



Race Walking

By Susan Heiser, USATF Race Walk Officials Chair

New Race Distances for 2026

Hello to all USATF Race Walk Judges and Officials. It has been my honor to serve as the USATF Race Walk Officials Chair for the past year. In this time, the RW Officials Committee has worked on updating and standardizing RW officiating practices as well as connecting with our race walk judges and officials. Our biggest struggle has been with outreach, and we are thankful to the NOC for giving us this platform to connect with a larger audience.

Race Walking will see many changes in 2026 driven by World Athletics rules and training. The most significant is the implementation of the new World Athletics Race Walk Championship distances. Starting in January, the Senior race distances will be increased from 20K and 35K to the half marathon and marathon, while WA U20 competitions will now be either 5000m or 10K. The U.S. will also be hosting more high level WA ranking events. These include USATF National Championships as well as collegiate and USATF sanctioned events that have obtained a WA sanction. All of these events will appear on the WA Calendar and must comply with WA technical rules.

Since we will be hosting more WA ranking events, the RW Officials Committee has been working to transition our training, forms, and practices to align with WA rules and practices. To this end we have created new forms that were tested at events this year and are now available for download on the [USATF RW Committee website](#). For ease of use, forms are grouped into packets by the type of event being conducted and include: RW Basics: Track no Penalty Zone; RW Advanced: Track with Penalty Zone; and RW Advanced: Road with Penalty Zone. Please review the use and printing instructions provided at the beginning of each packet.

Additionally, new RW practices and set-up checklists have been prepared and can be found at [USATF RW Officials Best Practices](#). We encourage you to review the RW Basics: How to Host a Race Walk, How to Judge and Track Assignments, in addition to the other useful documents. New materials will be added on an ongoing basis.

We look forward to providing you with the latest updates and information impacting USATF Race Walk Judges and Officials. If you would like to be added to the USATF RW Officials Database and receive direct notices, please email the USATF RW Officials Committee at: racewalkofficials@gmail.com.