document. The completed copies are distributed by the Referee at the completion of the game as follows:

- The Respective League – by e-mail or post
- } The Home Club Handed to a responsible representative of the Club prior to
- } The Away Club departure from the ground

This form accommodates the cautions and sending offs for each team and also has the facility for documenting breaches of particular League rules or directives by either of the participating Clubs.

If, for whatever reason, either Club does not receive their part of the report after the game, the Referee is responsible for ensuring it is posted to the Club Secretary immediately after the game.

Misconduct Reports

Match Officials should be aware that misconduct reports for matches played in the below mentioned Leagues must be addressed to The Football Association:

- Premier Academy League (Under 18)
- Football League Youth Alliance (Under 18)
- Football Conference North & South
- Isthmian Football League
- Northern Premier League
- Southern League

These forms can be submitted either electronically, or by post.

Only one copy of each form is required. If they are sent by post, they must be sent under separate cover to The Disciplinary Manager and **NOT** with the Referees' copy of the team sheet.

In all other cases, misconduct reports must be forwarded to the parent County Football Association of the Club concerned in duplicate. The parent County F.A. of individual Clubs is documented in The Football Association Competitions Directory.

Assistant Referees (and Fourth Officials, where appointed) are reminded that, in the case of a sending off offence, they must submit a misconduct report to the appropriate authority.

Reports to Individual Leagues

The Match Referee in every Contributory League game has a duty to report breaches of League rules or directives to individual Leagues. They must be documented on the Match Report form and the form must be forwarded to the Secretary of the individual competition.

If a Referee reports a Club for a breach of League rules or directives, he or she must inform a responsible member of the Club, that the breach will be reported and include it on the Match Report form.

Travel Arrangements and Expenses

Every effort must be made to keep travelling expenses to a minimum and **all** Match Officials have a part to play in that quest. The overall responsibility lies with the Match Referee for ensuring the most cost effective and practical joint travel arrangements.

When travelling by private car, you must claim for the journey, calculating the mileage by the shortest route. It is appreciated that, despite this instruction, you may still use another route, which, although providing a quicker journey, is not necessarily the shortest. With the modern development of orbital motorway routes, especially around large conurbations, it is often easier to circumvent these areas, rather than travel through them. That is your choice, but even in these cases, it is imperative that the shortest journey is claimed.

You should be aware that joint travelling arrangements are not always designed on a “pick up on the way” basis. There may be occasions where all three Officials are expected to meet at a mutually agreed point and then all travel together. In these cases, each individual Official is entitled to claim for the short journey to the meeting point.

When arranging for joint travel, every Match Official has an individual responsibility to ensure that the arrangements are made in good time ahead of the match day. It is not acceptable to leave the making of arrangements until the day before the game. If, when making arrangements, it transpires that there has been a replacement to any of the Officials, the remaining Match Official(s) must contact the appropriate Appointments Officer to establish the replacement and whether joint travel is required with that replacement Official.

There will be no dispensation from joint travel on a Saturday. If a Match Official wishes to withdraw from the joint travel arrangement on a Saturday, permission must firstly be sought, but he will do so at his own expense. It is accepted that – for midweek games – many Officials travel direct to the ground from work and that joint travel arrangements under those circumstances are not practical. To be released from any possible joint travel arrangements in these situations, contact your Appointments Officer (preferably by e-mail). If no authority is sought to be released from midweek joint travel, that Official will not be entitled to claim travelling expenses.

If a Match Official travels to a game by public transport, that Official may claim the appropriate second-class rail fare or any costs incurred by using bus, tram or ferry. In all cases of public transport being used, a receipt must be requested and must be submitted with the Official's expenses claim postcard. Costs incurred in using toll tunnels, bridges and roads may also be claimed. The non provision of a receipt may negate the paying of travelling expenses.

Prior to the commencement of the season, each Match Official will be issued with postcards, to be used for claiming expenses for each game. A completed expenses card must be submitted to the Home Club Secretary prior to the match and should be supported with the necessary receipts, where appropriate. These cards will be retained by individual Clubs and The Football Association reserves the right to inspect them from time to time to check the claims submitted by Match Officials. If it is established that any Match Official has misclaimed or over claimed travelling expenses, the Football Association also has the right to ensure that these expenses are repaid to the Home Club. In addition, disciplinary sanctions may also be imposed.

Postponement of Matches

Where a Match Official is requested to inspect a field of play to determine its suitability for play, the Home Club must produce a “Certificate of Match Postponement” to be completed and signed by the Match Official. The Home Club must then submit the certificate to the relevant League.

Fitness Tests

The responsibility for preparing and passing the Fitness Test rests with the individual Match Official. The Football Association will provide guidance to Match Officials at the time of registration for the following season, which outlines a training programme to prepare for a Fitness Test. Other advice regarding fitness training can be obtained from your County Football Association Fitness Co-ordinator or the PGMOL Fitness Advisor.

The criteria for fitness levels are set by The Football Association and may be varied from time to time. You will be notified of the structure of the Test in good time to prepare for it.

You will always be required to produce a blood pressure certificate on the day of the Test. This must be a test that was administered by a General Practitioner, a Practice Nurse or other recognised professional and was taken within a period of 14 days prior to the Test. The test must be below the pressure specified to you on your Registration Form and must be produced on letter headed paper or a provided blood pressure card authenticated with an official stamp.

If no blood pressure certificate is produced on the day, an unauthenticated certificate is produced, or the level is above the specified limit the Match Official will not be allowed, under any circumstances, to take the Test. There is no concession on this ruling, for obvious health and safety reasons.

You should never attempt to take a Fitness Test if you are injured or suffering from some form of illness. Apart from the obvious medical reasons for not doing so, you may jeopardise your place on the National List of Contributory League Match Officials if you are unsuccessful in completing the Test.

The Football Association reserves the right to call upon a Match Official to take a Fitness Test at any time during the season if there is a doubt over the level of fitness of that Match Official or if they are returning from a prolonged period of injury.

If you are unable to complete a scheduled Fitness Test, The Football Association may require you to produce documented medical evidence as to your injury or illness.

Preparation on Match Day

It is appreciated that, at this level of football, many Match Officials will have full time occupations and that, on occasions, it will be difficult to avoid working on the day of a match, especially midweek games. However, to ensure the most professional preparation possible, Match Officials should attempt to minimise the disruption to their pre-match planning.

Dress Code

In order to present a professional image to Clubs, a certain standard of dress is expected of Match Officials at this level. Match Officials will wear either a jacket and trousers or a suit and a shirt and tie. Female Match Officials must wear a jacket with trousers or skirt and a blouse.

Match Officials must wear **kit** comprising plain black shirts, with white collars and black shorts. Socks must be black with a white top. All Match Officials will wear the FAMOA badge on their uniforms on any Contributory League match. If a Match Official has been awarded The Football Association representative badge, this will be worn in place of the FAMOA badge. Match Officials may wear the badge of their Parent County Football Association in addition to the FAMOA badge where the County Football Association has given its approval for this combination to be worn.

Travelling to the Ground

All Match Officials should ensure that they have allowed sufficient time to travel to the ground. They should be in possession of a map showing the location of the ground, if available, and have planned a route to the ground, if they have not previously visited it. Route planner software programmes can be purchased, or can be found on several motoring web sites, via the Internet, or via one of the motoring organisations.

As the amount of traffic on the roads increases, the possibility of delay also increases. Prior to travelling, Match Officials should make every effort to identify delays caused by road works or incidents. Again, these can be found on the Internet, Teletext or even by visiting individual League web sites, where long term road works or other reasons for delay are often documented. In winter months, it would also be advisable to check the weather forecast, in case of inclement weather that would affect driving conditions.

It is inevitable that, on occasions, Match Officials will be delayed travelling to grounds. It would be wise to be in possession of a mobile telephone, in case of emergencies. You should always have to hand the contact telephone numbers of the other Match Officials (if travelling alone), the Home Club Secretary, the ground you are travelling to and your Appointments Officer. If you are delayed in any way and anticipate arriving late, ensure that your match colleagues and the Home Club Secretary are apprised of your progress.

Arriving at the Ground

Upon arrival at the ground, it is your responsibility to seek out and confirm your arrival with the Home Club Secretary or person responsible for liaising with the Match Officials. Where appropriate the Referee should also make early contact with the Home Club Safety Officer. The Safety Officer will advise the Referee of the current situation regarding safety issues and will confirm times and locations of any pre-match briefings.

On Football Conference Regional games you must arrive at least 90 minutes prior to the scheduled kick off time. On all other Contributory League appointed matches, you must arrive at least 60 minutes prior to the scheduled kick off time. In practice, it would be better if you arrive well before this time.

Reporting of Late Arrival

If an Assistant Referee arrives later than the stipulated time, he must submit a report to his designated Appointments Officer, explaining the reason for his late arrival and the time of arrival. In addition, the match Referee must also report this fact to the Assistant Referee's Appointments Officer. Where a Referee arrives late for a match, he must report himself late to his designated Appointments Officer. This report must be made immediately after the match by e-mail.

Non-Appearance of a Match Official

The Contributory Leagues Review Board has agreed with all participating Competitions that, in the event of a non-appearance of a Match Official, both Clubs must agree to a replacement Official. This ensures that a match will go ahead as scheduled despite the non-appearance of a Match Official.

If a Match Official fails to arrive at a ground at the stipulated time, the other Officials at the ground should attempt to make contact with the missing Official, firstly by mobile telephone and then by telephone, to the home address. If no contact is made by making these enquiries, the Officials at the ground should then contact the Home Club Secretary and confirm that the missing Official has (a) been contacted by the Home Club and (b) whether he has acknowledged that contact.

If both (a) and (b) are affirmative, the Officials present should then contact the Appointments Officer responsible for that Club and inform him of the situation. The Appointments Officer will attempt to arrange a replacement Referee or Assistant Referee, dependent on the status of the missing Official. Contact with the Appointments Officer should be carried out at the earliest opportunity, to give the maximum time to identify a replacement.

If the missing Official is a Referee and the only replacement that can be arranged is an Assistant Referee, then the senior Assistant for that match will take the place of the Referee. "Seniority" for these purposes will be determined by the length of service as a Contributory League Assistant Referee, then length of service as a Senior County Referee and finally by total length of service as a Referee.

If the Appointments Officer can provide no replacement, the Home Club should be asked to make enquiries, possibly by a crowd announcement, to establish a suitable replacement. When a suitable replacement is found, he should be afforded the role and responsibility of an Assistant Referee throughout the time he is carrying out that function. The Home Club may choose to offer financial recompense to such a replacement at their discretion.

If no replacement can be agreed or is available, the match will be completed by the two remaining Match Officials.

After the game, the Match Referee should submit a report to the Appointments Officer, outlining the details. If a person, other than a National List Contributory League Match Official, acted as an Assistant Referee, the report should contain the name and address of the individual.

Team Colours

You should make yourself aware of any potential clash of team colours at the earliest opportunity. Match Officials are reminded that they do not have the authority to deviate from the black uniform. The Laws of the Game require the Goalkeeper to wear colours that distinguish him from the other players (including the other goalkeeper) and the referee and assistant referees.

Guests at Contributory League Matches

The Football Association does not discourage the taking of guests to Contributory League matches. However, there are certain stipulations that Match Officials must take into consideration, if they decide to take guests to a game:

- Match Officials are responsible for the overall behaviour and conduct of any guests they take to matches
- Under no circumstances should a Match Official take more than two guests to a Contributory League match
- There should be no assumption that guests of Match Officials will receive unpaid entry into a ground, or any preferential treatment in respect of hospitality.
- Any such concession must be at the instigation of the Club.
- Once at the ground the Match Officials primary responsibility is preparing for the match and they should, at that point, part company with their guests.
- Under no circumstances should guests accompany Match Officials to, or visit, the dressing room before the match, at half time or after the match.
- Under no circumstances should guests accompany Match Officials onto the field of play.
- Guests should never be taken to a Contributory League game wearing anything that indicates allegiance to one of the participating Clubs.
- No unaccompanied children should be taken to Contributory League matches.

The Dressing Room

The overall control and management of the dressing room is the remit of the match Referee and the other Officials should take their lead from the Referee.

Security of the dressing room whilst it is unoccupied is the responsibility of the Home Club and they must ensure it is locked and secure when the Officials are not present in it. In the event of anything being stolen from the dressing room, or items being damaged within it, the Police need to be informed immediately and the matter reported to the Home Club Secretary and the League concerned. The matter should also be reported to the Appointments Officer of the Match Official concerned. It is advised that you should not take anything of value to a match. If, for whatever reason, you have taken items of value with you to a match, you are strongly advised not to take them into the dressing room.

Injury or Illness During the Match

If the match Referee is injured or taken ill during the game, then the senior Assistant Referee for that match will take the place of the Referee. "Seniority" for these purposes will be determined by the length of service as a Contributory League Assistant Referee, then length of service as a Senior County Referee and finally by total length of service as a Referee. If an Assistant Referee is injured or is taken ill during the game, both Clubs must agree on a replacement and the Match Officials should assist in every way in finding a replacement.

If no replacement can be agreed or is available, the match will be completed by the two remaining Match Officials.

After the game, the match Referee should submit a report to the Appointments Officer, outlining the details. If a person, other than a National List Contributory League Match Official, acted as an Assistant Referee, the report should contain the name and address of the individual.

Warming Up and Warming Down

The Football Association encourage Match Officials to warm up before and warm down after a match.

When carrying out these procedures, Match Officials must not wear any item of clothing that shows affiliation to a particular Contributory League or to any defunct Match Officials Association. This is the case even if the game upon which the Match Official is officiating is of the particular League in question.

Match Officials should be cognisant of their other responsibilities when arranging warm up and warm down times, such as the exchange of team sheets and safety briefings.

When arranging a warm down at the end of a match, the Referee must take note of any issue during the match, which might adversely affect the warm down and should make every effort to minimise the possibility of confrontation. This may include taking the decision not to participate in a structured warm down.

Post Match Hospitality

At this level of football, the majority of Leagues have provision in their League rules to cater for some form of post match hospitality. This may vary from the provision of refreshments after the game, to a formal invitation to attend the Home Club's boardroom.

If Match Officials are invited to join Club officials for post match hospitality, they must be aware of the potential for confrontation if they become involved in discussion regarding contentious incidents from the match. Acceptance of any invitation must be by agreement. Match Officials are not expected to accept or join club officials in hospitality on an individual basis.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Referees

The Referee's performance will be measured in every Contributory League match. Each Club will be required to mark the Referee out of one hundred marks. These marks will be submitted to The Football Association and will form the basis of performance measurement for the Annual Review of Performance.

Each Club will receive a written guide on the marking of Referees and will be asked to follow specific guidelines that include match control, player management and application and interpretation of Law.

Mark	Comment
91-100	This standard of performance will reflect complete confidence in the accuracy of decision making with the application of management and communication skills that create an environment of fair play and add real value to the game.
81-90	This standard of performance will reflect confidence in the level of accuracy in decision making with management and communication skills that enable fair play.
80	THIS IS THE STANDARD OF PERFORMANCE WE EXPECT FROM REFEREES AT THIS LEVEL. It reflects a confident approach to the decision making process with accuracy in the vast majority of those decisions. There will be empathy with the players and a positive contribution towards fair play.
71-79	This standard of performance reflects a reasonable level of accuracy achieved in the decision making process, and some empathy with players that enabled a degree of fair play.
61-70	This standard of performance reflects some shortcomings in the level of accuracy achieved in the decision making process, and little empathy with players to enable fair play.
60 and below	This standard of performance reflects shortcomings in the level of accuracy achieved in the decision making process, and further shortcomings in the empathy with players to enable fair play.

A mark of 80 represents the standard expected of a Contributory League Referee. Where a Club marks a Referee below 60, the Club is required to make comments to The Football Association, substantiating their judgement. These comments will be entered on the Referees' Marking Form, submitted by the Club. All marks awarded to Referees by Clubs will constitute the compilation of a Merit Table.

Assistant Referees

If an Assessor is assigned to a match, he will also mark the Assistant Referees. Any marks received by an Assistant Referee will be recorded and form part of a merit table.

Merit Tables

The Football Association, at its discretion, may issue merit tables for Referees and Assistant Referees. These merit tables are designed to give a Match Official an indication as to their individual position.

Performance Warning Letters

The Football Association will regularly review the Merit Table for both Referees and Assistant Referees. If it is identified that a Referee or Assistant Referee is under performing, the Official may receive a performance warning letter from The Football Association. Once an Official receives such a letter, he or she will be expected to show a substantial improvement during the remainder of the season.

Annual Review of Performance

At the end of every marking season, a Merit Table will be prepared for all Referees on the National List of Contributory League Match Officials. These Merit Tables will be presented to the Contributory Leagues Review Board. In addition, the Head of Senior Referee Development will use the merit table and other indicators to make recommendations as regards the following:

- Consideration for promotion to the National List of Assistant Referees.
- Consideration for promotion to the Panel League List of Referees.
- Consideration for removal from the National List of Contributory League List of Referees
- Consideration for removal from the Panel League List of Assistant Referees
- Consideration for removal from the National List of Contributory League List of Assistant Referees.

A Referee removed from the National List of Contributory League Referees as a result of an annual review may be offered a place as an Assistant Referee on the List for the following season, subject to the Official fulfilling the criteria laid down by The Football Association. If an Assistant Referee is removed from the National List of Contributory League Assistant Referees as a result of an annual review he may only return to that List in future seasons, providing the nomination criteria is satisfied, upon recommendation by his County Football Association and acceptance by The Football Association.

Assessors

The Football Association will administer a National List of Contributory League Assessors. This list will consist of assessors invited to assess at this level of football. Assessors will receive formal training.

Assessors will be appointed to matches at the discretion of The Football Association and are seen as an aid to the development, training and education of Match Officials. They also have responsibility as the guardians of standards.

An Assessor appointed to a Contributory League match must make his presence known to the match officials prior to the game. At the end of the game the Assessor will visit the Match Officials' dressing room to make contact.

At this time the Referee and two Assistant Referees should confirm their e-mail addresses with the Assessor, so that he can forward the assessment as soon as possible.

The Assessor will submit to The Football Association written reports and marks on the Referee and Assistant Referees. The Football Association will make a record of the Assessor's marks for the Match Officials. Copies of the written assessment and the marks awarded by Assessors will be made available to those responsible for the promotion and removal of Match Officials from the National List of Contributory League Match Officials.

The marking guide issued to Assessors is as follows:

Should not be at this level- a performance for the next level	+90
Something special- the “wow” factor	86 – 89
“Did exceptionally well – but not quite the “wow” factor	82 - 85
“Did very well” - above the standard performance	78 - 81
“Did well “– just above the standard we expect	74 - 77
“This is the standard we expect”- the standard performance	70 – 73
“Did ok,” but not quite at the standard expected	66 - 69
“Didn’t do quite well enough”- areas for development need addressing	62 – 65
“Didn’t do well in this game”- Fair amount of development required, major deficiency	58 - 61
Should not be at this level- below that expected	- 57

Contributory League Support Group

Basically, it is there to help you. Each Region has a representative, who will be an experienced Official. The purpose of the Support Group is two-fold:

- To offer independent help and advice on any Refereeing matters, through organised discussion forums and on an individual basis.
- To deliver training and information from The Football Association via regional meetings.

Match Officials will be allocated to a Contributory League Support Group Co-ordinator by The Football Association in relation to his/ her County of residence.

The details of the Contributory League Support Group Co-ordinators are contained in the Contributory League Directory of Match Officials.