**SDCFOA - Crew Chief Manual of Responsibilities (approved 4/22/20)**

It is the philosophy of the SDCFOA that our crew chiefs are the “Backbone of our Association!” We rely on the crew chief to personally represent all that is good in our association to model only the very best for our newer and veteran officials. It is a HUGE honor and responsibility to be a crew chief in the SDCFOA.

***LEADERSHIP – defined by Brene Brown in Dare to Lead – “I define a leader as anyone who takes responsibility for finding potential in people and processes, and who has the courage to develop that potential.”***

First and foremost, our crew chiefs are teachers charged with the development of their crew and all officials who come in contact with their crew. That philosophy also extends to our referees who lead crews on freshman and youth games. We are all teachers and learners out there!

The high school crew chief’s responsibilities can be broken down into thirds: 1/3 drafting a great crew; 1/3 developing that crew (including substitute officials); 1/3 being a great referee on the field.

Every crew chief is expected to be a mentor, a trainer, a conduit for information, and a positive steward of the association. If a crew chief were to fall short in carrying out his responsibilities, the other members of the crew will be receiving **less** leadership, instruction, and guidance than other association members. In other words, that crew chief’s officials would be cheated! This manual is meant to clearly outline the activities and responsibilities of the crew chief. By following this format, a crew chief will be providing their crew with the established leadership, instruction and guidance, and the crew members will not be “cheated”, rather will be rewarded for being on your crew!

**A crew chief in the San Diego County Football Official’s Association is expected to:**

* Be a positive, effective leader and mentor of the crew.
* Be in appropriate physical condition and be able to physically carry out all on-field responsibilities of a crew chief and the referee position.
* Have extensive knowledge and demonstrate a high proficiency of the NFHS rules and penalty enforcements. This includes responsibility for the crew’s application of the rules.
* Have extensive knowledge and demonstrate a high proficiency of the SDCFOA mechanics. This includes responsibility for the crew’s application of the mechanics. Uses only SDCFOA mechanics.
* Be available to work all varsity and the majority of the JV games assigned to the crew.
* Coordinate with crew regarding game site details, arrival times, locker room access, etc.
* Conduct effective and informative pre-game discussions. This includes discussions on rules, mechanics, special situations, and previous game reviews. It is the responsibility of the crew chief to ensure that all crew members participate in the discussions.
* Conduct effective and informative halftime discussions. This includes reviewing unusual plays, situations, and mechanics, allowing for crew input, and preparing the crew for the second half.
* Conduct an appropriate postgame discussion that includes game review, compliments and constructive criticism.
* Review game film with the crew when film if available.
* Keep crew updated on changes during the season to mechanics and points of emphasis.
* Be an exemplary representative of the SDCFOA while on the field, off the field, and at special events.  This includes appropriate interaction with fellow officials, game staff, players, coaches, team/school representatives, and the media.
* Attend instructor and crew chief meetings prior to all regular meetings.
* Attend the annual crew draft appropriately prepared.
* Make honest and informed recommendations regarding present and past crew members. This includes informing other crew chiefs of “un-draftable” officials at the annual draft and providing appropriate playoff recommendations to the assignment secretary.
* Notify crew members as soon as possible following the draft and after receiving playoff assignments.
* Serve as an extension of the SDCFOA training program. This requires that, when available, a crew chief must officiate youth football and help train newer officials.
* Support the association’s ratings program by providing informative and comprehensive ratings reviews for all officials worked with. The crew chief will also encourage his crew and all certified officials he works with to do the same.
* Be knowledgeable of the business, activities, and policies of the association and be able to convey that information to their crew and other within the association.
* Be responsive to communications from others within the association.
* Only the crew chief will Referee high school varsity games unless another official has been assigned as crew chief (in the regular crew chief’s absence), or another official is assigned due to requirements of being on a supplemental crew chief list.
* Only the crew chief will Interact with members of the media.

The position of crew chief is not guaranteed, and selection is valid for one year. All crew chiefs will be evaluated every year by the Crew Chief Selection Committee (CCSC) to validate that the crew chief remains in good standing with the requirements of being a crew chief. The CCSC will then determine which crew chiefs will retain their crew chief status for the following season, which crew chiefs will retain their crew chief status with conditions, and which crew chiefs will not retain their crew chief status. Failure to make a genuine effort to follow the above guidelines may negatively impact the crew chiefs’ post season schedule and may result in the loss of the position of crew chief.

**Leadership Style**

Developing a balanced leadership style is the expectation of the SDCFOA. By balanced, we mean that there is a “balance” between the concerns for the comfort of the crew and the concerns for results.

A crew chief that operates in a style that is totally accommodating, places performance and results as a distant-second priority. In this style there is only a concern for the comfort and happiness of each individual. This exaggerated concern about the members' needs and feelings assumes that, as long as they are [**happy**](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/building-positive-team.htm)  and secure, they will work hard. Research shows that what tends to be the result is a crew that is very relaxed and fun, but where productivity suffers because there is a lack of direction and control. In the end, the crew members who wish to grow and achieve are frustrated. Only the well-below average official is rewarded as he/she is allowed to maintain the status quo with minimal effort. Unfortunately, research shows that the crew, and its individuals, actually slides backward in their performance, and satisfaction is relatively low.

A crew chief that operates in a style that is totally task oriented places results over the comfort of the crew. This “authoritarian” leadership style believes that their crew members are simply a means to an end. The crew's needs are always secondary to its productivity. This type of crew chief develops their own strict rules, policies and procedures, and can view intimidation as an effective way of motivating team members. This approach can

drive impressive results at first, but low crew morale and motivation will ultimately affect people's performance. This type of leader will also struggle to retain highly talented and motivated crew members.

These two exaggerated styles of leadership are based upon theories of individual motivation. Crew chiefs who believe that crew members are self-motivated and happy tend to lead in the “Country Club” or accommodating style. Crew chiefs who assume that crew members are naturally unmotivated and dislike extra effort tend to lead from an authoritarian approach. The reality is, it’s just not that simple. A crew is most likely made up of officials from both sides of the continuum. Some will be highly self-motivated, and others will be relatively unmotivated. The same will be true with their officiating skills and experience levels.

So the expectation of the SDCFOA should be very clear, your leadership style needs to be situational and balance overall. When important decisions must be made, and the risk of failure is great, it is best that the crew chief step up, make a decision, explain the rationale to the crew, and assist them as they comply. When a decision is low-risk, or there is adequate time for processing, a crew-decision is more effective. In this way, individual needs are accommodated yet productivity is high. Have fun and work hard!

**Physical Condition & Appearance**

Each official is unique in their physical characteristics. Many times the age of the official is a major factor in their fitness. Thus, it is each crew chief’s responsibility to honestly assess their own, unique fitness level and implement a year-round fitness routine that will keep them healthy, fit, and free of injury. Many times it is desirable for the official to obtain professional assistance when developing a healthy diet and an effective strength and conditioning program. In addition, the crew chief must be well groomed and professionally dressed. Business casual dress is the standard for dress along with a conservative hair style and no facial hair. The crew chief must also wear a newer-looking uniform that can be tailored to fit. All of these expectations leads to a physically fit, healthy and impressive looking crew chief who will make a very positive first impression with the coaches, players, staff, and fans!

**Professional Conduct & Communication**

Crew chiefs are the most visible and important representatives of the SDCFOA. As such, it is imperative that they communicate with all in the football community in a pleasant, friendly and professional manner. As the leader of the crew, the crew chief must respond quickly to all inquiries, both within and outside the Association. All verbal, and non-verbal communication should underscore the crew chief’s desire for fairness and convey a passion for the game of football. The crew chief will respect all coaches, players, staff and fans. When communicating, the crew chief will be confident, fair and decisive. The crew chief will be open to criticism and honest in his own self-evaluation.

**Time Management**

The crew chief must create and share the weekly and game-day time schedule with the crew. The expectation is that all are either early, or on-time. Crew chiefs must constantly be aware of the crew’s time schedule and it is highly recommended that a member of the crew be assigned as a back-up manager of the crew’s awareness of the time schedule. Components of the schedule will include meetings, arrival, on-field, pre-game, coin toss, kick offs, official time outs, unofficial time outs, halftime, etc.

**Mechanics**

The SDCFOA Mechanics and Philosophies Manual contains all of the approved mechanics for three, four and five-man crews. The seven-man mechanics manual can be found on-line at [www.sdcfoa.org](http://www.sdcfoa.org). The crew chief will use the manual and its adopted mechanics and philosophies when conducting the pre-season meetings. The manual contains a discussion of much of the contents of this document as well as goal setting, crew organization, and weekly routines. The “Soup-to-Nuts” meeting will be organized around the contents of the 5-man mechanics manual. Special attention will be paid to game preparation, pre-snap routines, crew communication, vision patterns, purposeful movement, penalty enforcement, dead ball officiating, and effective communication with coaches and game personnel. The crew chief will utilize game film from Hudl to reinforce desired mechanics.

**Rules Knowledge**

The coaches, players and fans expect the officials, and especially the referee, to know the rules of the game. The crew chief must be able to accurately quote rules from the rule book so as not to be misunderstood. It is expected that the referee will do individual and/or group rules study year-round. Once the crew is determined, one member (or in rotation around the crew) will be assigned to lead a rules study quiz each week. The quiz will be sent out by the member mid-week and the crew will discuss the results during pre-game. If it is obvious that the pre-game will be short, the crew chief will find a time late in the week to discuss the quiz results. The quiz must be of a reasonable length (2-3 questions if challenging, 5 questions if the questions are merely review). Finally, penalty enforcements will be quickly determined, and accurately enforced. If there is a huddle, it will be for the purpose of gaining information regarding the action and foul, not for the purpose of determining the penalty enforcement.

**Philosophies and Judgment**

The crew chief will review the philosophies in detail during the soup-to-nuts meeting prior to the season. Furthermore, the crew chief will use the philosophies when evaluating fouls on Hudl. The crew chief may also use these philosophies when discussing game action with a crew member and the action only rises to the level of “questionable”, no advantage gained, no material restriction, or the action is deemed to be in the category of a safety foul. The crew chief will instruct the crew to be extremely cautious if a philosophy is conveyed to a coach as to why a foul was not called, rather they will be encouraged to convey to the coach that they saw the action and it was judged to be legal.

**Drafting Your Crew**

The crew chief will attend one of the three pre-draft meetings set up by the association. The crew chief will bring materials and lists that will help capture the information shared by other crew chiefs and the assignor. The crew chief will then prepare his lists in an order that will be used to guide selections. The ideal crew will be a balance between veteran and newer officials. The crew chief will do their best to follow the preferred draft sequence of Back Judge – Line Judge – Head Linesman – Umpire. The ideal crew also demonstrates the diversity of our association and best reflects the participants in the game of football and our schools. The crew chief must not reach in the draft to draft a friend, relative, or draft a highly rated umpire in earlier rounds because of insecurities. The crew chief will call each crew member within 24 hours of the draft. This does not mean that the crew chief actually speaks to all crew members, but an attempt to reach them must be made immediately. The crew chief will confirm the position that that official will work on the crew.

**Crew Organization**

The organization of the crew is a critical responsibility of the crew chief and must be done during two pre-season meetings. The two meetings take place between the draft and the crew’s assigned scrimmage. Getting everyone to meet twice within this 10-week window can be extremely challenging but the benefits are huge for the crew chief and the crew! The meetings should be face-to-face, but a conference call or skype-type call might be used for the first meeting. It is the crew chief’s responsibility to get the crew organized so they can all contribute and participate in the organization and success of the crew. It is also through these two meetings that the crew chief will share expectations and set standards for the crew.

The first meeting should provide an opportunity to get to know each other personally and professionally, to establish personal and crew goals for the season, and to get organized as a crew. The crew chief must provide and agenda for the meeting and a goal setting form that lists most of the topics from this manual. In this way the crew will be fully prepared for a productive meeting. The crew chief should lead the introductions and personal and professional backgrounds portion of the meeting as each member shares about their background, family, profession, and officiating experiences. Next, the crew chief will share his officiating experiences from last year and how that led to the selection of his personal goals for the current year. After each member has shared their personal goals for the season, the crew chief will begin the process of crew assignments. Members will either volunteer or be assigned one, or more, of the following jobs:

* HUDL cut ups;
* Game location including directions, parking, location of dressing rooms and locker rooms;
* Scouting the teams, coaches and key players for each game;
* Nutrition and hydration;
* Weekly rules quiz or rules presentation;
* Weekly crew goals.
* Post-game location and banker;
* Weekly presentation of a play the crew has not yet seen;
* Thought for the week to be shared just before going out on the field.

The second meeting should be what we call “Soup-to-Nuts”. This needs to be a face-to-face meeting. This is where the crew conducts a thorough review of the mechanics for 5-man officiating which may take upwards of two hours if done properly. The crew chief must be highly organized and set high standards and clear expectations for the crew. Communication, pre-snap routines, coverage, vision, purposeful movement, and dead ball officiating are key issues throughout this review. The crew chief must go into great detail when discussing the crew’s weekly routine, assigned additional duties, pregame, on-field mechanics, halftime, and post-game routines. Again, the referee must be clear and accurate when setting these standards with the crew.

Finally, the assigned high school scrimmage provides a great opportunity for the crew to practice their weekly routine prior to the first game. Crew communication (both signaling and the purposeful use of radios) can be refined at this time. A good pre-game and a thorough post-game can be practiced as a game video via Hudl will be provided the next day. Extensive cut ups should be needed at this time as you “iron out” some rough spots. This scrimmage experience will pave the way for our first weekly routine of the season.

The following is a possible weekly routine that was proven successful for Brad Yosick while serving as one of the all-time great crew chiefs in the SDCFOA. It is expected that each crew chief conduct a weekly routine that works for their life-style and work and family commitments while meeting the expectations of the association.

Saturday

* Work youth or college games. Game video available on Hudl for Hudl Expert to start “Cut Up” of game.

**Sunday**

* Hudl Expert (or crew chief) reviews game and creates cut ups (all fouls, interesting/unusual/critical plays, plus plays for reinforcing proper mechanics.
* Positive efforts by the crew must dominate cut up.
* Send out cut up to crew

**Monday**

* Email crew this week’s pregame (draft). Include game, time, location, arrival time.
* Personal fitness workout
* Start reading one section of the rule book and one section of the mechanics manual

**Tuesday**

* Quiz Monitor sends out the 2-5 rules questions to the crew
* Scout new teams and/or call crew chiefs who had those teams last week
* View the Weekly Instructional Video
* Personal fitness workout
* Continue reading section of rule book and mechanics manual

**Wednesday**

* Site Coordinator emails out game logistics (game, time, location, parking, locker room, internet access for video)
* Site Coordinator may reach out to school (athletic director) via email to introduce crew, confirm arrival time, pre-game facility if no JV game, obtain any extra information from the AD for that game.
* Team Scout emails report on teams (coaches, records, team tendencies, key players, importance of game)
* Attend SDCFOA Meeting
* Personal fitness workout
* Continue reading section of rule book and mechanics manual

**Thursday**

* Social Director emails the name of this week’s post-game meeting place (including address or directions)
* Light personal fitness workout
* Complete study of section of rule book and mechanics manual
* Work freshman or JV game

**Friday**

* Review penalties, distances, automatic 1st downs, loss of downs, and penalty signals
* Arrive early to game site – Plan for 1st impressions by school personnel
* Quiz Master goes over quiz results plus discussion
* Review the Weekly Bull
* View and/or discuss Cut ups plus Coover’s Weekly Instructional Video
* Cover revised pre-game outline (which was amended after being emailed to crew on Monday and receiving additional comments or information during the week)

**Always** be available for them.

**Never** “Big Time” them.

**Always** help them through their struggles.

**Always** recognize their successes.

**Always** model poise, presence, and positive communication.

**Sometimes** work with individuals, on the side, when larger issues come up.

**Pregame Preparation**

The crew chief will develop a pre-game routine that takes into account the scheduled game time and the time available for a full pre-game. If a full pre-game is not going to be possible, then a mid-week meeting/conference call is required. The weekly routine is described in the mechanics and philosophies manual. A full pre-game will include:

1. SDCFOA Weekly Bull
2. Individual and crew goals for the week.
3. Rules quiz.
4. Weekly Instructional Video, Calibration Video, and Crew Cut Ups.
5. Scouting report on teams, players, coaches and the nature of this game.
6. Crew discussion led by each official regarding aspects of the game relative to their position (topics change each week)

Umpire – spots, ball positioning, penalty enforcement

Back Judge – scrimmage kicks, free kicks, fair catches, onside kicks

Line Judge – cross-field mechanics, determining 1st downs, sideline catches, overtime

Head Linesman – determining accurate spots, communicating with coaches, change of possession plays

Referee – zone coverages, intentional grounding, reporting penalties, use of radios.

Other items to consider: a type of play we haven’t seen yet as a crew; a motivational thought for the week.

**Halftime Discussions**

The crew chief must teach the crew how to conduct a comprehensive halftime discussion. This will be done at the “soup-to-nuts” preseason meeting. After concluding the first half of play, the BJ will start his watch to time the halftime when the referee starts the game clock. The crew should already know where they are going at halftime and quickly use the restroom and obtain fluids and nutrition when they arrive at the assigned area. The crew chief will then lead an approximately eight-minute discussion of the following:

1. How are the chains?
2. How are your sidelines/restricted areas?
3. How are your head coaches?
4. How is the timer doing?
5. How is our game tempo?
6. Let’s review the foul report & plays of interest to be included in hudl game cutups.
7. Were there any other unusual plays or necessary adjustments we need to make?
8. How did our “players to watch” do in the first half?
9. What does this game need? Blowout/Overtime?
10. How did we do on our crew goals in the first half?

**Postgame Discussions**

Immediately after congratulations in the locker room, the crew will be seated and repeat the halftime discussion for the second half using the same list of ten questions. The crew member responsible for the Hudl cut ups will keep a record of the fouls, plays of interest, and unusual plays so they will make up the core of the Hudl cut up video. All discussions of fouls should not focus on correctness (Hudl will help with that determination), but rather a recollection of what was observed in the greatest detail possible. Following this approximately 8-minute discussion, the crew can then shower and dress for the postgame meal where additional topics will be discussed. If an observer is present, the observer can present following the crew’s discussion, or can go to the restaurant and conduct the debrief there. In all cases the crew chief must keep the discussion focused, purposeful, honest, and open to suggestions.

**Use of Hudl**

The crew chief will monitor the use of Hudl by each member of the crew. The crew will use the Crew Cut Ups, Weekly Instructional Video, and Calibration Video, to evaluate their previous week’s performance and prepare for the next week’s game. There must be a balance of positive examples and constructive comments. The crew chief must model the need to be honest, accepting of suggestions, and self-critical when necessary. The crew chief may assign the development of the Crew Cut Ups to a crew member, but the crew chief will always monitor, edit and contribute to the final version of the weekly evaluation video.

**Meeting Attendance**

It is expected that the crew chief will attend all association meetings and position clinics. If this is not possible, the crew chief must meet the SDCFOA minimum standards for meeting attendance. But meeting the minimum requirements is never the standard.

**Volume of Work**

The crew chief will work games at all levels including youth and/or college. If the crew chief is working a partial or full college schedule, the crew chief will work with the youth assignor to offer to work on “off weeks”.

**Assessment of Crew & Ratings**

The crew chief will provide honest and accurate assessments of each crew member at the pre-draft meetings and at the draft itself. The crew chief will assess the strengths and weaknesses of each crew members before the season begins. The pre-season meetings will be used to clarify goal areas and to clearly communicate expectations. The crew chief will use the scrimmage and Hudl video to assess the early performance of each crew members. The crew chief will then offer honest and accurate compliments and suggestions for improvement. The crew chief will establish himself as a model of self-criticism and self-motivated improvement efforts. The mid-season evaluation of each crew member will not be inflated and will accurately rate the individual according to the scoring rubric. Recommendations to assigner for playoff assignments will be in the best interest of the SDCFOA membership at-large. The crew chief will complete all ratings on time.