

# THE STATE OF SPORTS OFFICIATING 2020

From a survey of 19,000 sports officials nationwide from 15 states:

## A CRISIS IS BREWING

Older officials are not being replaced quickly enough by younger officials

**45%**

of officials report they have less than 6 years remaining in their career

**50%**

of officials are 55 years or older

**12%**

of officials are under 34 years old

## FOR THE LOVE, SHOW ME RESPECT



**70%**

rank LOVE OF SPORTS as the #1 reason for officiating

**BUT**



**55%**

rank **verbal abuse** from fans, coaches and parents as the #1 reason why officials quit



**59%**

don't feel respected by parents and fans



**42%**

feel that institutions do not address poor fan behavior during games

**AND**

**66%**

believe their area does have enough officials to work contests

**63%**

believe officials at their level need more training

### Sports with Most Perceived Shortage of Officials:

Soccer 77%

Field Hockey 75%

Lacrosse 73%

Baseball 73%

### Sports with Most Perceived Need for Training:

Water Polo 72%

Field Hockey 71%

Lacrosse 70%

## WHY PEOPLE OFFICIATE

OFFICIALS RANKED THESE IN THEIR TOP 2 REASONS:



Love of sports

**70%**



Stay in shape

**26%**



Make money

**25%**



Give back to community

**22%**



To be part of officiating community

**17%**



Mentor others

**13%**



Socialization

**11%**



To be in charge

**8%**

## WHY OFFICIALS LEAVE

OFFICIALS RANKED THESE IN THEIR TOP 2 REASONS:



Verbal abuse from parents/fans

**60%**



Verbal abuse from coaches

**50%**



Pay

**22%**



Bad contest assignments

**15%**



Poor treatment by institutions

**11%**



Travel too far

**15%**



Uniforms/supplies too expensive

**14%**



Lack of mentorship

**7%**



Not enough training

**6%**



Required camps

**5%**

## SHOW ME THE MONEY

**66%**  
Believe officials are not fairly compensated

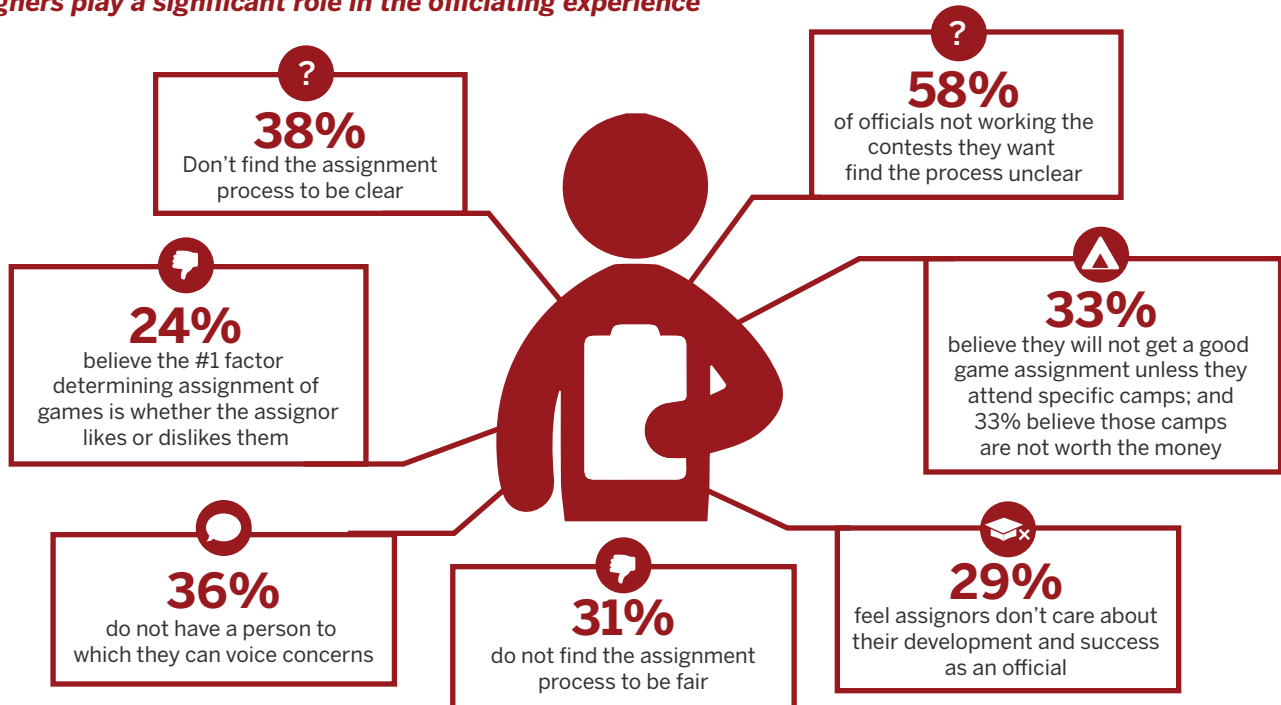
**96%**  
of that group believe there should be at least a 10% pay increase

**63%**  
See non-cash compensation methods as useful (cheaper uniforms, camps, training, memberships)

**39%**  
ranked **MORE PAY** as #1 thing that can be done to improve recruitment and retention of referees

## UNCLEAR ASSIGNMENT

Assigners play a significant role in the officiating experience



## GAMEDAY

### LEAST KNOWLEDGEABLE FANS BY SPORT



Football



Field Hockey



Water Polo

### MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE FANS BY SPORT



Swimming & Diving



Gymnastics



Wrestling



Track & Field



Spirit

**83%** Felt they travel a reasonable amount of distance or time to their games, but officials in Field hockey, Water Polo, Lacrosse, Gymnastics had to travel more inconvenient distances

**80%** Believe fans do not know the rules to the sport

**65%** Believe more rules education for fans would help REDUCE verbal abuse of officials

**55%** Say codes of conduct can work to promote good fan behavior

**50%** Believe venue signage promoting positive treatment of officials can help reduce abuse

### TOP 2 AMENITIES REQUESTED ON SITE BY OFFICIALS:



Security



Private room to change

