

OPA-APO Assessment Process 2025-2026

OPA-APO members value the opportunity to play at level. In the last two member surveys, playing at level was ranked first in importance. Assessments are key to ensuring that players are at appropriate levels.

The OPA-APO Board has continually been working to improve the assessment process. Under the leadership of our Head Club Pro, we have assembled a team of trained assessors who will visit all the leagues and skills sessions to observe play to determine if players are at the appropriate level.

There will be two rounds of assessments. One will take place at the beginning of the fall session, and the second at the beginning of the winter session.

Below is key information on the assessment process, important dates, and responses to questions we have received in the past.

Who Will be Assessed?

In order to be assessed, members must:

- Be registered as a roster player (not a spare)
- Be playing in your current colour level

You are NOT guaranteed an assessment if:

- You are only a spare. Spares may be assessed only if they happen to attend an assessment session.
- You miss play during the assessment period

When Will I be Assessed?

- Assessments will occur in Round 1 (Fall) and Round 2 (Winter). You may be assessed more than once during this time.
- Members will not be advised on the specific date of an assessment.
- Players may be assessed at any time they are seen during OPA-APO play

NOTE: We will not accommodate requests to fit you into an assessment

Where Will I be Assessed?

You will be assessed in:

- In a league or skills session
- Ladies League

You will NOT be assessed in:

- Clinics
- Tournament Prep
- Socials
- Mixed Leagues
- Tournaments
- Drill Time

Round 1

Sept 8th Leagues start (Each venue has a different start date. See your BenchApp)

1A: Sept 15th – October 7th

Full assessments will be scheduled for all leagues and skills (not clinics, socials, tournaments or mixed leagues).

Probationary trial letters for those players not meeting level or exceeding level will be sent by October 8th. The probation period will be Oct 8 to Oct 29.

1B: Oct 30 – Nov 6

Assessment of players not meeting the current level or those who are exceeding level and given a probationary opportunity to play at the next level.

Letters to be sent November 7.

Violet level players will be assessed during 1B.

Round 2

2A: Jan 5 – Jan 26

Full assessment of all leagues and skills (not clinics, socials, mixed leagues or tournaments). This includes members who are not meeting the criteria and those probationary moving-up players who missed the 1B assessment.

Probationary trial letters for those players not meeting level or exceeding level will be sent out by Jan 27th.

2B: March 1- March 10

Start to reassess players not meeting the criteria and probationary moving-up players.

Letters to be sent March 11.

Assessment Scenarios

Assessments of players will fall into three categories:

- 1) Members that are not meeting the requirements of the colour level.
- 2) Members that are at the correct colour level.
- 3) Members that exceed their current colour requirements and appear to meet the criteria of the next level.

Scenario 1: Not at Level – player is not meeting the criteria of their level.

- Following the completion of “Round 1A and Round 2A” assessments of all leagues and skills, you will receive an assessment report from the Head Club Pro outlining the areas that require improvement. You will have approximately 3 weeks to work on these skills and will be assessed again during “Round 1B or Round 2B”, or the beginning of the next session. If, after the reassessment, you now meet the criteria of your level, you will remain at your current level. If not, you will immediately be moved to the next lower level. The OPA-APO Executive Director (ED) will contact you about refunds and registration in the new colour level.
- In the event that there is no space in the lower level, you will be provided the opportunity to spare until registration occurs for the next session.

Scenario 2: At Level – player is assessed to be meeting the criteria of their level.

- If you do not receive any communication following the completion of the Round 1A and Round 2A assessments of leagues and skills, you remain at level. Due to resource limitations a report card will not be sent to members who meet the criteria of their level.

Scenario 3: Exceeds Level – player appears to meet the criteria of the next level.

- At the conclusion of the assessment round, you will receive an email from the Head Club Pro indicating that you appear to meet the criteria of the next level and will be given the opportunity to play at the next level for approx 3 weeks. Players will be provided with options of leagues to play at the next level over the course of a few weeks. You may also continue to play at your existing colour at the same time.
- If there is space, you will be registered on Benchapp as a regular for that league. You will still need to pay as a spare for that league.
- You will be reassessed after the 3 week probationary period to verify if you fit in at that level. If you fit in at the level, you will be able to register for the higher level of play. If you do not meet the criteria of the advanced level, you will be given feedback on which criteria you did not meet. You will then be able to register for your current level.
- If you do not attend the reassessment as described above, your level will remain the same and you will not be able to sign up for the higher level.
- If you are not interested in the opportunity to play at the next level and wish to remain at your current level, you will be asked to contact leaguePlay@ottawapickleballassociation.com

Assessment FAQs

Q. I have played all summer and have taken clinics to advance my play. Can I get assessed earlier?

A. No. Assessments will happen at OPA-APO venues, starting in September when assessments can be applied fairly to all members who are registered to play in their specified colour league.

Q. I do not want to register for a league as I know I am stronger than the players at my current colour level. May I get assessed?

A. No. You must register for a league or skill session in your current colour and be assessed with everyone to provide a fair assessment for all our members. If you are strong enough, our assessors will recommend a “probationary move-up” trial period of approx 3 weeks. You are not guaranteed an assessment if you are a spare, or playing only in socials, clinics, mixed leagues or tournaments.

Q. I did not play well on the one day that I was assessed. I play above level every other time. How can I get assessed again?

A. If you are registered in multiple leagues or skills sessions you may get assessed again during the assessment round. If not, you will need to wait until the next round of assessments.

Q. I am always nervous when I'm being assessed.

A. Unfortunately the assessors are only able to assess what they see when they are present, and all players have to perform under the same circumstances. Perhaps taking more skills or clinics and more drilling can help to develop your confidence.

Q. Is it fair that I am being assessed with players who are at level or below level, when I am above level?

A. Yes. The assessors are looking at the skill criteria of the colour level as well as observing those below and above. If you are demonstrating the skills of the higher level, it will be observed.

Q. Some members are not interested in being assessed and do not put in extra effort when being assessed, whereas I am interested in moving to the next level. How can the assessors fairly evaluate my level?

A. The assessors have been trained to observe many games over the assessment session to ensure a balanced assessment is given against a variety of players.

Q. I missed the assessment as I was sick/out of town? When can I get assessed?

A. If you miss your assessment in one league or skills session, you may get assessed during the next assessment round. If you are registered in other leagues or skills, you will get assessed, as all leagues and skills sessions are being assessed. You may not ask the ED to fit you in after a missed assessment.

Q. I'm content with my colour level. Can I opt out of assessments?

A. No. All players must be assessed to ensure they are meeting the criteria of their level.

Q. I do not agree with the assessment result. Who do I talk to?

A. Please email our President (President@ottawapickleballassociation.com).