



**WORLD POOL ASSOCIATION**

## **Sanctioning Guidelines**

## **SANCTIONING GUIDELINES.**

### **Introduction:**

1. Sanctioning is an important feature of all major pool Tournaments. It is a key responsibility of the World Pool Association (**WPA**) at an international level, for its members the six Continental Federations (**CFs**) at a continental level and for its National Federations (**NFs**) at a national level.

**International Tournaments.** A tournament is an International Tournament if it comprises athletes from two or more continents.

**Continental Tournaments.** A tournament is a Continental Tournament if it comprises athletes from two or more countries within the continent or if it is an International Tournament for less than USD 40,000 which is not sanctioned by the WPA

**National Tournaments.** A tournament is a National Tournament if it only comprises athletes from within the relevant country.

2. The WPA has defined the continents for the purpose of these guidelines in Appendix A. This definition applies throughout the Rules and Regulations generally. Our definition adopts the IOC's National Olympic Committee's continental definitions.
3. This document sets out the requirements and benefits of an International Tournament receiving the sanction of the WPA. If further information or clarification is required, please contact the WPA by email at [info@WPApool.com](mailto:info@WPApool.com).
4. The actions of the WPA in dealing with the grant of sanctioning for an International Tournament may be performed by the WPA's Board or by the Board's duly authorised delegate. In this document where the context requires, the words an International Tournament includes World Championships.

### **International Tournaments**

#### **Categories**

5. During any year there are many Tournaments organised in the world of Pool. The WPA itself, its members the CFs and their members the NFs, all organise or host Tournaments. In addition, many of the Tournaments are organised by commercial promoters.
6. In these guidelines the term "Tournament Organiser" covers both commercial promoters and businesses and also CFs and NFs where they organise Tournaments directly
7. There is a substantial range in the size and significance of Tournaments. International Tournaments are classified by the WPA into the following five categories. The reference to "added prize money" is to prize money in

addition to entry fees charged by Tournament Organiser that may be applied as prize money:

- 7.1. **Category 1.** World Championships or Tournaments offering a minimum of USD 200,001 of added prize money;
- 7.2. **Category 2.** Tournaments offering between USD 125,001 and USD 200,000 of added prize money;
- 7.3. **Category 3.** Tournaments offering between USD 75,001 and USD 125,000 of added prize money;
- 7.4. **Category 4.** Tournaments offering between USD 40,001 and USD 75,000 of added prize money; and
- 7.5. **Category 5.** Tournaments offering up to USD 40,000 of added prize money.

Payments to athletes for appearance money or other costs are not included in the calculation of “added prize money”.

8. Only WPA Sanctioned Tournaments are eligible for World Ranking Points. The Ratified Tournaments referred to below are not eligible for World Ranking Points.

#### **When does a Tournament need to be sanctioned?**

9. Sanctioning is required when an International Tournament is any of a Category 1 Tournament to a Category 4 Tournament.
10. Sanctioning may, if requested, be granted to a Category 5 International Tournament at the sole discretion of the WPA and upon such additional conditions as it may require.
11. Ratified Events do not require sanctioning. In this regard a Ratified Event is one has been approved by the WPA Board – see paragraph 50 and following below.

#### **Entry & Sanction fees**

12. Tournament Organiser may charge an entry fee to Tournaments, but this fee is not added to the prize fund for the purpose of calculating a sanctioning fee.
13. A sanctioning fee shall be negotiated between the WPA and the Tournament Organiser but will usually be not less than 7.5% of the total added prize money in all Categories.
14. CFs and NFs cannot charge a fee to a Tournament Organiser in respect of a WPA Sanctioned Tournament.
15. An NF cannot charge a fee to a Tournament Organiser in respect of a CF Sanctioned Tournament

## Procedure

16. The WPA Board has the right to sanction a Tournament in any country. Prior to a sanction being granted the following steps must be followed:-
  - 16.1. The WPA Board will not consider any sanctioning application until a corresponding letter from the WPA member is attached to the application, affirming that the CF and its NF have no objection to the sanctioning.
  - 16.2. This means that any Tournament Organiser that wants to sanction an event with the WPA must first contact the CF and NF responsible for the location where the Tournament will be held.
  - 16.3. The CF has an obligation to send a final answer to the Tournament Organiser within 14 days after receiving the application from the Tournament Organiser. In this regard the NF must provide any comments it may have to the CF within 7 days.
  - 16.4. If no timely response is received from the CF, the WPA Board has the right to proceed to decide the sanctioning request.
  - 16.5. If the CF objects to the Tournament being sanctioned it shall advise the WPA of its reasons in writing at the same time that it advises the Tournament Organiser of its refusal.
  - 16.6. If the Tournament Organiser and the CF agree to extend the 14 day application period, this agreement must be in writing.
17. An application to the WPA Board must use the WPA's published application form unless otherwise agreed by the WPA Board.
18. The CF, its NF and the Tournament Organiser will each provide to the General Secretary copies of all correspondence (including letters, emails and text messages) in relation to an application made under the previous clause as they occur.
19. Notwithstanding the objection by a CF to the sanctioning of a Tournament the WPA Board may choose to resolve in principle to sanction that Tournament on such terms and conditions as it chooses to impose. If this occurs, then the WPA Board will inform the CF in writing of its reasons for sanctioning the Tournament.
20. In relation to the timing of an application for sanctioning for Championships or Tournaments due to commence after 1 July 2026 the following time requirements shall apply (unless waived or modified by the WPA Board):-
  - 20.1. **Category 1** applications should be made at least 12 months before the date when the World Championship or Tournaments is due to commence;
  - 20.2. **Category 2** applications should be made at least 10 months before the date when the Continental Open Championships or Tournaments are due to commence;

- 20.3. **Category 3** applications should be made at least 8 months before the date when the Tournament is due to commence;
- 20.4. **Category 4** applications should be made at least 6 months before the date when the Tournament is due to commence; and
- 20.5. **Category 5** applications should be made at least 4 months before the date when the Tournament is due to commence.

In relation to the timing of an application for sanctioning for Championships or Tournaments due to commence before 1 July 2026, the time requirements shall be dealt with by the WPA on a case by case basis, but applications should be made as soon as possible.

- 21. An application for sanctioning by a Tournament Organiser shall be in writing and shall include the following:-
  - 21.1. The letter from the CF confirming it has no objection;
  - 21.2. The proposed name of the Tournament;
  - 21.3. The proposed discipline;
  - 21.4. The location and dates of the Tournament;
  - 21.5. The size and gender/s of the playing field;
  - 21.6. The basis upon which athletes will be invited to participate;
  - 21.7. The amount of the added prize money;
  - 21.8. The proposed entry fee if any; and
  - 21.9. any request for the Tournament to be excused from any of the WPA's Rules and Regulations of Pool.
- 22. Upon receipt of an application in writing for sanctioning, the General Secretary will:
  - 22.1. confirm that it has a letter of support from the relevant CF that it does not object to the Tournament;
  - 22.2. if there is no letter of support, refer the application to the relevant CF; and
  - 22.3. if the CF objects to the Tournament, the General Secretary shall if requested by the Tournament Organiser, refer the matter to the WPA Board.
- 23. Once a letter of support has been received from a CF, or the WPA Board has resolved in principle to sanction a Tournament under clause 16 above, then the Sports Director will review the application and decide whether to:-
  - 23.1. grant the application;
  - 23.2. grant it on varied terms (including for example the date or location of the Tournament); or
  - 23.3. refuse the application.

24. If the Tournament has a letter of support from a CF and it is proposed that the application will be granted on varied terms, the General Secretary will liaise with the CF about those variations and seek its approval. If approval is not granted clause 16 above may apply.
25. Once the application is granted or the Tournament Organizer has agreed to proceed with the application on the varied terms then:-
  - 25.1. the Sports Director will provide written approval to the Tournament Organiser with the relevant sanctioning conditions for that Tournament;
  - 25.2. the Sports Director will allocate the Tournament with a Tournament Sanction Number;
  - 25.3. The WPA will send an invoice to the Tournament Organizer for payment of the sanction fee.
26. The Tournament Organiser must pay the sanction fee within 14 days of the invoice being issued.
27. Once the sanctioning fee is paid the Sports Director will place the Tournament in the WPA Sports Calendar and will send a Tournament Information Pack to the Tournament Organiser which will include a WPA logo to be used in all Tournament related promotional and advertising activities by the Tournament Organiser.
28. If the sanctioning fee is not paid within 14 days, then the approval of the Tournament may be suspended or cancelled by the decision of the Sports Director.
29. The WPA Board may choose to sanction any Tournament at any time on such terms and conditions as it chooses to impose. These terms may include not awarding Global Ranking Points for the Tournament. This sanction may occur irrespective of whether an application has been made or not. If this sanction occurs, then:
  - 29.1. the Sports Director will place the Tournament in the WPA Sports Calendar with the initials (IS) indicating an Imposed Sanction; and
  - 29.2. the WPA Board will inform the CF in writing of its reasons for sanctioning the Tournament.
30. A Tournament may be sanctioned by the WPA Board retrospectively.

### **Provisional Sanctioning**

31. The Board may, in its absolute discretion, agree to provide provisional sanctioning to a prospective tournament or a tournament concept to enable its Tournament Organiser to seek "in principle sponsorship".
32. The grant of provisional sanctioning will be subject to such terms and conditions as the Board may impose. These terms and conditions may be varied at any time by the Board.

33. The grant of provisional sanctioning does not mean that the tournament or a tournament concept will in fact be sanctioned by the WPA. The Tournament Organiser will need to seek sanctioning following the procedures in these Guidelines in the usual way set out above.
34. A Tournament Organiser who has been granted provisional sanctioning shall not use the words “sanctioned by the WPA” or words to that effect and shall not use the WPA logo or other trademarks.
35. A Tournament Organiser who has been granted provisional sanctioning shall not seek or be paid any fee or other benefit nor procure a promise to be paid any fee or other benefit in the future, on the basis of the provisional sanctioning.

### **Escrow**

36. For all new Tournament Organisers, the prize fund for their first Tournament must be secured in an escrow account nominated by the WPA not less than 60 days prior to the commencement date of the Tournament. This procedure will apply to all new Tournament Organisers. It will also apply to any Tournament Organiser who, in relation to an earlier Tournament, failed to make the prize money payments within 14 days after the Tournament concluded.
37. If the funds have not been secured in escrow as required, the WPA is obliged to advise the athletes of the situation.

### **Default**

38. If Tournament Organiser is in default of any of its obligations in respect of a Sanctioned Tournament, the WPA may either suspend the sanctioning of the Tournament until the default is remedied or revoke the sanctioning of the Tournament.

### **Withholding Tax**

39. Where it is necessary for tax to be deducted from an athlete’s winnings, tax certificates must be issued by the Tournament Organiser to the athletes. Details of the procedures concerning tax being withheld and tax certificates must be included in any Tournament information that is given to the athletes by the Tournament Organiser.

### **Notification**

40. All relevant information regarding the Tournament must be available for the CFs and their NFs to distribute to its athletes not less than 60 days prior to the Tournament commencing.

41. Athlete registration for a Tournament will occur via a facility on the WPA website.

**What benefits do the Tournament Organisers receive from the WPA sanction?**

42. The Tournament date will be reserved and must be respected by the WPA's CFs and their NFs.
43. In relation to a Category 1 Tournament.
- 43.1. In the case of a World Championship the President (or nominee) will be present. He will arrive 1 day before the Tournament and leave 1 day after the Tournament. The economy class travel costs and the transfers and accommodation costs will be paid by the Tournament Organiser.
- 43.2. The Sports Director (or nominee) will be present. He will arrive 2 days before the Tournament and leave 1 day after the Tournament. The travel costs are paid by the WPA, but the transfers and accommodation costs will be paid by the Tournament Organiser. His main role is to support the Tournament Organiser, officials and the athletes.
- 43.3. The WPA supplies the medals when the event being held is an official World Championship.
- 43.4. If requested, referees can be provided. The costs will be negotiated with the Tournament Organiser by the WPA.
44. Any Tournament information will be distributed and promoted by the WPA, its CFs and their NFs.
45. The use of the WPA logo for publicity purposes is allowed.

**What benefits does the venue receive from the WPA sanction?**

46. A Sanctioned Tournament distinguishes itself from other tournaments with the prestige of being recognised by the WPA. WPA Sanctioned Tournaments can also unlock available funding from governments and opens more doors with corporate sponsors.
47. The venue is showcasing the best athletes from around the world and will be mentioned and featured in coverage of the Tournament on all WPA platforms.
48. Finally, the venue has the comfort of knowing that that the highest authority of the sport will deal with any disciplinary issues that may be necessary.

**What benefits do the athletes receive from the WPA sanction?**

49. Athletes can be confident that the Tournament and its Tournament Organiser have been vetted by the WPA and that our criteria have been met.



50. Athletes can also be assured of fair play being followed from the draw through to the conclusion of the finals and that the Rules and Regulations of the WPA will apply.
51. The WPA will have an official available to assist with any unforeseen circumstances. The WPA will also provide assistance in the event that the Tournament Organiser has not paid the prize money in a timely fashion.
52. Athletes receive World Ranking Points from Sanctioned Tournaments which helps them receive invitations to future Tournaments and increases their chances of securing personal sponsors.
53. The WPA sanctions Tournaments in different disciplines (8-Ball, 9-Ball, 10-Ball, Straight Pool/14.1, and Heyball) It will ensure that two WPA Sanctioned Tournament do not occur in the same discipline at the same time.
54. The WPA will also seek to coordinate Sanctioned Tournament wherever possible to enable athletes to play in multiple Sanctioned Tournaments before leaving one continent to travel to another.

### **Ratified Events**

55. A Tournament Organiser that wants to have a Pool Event ratified by the WPA Board make seek ratification by applying in writing to the General Secretary.
56. An application for ratification by a Tournament Organiser shall be in writing and shall include the following:-
  - 56.1. the proposed name of the Pool Event;
  - 56.2. the proposed discipline;
  - 56.3. the location and dates of the Pool Event;
  - 56.4. the size and gender/s of the playing field;
  - 56.5. the basis upon which athletes will be invited to participate;
  - 56.6. the amount of the added prize money;
  - 56.7. the proposed entry fee if any; and
  - 56.8. any request for the Pool Event to be excused from any of the WPA's Rules and Regulations of Pool.
57. The intention of the ratification of Pool Events is to support initiatives which will serve to develop or enhance the game of Pool. Ratified Pool Events may include, but are not limited to, exhibition events, demonstration events, instructional events and experimental events.
58. The WPA Board may in its absolute discretion determine whether an event shall be classified as a Ratified Pool Event.
59. The WPA Board may impose conditions it considers as appropriate in relation to a Ratified Pool Event.
60. If the application is granted, then:-

- 60.1. the General Secretary shall provide written approval to the Tournament Organiser with the relevant ratification conditions for that Pool Event;
- 60.2. The WPA will send an invoice to the Tournament Organizer for payment of any ratification fee.
61. The Tournament Organiser must pay any ratification fee within 14 days of the invoice being issued.
62. Once the sanctioning fee is paid the Sports Director will place the Tournament in the WPA Sports Calendar and the General Secretary will send a Tournament Information Pack to the Tournament Organiser which will include a WPA logo to be used in all Tournament related promotional and advertising activities by the Tournament Organiser.
63. If the ratification fee is not paid within 14 days, then the approval of the Pool Event may be suspended or cancelled by the joint decision of the WPA Board or its delegate.
64. An event may be classified as a Ratified Event retrospectively.
65. Ratified Pool Events do not receive World Ranking Points.
66. Only the WPA may ratify events.

### **Continental Tournaments**

67. CFs may sanction Continental Tournaments. Ideally CFs should agree on a consistent approach so that our international Tournament Organisers working on continental tournaments enjoy the same process with each CF.
68. CF sanctioning guidelines to have a CF Sanctioned Tournament should be consistent in philosophy and approach to the WPA guidelines above

### **International Tournaments**

69. NFs may sanction National Tournaments.
70. NF sanctioning guidelines to have a NF Sanctioned Tournament should be consistent in philosophy and approach to the WPA guidelines above and to their relevant CF guidelines.

## National Olympic Committees

### AFRICA

Algeria  
Angola  
Benin  
Botswana  
Burkina Faso  
Burundi  
Cabo Verde  
Cameroon  
Central African Republic  
Chad  
Comoros  
Congo  
Congo, Democratic Republic of the  
Djibouti  
Egypt  
Equatorial Guinea  
Eritrea  
Eswatini  
Ethiopia  
Gabon  
Gambia  
Ghana  
Guinea  
Guinea-Bissau  
Ivory Coast  
Kenya  
Lesotho  
Liberia  
Libya  
Madagascar

Malawi  
Mali  
Mauritania  
Mauritius  
Morocco  
Mozambique  
Namibia  
Niger  
Nigeria  
Rwanda  
Sao Tome and Principe  
Senegal  
Seychelles  
Sierra Leone  
Somalia  
South Africa  
South Sudan  
Sudan  
Tanzania  
Togo  
Tunisia  
Uganda  
Zambia  
Zimbabwe

**AMERICIAS**

(Presently the WPA is clarifying the division of the NOCs between its Continental Members for North & South America. Please contact the WPA General Secretary if you have any questions)

American Samoa  
Antigua and Barbuda  
Argentina  
Aruba  
Bahamas  
Barbados

Belize  
Bermuda  
Bolivia  
Brazil  
British Virgin Islands  
Canada  
Cayman Islands  
Chile  
Colombia  
Costa Rica  
Cuba  
Dominica  
Dominican Republic  
Ecuador  
El Salvador  
Grenada  
Guam  
Guatemala  
Guyana  
Haiti  
Honduras  
Jamaica  
Mexico  
Nicaragua  
Panama  
Paraguay  
Peru  
Puerto Rico  
Saint Kitts and Nevis  
Saint Lucia  
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines  
Suriname  
Trinidad and Tobago  
United States

United States Virgin Islands

Uruguay

Venezuela

**ASIA**

Afghanistan

Armenia

Azerbaijan

Bahrain

Bangladesh

Bhutan

Brunei

Cambodia

China

Chinese Taipei (Taiwan)

Cyprus

Georgia

India

Indonesia

Iran

Iraq

Israel

Japan

Jordan

Kazakhstan

Kuwait

Kyrgyzstan

Laos

Lebanon

Malaysia

Maldives

Mongolia

Myanmar

Nepal

North Korea  
Oman  
Pakistan  
Palestine  
Philippines  
Qatar  
Saudi Arabia  
Singapore  
South Korea  
Sri Lanka  
Syria  
Tajikistan  
Thailand  
Timor-Leste  
Turkmenistan  
United Arab Emirates  
Uzbekistan  
Vietnam  
Yemen

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**EUROPE**

Albania  
Andorra  
Armenia  
Austria  
Azerbaijan  
Belarus  
Belgium  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Bulgaria  
Croatia  
Cyprus  
Czech Republic  
Denmark

Estonia  
Finland  
France  
Georgia  
Germany  
Great Britain (England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland)  
Greece  
Hungary  
Iceland  
Ireland  
Israel  
Italy  
Kosovo  
Latvia  
Liechtenstein  
Lithuania  
Luxembourg  
Malta  
Moldova  
Monaco  
Montenegro  
Netherlands  
North Macedonia  
Norway  
Poland  
Portugal  
Romania  
Russia  
San Marino  
Serbia  
Slovakia  
Slovenia  
Spain  
Sweden



Switzerland

Turkey

Ukraine

United Kingdom

Vatican City

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**OCEANIA**

Australia

Federated States of Micronesia

Fiji

Kiribati

Marshall Islands

Nauru

New Zealand

Palau

Papua New Guinea

Samoa

Solomon Islands

Tonga

Tuvalu

Vanuatu