Instructor Grades
The implementation of this program would not be possible without the training and advancement of instructors to train referees. The current instructor levels within the National Program for Referee Development and courses needed for upgrade are: (Minimum age to become an instructor is 18.)

All instructors are required to take and pass the equivalent referee grade exam annually as designated by U.S. Soccer.

Instructor – Grade	Requirement
Recreational Youth Instructor - Grade 11	Must successfully complete the Recreational Instructor Course. Recreational Referee Instructors are eligible to teach the Recreational Referee Course (Grade 9) only. To become an Associate Instructor, they must attend the Associate Instructor Course.
Associate Instructor - Grade 9	Candidates must successfully complete the 16-hour Associate Instructor Course and have experience as a referee. Initial registration will be at the Associate Instructor level. Before requesting an upgrade to Referee Instructor, you must perform satisfactorily for one year as an Associate Instructor.
Referee Instructor – Grade 7	Successful completion of the 24-hour. 'Instructional Theory Into Practice" (ITIP) is required. Before requesting an upgrade to State Instructor, you must perform satisfactorily for one year as a Referee Instructor.
State Instructor – Grade 5	Required course work includes two, 24-hour modules: "Train the Trainer" (TT) and "Improving Instructor Effectiveness'' (IIE)
National Instructor – Grade 3	Consideration will be based upon candidate's individual expertise as an instructor and his or her knowledge and experience of refereeing at the highest levels of the game during the time the individual was refereeing.
National Instructor Trainer – Grade 4	Candidates must possess skills and competencies required and valued by the National Program for Referee Development, but may not be required to have refereed at high levels of the game. Candidates must have successfully completed Associate, Referee and State Referee Instructor course work as well as all available National Instructor Modules and a special project. Appointments will be made by the U.S. Soccer Federation National Program for Referee Development office. Consideration will be based upon the candidate's individual expertise as an instructor or in a specific area of skill or competency possessed by that individual.