



Rowing British Columbia

Guide to Umpiring in British Columbia

www.rowingbc.ca

Congratulations on taking the first step on your career path as an umpire in Canada. Welcome to the Rowing British Columbia umpire family! Thank you for volunteering your time. We look forward to seeing you at regattas.

This document **is not** intended to be a reference for how to umpire. Please direct any questions you may have to the Chief Umpire at the regatta or a clinician!

This document **is** intended is to provide you with the information you will need as you continue with your umpiring.

The Rowing British Columbia website www.rowingbc.ca provides extensive resources and information for umpires.

We are here to help – don't hesitate to contact the clinicians or the Rowing British Columbia Umpire Committee if you need assistance.

Umpire levels

Umpiring in Canada is controlled by the Umpire Committee of Rowing Canada Aviron, who set the framework for umpiring across the country. The RCA UC is also responsible for the education of umpires.

The current umpire structure is as follows:

Level 1 – Assistant Umpire

- Has taken the Level 1 clinic;
- Provides support to the jury at regattas in a mentored role;
- Decides when ready to move on to Level 2.

Level 2 – Associate Umpire

- Has taken the Level 2 clinic;
- Participates in juries at regattas in a mentored role;
- Decides, typically in consultation with a clinician, when they are ready to challenge the exam.

Level 2 – Umpire

- Has passed the exam;
- Must attend a seminar at least once every three years to retain their licence;
- Is to be evaluated by a clinician every three years;
- Is eligible to travel to out-of-province regattas.

Level 3 – Chief Umpire

- Has attended the Chief Umpire clinic.

Level 4 – Clinician

- Has been appointed a clinician by the RCA UC;
- Has attended the clinician training workshop.

Level 5 – International [FISA] Umpire

- Has been approved by the province and RCA to challenge the FISA Umpire exam;
- Has passed the FISA Umpire exam;
- Has maintained their RCA umpire licence.

Note that possession of a FISA licence does not automatically make the individual a Level 4 Clinician.

The career path

After the Level 1 clinic, you are designated as an Assistant Umpire. You can provide support to the jury at a regatta in a mentored capacity. This is expected to be a short process, during which you will experience the various positions on the jury. The requirements to be met before moving on to the Level 2 Clinic are detailed in the information you will receive at the Level 1 Clinic. When you decide that you want to take the next step, the next step is for you to contact a clinician and indicate you want to take the Level 2 clinic.

After the Level 2 Clinic, you are designated as an Associate Umpire. You can participate as a jury member, but only in a mentored role. The requirements to be met before challenging the Umpire exam are detailed in the information you will receive at the Level 2 Clinic. The process of moving to an Umpire is self-driven. The pace of the progression to Umpire is entirely your own choice. Typically this takes around a year. The more regatta participation, the quicker you will gain the experience and self-confidence to be ready for the exam. Sprint racing provides the best experience, but gaining experience at head races is also important.

When you sign up for a regatta, you will be treated as one of the jury. You will be paired with a level 2 [or higher] umpire who will act as your mentor for that shift. The expectation is that you will initially observe what is taking place, and then the roles will be reversed – you will take control with the mentor watching closely. The more experience you get under your belt, the less the level of over-your-shoulder supervision will become.

We encourage you to keep a record of your jury participation, noting the positions you worked at, and have it signed off by the Chief Umpire.

When you feel confident of your abilities, the time has come to challenge the umpire exam. This decision is normally made in conjunction with a clinician. The exam is made up of two parts, a written module [taking about an hour] followed by a practical [about 30 minutes]. Achieving mastery of both elements results in passing the exam and becoming a Level 2 Umpire.

Once you have become a Level 2 Umpire, you are eligible to apply for positions on National Regatta juries and to participate in the cross-border exchange with the Referees in the US Rowing Pacific NorthWest region.

To maintain your licence, you must attend a recertification seminar at least once in a three-year period. A clinician is required to evaluate each umpire one every three years.

The next step is to become a Chief Umpire. RCA has criteria in place for you to be invited to a Chief Umpire clinic. This clinic provides the grounding for you to deal with the Sanction document [effectively ensuring that everything is in place for a fair and safe event, and putting the RCA insurance in place] and with the Organizing Committee. Initially the new Chief Umpire will be used as an Assistant Chief Umpire, supporting and being mentored by an existing Chief Umpire.

RBC Umpire Committee

Once a year the umpires in British Columbia elect an Umpire Committee, whose job is to deal with the day-to-day administration of umpiring within the province. Typically we elect six members to the RBC UC. Our hope is to have an equal split of members between the Island and the Mainland.

We have now appointed two individuals from within the UC who will act as ombudsmen for the Associate umpires – as always, one for the Island and one for the Mainland. If you have any questions or concerns about how things are going, contact those individuals.

Seminar

One of the major tasks undertaken by the UC is the organization of the annual Recertification Seminar. One seminar is held per year, the location alternating between the Mainland and the Island. The seminar is designed to be of value to both Associates and Umpires – we definitely encourage the Associates to attend. The primary thrust is towards education, but there is also a social and networking aspect. We also provide a forum for anyone to ask questions or raise issues. We view this as an opportunity to thank everyone for their work during the previous year. It is at the seminar that the UC is elected.

Communication

Communication is mainly handled by email.

Mass communication to the umpires is handled by the RBC office for the UC. Your information will be added to the RBC Umpire database after the introductory clinic. The email you provide will be the email we use to communicate with you. We may also call you, but that is not our preferred communication method.

Should you want to contact the RBC UC, use the ucommittee@rowingbc.ca email address – that will reach all the members of the umpire committee.

Regatta signup

In British Columbia the UC takes responsibility for selection of Chief Umpires and juries for all local regattas held in the province. Regattas do not select their own Chief Umpires or juries.

Our annual refresher seminar is typically held in late January once RBC has the regatta schedule firmed up. During the seminar we encourage Umpires and Associates to sign up for the year's regattas. The results of that sign-up process are published in an online GoogleDocs document [available on the RBC website in the "umpire resources" page].

The GoogleDocs sign-up sheet is maintained by the members of the UC; please check to ensure you are listed for the regattas you wish to attend and advise the committee of any changes (additions or deletions) you would like made.

We appreciate that it is often impossible for you to commit your time 11 months out. We encourage you to look at the online document when you know your schedule and to let the UC know what regattas you can participate in. Do that via an email to ucommittee@rowingbc.ca. Similarly, should your schedule change and you are unavailable for a regatta that you had signed up for, please notify the UC via the same email address.

You will see that the online document details the number of umpires required for a regatta. Should we be struggling to locate enough umpires for the regatta, one of the UC members will solicit your participation by phone or email.

When you have signed up for a regatta, expect to be contacted by the Chief Umpire a week or more before the event. The Chief Umpire will let you know the time that you are expected at the site and will provide any specific instructions. If for some reason you have not been contacted by the weekend before the event, please get in touch with the UC.

It helps if you read the published regatta package so that you are familiar with the site, the course and the events that are being run. When you arrive, find out where the Umpires are congregating and introduce yourself to the Chief Umpire or Assistant Chief Umpire. They will give you your assignments for the day and introduce you to your mentor for the first shift.

Expenses.

Rowing British Columbia does an excellent job of supporting the umpires in terms of covering their expenses.

As an Associate Umpire, you are eligible to claim expenses.

Go to the RBC website, where you will find a drop-down box for “umpires” – select the “umpire resources” option. You will see a downloadable Excel spreadsheet for the claim and a PDF providing details of allowable expenses.

Note that RBC’s auditors require original receipts – electronic copies are not allowed.

Expenses are to be claimed within 30 days of the event.

General.

Equipment

RBC supplies most equipment – the goretex jackets, megaphones, radios, radio harnesses, PFD's, flags and stopwatches. The kit also includes a pair of binoculars, which are reserved for use at the finish line. Things you might want to consider purchasing for yourself would be a clipboard, a waterproof bag, rain pants and waterproof footwear.

Uniform

Associate umpires are encouraged to wear clothes that match the umpire uniform – tan pants and a pale-blue shirt.

Level 2 to 4 Umpires are required to wear the tie. They are also encouraged to wear the RCA-crested shirts, but that is not compulsory. In BC we typically wear the goretex jackets instead of the blue blazer that is laid down in the Rules of Racing. If you want to wear the blue blazer, that is fine. FYI, Value Village has been a fertile hunting ground for blue blazers. Should you participate in a National Regatta, the blue blazer is mandatory except in the case of inclement weather.

RBC Policies.

RBC policies apply to umpires and associates. These policies are found on the RBC website. Follow the “about RBC” link to “Governance” and finally to “Policies”. The policies are:

- Rowing BC Code of Conduct and Ethics
- Rowing BC Discipline and Complaints Policy
- Rowing BC Appeal Policy
- Rowing BC Dispute Resolution Policy
- Rowing BC Conflict of Interest Policy
- Rowing BC Commitment to Fair Play Policy
- Rowing BC Drug Free Sport Policy