Manual For Athletic Officials

2026-2027

Minnesota State High School League
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Table of Contents

Officiating Program News and Notes ---------- 3
Contacts in the MSHSL Office for Officials ---------- 3
Welcome to the MSHSL Officiating Program ---------- 4
The Team is Counting on You ---------- 4
Information for New Officials ---------- 5
Recruiting New Officials ---------- 6
Requirements of Member Schools ---------- 7
Registration and Administrative Policies ---------- 9
Online Rules Module Instructions ---------- 10
Online Testing Instructions ---------- 10
Registration Fees/Materials/Eligibility Requirements Due Dates ---------- 12
Officiating Eligibility Tiers ---------- 13
Registration with Other States/Reciprocity ---------- 14
Officials Insurance Program ---------- 15
Years of Service/Officials Awards Program ---------- 16
Historical Number of Registered Officials ---------- 17
MSHSL Officials Advisory Committee Members ---------- 17
MSHSL Calendar ---------- 19
MSHSL State & Regional Coordinators ---------- 20
Official Rules Books for Minnesota Contests ---------- 24
Official Uniform Requirements ---------- 25
Rule Modifications for Minnesota Schools ---------- 27
Weather Conditions Guidelines ---------- 37
Process for Blood ---------- 37
Student/Coach Ejection from a Contest Policy ---------- 38
Section Tournament Policy ---------- 39
Application for MSHSL State Tournament Assignments ---------- 40
Code of Ethics for Officials ---------- 41
Substance Use Policy ---------- 42
Conflict of Interest Guidelines ---------- 43
Social Media Guidelines ---------- 44
Criticism of Officials by Coaches ---------- 45
Criticism of Coaches by Officials ---------- 45
Assault on an Official ---------- 45
Minnesota State Statutes – Assaulting a Sports Official ---------- 46
MSHSL Board Policy Statements ---------- 47

Officiating Program News and Notes

Contact the MSHSL: officials@mshsl.org or 763-560-2262

Registration: The MSHSL uses Arbiter as the management system for our officials. All registrations/payments are through Arbiter as well as the eligibility requirements for officials. There is a link to Arbiter via the MSHSL website. The Arbiter support phone number is 800-311-4060 or email - support@arbitersports.com.

Recruiting and Retaining Initiative: This initiative calls on officials, officials associations, and our member schools to actively recruit individuals and to guide them along the path to becoming quality officials. There are permanently reduced fees for new officials, schools are helping to provide a better atmosphere for officials, and improved mentoring programs for less experienced officials are being implemented.

Registration fees for new officials are permanently set at $30 for the first year and second year. Also, we continue with the development of the Officiating Recruitment Forum and cooperative efforts with MYAS.

The "Thank a Ref" campaign - there will be continued emphasis on hosting officials and showing appreciation for their efforts. There will also be an emphasis on the sportsmanship of coaches and fans. Enhancements to the Charter/Legacy Association Program will continue.

Find someone you know – a relative, friend, neighbor, co-worker, etc.; encourage them to join us as an official and then help them to get started. ***Now is the time*** for you to give back, replace yourself, and pay it forward! Personal connections are critical! Increased emphasis on recruiting BIPOC and women officials will increase this year.

Registration Fees for Veteran Officials: $70 for the first sport and $20 for each additional sport.

Background Checks: Background re-checks will be conducted on approximately 20% of currently registered officials each year. This will be done through Arbiter via People Trail. Background checks will be conducted a few weeks before the season begins. Officials who have issues with their background checks will be contacted.

Eligibility Tiers – The Eligibility Tiers listed below are available for each varsity activity.

- **Regular Season Official** (For those who only desire to officiate regular season events) Will have the requirements of: payment, concussion module, background check, general officials and sport specific online rules modules, and exam.
- **Section Tournament Official** (For those who desire to officiate regular season and be considered for section events)·Will have Regular Season requirements and clinic attendance (in sports where this is applicable).
- **State Tournament Official** (For those who desire to officiate regular season and be considered for section and state events) ·Will have Section Tournament requirements and additional requirements as determined by the Coordinators for each sport, which could include the viewing of training videos, completion of a mechanics exam or other sport-specific requirements. These items will have adjusted due dates (not the same as the online modules or exams) that will vary by sport.
- **Reciprocity Official** (for officials fully eligible in other neighboring states) Will have the requirements of: payment, background check, concussion module, and "Home" state requirements.
- **Student/Minor Official** (any official under the age of 18) ·Will have the requirements of: payment, concussion module, general officials and sport specific online rules modules, and exam.

Training Requirement: ALL Section and State Tournament officials must attend a training clinic at least once every two years (except for Adapted Sports, Dance Team, Girls Lacrosse, and Synchronized Swimming). Those who have attended a clinic in the past two years have been given credit for that attendance. Those who have not attended a clinic will remain Regular Season eligible and are **not eligible** for Section or State Tournaments. All officials are encouraged to attend annual offered trainings to continue to learn and improve.

REMINDER: All officials must have their picture (headshot) on their Arbiter account – it can be added on the Profile page.

Directory of MSHSL Charter/Legacy Associations
The directory of Charter/Legacy Associations is posted on the League website and will not be part of the MSHSL Manual for Athletic Officials. Main contacts will be listed. Any changes made by an association will be changed upon notification to the League office.

Contacts in the MSHSL Office for Officials

Jason Nickleby ---------- (763) 392-5551 ---------- Assistant Director
Pam Inniger ---------- (763) 569-0496 ---------- Administrative Assistant - Officials
Sport Director ---------- ---------- Ejections

The online rules module schedule/official's deadlines chart is posted separately on the MSHSL Arbiter Central Hub.

Manual for Athletic Officials

This MSHSL Manual for Athletic Officials is an annual publication of the Minnesota State High School League. It is designed to serve as a resource for all individuals who achieve eligibility to officiate high school athletic contests sponsored by member schools of the League. The manual is on the League website under the Officials/Judges section. As an official, you are responsible for all information contained in this manual.

Information on officials is also included in the MSHSL Official Handbook which is distributed to all member schools and on the League Web site: www.mshsl.org.

Welcome to the MSHSL Officiating Program

Welcome to the MSHSL Officiating Program. We are glad to have you as an official in our program and appreciate your willingness to contribute to the educational experience of our student-athletes. Your efforts are very important. Thank you for being an official!

You are also reminded to do what you can to recruit new officials. We need more officials in every sport and have some serious challenges in certain parts of the state. Think what would happen if every official recruited one official. You know the great thrill there can be in working contests and contributing to high school athletic programs. Share your enthusiasm and information with your friends and family!

We welcome your questions and your input. We encourage you to contact the League Office for guidance and direction and to give us feedback on how we can make our officiating program better and how we can help you become a better official.

The Team Is Counting on You!

Officials strive to learn and improve by observing veteran officials and by *studying the effective strategies of officials like you.*

Use your Rules book for the detailed technical description and application of the rules. This book should become worn with use and filled with notes and references from your discussions with your peers. Your review of the case book situations and rulings can put the rules into practical situations as well as the unusual events that can happen during competition.

Minnesota uses an open book examination. It is the philosophy of the MSHSL that rules tests should be a learning experience. Officials are encouraged to use all of their Rules book and publications for rules references. Officials may gather to discuss the test questions. Such gatherings are not discouraged, as the end result must be an official who knows the rules during the heat of competition and can apply the rules in a fraction of a second.

You are encouraged to join a local officials association. These voluntary organizations of independent contractors can provide the opportunity to discuss rules and contest situations. These discussions can be extremely important to both new and veteran officials. Active associations will provide mechanics clinics for their members, recruit, and train new officials, and provide critical feedback.

Beginning officials can learn from experienced officials, analyzing their rule applications, mechanics, and management of the environment of coaches, athletes, and spectators. Veteran officials should work with the new officials, sharing contests, and offering positive, constructive recommendations. It is imperative that new officials be brought into the fold with their peers, supported, and provided with assistance.

The next generation of officials is deciding whether they want to become an official by watching you and your peers.

Give them every reason to join!

Information for New Officials

What Do I Need to Qualify as a Varsity High School Official?

- An enjoyment of high school activities and a desire to give something back to others who are following in your footsteps.
- Be a high school graduate or 18 years of age.
- Have a thorough understanding of the activity and the ability to interpret and apply the rules.

What Are the Benefits of Officiating?

- Staying involved in your favorite activity.
- Meeting and working with high school students and a lot of nice people.
- Learning how to make fair and firm decisions and to accept criticism.
- Maintaining physical fitness and enthusiasm.
- Earning some extra money.
- Give back to your favorite activity and today's athletes.
- Making new friends.

What Must I Do to Become a Regular Season MSHSL Official?

- Complete your registration payment online at www.mshsl.org → Who Are You? → Sports Officials →Sports Officials Overview →Register as an MSHSL Official with Arbiter (gold button)
- Annually complete the online rules modules (including the General Officials module), which are available before each activity season.
- Score 80 percent or better on an open book/online examination in each of your registered activities. Exam results are available online after exam due dates have passed
- Consent to a background check
- Complete concussion training every three years

How Do I Get Contracts?

- Officials can directly contact the activities administrators at area schools for game contracts.
- As an MSHSL eligible official, you are encouraged to become an active member of a local association where you can receive mentoring and assistance in obtaining contracts. A listing of charter/legacy officials associations is available on the website.
- Be patient. Officials work many years to advance to varsity-level contests. Establish your ability and credibility by working middle school and/or sub-varsity contests. You will be noticed by what you do and your willingness to gain experience through a variety of assignments.
- MSHSL does not secure contracts or assignments for officials during the season. Schools issue contracts to officials or their associations during the season. If you are selected for section events, your contract will come from the region committee. If you are selected for state events, your contract will come from the MSHSL.
- Member schools set officiating fees based on the level of competition; distance to and from the contest; the number of contests officiated; number of officials needed. Fees vary by sport and area of the state.
- You are an independent contractor and subject to the appropriate IRS requirements.

Where and How Do I Get:

- Rules books – rules books are sent from the League Office. Rules books are mailed to returning officials every other year, and new officials their first year.
- Insurance- the cost of supplemental insurance coverage is included in your registration fee. Specific coverage is in the Officials Insurance Program section of this manual and on the MSHSL Arbiter Central Hub.
- Uniforms - uniforms may be purchased at a sporting goods store or ordered from a company that provides officials' uniforms. Some sports require Smitty uniform tops. Please see the Sport Specific Official Uniform Requirements document posted on the MSHSL Arbiter Central Hub.
- Refer to the National Federation Rules book or a mentor for your activity to determine your needs.

What about Physical Examinations?

- Officials are urged to have a thorough physical and eye examination before undertaking officiating duties.

How to Grow and Improve as an Official:

- Read and study your Rules book and case book/mechanics illustrated/officials manual.
- Keep in top physical and mental condition for the demands of your activity. A physical examination should be a priority.
- Read the MSHSL Arbiter Central Hub sport specific pages to be current with rules changes, situational rulings, and other sport-specific information. Check the League website (www.mshsl.org) to be current with the activities of the League.
- The National Federation has a website (www.nfhs.org) for rules changes, situational rulings, and official's information.
- You are encouraged to join a local official's association; and attend all meetings and clinics. An official should maintain membership in one primary association in the same activity.
- Keep a schedule of contracts. Confirm each date to avoid accepting two contracts for the same date. Return contracts promptly.
- Purchase the appropriate uniform and contest equipment and keep all in good condition.
- Return telephone calls and email correspondence promptly. Keep a copy of your correspondence for your files.
- Report all incidents to the League Office promptly and provide all written reports as requested.
- Remember that the contest you are working in is the most important contest in the eyes of the athletes, coaches, and fans. It must also be your priority.
- Use gender-neutral inclusive language. Avoid "girls", "boys", "ladies", "gentlemen", and "son", and replace those with reference to the player, i.e., "number 11", "teams", "captains" etc.
- Use your skills to work with coaches and athletes; eject when required.
- Attend clinics and camps to improve your skills.

Recruiting New Officials

As an official, you are encouraged to contact high schools in your area and volunteer a portion of your time to meet with student officials and provide information and support as requested by the school.

Student Officials Program

High school students are the future source of officials for the interscholastic program and a current resource for junior high and elementary level contests. Through a Student Officials Program, they can learn the basics of officiating with your assistance and the support of their school.

Schools are encouraged to develop a student officials' program. The school could provide the student officials with a rules interpretation training conducted by an eligible MSHSL official. You, as the eligible official, would explain the rules, the role of officials, and the personal benefits and responsibilities of being an official. Expanding a student's understanding of officiating may also lead to a positive relationship between athletes and officials. We would encourage the use of RefReps for this purpose.

MSHSL Student Official Program:
Officials who register under this program must be under the age of 18. Student Officials who complete the requirements on Arbiter Central Hub (payment, concussion module, online rules modules, exam) will receive the same benefits that fully registered officials receive. Student officials will receive a pre-season packet, insurance, and access to training and mentorship. Student officials will not complete a background check and thus are not eligible to officiate at the Varsity level. The fee schedule is the same for Student Officials as it is for Registered Officials. Student Officials can carry their Arbiter Central Hub information forward to regular registration after the official reaches the age of 18. This program is designed to give younger officials a good start to their officiating careers before working at the varsity level.

Recruiting New Officials

We need your help! We must recruit quality young people to become MSHSL officials. Schools are facing potential shortages as veteran officials retire and must be replaced. The recruitment of quality individuals as officials is a responsibility that we all must share. Making a personal appeal is the most effective method of recruiting officials. Consider parents of athletes or former athletes as well.

Registration Fees for New Officials

New officials pay a registration fee of $30 for the first sport and $15 for each additional sport for their first and second years.

College and University Classes, Community Education Classes:

Model curriculum guides and other information to support instructors of officiating classes for specific sports are available from the League office and through our partnership with RefReps Officiating Education System, (refreps.com).

Employment of Women as Officials

State Statute:

M.S. 128C.02 Duties, Policies, Criteria, Rules of Board. (For text of subds 1 to 6, see M.S. 1992)

Subd. 7. Women referees. The league shall adopt league rules and policy requiring, to the extent possible, the equal employment of women as referees for high school activities and sports contests, from game level to tournament level. History: 1993 c 224 art 9 s 40.

Board of Directors Policy:

Women in Officiating: Employment. It is the policy of the MSHSL to work affirmatively to encourage, promote, and ensure fair and equitable treatment in the employment of women as officials for high school activities and sports contests at the local level through MSHSL tournaments.

Requirements of Member Schools

Status of Officials as Independent Contractors

Individuals who are independent contractors with no employees are not covered by workers' compensation insurance unless the entity contracting with the independent contractor elects to purchase insurance for that individual. The workers' compensation statute does not contain a definition of "independent contractor." When a question arises as to whether a particular relationship is that of employer-employee or that of two entities contracting independently, a five-factor test has developed through case law that generally allows an employer or employee to make some judgments concerning the appropriate characterization.

This test involves analyzing the following five factors:

a. The right to control the means and manner of performance.
b. The mode of payment.
c. The furnishing of tools and materials.
d. Control over the premises where the work was done.
e. The right of discharge.

Generally, state unemployment and workers compensation departments are using two major tests to determine the status of officials:

a. Whether the individual is free from control and direction in the performance of service, both under his/her contract for the performance of service and in fact
b. Whether such an individual is customarily engaged in an independent trade, occupation, or business related to the service provided.

Stat Auth: MS 176.041 subd 1; 176.83 subd 11 HIST: 10SR 1852; 5224.0310 Sports Officials

Subpart 1:
Definition: A sports official is an individual engaged in refereeing games of sports such as basketball, hockey, or football where the level of competition requires the sport's official to be a member of or certified by an organization whose purpose is to maintain minimum standards and qualifications of sports officials.

Subpart 2:
Independent contractor: A sports official is an independent contractor if all the following conditions are substantially met.

A. There is a written contract between the sports official and the party or association engaging the services of the sports official that states specifically that the sports official is an independent contractor.

B. Payment to the sports official is a set fee for each game officiated.

C. The official is free under the terms of the contract to accept or reject assignments of any game.

D. The sports official is not limited to exclusively officiating with the party engaging the services as a sports official.

Subpart. 3:
Employee: A sports official is an employee if all of the following criteria are substantially met.

A. The official is paid on an hourly, weekly, or similar time basis.

B. The official must work at the times and places designated by the purchaser of the official's services and are not free to reject the assignments.

C. The official is not free to sell his or her services to other parties while working for the purchaser.

D. The relationship is terminable at will without any liability to the official.

Registered Officials Required for Varsity ("A") Squad Contests

A function of the Minnesota State High School League is the registration of contest officials for interscholastic competition. Member schools of the League only hire fully eligible officials for varsity level contests as defined below. (MSHSL Official Handbook, Bylaw 413).

When eligible officials are not available for a contest, the Board of Directors may, in case of emergency, grant any member school a limited number of waivers. (MSHSL Official Handbook, Bylaw 413). Unless a waiver is granted, only eligible officials may work in a varsity contest.

Required number of eligible officials for varsity contests:

Baseball	Minimum: One umpire-in-chief and one field umpire. Optional: One umpire-in-chief and two or three field umpires.
Basketball	Minimum: One referee and one umpire. Recommended: One referee and two umpires.
Dance Team	Routines in dual or triangular competitions must be judged by a minimum of two judges, with one serving as the superior judge. Routines in competitions where there are four teams or competitions with four teams or fewer, where teams perform multiple times must have three to five judges, with one serving as the superior judge. In competitions where there are five or more teams/routines, there shall be a minimum of five judges, with seven or more recommended. One judge shall serve as the superior judge.
Football	Minimum: Four official crew – referee, umpire, down judge, and line judge. Recommended: Five official crew – referee, umpire, down judge, line judge and back judge. Optional: Seven official crew - referee, umpire, down judge, line judge, back judge, field judge, side judge.
Gymnastics, Girls	Minimum: Two judges per event, one superior judge. During non-conference non-MSHSL qualifying meets or tournaments and with the consent of all participating coaches, one judge per event may be used.
Hockey, Adapted	Minimum: One referee. Recommended: Two referees. Optional: Two referees and one linesperson.
Hockey	Minimum: Two official system consisting of two referees. Recommended: Three official system consisting of one referee and two assistant referees, two referees and one linesperson, or one referee and two linespersons. Optional: Four official system consisting of two referees and two linespersons.
Lacrosse	Minimum: Two officials. Recommended: Three official system.
Soccer, Adapted	Minimum: One referee. Recommended: Two referees.
Soccer	Minimum: Two official system – one head referee and one referee. Recommended: Three official system – one referee and two assistant referees or the three whistle system.
Softball, Adapted	Minimum: One umpire. Recommended: Two umpires.
Softball, Girls Fastpitch	Minimum: One umpire-in-chief. Recommended: One umpire-in-chief and one field umpire. Optional: One umpire-in-chief and two or three field umpires.
Swimming and Diving	Minimum: One referee/starter, may serve as diving referee. Recommended: One referee and one starter, either may serve as diving referee.
Synchronized Swimming, Girls	Minimum: Three competitive judges, one of whom must be a referee.
Track and Field	Minimum: One official (either the referee or starter). Recommended: Two officials – one referee and one starter.
Volleyball	Minimum: First referee and second referee.
Wrestling	Minimum: One referee. Optional: One referee and one assistant referee.

Eligible Officials Are Not Required for Varsity Contests In:

- Alpine Skiing
- Badminton, Girls
- Cross Country Running
- Golf
- Nordic Skiing
- Tennis

Note: While eligible officials are not required for the above activities, schools are encouraged to secure individuals with a thorough knowledge of the rules in that activity.

Registration and Administrative Policies

Change of Address (Street and E-mail) is Responsibility of Official

Officials are responsible for making changes to mailing or email addresses on their Arbiter account. The MSHSL will not assume any responsibility for late, lost, or misdirected mail or email. League mailings include bulk mailings and are not forwarded by the Postal Service.

Eligibility Badge and Arbiter Profile Page

Your Profile Page in your Arbiter account will list the sports/activities you are eligible for as badges (small sport specific pictures/icons). Once you have completed all the requirements of the Eligibility Tier the coordinating-colored badge will appear under your picture on your profile page and on the Arbiter app. Please either print your profile page in color or screen shot that page. It is recommended that you email this page to the Activities Director prior to your arrival for the assigned contest.

Someone representing the home team must ask the officials to show their Eligibility Badge/Profile Page prior to working a varsity contest, however, if a site manager does not ask you for your badge, please take the initiative and show it to the home team Activities Administrator, site manager, or coach. A contest shall not start until all officials have proven that they are currently eligible to officiate at the varsity level in that sport; or a waiver to use a non-registered official has been granted by the MSHSL.

This process is explained in the General Officials online rules module.

Use of Non-Registered/Ineligible Officials or Less Than the Minimum Required

When there has been a determination that less than the minimum number of officials as stated above or a non-registered/ineligible official has been used as an official in a varsity contest, without the school having received a waiver from the MSHSL office, the following will occur:

- The home team or whoever is responsible for hiring the officials will be fined: $250 first offense, $350 second offense (during the same school year), $500 third offense (during the same school year).
- Activities/Athletic Administrator will be censured.
- When an unregistered/ineligible official is used, the offending person will be suspended from completing the eligibility process, as a minimum, for the next four consecutive varsity, interscholastic contests, or four weeks (28 calendar days), whichever is greater.
- When an assigner is involved, they will be censured, and the Association will drop to probationary status as a Charter/Legacy Association—no official may be recommended to the State Tournament, and the association may not have representation at MSHSL Meetings for one calendar year.

In order to avoid situations in which non-registered/ineligible officials are used, officials must double check to make sure they are fully eligible, and that their partners are fully eligible, before working any varsity assignment. Assigners must check the League's/Arbiter officials registration and eligibility platform eligibility list to make sure they only assign officials who have a Reciprocity, Regular Season, Section Tournament, or State Tournament eligibility badge. Schools must check to make sure that only officials with an eligibility badge work their varsity events.

To aid in this process, all officials will be required to show proof of their eligibility by showing a copy of their League's/Arbiter officials registration and eligibility platform profile page with their photo and eligibility badge visible. This can be copied and printed from the League's/Arbiter officials registration and eligibility platform profile page or can be shown with a phone or other digital device. Someone representing the home school shall ask the officials to show their eligibility badge prior to working at a varsity event. This can be done by the Athletic/Activities Administrator, site manager, coach, or other authorized school personnel. An event shall not start until all officials have proven that they are currently eligible in that sport; or a waiver to use less than the minimum required, or a non-registered/ineligible official has been granted by the League.

Background Checks

(Revised: December 2, 2021)

Persons who apply to become a registered sports official or fine arts judge with the Minnesota State High School League, may not have engaged in any action, which, within the discretion of the MSHSL Board of Directors, or their representative, gives rise to a concern over the safety of minors or others involved in MSHSL sponsored programs; indicates that the applicant cannot objectively perform an official's or judge's duties; or otherwise is inconsistent with the MSHSL's responsibilities to its member schools, the student participants, or the parents/guardians of participants.

All sports officials and fine arts judges who apply to become a registered Minnesota State High School League official or judge must submit/consent to a background check. Background checks will be conducted on all new officials and judges before their completed registration. This background check will verify the applicant's social security number and address history and screen their criminal conviction history.

To become or continue as a registered official or judge for the MSHSL, the applicant may not have been convicted of a felony crime involving:

a. A minor at any time
b. The use, possession, or sale of a controlled substance within the last ten years
c. The use or threatened use of violence against a person within the last ten years
d. A sexual offense within the last ten years
e. Gambling within the last ten years

Any previous convictions meeting the above criteria shall result in the denial of registration/eligibility. This denial may be waived by the MSHSL Board of Directors Executive Committee in individual cases if it determines in its sole discretion that circumstances justify such a waiver or modification.

Upon receipt of information that indicates that an applicant will be denied registration/eligibility, a pre-adverse action letter will be sent to the applicant, along with a copy of the screening report. The applicant will have ten days in which to contest any information that is inaccurate or incomplete. After ten days the information will be deemed to be accurate, and an adverse action letter will be sent, notifying the applicant that their request to be an MSHSL registered/eligible official or judge has been denied.

Note: Background re-checks will be conducted on approximately 20% of currently registered officials and judges each year, in addition to all new officials and judges.

Concussion Training-Required by Law

Concussion training is required of ALL officials (and coaches) – it is a Minnesota State Law. Training will be an online module that can be accessed through the Arbiter Central Hub Eligibility tab and can be completed at any time. This is required once every three years.

The law also stipulates that any athlete who displays the signs or symptoms of a concussion MUST be removed from play and may not return until released by a licensed health care provider.

Online Rules Module Instructions

The process for viewing online modules is easy! Log in to your Arbiter account. Click on the Eligibility tab in the menu bar, go to your sport, click on requirements (anywhere in the box to open your dashboard), go to the Rules Module heading, and click on the View Clinic link (in blue). The module will automatically start and will be in a PowerPoint format with narration. You should receive a certificate of completion and credit should be given within 24 hours.

There will be a separate module for general information. Officials only need to complete this module one time each year.

The online rules modules are separate requirements from the officials training clinics. Both the general information and sport-specific online rules modules must be completed.

Online Testing Instructions

Under the Eligibility tab on Arbiter, click on the Take Test link with the name of the sport. You can start and come back to the test two times until the deadline. We do recommend you complete it in one sitting if possible, it is not required though.

a. Test questions are posted on Arbiter Central Hub under Printable Exams– you **will not** receive a printed version of the test.
b. All tests will be taken online with each test containing between 40-100 questions.
c. The questions will appear as they are posted on Arbiter, so that each test will have the same set of questions.
d. The order of the questions will not be randomized.
e. The test will consist of True or False and Multiple-Choice questions and some video clips (where applicable).
f. You are required to attain a score of at least 80%. If you do not reach 80% you will be allowed one re-take.
g. If you do not pass the test on the second try, you will have failed and will drop to Ineligible status.
h. NO EXCEPTIONS will be made for those who cannot pass the test on the second try.
i. Re-takes must be completed by the test deadline – plan ahead so you can have time for a re-take.
j. Tests are "open book" and you are encouraged to use your Rules book to make sure that you get the right answers. One of the purposes of the test is for you to "get into the Rules book" to review the rules and prepare for the upcoming season.

Officials Contracts

It is the responsibility of each eligible official to contract their own contests with member schools. The MSHSL Office does not assign officials to contests during the regular season. The League Office and its region committees contract with officials for post-season tournaments.

a. The official acts as an independent contractor when entering into an agreement with an MSHSL member school or the MSHSL.
a. Contracts shall be regarded as null and void if either the sender or the official is suspended from membership or eligibility with the MSHSL.
b. If a contest is rescheduled or canceled because of situations beyond human control, the official(s), originally contracted should be provided the first invitation to officiate the same contest at a later date.
c. A school that violates contract provisions is expected to pay the official(s) according to the financial terms of the contract.
d. Contracts may be canceled by either party giving one (1) week notice.

An official is expected to fulfill game/meet contracts when agreed to by the official and the school/conference. It shall be cause for suspension for an official to accept more than one contract for the same date/time then secure a replacement without agreement by the school and/or cancel one of the two contracts.

Officials Working Scrimmages

Officials may work scrimmages and/or jamborees either voluntarily or for pay. Whether or not officials are paid does not determine if the event is a game or a scrimmage (Bylaw 411.10 F).

Reporting Unsportsmanlike Conduct and Incidents

It shall be the responsibility and duty of an official to report, in writing, to the League Office each ejection, unsportsmanlike conduct, or incident on the part of school personnel, or student-athletes no later than noon on the first business day following the contest. Go online to Arbiter Central Hub and follow the posted links to file a Contest Report or Ejection Report. This is extremely important in order to enforce League rules and to document these situations.

Due Process

The Board of Directors may suspend the eligibility of an official for a violation of the standards prescribed by the League or for conduct unbecoming of high school officials. (MSHSL Official Handbook, Bylaw 413)

An official may be suspended for actions or conduct which include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to honor a contract without written consent or release from the contract.
- Unethical conduct or failure to abide by the rules and regulations of the MSHSL.
- Officiating high school "A" squad contests, meets, games or tournaments while not classified as an Eligible official with the MSHSL.
- Being charged with a felony, pending the outcome of the court proceedings.
- Working a sub-section or section tournament game while not classified as a Section or State Tournament eligible official.
- Falsifying information on registration pages.
- Working without valid concussion training.
- Working without an approved background check.

See the MSHSL Code of Ethics for Officials as printed in this manual – p. 40.

The privilege of registering as an athletic official with the MSHSL and officiating interscholastic athletic contests is attained by meeting all standards and policies cooperatively set by the MSHSL Board of Directors and member schools. An official's conduct in all settings must be moral, ethical, responsible and a worthy example for the participants.

Pursuant to MSHSL Bylaw 413, the Board of Directors has the authority to suspend the eligibility of an official who has violated the standards prescribed by the MSHSL and/or for conduct unbecoming of a high school official. If an official or prospective official is reported to the MSHSL for a violation of the standards prescribed by the MSHSL or for conduct unbecoming of a high school official, he/she will be informed of this in writing by the MSHSL. The official or prospective official will be given the opportunity to provide a response to the MSHSL, in writing, to the Executive Director or his/her designee. Based upon the information provided, the Executive Director or his/her designee may determine whether the official shall be permitted to register or continue as a eligible/registered official. The official may appeal the Executive Director's determination to the Board of Directors, in writing, to be reviewed at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors.

Registration Fees

The membership year will be from July 1 to the following June 30. All registrations expire annually on June 30. It is renewable for one year.

Currently, registered officials will receive renewal registration information annually via email after the registration deadline in that sport.

Officials are informed of requirements and the deadline date through email communication, the MSHSL Arbiter Central Hub, and the Manual for Athletic Officials and will not be exempt from the late fee.

1. Officials Renewing Registration:
   a. For one activity (includes Insurance Plan): $70.00 for the first activity; $20.00 for each additional activity.
   b. Late fee of $40.00 will be assessed for those who register after the dates indicated on the Official's Deadlines document.
2 New officials: $30.00 for the first activity, and $15.00 for each additional activity for the first and second year.
3. Registration fees are **not refundable**.

Registration Materials

Each official will receive the following information approximately three weeks prior to the start of practice for each activity:

a. Rules Book (every other year for renewing officials)
b. Case Book or Mechanics Illustrated/Officials Manual (if published for that activity, every other year for renewing officials)

Eligibility Requirement Due Dates

Officials are required to complete an annual MSHSL online rules module in each of the activities they are registered for. The exam must be completed online on Arbiter by the date listed below. Test answers will be posted after the deadline has passed.

Activity	Exam Due Date
Adapted Hockey	December 2, 2026
Adapted Soccer	September 16, 2026
Adapted Softball	March 24, 2027
Baseball	March 31, 2027
Basketball	November 24, 2026
Dance Team	November 4, 2026
Football	September 9, 2026
Gymnastics	December 2, 2026
Hockey	November 11, 2026
Lacrosse, Boys & Girls	April 14, 2027
Soccer	August 26, 2026
Softball	March 24, 2027
Swimming & Diving, Girls-Fall Deadline	August 26, 2026
Swimming & Diving, Boys-Winter Deadline	December 9, 2026
Synchronized Swimming	March 10, 2027
Track and Field	March 24, 2027
Volleyball, Girls-Fall Deadline	August 26, 2026
Volleyball, Boys-Spring Deadline	March 31, 2027
Wrestling	December 2, 2026

Officiating Eligibility Tiers

Eligibility Tiers for each activity/sport:

- Regular Season
- Section Tournament
- State Tournament
- Reciprocity
- Student/Minor

Requirements for each Tier:

- **Regular Season -** (For those who only desire to officiate Regular season varsity events) Will have the requirements of:
  - Payment/Registration
  - Concussion module
  - Background check
  - Online rules modules – General Officials module & Sport-Specific Rules module
  - Exam - minimum score of 80%

- **Section Tournament -** (For those who desire to officiate regular season varsity events and be considered for section events). Will have the requirements of:
  - Payment/Registration
  - Concussion module
  - Background check
  - Online rules modules – General Officials module & Sport-Specific Rules module
  - Exam - minimum score of 80%
  - In-person or Zoom clinic attendance (in sports where this is applicable) *

- **State Tournament -** (For those who desire to officiate regular season varsity events and be considered for section and state events). Will have the requirements of:
  - Payment/Registration
  - Concussion module
  - Background check
  - Online rules modules – General Officials module & Sport-Specific Rules module
  - Exam - minimum score of 80%
  - In-person or Zoom clinic attendance (in sports where this is applicable) *
  - Additional requirements as determined by the coordinators for each sport, which could include the viewing of training videos, completion of a mechanics exam, or other sport-specific requirements. These items will have adjusted due dates (not the same as the online rules modules or exams) that will vary by sport.

- **Reciprocity (eligible for Regular Season varsity events only) -** Will have the requirements of:
  - Payment/Registration
  - Background check
  - Concussion module
  - "Home" state requirements

- **Student/Minor (not varsity event eligible) -** (any official under the age of 18) Will have the requirements of:
  - Payment/Registration
  - Concussion module
  - Online rules modules – General Officials module & Sport-Specific Rules module
  - Exam - minimum score of 80%

*All officials who want to be considered for Section or State Eligibility must attend a training clinic at least once every two years (except for Adapted Sports, Dance Team, Girls Lacrosse, and Synchronized Swimming). Those who have attended a clinic in the past years have been given credit for that attendance. Those who have not attended a clinic will be ineligible for Section and State Tournaments.

Reciprocity

The following policy includes the six (6) states of Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and South Dakota who have developed a reciprocity agreement allowing an official who lives in one state to be registered/eligible to officiate in a neighboring state. The basic requirements of this agreement are:

1. Officials must register with their home state association, contact the state association of the state in which reciprocity is desired and provide a copy of their current registration documents.
2. The home state association will send the official whatever material is pertinent to their state, avoiding duplication of rules books, rules examinations or interpretation modules
3. The reciprocity fee will be $15.00 and will include all sports for which the official is eligible in the home state. The fee is to be paid directly to the state in which reciprocity is requested.
4. Officials must complete a background check and concussion training with the MSHSL.
5. Any individual who officiates a contest in a neighboring state without reciprocity will be subject to consequences as determined by both associations.
6. An individual must be eligible and in good standing with their home state association to receive reciprocity in another state.
7. **Note:** Reciprocity officials are ***not*** eligible for post-season contests.

Associations to Contact for Reciprocity

Illinois High School Assn.
2715 McGraw Drive
P.O. Box 2715
Bloomington, IL 61702-2715
309-663-6377
www.ihsa.org

Michigan High School Athletic Assn.
1661 Ramblewood Drive
East Lansing, MI 48823
517-332-5046
www.mhsaa.com

Iowa High School Athletic Assn.
Iowa High School Athletic Association
PO Box 10
Boone, IA 50036
http://www.iahsaa.org/

North Dakota H.S. Activities Assn.
134 NE Third St.
P.O. Box 817
Valley City, ND 58072
701-845-3953
www.ndhsaa.com

Iowa High School Girls Athletic Union
5000 Westown Parkway, Suite 150
West Des Moines, IA 50266
515-288-9741
www.ighsau.org

South Dakota H.S. Activities Assn.
PO Box 1217
804 North Euclid, Suite 102
Pierre, SD 57501-1217
605-224-9261
www.sdhsaa.com

Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Assn.
5516 Vern Holmes Drive
Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-344-8580
email: info@wiaawi.org

MEMBER OFFICIALS AND ASSOCIATIONS INSURANCE SUMMARY

7/1/26-7/1/27

Coverage Summary

Arbiter Officials Association member officials and member associations are provided with General Liability, Accident Medical, and Accidental Death & Dismemberment coverage while they are officiating during covered activities as outlined below, with options for associations to purchase Directors & Officers and Excess Liability insurance.

General Liability

Policy will provide $1 million per occurrence, subject to a policy aggregate of $5 million per official/covered association. Participant Legal Liability is included within the limits of coverage. Defense costs are paid in addition to these limits.

Accident Medical

Coverage is provided up to a limit of $50,000, with a $250 deductible. Benefit period is 52 weeks; first covered expenses must be incurred within 90 days of the covered accident. Coverage is excess of any other valid and collectible insurance the official may have in force. The $250 deductible will need to be paid over any primary insurance the official may have in force.

Accidental Death & Dismemberment

Policy provides a $10,000 limit for Accidental Death & Dismemberment, including limited coverage for heart and circulatory disorders.

Directors & Officers (optional)

Associations can purchase Directors & Officers insurance at limits of $1 million or $2 million. To learn more and purchase online, visit amerspec.com/arbiter.

Excess Liability (optional)

Associations can contact Susanne Watson at swatson@americanspecialty.com to discuss Excess Liability insurance options and complete an application if required. Minimum premium may apply.

Covered Activities (All Coverages)

- For coverage to apply, the official/association must be a registered member of Arbiter Officials Association. Associations must have 100% of officials participating in Arbiter Officials Association. Membership will be verified by Arbiter Sports before any claim is paid.
- This insurance coverage shall apply while the member official is engaging in officiating activities for sports/ activities that are recognized by the state high school association where the game/contest takes place and that follow the sports guidelines of an accredited sport sanctioning organization or governing body. If a sport is recognized for either men or women by the state high school association, the official will be covered for officiating both men and women. Officiating activities include assigning, chain crew, and attending or operating officiating camps, clinics or meetings.
- Coverage will extend to non-high school activities as well, such as middle school, summer leagues, and recreational leagues, that are recognized by the state high school association where the game/contest takes place and that follow the sports guidelines of an accredited sport sanctioning organization or governing body.
- Operations for local associations include events such as training seminars, banquets, business meetings, and office premise liability.
- Coverage may extend to include travel directly to and from a covered activity for all Participant Accident benefits. No liability coverage is provided for travel to and from a covered activity.
- **No coverage will apply for officiating at the professional or semi-professional level.**

Insurance Carriers

The insurance carriers providing these admitted policies to Arbiter Officials Association are rated “A” or better by A.M. Best.

Claims & Questions

- **Request a certificate of insurance online at americanspecialty.com/arbiter-certificate.**
- Any Accident Medical claims should be reported to Health Special Risk, Inc., 8400 Belleview Drive, Suite 150, Plano, TX, 75024 (claims@hsri.com). Policy Number: 11SPR0941203.
- Any General Liability claims should be reported to American Specialty Insurance & Risk Services, Inc., 7609 W. Jefferson Blvd., Suite 150, Fort Wayne, IN, 46804 (claims@americanspecialty.com). Policy Number: SBCGL1494005.
- For Directors & Officers questions and claims, visit amerspec.com/arbiter.
- For general questions regarding the Arbiter Officials Association Insurance Program, please contact American Specialty at 800-245-2744 or Susanne Watson at swatson@americanspecialty.com.

Years of Service Awards

A recognition program for fully MN eligible officials has been established to acknowledge the years of service provided to MSHSL member schools. Each year the League will provide officials with the award for which they qualify.

10 years – Pin
20 years - Plaque and pin
30 years - Plaque and pin
40 years - Plaque and pin
50 years - Watch
60 years - Ring

Official Awards Program

In addition to the years of service awards, the MSHSL has implemented additional awards for Associations and individual officials as described below. Nominations are accepted throughout the year. A committee selects those who will receive the awards. The individual awards are presented during a state tournament in March of each year, and the association awards are awarded biennially. More information on these programs is available here - https://www.mshsl.org/who-are-you/sports-officials/officials-awards.

MSHSL Official's Association of Excellence Award: This award is designed to recognize and reward one association for the overall quality of their association and the service that they provide to MSHSL member schools. Associations that would qualify for this award would have programs in most if not all the following: training, recruiting, mentoring, retaining, service to schools and/or conferences; sportsmanship, community service, or other special programs.

MSHSL Official's Association Citation Award: This award is designed to recognize and reward associations for a specific program they have enacted that has significantly impacted the Association or the schools, student-athletes, or communities they serve. The program could be new and innovative, or one that the Association has been involved with for a long period of time. Programs could involve one or more of the following: training, recruiting, retaining, mentoring, or other programs that impact the administration of the Association and/or the customers that they serve.

MSHSL Official's Distinguished Service Award: This award is designed to recognize and reward those individuals who go above and beyond in service to their fellow officials. This does not require but could involve service to the MSHSL. This award is not based on the person's ability or skill as an official but instead it is dependent upon the leadership and service provided. This award should go to officials who have made a difference through long-term service and commitment. To qualify for this award an official must have been an MSHSL registered official for at least ten years.

MSHSL Official of the Year Award: One award is presented annually for each MSHSL activity that uses eligible officials: Adapted Hockey, Adapted Soccer, Adapted Softball, Baseball, Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball, Dance Team, Debate, Football, Girls Gymnastics, Boys Hockey, Girls Hockey, Boys Lacrosse, Girls Lacrosse, Music, One Act Play, Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer, Girls Softball, Speech, Boys Swimming and Diving, Girls Swimming and Diving, Boys Track and Field, Girls Track and Field, Visual Arts, Boys Volleyball, Girls Volleyball and Wrestling. Official of the Year honorees have made significant contributions to MSHSL officiating and high school activities. These individuals have contributed to overall betterment of officiating at the high school level.

*Programs do not apply to reciprocity only officials.

Registered Officials

Activity	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Adapted Hockey	39	39	38	39	42	NA	33	34	36	53	51
Adapted Soccer	28	30	31	29	34	NA	18	21	22	32	37
Adapted Softball	20	23	23	24	35	17	18	21	16	32	37
Baseball	1056	1049	1054	1008	910	862	895	898	874	903	857
Basketball	1834	1833	1829	1887	1878	1586	1531	1605	1644	1706	1776
Dance Team, girls	133	147	154	153	150	157	159	155	158	160	160
Football	1325	1314	1309	1319	1316	1222	1177	1197	1212	1289	1242
Gymnastics, girls	167	171	177	167	169	134	151	145	154	145	147
Hockey	650	662	671	667	662	600	630	649	685	709	740
Lacrosse, boys	137	132	139	141	104	106	119	120	128	132	128
Lacrosse, girls	86	108	111	116	106	99	104	108	100	104	105
Soccer	585	621	652	649	632	501	539	541	601	610	665
Softball, girls	886	871	870	859	771	689	701	705	714	746	749
Swimming and Diving	192	183	185	196	192	174	187	177	188	192	178
Synch. Swimming, girls	63	73	70	68	66	57	49	55	68	65	63
Track and Field	164	165	175	170	155	145	157	174	174	184	185
Volleyball	596	581	592	599	626	518	482	513	581	608	599
Wrestling	240	240	232	243	251	198	202	218	230	253	264
TOTALS	**8201**	**8242**	**8312**	**8334**	**8099**	**7065**	**7340**	**7336**	**7586**	**7923**	**7983**

MSHSL Officials Advisory Committee (OAC)

Established 1995

Background: The MSHSL Officiating Program networks with the local officials' associations and the League through the MSHSL Charter Program.

Each association may apply for a charter in all sports represented by its members and appoint a charter clinician in each sport. All charter clinicians are invited to meet prior to the season with the MSHSL Rules Coordinators and League Staff. At these meetings, the charter clinicians receive rules interpretations for the current season, share ideas for recruiting, retaining and training officials, and propose recommendationsfor the improvement of the MSHSL Officiating Program.

The League seeks feedback and program adjustments through various stakeholders of MSHSL activities. The Officials Advisory Committee is the conduit for this exchange of ideas to occur.

Purpose of the Officials Advisory Committee (OAC): The League seeks advancement and improvement in all programs and employs advisory committees to do this. This committee provides the ability to facilitate a process for officials to share and develop recommendations for the consideration of the MSHSL Board of Directors and Executive Staff.

Members of the Committee:

1. One member from each MSHSL activity which requires registered/eligible officials (see the chart below). Note: Officials are not registered/eligible in the sports of Cross Country; Tennis; Golf; Nordic Skiing; and Alpine Skiing.

2. Two current serving activities directors: one Class A and one Class AA member. These members serve as representatives of athletic administrators in MSHSL member schools and as an appropriate channel for information sharing between the two groups.

3. At-large members may be appointed to ensure broad representation of all MSHSL registered/eligible officials. The list below is the current stakeholder groups represented on the committee: Female Officials, BIPOC Officials, Young Officials

Process: Any eligible officials may submit their names to be placed on the slate of candidates for their activity or stakeholder group. The slate of candidates will be sent to the Executive staff liaison to the OAC for final determination.

Terms: The length of term is three years. Members are not eligible to repeat consecutive terms. Terms are staggered to ensure knowledgeable and experienced representation with effective turnover of new members.

Meetings of the Advisory Committee: The committee will hold two meetings annually in the months of October (Zoom) and April (League Office). The agenda will include recommendations forwarded from each sport charter clinician meeting and other items as brought forward by committee members and the League staff liaison.

Action on Committee Recommendations: Committee recommendations will be forwarded for the consideration of the Board of Directors and Executive Staff or another appropriate MSHSL committee.

Officials Advisory Committee

Adapted Athletics	Dave Malley	Brooklyn Park
Athletic Administrator, Class A	Katie Carter	Austin
Athletic Administrator, Class AA	Katie DeWitt	Roseville
Baseball	Rick Kehoe	Bemidji
Basketball	Stephen Kent	Lake Elmo
Dance Team	Nicole Opland	Superior
Football	Casey Pack	Maple Lake
Gymnastics, Girls	Carly Hanson	Minneapolis
Hockey	Nick Biondich	Hermantown
Lacrosse	TBD	TBD
Recruitment of Female Officials	Chris Katke	Blaine
Recruitment of BIPOC Officials	Cory Clark	River Falls
Soccer	Wayne Lemens	Rochester
Softball, Girls	Mike Kahler	Chaska
Swimming & Diving	Judy Seliga-Punyko	Duluth
Track & Field	Jen Myers	St. Paul
Volleyball	Gail Simones	Sartell
Wrestling	Spencer Beech	Minneapolis
Young Official	Noah Glad	Hawley

NOTE: Officials are encouraged to contact their activity representative on the committee to provide recommendations for their consideration.

MSHSL 2026-2027 Calendar

Activity	Start Dates (Conditioning/Practice)	Dates of Tournament
Fall		
Adapted Soccer	September 8	November 20-21
Cross Country	August 17	November 7
Football	August 17*	Nov. 12-14; 19-21; 27-28
Soccer	August 17	October 27-29; Nov. 4-7
Swimming & Diving, Girls	August 17	November 18-20
Tennis, Girls	August 17	October 27-30
Volleyball, Girls	August 17	November 11-14
Winter		
Adapted Hockey	November 23	March 5-6
Basketball, Boys	November 23	March 24-27
Basketball, Girls	November 16	March 17-20
Dance Team	October 26	February 19-20
Gymnastics, Girls	November 16	February 26-27
Hockey, Boys	November 16	March 10-13
Hockey, Girls	November 2	February 24-27
Skiing-Alpine	November 9	February 9
Skiing-Nordic	November 9	February 10-11
Swimming & Diving, Boys	November 30	March 4-6
Wrestling	November 23	March 3-6
Spring		
Adapted Bowling	March 1	May 14
Adapted Softball	March 15	May 21-22
Badminton, Girls	March 8	TBD
Baseball	March 22	Week of June 14
Golf	March 22	June 15-16
Lacrosse, Boys	April 5	Week of June 14
Lacrosse, Girls	April 5	Week of June 14
Softball, Girls	March 15	June 8-11
Swimming-Synchronized, -Girls	March 1	TBD
Tennis, Boys	March 29	June 8-11
Track & Field	March 15	June 10-12

* = 1 week of conditioning followed by two weeks of practice.

MSHSL State & Regional Coordinators

ADAPTED HOCKEY

***Stephan, Tom**
Brooklyn Park, MN 55443
Home/Cell 612/210-9021
Work 612/278-6066
Email tstephan23@hotmail.com

ADAPTED SOCCER

***Pearson, Craig**
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ADAPTED SOFTBALL

***Schneider, Michelle**
Brooklyn Park, MN 55428
Home 763/592-0254
Cell 612/743-0511
Email mhipcheck7@msn.com

ALPINE SKIING

***Lindemer, Grant**
Phone 763/438-3625
Email grant_9@msn.com

BASEBALL/SOFTBALL

***Keller, Tom (Softball Central Minn.)**
St. Cloud, MN 56303
Cell 320/333-3262
Email tk180539@gmail.com

***Monita, Mike (Baseball-Metro)**
West St. Paul, MN 55118
Cell 651/336-5344
Email mmonita@comcast.net

Behrens, Marshall (Softball-SE Minn)
Rochester, MN 55904
Cell 507/259-9439
Email 19referee@gmail.com

Crowe, Robert (Softball-Metro)
St. Paul, MN 55104
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Work 651/905-6980
Email robert.crowe@staywell.com

Gerads, John (Baseball Central & NE Minn.)
Sartell, MN 56377
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Email johngerads@gmail.com

BASEBALL/SOFTBALL, continued

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Pelican Rapids, MN 56572
Cell 218/209-1567
Email gulere413@gmail.com

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Cell 320/737-0155
Email flvrflv16@gmail.com

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Cell 218/391-8003
Email ray.kosey@gmail.com

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Cell 701/361-0523
Email kpennick@hotmail.com

Solberg, Matt (Baseball-NE Minn)
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Cell 763/742-4137
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Cell 507/381-4701
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Rochester, MN 55906
Cell 507/269-0891
Email Zollner.chris@mayo.edu

BASKETBALL

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St Anthony Village, MN 55418
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Conrad, Paul (Central Minn.)
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Cell 320/249-6570
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MSHSL State & Regional Coordinators, cont.

BASKETBALL, continued

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CHEERLEADING

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MSHSL State & Regional Coordinators, cont.

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GYMNASTICS, Girls

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HOCKEY

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HOCKEY continued

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BOYS LACROSSE

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***State Coordinator**

Officials Rules Books for Minnesota Contests

Sponsored Competitive Activities

Fall
Cross Country Running
Football
Soccer, Adapted
Soccer
Swimming & Diving, Girls
Tennis, Girls
Volleyball, Girls

Winter
Alpine Skiing
Basketball
Dance Team
Gymnastics, Girls
Hockey, Adapted
Hockey
Nordic Skiing
Swimming & Diving, Boys
Wrestling

Spring
Badminton, Girls
Baseball
Bowling, Adapted
Golf
Lacrosse, Boys
Lacrosse, Girls
Softball, Adapted
Softball, Girls
Synchronized Swimming, Girls
Tennis, Boys
Track & Field
Volleyball, Boys

Contest Rules for Competitive Activities

Except as modified by the League, the rules adopted by the National Federation of State High School Associations shall be the official contest rules for all interscholastic athletic activities sponsored by the League. If National Federation rules are not established for an activity, current rules as adopted in the Official Handbook shall prevail.

The following rules, except as modified by the League, shall govern all interscholastic competition in the respective activity. MSHSL rule modifications are listed on the following pages.

National Federation Rules Books

Baseball
Basketball
Cross Country Running
Football
Gymnastics
Hockey
Lacrosse, Boys
Lacrosse, Girls
Softball
Soccer
Swimming & Diving
Track & Field
Volleyball
Wrestling

Minnesota State High School League Rules Book

Dance Team

Sport Association Rules Books

Alpine Skiing - F.I.S.
Golf - U.S. Golf Association
Nordic Skiing - National Collegiate Athletic Association
Synchronized Swimming - U.S. Synchronized Swimming
Tennis - U.S. Tennis Association

Adapted Athletics – Supplemental Rules to National Federation Rules Book

Bowling, Hockey, Soccer, Softball

Sport-Specific Official's Uniform Requirements

Baseball

- Smitty MSHSL black shirt with grey side panels is the default (required) shirt. The blue shirt with black panels is optional. All crew members must match.
- Charcoal Gray Slacks with a black belt
- Mostly black shoes
- Black-sized hat and black ball bag
- Black windbreaker/jacket, if needed.

Basketball

- Smitty MSHSL gray shirt with a black panel and black collar and sleeve cuffs with the MSHSL logo on the left chest. All crew members must match.
- Black pants
- Black lanyard and whistle
- Mostly black shoes and black socks
- Jackets allowable – plain or association jackets; primarily black in color

Dance Team

- Be professional and dress appropriately. No casual jeans, pants with holes in them, or sweats/workout attire is allowed. Business casual is appropriate, as well as association logo items.

Football

- Smitty shirt with MSHSL logo on front left chest & USA flag on the sleeve. All crew members must match.
- Black pants with a 1-1/4" white stripe down the side & black leather belt, 1-1/4" to 2" wide with a plain buckle
- Black socks & mostly black shoes with black laces
- Black undergarments (if visible)
- Black baseball-style cap with white piping for crew members; An all-white hat is required for the referee. A fitted cap is recommended for both.
- Mostly black gloves (if worn)
- Other required equipment: black whistle & lanyard, flipping coin, penalty marker (15" x 15" weighted gold flag), blue or white bean bag (with all crew members using the same color), game card, pencil, a device to track down numbers, watch, and the down judge shall also have a clipping device for the chains.

Gymnastics, Girls

- Black blazer
- Business casual attire

Hockey, Adapted

- Smitty MSHSL gray shirt with a black panel and black collar and sleeve cuffs with the MSHSL logo on the left chest. All crew members must match.
- Black pants
- Black socks, mostly black shoes

Hockey, Ice

- Official's sweater
- A black HECC certified ice hockey helmet with a chin strap and a half-face shield that meets HECC certification at the time of manufacture.
- Black trousers
- Whistle & Armbands (if needed)

Lacrosse, Boys

- Smitty shirt with MSHSL logo on front left chest & USA flag on the sleeve (required for all varsity games in 2026) 2-1/4" black-and-white vertically striped long or short-sleeved shirt with Byron collar and black cuffs. All crew members must match.
- Black shorts or pants, black leather belt (1-1/4" to 2" wide)
- Black undergarments (if visible)
- Black socks that cover the ankle & mostly black shoes with black laces
- Black baseball-style cap with white piping.
- Black jacket & gloves (if required due to weather)
- Other required equipment: whistle, two penalty markers (15" x 15" weighted gold flag), scorecard, pencil, coin, tape measure, and 20-second timing device.

Lacrosse, Girls

- Smitty shirt with MSHSL logo on front left chest & USA flag on the sleeve - black-and-white 1" vertically striped shirt (short or long sleeved), required for all varsity games in 2026.
- Black kilt, shorts, or slacks
- Black socks & mostly black shoes
- Black visor, hat, undershirt, turtleneck, whistle, lanyard, sunglasses
- Solid black jacket & gloves (if required due to weather)
- Black bag preferred to carry Rules book, whistle, green, yellow, and red warning cards, a tape measure, pen, pencil, and a coin.

Soccer, Adapted

- Smitty MSHSL gray shirt with a black panel and black collar and sleeve cuffs with the MSHSL logo on the left (this is the default shirt). Smitty MSHSL green & black striped shirt with MSHSL logo on the left is optional. All crew members must match.
- Black shorts
- Black socks & mostly black shoes

Soccer

- Smitty MSHSL green & black striped shirt with MSHSL logo on the left
- Black shorts or pants
- Mostly black shoes & black knee socks with three white horizontal stripes
- Solid black cap, if worn
- Other equipment required: two whistles, yellow and red cards, stopwatch, flipping coin, pencil, linesman's flags, and scorecard.

Softball, Adapted

- Smitty MSHSL electric blue shirt with midnight blue side panels is the default (expected) shirt. The midnight blue shirt with electric blue panels is optional. The new shirt is required for all State & Section Tournament games in 2027, and all varsity games in 2028. All crew members must match.
- Navy blue shorts
- Black socks & mostly black shoes

Softball, Girls

- Smitty MSHSL electric blue shirt with midnight blue side panels is the default (expected) shirt. The midnight blue shirt with electric blue panels is optional. All crew members must match.
- Pants - charcoal gray pants & black belt - must match the other umpires.
- Mostly black shoes, some white on the shoes is acceptable
- Navy blue sized hat
- Navy blue ball bag(s)
- For inclement weather, jackets with blue or white trim are the default. It is preferred that you have a jacket that is similar to your crew. NCAA-style uniform jackets are acceptable - no emblems, printing, or markings on uniforms are acceptable.

Swimming and Diving

- Blue Smitty brand knit polo shirt with MSHSL logo on the left chest. Shirts should be worn tucked in.
- Black dress or sharp casual style pants, shorts, or skirts are acceptable during the regular season. Shorts and skirts must fall within 3 inches of the knee. Athletic shorts, sweatpants, leggings, and warm-up pants are not acceptable.
- Mostly black shoes are required. If socks are worn, they must be black.
- Officials selected for the state meet must wear the standard Smitty blue polo tucked in with black full-length dress-style pants. Shorts and skirts are not acceptable. A mostly black shoe is required, sandals and crocs are not acceptable footwear at the state meet. If socks are worn, they must be black. Section meet officials are encouraged to follow the state meet requirements.

Synchronized Swimming, Girls

- Black top
- Black bottoms

Track and Field

- Starters: Red or white polo shirt
- Khaki shorts or pants

Volleyball

- Smitty MSHSL blue or short or long-sleeve polo shirt with black piping and the MSHSL logo on the left chest. It is recommended that officials match the shirt color for the regular season. The official's shirt color must match for sections/playoffs and the state tournament.
- Jet black pants
- Solid black shoes & black socks
- Other equipment required: black whistle & lanyard, set of yellow and red cards, a coin, pen/pencil, and a digital wristwatch

Wrestling

- Smitty MSHSL gray shirt with a black panel and black collar and sleeve cuffs with the MSHSL logo on the left chest. All officials must match.
- Black pants & black belt
- Black shoes (white or gray trim permitted) & black socks
- Other equipment required: colored disk, black lanyard, black whistle, and red and green armbands.

Rule Modifications for Minnesota Schools

Authenticating Mark Program: Minnesota has accepted the NFHS Rulebook provision and will not penalize schools who do not use the marked equipment.

The rulebook where the "mark" is required will state that, "In the event a properly marked ball or puck is not available for use in a given contest, the NFHS recommends the contest be played and that the game officials send a report to the applicable state association for action, if any, that the state association deems appropriate."

Baseball

The game ends when the visiting team completes its half of the 7th inning provided their runs are fewer than the number scored by the home team in 6 innings, or, or game will end when, after five (5) innings of a 7-inning game, a team is ten (10) or more runs behind and has completed its term at bat.

A. **Regulation Game:** It is a regulation game if: (a) 5 full innings have been played; or if the team second at bat has scored an equal or greater number of runs in 4 or 4 and a fraction terms at bat than the opponent has scored in 5 terms at bat; or (b) play has gone beyond 5 full innings.

In (b), if the game is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed terms at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; unless the home team, in their half of the

incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, in which case, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.

B. Suspended Games (Regular Season and Postseason): A suspended game is any game that is ended **before** it becomes a regulation game, or a regulation game that has a tie score after the last completed inning or is tied in the bottom half of the inning. If darkness, rain, or other circumstances interfere with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire-in-chief before it is a regulation game, such game shall be declared a suspended game. The suspended game shall be resumed from the point of interruption at a later date.

If a called game is a regulation game that has a tie score after the last completed inning or is tied in the bottom half of the inning, it shall be declared a suspended game and must be continued from the point of suspension at a later time. The lineup and batting order of each team shall be exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules governing the game. All other games that are called (ended) by the umpire-in-chief will revert back to the score after the last completed inning (except in cases where the home team takes the lead in the bottom half of the inning) and will be final.

C. Umpire Uniform: The uniform for MSHSL baseball umpires is: gray slacks (heather or charcoal-charcoal preferred) with a black belt, Smitty MSHSL black shirt with grey side panels is the default (expected) shirt. The blue shirt with black panels is optional. This shirt is expected for all postseason and State Tournament games in 2025 and will be expected for all varsity games in 2026. All crew members must match. Black Carolina, Powder Blue, or Navy blue pullover style shirt with red, white, and blue trim on sleeves and collar shirts are optional shirts for regular season games. All crew members must match. Mostly black shoes, a black-sized hat, black windbreaker/jacket, black ball bag.

D. Ties, Regulation Season Games (Conferences may adopt this special rule.): Each year during regular season play some conference games, after going five full innings or more are called because of rain, darkness or other cause while the score is tied. According to the rule, this is a tie game. Batting and fielding records are counted but the game is not counted in computing percentages of games won and lost.

There is, however, the choice, by conference adoption, that a regulation called game with a tie score shall be counted as half-game won and a half-game lost for each team.

E. Baseball Courtesy Runner/Speed up Rule

a. The team at bat may use courtesy runners for the pitcher and/or catcher. The same runner may not be used for both positions. Neither the pitcher nor the catcher will be required to leave the game under such circumstances**.**

b. Players who have participated in the game in any other capacity are ineligible to serve as courtesy runners.

c. A player may not run as a courtesy runner for the pitcher or the catcher and then substitute for another player in that half-inning. If an injury, illness, or ejection occurs and no other runners are available, the courtesy runner may be used as a substitute.

d. The umpire-in-chief shall record courtesy runner participation.

e. A player who violates the courtesy runner rule is an illegal substitute.

Exception: Should an injury, illness or ejection occur to the courtesy runner, another courtesy runner for the pitcher or catcher may run.

Basketball

A. All varsity basketball games will be played as two eighteen (18) minute halves.

B. Home team wears dark uniforms and visitor team wears white uniforms.

C. All apparel (excluding knee braces) – i.e. wristbands, headbands, arm/knee sleeves, knee pads, compression shorts, and tights must be solid black or white and the same color for all participants.

D. Games below the varsity level must also be played in halves with a maximum time of sixteen (16) minutes.

E. All MSHSL varsity basketball contests will follow NFHS shot clock Rules as identified on pages 71-73 of the NFHS Basketball Rules Book with the following modifications:

RESET to 20 seconds or the time remaining on the shot clock, whichever is greater, when:

1. There is a personal or technical foul committed by the defensive team prior to a try for a goal that hits the ring or flange, and the ball is to be inbounded in the front court by the offense.
2. There is a kicked or fisted ball by the defensive team and the ball is to be inbounded in the front court by the offense.
3. There is an inadvertent whistle when there was no player or team possession, and the AP arrow favors either team for a throw-in in its frontcourt.

RESET to 20 seconds when:

1. The offense gains control of the ball after an unsuccessful field goal attempt that contacts the ring or flange.
2. The offense gains control of the ball after an unsuccessful free throw that remains in play.

3. The defense is assessed with a foul after an unsuccessful free throw that remains in play, or an unsuccessful field goal that contacts the ring or flange, or during a successful try provided that the offensive team will inbound the ball in the front court.
4. After the defense causes the ball to be out of bounds in the front court following an unsuccessful free throw or an unsuccessful field goal attempt that contacts the ring or flange.
5. When there is no team control, after the offense is awarded possession in their front court when the alternating possession arrow favors the offense following an unsuccessful free throw that remains in play, an unsuccessful field goal that hits the rim.
6. A violation occurs, other than an opponent causing the ball to be out of bounds or kicking the ball, and the defense is awarded the ball in its front court.
7. After any double personal foul when only one of the fouls is intentional or flagrant, and it is assessed against the offense and the defense is awarded possession in its front court.
8. After a shot that contacts the rim/flange is batted into the backcourt and out of bounds by the shooting team and the ball is awarded to the other team.

F. Rule 4 SECTION 10 CLOSELY GUARDED:- EXCEPTION: Closely guarded is not in effect when a player is dribbling the ball (9-10-1a NOTE).

G. Mercy Rule: When the point differential reaches 35 points or more, with less than nine minutes to play, the clock will go to running time. The clock will only be stopped for time-outs (team or official). Shot clock rules will be used throughout the game. Regular timing rules will be used if the point differential drops back to less than 30 points.

H. Restricted Arc: The restricted area arc is required for all levels of play. Note: 9th grade is optional. Instructions for placing the arc on the floor are found on the MSHSL website on the basketball activity page.

I. Coaching Box: The coaching box is 14 feet.

J. Officials Uniform Shirt: The official shirt of the MSHSL is the Smitty gray shirt with a black panel and black collar and sleeve cuffs with the MSHSL logo on the left crest. All crew members must match.

K. Bonus Free Throws: Beginning with a team's seventh foul in each half the "one-and-one" free throw is awarded. The bonus free throw is awarded only if the first free throw is successful. Beginning with the team's 10th foul in each half, two free throws are awarded whether or not the first free throw is successful.

L. Basket Interference: In addition to language specified in NFHS Rule 4-6, any action that causes the basket or backboard to vibrate when the ball is on or within the basket and/or is on or within the cylinder would constitute basket interference.

Football

A. A visible 25/40 second play clock may be used when available at the discretion of the home team. There must be a clock operator and the clock must be available to both teams.

B. Modification of the football distance penalty in 9-Player football. All penalties that require a loss of 15 yards in 11-player football, will be penalized a loss of 10 yards if played on an 80-yard field. All 15-yard penalties on a 100-yard field will be penalized as a loss of 15 yards.

C. When facilities permit, nine-player football should be played on a 100-yard field. If space does not allow for 100 yards, the game can be played on an 80-yard field. In either case, the width of the field is 40 yards. Distance from sidelines to hash marks is 48 feet, 4 inches.

D. **Mercy Rule:** When the point differential reaches 35 points or more in the fourth quarter, the clock will go to running time. While the mercy rule is in effect, the clock will be stopped only for TIPS events – T(team time-outs), I(injuries), P(penalties) or S(scores). Regular timing rules will be used if the point differential drops back to less than 30 points. **Note:** Rule 3-1-3 remains in effect – this allows the game to be shortened or terminated at any time, by mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee.

E. Both 9 and 11 player: If at the end of the fourth period, the teams have identical scores, the tie will be resolved using the "10-yard" overtime procedure as outlined in the NFHS Rules Book.

F. Team boxes shall be marked on each side of the field outside the coaches' area between the 15-yard lines for use of coaches, substitutes, athletic trainers, etc., affiliated with the team.

Gymnastics, Girls

A. National Federation Girls Gymnastics Rules book provides that: **Rule 2–1-1**, it is recommended all of the optional exercises be evaluated by at least four judges, one of whom shall be a chief judge.

a. **Rule 2-1-2 -** "if it is not possible to have four (4) acting judges at an event, a minimum of two (2) judges shall be used with one judge serving as the chief judge." A waiver may be granted to a member school for specific dual meets where two (2) judges cannot be secured for the varsity meet. A school shall contact the League Office to request a waiver for such a meet(s).

b. During non-conference, non-MSHSL qualifying meets or tournaments and with the consent of all participating coaches, one judge may be assigned at an event.

B. Rule 4-2-2 - The rule shall read: "A team's event score is determined by totaling the best four (4) individual scores for each team in each event. In the event of a team tie, the five (5) individual scores per event shall be added together for the team score."

Hockey

A. Warm-Up Jersey: MSHSL member school hockey teams have elected to wear in past seasons, or are considering for this upcoming season, the wearing of a sponsor jersey or a special recognition jersey for warmups. If a hockey team is going to wear a jersey for warmup that is not the official game jersey the following must take place.

a. The jerseys must be numbered, and the numbers must comply with the specifications of NFHS Hockey Rule 2-1-2:
   i. The number on the back of the jersey must be at least 10-inch-high Gothic lettering;
   ii. The number must be contrasting in color with the color of the jersey; and
   iii. Numbers on the sleeves are not required.

b. The player wearing the warmup jersey must be identified prior to warmup one of two ways:
   i. The warmup jersey number corresponds with the number on the game roster provided to the official scorer; or
   ii. If the warmup jersey number is different than the game jersey a complete warmup roster with names and numbers must be provided to the official scorer.

If the game officials determine the warmup jersey is not in compliance with the specifications above the player or players will be asked to change into their game jersey for the remainder of the warmups. If a player fails to comply, he or she will be asked to leave the ice and they will not be allowed to participate in the remainder of the warmups.

B. Warm-Ups: There will be a one-minute warm-up before the start of the second and third period.

C. Length of Periods: All varsity teams—boys and girls—shall play three (3) 17-minute periods. By mutual agreement of the schools involved the JV games could be played with longer periods from 15-minutes to 17- minutes. All games at all levels must have three periods and each period must be 15-17 minutes in length.

D. Game Misconduct Penalty: A game misconduct penalty **is an ejection** under League policies. The player or coach will be removed from that game for its duration and is ejected for the next game(s) according to the MSHSL Policy for Student/Coach Ejection from a contest (see bylaw 206). There is an exception when a game misconduct penalty is assessed under Rule 4-5-2 for a player incurring five penalties in the same game. This is NOT an ejection under League policies and the player is only required to sit out the remaining portion of that game.

E. Game Disqualification: A game disqualification penalty is an ejection under League policies. The MSHSL ejection policy is not applied twice in the event a player receives a game misconduct and game disqualification in the same game.

F. Shortened Games: All high school games, including all rounds of the state tournament, will be shortened after two periods or during the third period by using running time when a team leads an opposing team by six or more goals.

G. Overtime Periods: Teams will switch ends before the start of each overtime period.

Overtime Periods for Regular Season Play

In case of a tie at the end of regular play, follow the procedures outlined below.

1. Teams must remain in the bench area
2. 3-minute rest period
3. Teams switch ends prior to the start of the overtime period
4. One 8-minute sudden death overtime period will be played

Overtime Periods in School-Sponsored Tournament Play During the Regular Season

This procedure shall be used for regular season tournament games where a winner must be declared to advance in the tournament bracket.

In case of a tie at the end of regular play during school sponsored tournament play follow the procedures outlined below.

1. Teams must remain in the bench area
2. 3-minute rest period
3. Teams switch ends
4. One 8-minute sudden death overtime period will be played
5. If still tied after the 8-minute period, the tournament manager will conduct a shootout to determine the winner
6. In all cases where a shootout is used to determine a winner the game will be officially recorded as a tie
7. The score at the end of the 8-minute overtime period will be the official score for the contest

Overtime Periods for Post Season Tournament Play
This procedure will be used for all Section and State Tournament games. (Exceptions: State Tournament 3rd place and Consolation Final can end in a tie.)

In case of a tie at the end of regular play, follow the procedures outlined below.

1. Teams must remain in the bench area
2. 3-minute rest period
3. Teams switch ends prior to the start of each overtime period
4. 8-minute sudden death overtime period will be played
5. Make ice with a 15-minute rest period
6. 17-minute overtime period will be played
7. If a tie remains, repeat procedures as indicated in 1-6 above

H. Daily Participation Limits (Interpretation – Exception 2) Refer to Bylaw 502: When a penalty occurs at the end of a period and the penalty time will carry over to the next period, we allow a student to be replaced in the penalty box for the next period to **prevent** the use of an ineligible student if the next period would be the 5th period. However, we do not allow the replacement of the student in the next period to **preserve** his or her future eligibility. If the next period is not the 5th period for the student, the student must serve the penalty and count that period toward the maximum allowable periods for the day. If the coach wishes to ensure that a student has the desired further periods of participation available, it is the coach's responsibility to not have the student on the ice towards the end of a period when any penalty time assessed would carry over to the next period in which the coach had intended that the student not participate.

Soccer

A. Jewelry (Rule 4-3-2a): A religious medal or other religious items must be taped to the body and worn under the uniform if possible. Note: this is for religious purposes as stated in Rule 4-3-2 and is not meant as an opportunity to tape or cover jewelry worn for adornment.

B. Officials Uniform (Rule 5-1-3):

The officials shall be dressed alike in uniforms primarily consisting of:

a. Smitty MSHSL green & black striped shirt with MSHSL logo on the left (expected for all games – regular season, section, and state).
b. Black shorts or pants
c. Mostly black shoes & black knee socks with three white horizontal stripes
d. Solid black cap, if worn
e. Other required equipment: two whistles, yellow and red cards, stopwatch, flipping coin, pencil, linesman's flags, and scorecard

C. Official Scorekeeper (Rule 6-3):

The official scorer's table may be located in one of three places:

1. At the halfway line, which is a distance of 10 yards from the start of each bench.
2. In the press box.
3. In a position on the end of the team bench closest to the halfway line.
   The host school must inform the official prior to the start of the game as to the location of the official scorer. **Substitutions will report to the halfway line. Entry onto the field of play by a substitute is prohibited until approved by the referee.

D. Suspended Games:

Regular Season

Suspended Games (Rule 7-1-3): If less than one-half of the game has been played, the game will be replayed from the point of suspension unless game completion is mutually agreed upon by head coaches in which case the existing score would be final. The host school has the authority to suspend a game for inclement weather.

Postseason:

Suspended Games (Rule 7-1-3): Games that have been suspended before the completion of the first half, or are tied at the point of suspension shall be replayed from the point of suspension unless game completion is mutually agreed upon by head coaches and tournament manager in which case the existing score would be final.

E. Tie Games (Rule 7-3):

1. Regular season games that end tied after regulation time shall be recorded as a tie.

2. The following procedure must be used to break a tie at the end of regular play in all tournament games that advance to the championship bracket, including the MSHSL section and state tournament games. ***<u>There will be no tiebreaker or overtime for third-place games.</u>***
    a. Teams remain in the bench area for a 5-minute rest period.
    b. The choice of ends will be determined by a toss of a coin with the visiting team captain making the call while it is in the air.
    c. A 20-minute sudden death overtime period will be played. At the start of the period, the clock will be set at 10 minutes. A kickoff shall initiate the play. Teams will change ends after ten minutes of play. Teams do not go to their bench; coaches do not talk to the captain; play should be continued immediately.
    d. If a tie still exists, each coach selects five players, on or off the field (except those who were disqualified), to take penalty kicks. A coin toss will determine which team shoots first. The referee designates which captain will call the coin toss. The team winning the coin toss has the choice of shooting first or second. The team's alternate kickers with the goalkeeper being any eligible team member. The team scoring on the greater number of kicks shall be the winner.
    e. If the score is still tied, each coach will select five additional players and continue with the same procedure: except that beginning with the 6th kick, a winner will be declared if one team scores and the opponent fails to score on a turn. Each kick shall be taken by a different player, and not until 10 players of any team have attempted a kick, may a player of the same team have a second kick. When repeating the procedure, a winner will be declared if one team scores and the opponent fails to.
    f. If the score is still tied, follow the procedures in (e) above and repeat until a winner has been determined.

F. Mercy Rule (Rule 7-4): In the second half, if the goal differential is five goals or more, the clock will only stop for serious injury.

G. Policy for Disqualified Players (Rule 12-6):

1. Any player disqualified from the game for any reason, shall be disqualified from that game and the next game of that season. Application of the following progressive game disqualification structure applies throughout each season, including playoff games:
    a. 1st disqualification - that game plus the next scheduled game.
    b. 2nd and all subsequent disqualifications - that game plus the next four scheduled games in that sport.

<u>Softball, Girls</u>

A. **Bench and Field Conduct Rule Modification:** Coaches, players, or other team personnel must be in the dugout (bench area) or dead-ball territory (as defined by Rule 2, Section 22, Article 4) during the opponent's infield practice prior to the start of each game. **Penalty:** The umpire shall warn the offender unless the offense is judged to be major, in which case an ejection shall occur. Any subsequent offense shall result in restriction to the dugout and/or ejection of the offender(s).

B. **On-Deck Circle:** All on-deck batters must use the on-deck circle that is located behind the batter, with the exception of the on-deck batter who is leading off the ½ inning – that batter may remain in front of their dugout.

C. **10-Run Rule:** Calls for the game to end if a team is ahead by at least 10 runs after 5 innings of a 7-inning game.

D. **15-Run Rule:** A game ends after 4 innings (3-1/2) when a team is 15 or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat. This is effective for regular and post-season play.

E. **Regulation Game:** It is a regulation game if: (a) 5 full innings have been played; or if the team second at bat has scored an equal or greater number of runs in 4 or 4 and a fraction terms at bat than the opponent has scored in 5 terms at bat; or (b) play has gone beyond 5 full innings.

In (b), if the game is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed terms at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; unless the home team, in their half of the incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, in which case, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.

F. **Suspended Games (Regular Season and Postseason):** A suspended game is any game that is ended **<u>before</u>** it becomes a regulation game, or a regulation game that has a tie score after the last completed inning or is tied in the bottom half of the inning. If darkness, rain or other circumstances interfere with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire-in-chief before it is a regulation game, such game shall be declared a suspended game. The suspended game shall be resumed from the point of interruption at a later date.

If a called game is a regulation game that has a tie score after the last completed inning or is tied in the bottom half of the inning, it shall be declared a suspended game and must be continued from the point of suspension at a later time. The lineup and batting order of each team shall be exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules governing the game. All other games that are called (ended) by the umpire-in-chief will revert back to the score after the last completed inning (except in cases where the home team takes the lead in the bottom half of the inning) and will be final.

G. **Tie Regulation Season Games:** Each year during regular season play some conference games, after going five full innings or more are called because of rain, darkness or other cause while the score is tied. According to the rule this is a tie game. Batting and fielding records are counted but the game is not counted in computing percentages of games won or lost. There is, however, by rule this choice; by conference adoption, a regulation called game with tie score shall be counted as half game won and half game lost for each team.

H. **Time Limit Procedure:** In invitational tournaments games may be played with a time limit as prescribed by the host tournament team. Under this rule, no new inning will start after the prescribed time limit unless the game is tied. If a game is tied the tie-breaker rule, identified in I. below, will be used to determine a winning team. The host tournament team will decide in which inning the tiebreaker rule will be used.

I. **Tie-Breaker Rule:** In the event that the Tie Breaker rule is used the following procedures shall apply: At the start of the inning in which the tie-breaker rule is used, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in the respective half inning being placed on second base (e.g., if the number 5 batter is the leadoff batter, the number 4 batter in the batting order will be placed on second base). The umpire and scorekeeper will determine that the proper runner has been placed at second base and the inning shall begin.

J. **Double First Base:** Double first base is required for all regular and post-season games.

K. **Umpire Uniform**: The uniform for softball officials is: Smitty MSHSL electric blue shirt with midnight blue side panels is the default (expected) shirt. The midnight blue shirt with electric blue panels is optional. These shirts are required for all varsity games in 2026. Charcoal gray pants & black belt. Charcoal is the color requirement for 2026. All crew members must match. Mostly black shoes, navy blue-sized hat, Navy blue ball bag(s), For inclement weather, jackets with blue or white trim are the default. NCAA style uniform jackets are acceptable – no emblems, printing, or markings on uniforms are acceptable.

Swimming & Diving

A. Swimming & diving meet officials shall wear the blue Smitty brand knit polo shirt with the MSHSL logo on the left crest. Shirts should be worn tucked in. Black dress or sharp casual style pants, shorts, or skirts are acceptable during the regular season. Shorts and skirts must fall within 3 inches of the knee. Athletic shorts, sweatpants, leggings, and warm-up pants are not acceptable. Mostly black shoes are required. If socks are worn, they must be black. Officials selected for the state meet must wear the standard Smitty blue polo tucked in with black full-length dress-style pants. Shorts and skirts are not acceptable. A mostly black shoe is required, sandals and crocs are not acceptable footwear at the state meet. If socks are worn, they must be black. Section meet officials are encouraged to follow the state meet requirements.

B. Rule 3-3-3 addresses information that can be placed on the suit or cap:

- Competitor's name, school name, abbreviation, and/or school-approved mascot, nickname, or logo
- Advertising or name other than that permitted in 3-3-3c is prohibited;
- A single visible manufacturer's logo/trademark/reference; no more than 2 ¼ inches
- One American flag or memorial patch; not to exceed 4 square inches
- The FINA mark and/or individual barcode.

Track and Field and Cross Country

A. A competitor may be entered and compete in a total of four events (track and field), but not in excess of three track or field events in arriving at the combination of four. (Modifies Rule 4-2-1, 4-2-2) An athlete that is already entered into 3 individual running events is not eligible to be placed as a runner or alternate in a relay.

For Sub-Section, Section, and State Competition

A contestant becomes officially entered into the first level of competition upon the entry deadline established by the section. If section meet procedures allow for scratches on meet day, this will be allowable at the first level of competition only, these must take place PRIOR to the start of the earliest event of the meet. An athlete that is scratched during this meeting is scratched from ALL events for which they were entered. Additions may not be made for any reason.

Once the first level of competition meet begins and/or the athlete advances and the next level meet begins (i.e.; sub-section to section or section to state), they must compete in ALL events in which they are entered. If the athlete does not compete in all events entered, it will result in disqualification of the participant in ALL events in which the contestant is entered (including events that are final). If the athlete is a member of a relay that is complete (prelims or finals), that relay team shall be disqualified and not eligible for advancement to the next level of competition. If the athlete is a member of a relay team yet to compete in which no alternates are listed or available, that relay is disqualified.

Medical exceptions to this policy will be handled on an individual basis at the meet by the Games Committee.

Relays: Relays advance as a school team. Therefore, the relay team (4 runners and 2 alternates) may change from sub-section to section and from section to state. If a Preliminary event is run, the same team of 6 runners must be used in the Finals event. Runners and Alternates must have an available event to be placed on the relay card.

Example: An individual who is entered in the 100, 200, and 400 is not eligible to be placed on a relay as a runner OR alternate as they are not eligible to run. An individual who is entered in the 100, 200, and 4x400 may be listed as an alternate in the other relays as they could be utilized by not participating in the 4x400.

An athlete that is entered into 3 individual events (100, 200, 400) will be disqualified from ALL events in which they are entered if listed as 1 of the 8 allowable athletes in a relay.

B. If a student should participate in more than one track meet in a given day, the total participation in both meets must not exceed the above limitations.

C. A competitor who fails to qualify in a preliminary of any event shall be considered to have participated in the event.

D. If a competitor competes in three track events, only two events may be 800 meters or longer. The penalty for violation of (A), and (B) is according to the National Federation Track and Field Rules, **(Modifies Rule 4-2-2)**. All individual and team points earned by that competitor shall be forfeited. If a competitor participated in a relay event, all relay points earned by the team shall be forfeited.

E. A competitor who meets or exceeds the standard established for advancement to the MSHSL State Track & Field Meet in the section meet finals of the 100m, 200m, or 100m/110m hurdle races, or long jump and/or triple jump shall qualify for the state meet if the wind measured during the performance is less than or equal to +4.0m/sec. **(Modifies Rule 10-2-1).**

F. Participants must wear helmets during practice, warm-ups, and competition in the pole vault. Helmets shall be unadorned. If the competitor is observed by a meet official to be not in compliance, the competitor shall be issued a warning that a subsequent violation will result in the athlete's disqualification from the event. In addition, it shall be noted by a meet official, and the competitor shall be required to wear a compliant helmet before becoming eligible for further competition in the event.

G. There are no restrictions for hair control devices. However, baseball caps, scarves, bandanas, etc., shall not be worn during competition. Other prohibited items include face/body paint and/or stickers. Headbands shall not be tied in a knot (see NFHS Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Book 4-3, Art. 1-b-3).

H. Any visible garments (with the exception of the sports bra and briefs) worn by two or more relay team members or cross country team members underneath the uniform top and /or underneath the uniform bottom, shall be unadorned and of the same, single, solid color, but not necessarily the same length. Note…Visible items worn under both the top and the bottom do not have to be the same color. (Modifies Rule 4-3-1b.7)

Volleyball

A. Varsity Matches for the Dual Meet Season:

1. Length of Sets: (Rule 1-2-1). A team that has scored 25 points rally scored and is at least 2 points ahead is the winner. If the leading team does not have a 2-point advantage, play shall continue until one team has a 2-point advantage.
2. Length of Match: (Rule 1-2-1). A match consists of the best three-out-of-five sets. The fourth and/or fifth set shall not be played unless it is necessary to determine the winner of the match. If a fifth and deciding set is played, a team scoring 15 points and is at least 2 points ahead is the winner.
3. Girls Volleyball Ball: (Rule 3-2-1): In all varsity contests the use of the three-colored panel volleyball in grey/blue, white is required. Sub-varsity may utilize the three-colored panel ball or solid white volleyball.
4. Boys Volleyball Ball: (2024-2026 NFHS Experiment): In all varsity contests the use of the textured Molten FLISTATEC 5000, is recommended. This ball will be used for all postseason tournaments.

B. Sub-varsity Matches and Invitational Tournaments:

Sub-varsity matches and invitational tournaments shall be best of three sets rally scored to 25 points (no cap) and the third set played to 15 points (no cap).

In sub-varsity and invitational tournaments, a match consists of the best two-out-of-three sets rally scored to 25 points (no cap).

PLEASE NOTE: If a team wins a sub-varsity match in 2 sets, the competing schools may elect to play the third set. If the third set is played, game officials and contest personnel (scorers, timers, etc.,) must be present and the set must be counted as one of the five (5) sets per day permitted for individual players. The third set shall not be played if contest personnel (scorers, timers, etc.) are not available.

If schools elect not to play the third set but elect to conduct a scrimmage during the available time prior to the next match, the scrimmage must adhere to Bylaw 411, Scheduling of Contests, Game Definition.

Schools should decide prior to a sub-varsity match whether they will play a third set or conduct a scrimmage and notify the game officials and contest personnel. If both coaches cannot agree, the third game cannot be played.

The schedule of matches should respect the contracted times of the match officials.

Non-League Tournaments – Rally Scoring must be used.
In non-league tournaments, teams may compete in a maximum of 15 sets per day. A minimum of 2 sets rally scored to 25 must be played with each opponent. Match play (2 out of 3) may also be used. If teams play only 2 sets with an opponent, the winner of the match will be decided by the following criteria.

1. A team winning both sets shall be declared the winner.
2. If a team has split the games with one win and one loss, the winner shall be declared using one of these criteria:
   a) one team has scored more total points (2-games total) than the other team
   b) if both teams have scored the same total points there are two options:
      1. Continue play in set 2 until one team has scored a total of 2 more points than the other team or
      2. Play a 5-point set to determine the winner.

Match Protocol

A. BENCHES: During the regular season, teams will not switch sides. Home team will choose their side.

B. COIN FLIP: Pre-game captain's meeting will determine Serve or Serve Receive by coin toss.

C. WARM UP PERIOD:
Directed by the second referee. Timed by the timer on a visible scoreboard and second referee on stopwatch. 20 minutes of warm-up:

- 4 minutes shared court time
- 6 minutes of **warm-up** by visiting team
- 6 minutes of **warm-up** by home team
- 2 minutes of **exclusive warm-up** by visiting team
- 2 minutes of **exclusive warm-up** by home team
  Space needs to be provided for the other team during the six-minute court time periods.

D. INTRODUCTIONS: First Referee and L1 stand on sideline near officials stand (facing benches) with first referee standing closest to net. Second Referee and L2 stand on sideline near bench (facing court on opposite side of net from First Referee) with Second Referee standing closest to net. During the playing of the anthem and introductions, line judges will stand without flags - L1 places flag on referee stand and L2 on scorer's table.

1. First Referee whistles both teams to their respective end lines, teams remain on their respective end line until number '4'. Coaches remain in the team bench area.
2. National Anthem is played.
3. Announcer introduces visiting reserves, starters, and coaches; followed by home team reserves, starters, and coaches.
4. First Referee whistles and signals:
   a) The starting players to immediately take the court to begin the match.
   b) The remaining team members (including libero) will proceed to the team bench area.
5. Officials and line judges assume their match positions.
6. For sets 2 through 5, players report directly to the playing court.

E. BEGINNING OF FIRST SET IN THE MATCH: First Referee on stand and Second Referee by scoring table:

1. First Referee signals starters to the end line.
2. First Referee whistles and signals players onto court (arms extended in front, bring palms together over net).
3. For sets two through five, players report directly to the playing court.

F. END OF SET: First Referee whistles and signals players to their respective benches.

1. Non-Deciding Set - First Referee whistles and signals players the end of set and directs players to their team benches.
2. Deciding Set
   a) The First Referee, whistles, signals end of set and directs players to their team benches.

b) The Second Referee double whistles and raise coin in air to signal the captains to go near the officials table for deciding set coin toss. (Home team calls the toss).

c) The Second Referee communicates results to the First Referee extending an outstretched arm on the side of the team to serve first and giving the appropriate signal indicating if teams remain on their current side or change.

d) The First Referee whistles to start the 3-minute clock between sets.

e) The Second Referee verifies the 3-minute clock has started.

G. END OF MATCH:

1. First Referee whistles, gives the end-of-set signal and whistles and signals the teams to shake hands at net.
2. The Second Referee verifies the score by initialing the score sheet. Match becomes official when the score sheet is initialed.
3. The officials leave the confines of the gymnasium together.

H. PROTOCOL FOR INTRODUCTION OF TEAMS DURING TOURNAMENTS AND RECOMMENDED FOR SUB-VARSITY MATCHES.

1. First Referee on the stand and Second Referee by scoring table:
2. First Referee signals starters to the end line.
3. First Referee whistles and signals players onto court (arms extended in front, bring palms together over net).
4. For remaining sets, players report directly to the playing court.

Wrestling

A. Weight control program (Rule 1.5.2): Hydration testing not required

Weather Condition Guidelines

See mshsl.org for the Board Policy for Weather Conditions and Competition.

Process for Blood

The MSHSL Board of Directors approved the following procedure for an athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has blood on the uniform.

Communicable Disease Precautions

While risk of one athlete infecting another with HIV/AIDS during competition is close to non-existent, there is greater risk that other blood borne infectious diseases can be transmitted. For example, hepatitis B can be present in blood as well as in other body fluids. Precautions for reducing the potential for transmission of these infectious agents should include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Routine use of gloves or other precautions to prevent skin and mucous-membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluids is anticipated.

2. Immediately wash hands and other skin surfaces if contaminated (in contact) with blood or other body fluids. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.

3. The official discovers a player who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the game/meet until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and or/the uniform is changed before returning to competition.

4. The bloodied portion of the uniform must be properly disinfected, or the uniform changed before the athlete may participate. To disinfect the uniform, use a solution of 1-100 (for example, 1/4 cup to one gallon water) of sodium hypochlorite (example bleach) or 70% isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol) or other appropriate disinfectant.

5. Clean all blood contaminated surfaces and equipment with a solution made from a 1-10 dilution of household bleach or other disinfectants before competition resumes.

6. Practice proper disposal procedures to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels and other sharp instruments or devices.

7. Although saliva has not been implicated in HIV transmission, to minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, or other ventilation devices should be available for use.

8. Athletic trainers/coaches with bleeding or oozing skin conditions should refrain from all direct athletic care until the condition resolves.

9. Contaminated towels should be properly disposed of/disinfected.

10. Follow acceptable guidelines in the immediate control of bleeding and when handling bloody dressings, mouthguards and other articles containing body fluids.

It shall not be the responsibility of the official to provide first aid to an injured athlete or to remove blood from the playing surface.

Student/Coach Ejection from a Contest

Penalties:

Any student or coach disqualified from an interscholastic contest by game officials will be ineligible for the next regularly scheduled game/meet at that level of competition and all other games/meets in the interim at any level of competition.

The second violation carries a four (4) regularly scheduled game/meet ineligibility.

If penalties are imposed at the end of the activity season and no contest remains, the penalty is carried over in that particular activity until the next school year. In the case of a senior student, the penalty will continue to the next activity season.

Student:

Anytime a student-athlete is ejected from a game/meet, he/she does not participate for the remainder of that day. The student is also suspended from the next scheduled, rescheduled, or contracted contest at that level of competition and all games/meets in the interim at other levels of competition.

Student Relationship to Team During Suspension:

Q. What may a player do while under suspension?

A. A player may travel with the team, be in the locker room and on the sideline but may not be in uniform while under suspension.

Coach:

Anytime a coach is ejected from a game/meet, he/she does not coach the remainder of that day. The coach is also suspended from the next scheduled, rescheduled, or contracted date at that level of competition and all games/meets in the interim at other levels of competition.

Coach Relationship to Team During Suspension:

Q. What may a coach do while under suspension?

A. A coach who is under suspension for an ejection may not:

1. Have access to the locker room prior to the game, during half-time, or following the game;
2. Be seated in an area proximal to the team bench;
3. Ride the team bus to or from the contest; or
4. Serve in any official capacity as a coach, statistician, supervisor, etc. until the suspension has been served.

Appeal: A basketball coach may appeal the penalty only when the coach is disqualified for technical fouls and his/her actions did not contribute to the disqualification. The appeal will be heard by the local school administration. A complete report must be sent to the League for review.

Ejection Protocol for Officials:

The following protocol should be followed when an official is required to eject an athlete or coach from a contest:

Ejection of Athlete:

1. Within the rules of the activity, announce the ejection by making eye contact with the ejected athlete. Do not make physical contact with the athlete.
2. Request the athlete to go immediately to the team bench/area and to the head coach.
3. One official will go to the sidelines/team area, make eye contact with the head coach and announce that the athlete (identify by number or lane or some accepted method for that activity) has been ejected from this contest and state the reason.
4. Athletes shall remain on the bench under the supervision of the coach. They should not leave the playing area unless accompanied by school personnel.

Ejection of Coach:

1. The official should approach the coach; announce the ejection to the coach and state that the coach should leave the competition area. In addition, the official must ask which coach or school representative will function as the head coach in the absence of the ejected coach. Only assistant coaches or school representatives may act in place of the coach.
2. The ejected coach shall leave the competition area and may not be seated in an area proximal to the team benches or have access to the locker room before the game, during half-time or following the game (see policies under penalties).

Report to League Office:

a. One official must file a written report with the League office no later than noon on the first business day following the contest. The ejection report must be filed online (go to Arbiter MSHSL Central Hub). **Please submit a separate report for each athlete**.
b. The League Office will email a confirmation of the ejection to the activities administrator of the member school. The activities administrator will reply with a response to the League Office indicating the summary of action taken.

Section Tournament Policy for Officials

The Policies listed below apply to: Football, Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Hockey, Baseball and Softball:

Reciprocity officials are not eligible to work post-season contests.

1. Officials may not work more than three consecutive years in the same section tournament, at the semifinal or final level. Each class and each gender are considered to be different sections.

2. Officials may not work a Section Championship game in consecutive years in the same section tournament. Each class and each gender are considered to be different sections. *

3. At the end of each season, each section must report the game officials to the MSHSL office and indicate the name of each official who worked in the section tournament for the semifinal and final rounds. This information will be tracked by the League office.

*Serving as an alternate/bench/4th official is not included when calculating the number of consecutive years.

Policies listed below apply to all sports:

1. All officials who work at any level in a section tournament must have worked the minimum number of events in Minnesota as indicated below, during the year prior to working in the section tournament: (these are the same numbers as required to work the state tournament) *

   Football, Dance Team, and Adapted Sports: 7
   All Other Activities: 10

2. Any official who works a **section** event in Minnesota must be **fully eligible (completion of Section or State Tournament Tier requirements) in Minnesota (not reciprocity)** and meet the above game requirement in Minnesota.

3. If extenuating circumstances create the need to hire an official who does not meet the above requirements, a waiver requesting an exception from these requirements may be filed with the MSHSL office.

* Section-Eligible Lists are provided to assignors via the Region Secretaries.

Application for MSHSL State Tournament Assignments

The League Office provides eligible officials with the opportunity to provide a description of their qualifications as a potential state tournament official/crew. Through this avenue, it is hoped that all interested officials can be included in the evaluation and selection process.

- Officials must be in good standing with the League and their affiliates, including the requirements for registration, testing, completion of rules modules/exam, background check, working a schedule of contests, concussion training, clinic attendance (if applicable), any additional eligibility tier requirements by sport and the Code of Sport Ethics For Officials.
- Whenever possible, officials who have been selected for three consecutive years will not be selected. Officials are selected to represent the geographical areas where teams in that activity are located and the statewide constituency of officials in that activity.
- The roster of state tournament officials may include officials who have been selected for previous state tournaments or new officials assigned for the first time.
- Your schedule should include a minimum of ten (10) high school contests for that season. Exception: football, dance team, and adapted sports where the minimum requirement is seven (7) contests for that season.
- In order to qualify for state tournament selection, officials must have their schedules entered on the Officials/Judges Schedule Form located on the Arbiter Central Hub page.
- Officials who work in a state tournament must complete all requirements under the State Tournament Eligibility Tier by the assigned deadline.
- Regular Season, Section Tournament, Reciprocity, and Student/Minor officials are not eligible for state tournament assignments.

Tournament Eligibility Tier

- State Tournament Tier eligible officials who wish to be considered for assignments for MSHSL State Tournaments must complete the emailed form that is sent from the League office to be considered.
- To be eligible for the state tournament, officials must enter their schedule on the Schedule Form.
- The roster of state tournament officials includes officials who have been selected for previous state tournaments and new officials assigned for the first time; any official who completes the state tournament eligibility tier will be considered.
- If you are applying to soccer, hockey, or basketball, you will need to complete the emailed forms as indicated for the boys tournament and the girls tournament.

State Tournament Policy for Officials Who Live or Officiate Out-of-State

In order to apply to work in any MSHSL State Tournament, officials must be fully eligible in Minnesota; pay the full registration fee, attend a training clinic (if applicable), watch the online rules modules, complete a background check, complete the concussion module, and pass the rules test. In addition, to qualify for the state tournament officials must work the minimum number of required games in Minnesota – ten (10) except for football, dance team, and adapted sports, where the requirement is seven (7). Officials who pay the $15.00 fee for reciprocity in Minnesota are not eligible to work in the Section or State Tournaments.

Fall Activities/Deadline	**Winter Activities/Deadline**	**Spring Activities/Deadline**
Application Form emailed from MSHSL approximately mid-September.	**Application Form emailed from MSHSL approximately late December.**	**Application Form emailed from MSHSL approximately late April.**
Football	Basketball, Girls	Baseball, Boys
Soccer, Girls & Boys	Basketball, Boys	Lacrosse, Girls
Soccer, Adapted	Dance Team	Lacrosse, Boys
Swimming & Diving, Girls	Gymnastics, Girls	Softball, Girls
Volleyball, Girls	Swimming & Diving, Boys	Softball, Adapted
	Hockey, Adapted	Track & Field, Girls & Boys
	Hockey, Boys	Volleyball, Boys
	Hockey, Girls	
	Wrestling	

MSHSL Code of Ethics for Officials

High school interscholastic sports are unique in their mission to provide educational opportunities for students through athletic programs sponsored by their schools.

As a high school official, you share the responsibility to assist schools as they teach students how to reason, make choices, and understand the impact of their decisions on others.

During the competitive season, student-athletes listen to your words and see how you treat them, their coaches, other participants, and spectators. They observe your respect for the letter and spirit of the rules.

As an official, your actions are expected to support the governing values of the Minnesota State High School League:

- Fair play and honorable competition
- Treating people with dignity and respect
- Equity, fairness, and justice
- Activities that enhance healthy lifestyles

The following statements will help you review your responsibilities as an official registered with the Minnesota State High School League.

I Understand

1. I understand that I am part of the educational process of teaching students how to reason, make choices and understand the impact of their decisions on others.
2. I understand that my actions as an official must display decisions and behavior which teach students how to compete within the letter and spirit of the rules so that all competitors have the same fair chance for success.
3. I understand that I must model decisions and behavior which reflect the following principles: justice, honesty, responsibility, and beneficence/producing good.
4. I understand that the League and its member schools are committed to creating an environment in the activity program which promotes respect for and appreciation of racial, gender, and ethnic differences and is disability aware.

I Will

The following moral guides are drawn from the principles of justice, honesty, responsibility, and beneficence/producing good. These principles will help officials choose the appropriate response to situations. They are reminders that the letter and spirit of the rules are meant for everybody and for the good of everyone alike. I will be neutral and impartial.

Honesty: being truthful and trustworthy in dealing with others

- I will uphold and abide by all rules of the Minnesota State High School League. I will work within the established process to change rules and policies.
- I will treat other officials with courtesy and support their decisions.
- I will honor contracts regardless of possible inconvenience or financial loss. When unable to honor a contract because of circumstances beyond my control, I will work with the contracting school and my officiating partner(s) to find a suitable replacement.
- I will admit my own errors and make all possible corrections.

Responsibility: being accountable for your actions; capable of determining one's own actions

- I will register with the MSHSL each year on a timely basis and complete all tier requirements.
- I will not work an interscholastic varsity contest with officials that I know do not hold current MSHSL eligibility in the sport.
- I will actively participate in clinics to improve my skills.
- I will make thorough physical and mental preparations for each season and every assigned contest.
- I will intensively study the rules books, case books and official’s manuals, observe the work of other officials, and will work to improve myself as an official.
- I will recruit, encourage, and mentor new officials including female and minority officials.
- I will have a clean uniform and present a professional image in terms of personal appearance and have proper and approved equipment.
- I will not use alcohol prior to, while officiating, or after any League contest or activity at the site of the contest.
- I will refrain from the use of tobacco in the presence of students.
- I will abstain from the use of illegal, controlled substances.
- I will use respectful language at all times and will not use profanity that is casual or directed at any individual.

MSHSL Substance Use Policy

Policy Statement
The Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) is committed to ensuring a safe and fair competitive environment for student-athletes, coaches, spectators, and officials. To uphold the integrity of high school sports, all MSHSL officials must remain free from the influence of alcohol, drugs, and marijuana before, during, and immediately after contests.

Prohibited Conduct
MSHSL officials are prohibited from:

- Consuming alcohol, drugs, marijuana or any other substance that may impair judgement before officiating a contest.
- Officiating while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, marijuana, or any substance that affects judgment, coordination, or reaction time.
- Possessing alcohol, illegal drugs, or marijuana at a contest site.
- Using prescription or over-the-counter medications in a manner that impairs their ability to officiate.

Reporting and Investigation Process
If an official suspects that their partner or crewmate may be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or another judgment impairing substance before or during a contest, the following steps are recommended:

1. Immediate Private Discussion – The observing official should discreetly speak with the suspected official to assess the situation. If the official admits to using a prohibited substance or exhibits clear signs of impairment, they must immediately remove themselves from officiating duties.
2. Contact Contest Assigning Authority – If the suspected official refuses to step aside or denies impairment but continues to exhibit concerning behavior, the observing official must contact the contest assigning authority for guidance and next steps.
3. Notify Game Administration – If the contest assigning authority is unavailable, or if the suspected official remains on site, the observing official must notify the game administrator (e.g., athletic director, school official) to intervene.
4. Escalation to Local Authorities (If Necessary) – If the suspected official exhibits dangerous behavior, refuses to cooperate, or presents a risk to participants, game administration should contact local law enforcement for further action.
5. Completion of Contest Report – Any incident must be documented in writing and submitted to the officials' contest assigning authority within 24 hours of the occurrence. The contest assigning authority must report the case to MSHSL within 7 days for review.

Consequences for Non-Adherence
Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include:

- First Offense – Local officials' association may adjudicate, with disciplinary action ranging from a written warning to a one-month suspension from officiating duties. The case must still be reported to MSHSL within 7 days for official record-keeping.
- Second Offense – Automatic forfeiture of all future MSHSL contest assignments for the current season and mandatory substance use assessment before reinstatement.
- Third Offense – Permanent suspension from officiating MSHSL contests.

In cases of severe impairment or endangerment of participants, MSHSL reserves the right to immediately suspend or expel an official, regardless of prior offenses.

Delegation of Authority
MSHSL may delegate first-offense adjudication to local officials' associations. However, all cases—regardless of severity—must be reported to MSHSL within 7 days for monitoring and record-keeping.

MSHSL Conflict of Interest Guidelines

The Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) approved the following Conflict of Interest (COI) Guidelines to assist officials in determining when a potential COI may or may not exist. Officials must avoid Conflicts of Interest, whether real or perceived, whenever they exist. Evaluating potential conflicts is a difficult and complex issue. MSHSL Rules Coordinators will assist officials in making the best decisions when evaluating potential conflicts of interest.

The following guidelines are established to assist officials in making their own personal decisions. Every situation is different, and officials should not solely rely upon this guidance. Officials must use good personal judgment when evaluating each potential conflict. This document cannot cover every situation that might arise. Officials are advised to consult with Rules Coordinators when they are unsure of how to address a potential conflict.

Conflicts of Interest arise when an official's bias may be impacted and can exist in many different forms including family or personal relationships, employer/employee relationships, school affiliations, conference affiliations, community conflicts, and many more. Each one of these is unique and requires careful assessment.

Good judgment should be exercised when officiating all levels of games. However, the following situations apply to officials working MSHSL contests.

Officials should not work games within a school district if they:

1. Are a current employee of that school district.
2. Have children that attend a school in that school district and/or those children have participated in sports in that school or district within the past two years.

Note: Some conferences have more stringent requirements than #1 & 2 above, which prohibit working any games in a conference if an official is employed by a school in that conference. Officials should check with the assigner to ensure they are not violating any conference regulations.

Officials should not work a contest that includes a particular school if they:

1. Attended, participated, or coached in the sport at that school within the past five (5)years.
2. Have a personal relationship and are friends with any of the coaching staff from the school.
3. Social Media: You have unique access to information. The same ethical restrictions that apply to any form of public speech also apply to social media. It is inappropriate to communicate specifics about your assignments, other officials, conferences/schools, coaches, players or any related personnel. If you have social media relationships with any of those individuals, take that into consideration.
4. Have immediate relatives that play on the school team.
5. Have immediate relatives who work at the school district.

Immediate relatives include siblings, children, stepchildren, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

All officials and assigners should consider not working contests involving players whose parents they consider close friends.

The information provided in this document is guidance and officials may be allowed to work games with a conflict of interest if it is an urgent need and the conflict of interest is disclosed to the scheduling Activities Director, Conference Commissioner, or Assigner. It is highly recommended that the scheduling Activities Director, Conference Commissioner, or Assigner notify both coaches of this conflict and receive unanimous approval for the official(s) to work the contest. Those should rarely occur, and every effort should be made to switch the official who had a conflict of interest to another contest.

MSHSL Social Media Guidelines

As adopted from the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO).

- Consider social media communications as public at all times — even if created with private intentions. If you are going to use social media in any form, consider your communication may be read by anyone at any time.
- You represent the officiating industry, your associations, your assigners, and your partners. Act accordingly.
- Promote officiating in a positive light and with a general feeling of pride and professionalism. You are an ambassador for officiating.
- You have a unique access to information. The same ethical restrictions that apply to any form of public speech also apply to social media. It is inappropriate to communicate specifics about your assignments, other officials, conferences/schools, coaches, players, or any related personnel.
- Do not engage in specific play and or ruling evaluation/commentary, whether it is of a game you worked, one that you witnessed or in general about the impact of officials in any sporting event.
- Communications among officials for learning purposes should be done privately and not through the use of social media. Be mindful that email and other forms of direct communication can be made public.
- Be very sparing in the sharing of your personal information, including photos. Adjust security settings accordingly. Report fake profiles or posts to the appropriate authorities/governing bodies in a timely fashion.
- Follow specific conference, school, and/or governing body social media policies.

Criticism of Officials by Coaches

Statement of Philosophy

The Minnesota State High School League has established policies and standards which will cultivate the ideals of good sportsmanship. It shall be the responsibility of each member school to ensure that all individuals employed or directly associated with the interscholastic program conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner.

The coach is an official representative of the school at interscholastic athletic activities. It is the responsibility of the head and assistant coaches to serve as role models for students and the public.

Code of Ethics:

A coach will be in violation of the standards for good sportsmanship established by the Minnesota State High School League by:

a. Making degrading/critical remarks about officials during or after a contest either on the field of play, from the bench or through any public news media including social media;
b. Arguing with officials or going through motions indicating dislike/disdain for a decision;
c. Detaining the officials following the contest to request a ruling or explanation of actions taken by the official; or
d. Being ejected from any contest.

Actions and Response:

Unsportsmanlike actions by a coach shall be reported to the League by the school and by the head contest official. The school shall document the results of their investigation and actions taken, where necessary and appropriate.

Penalties for violation of these standards may include, but are not limited to, reprimand, censure, fines, or other actions as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors.

Commentary:

It is within each individual's ability to treat others with dignity and respect. The League and its member schools expect each individual to assume the responsibility for their actions.

Criticism of Coaches by Officials

Just as coaches are held to a standard and a code of ethics, so too are the officials. An official shall be in violation of the standards of good sportsmanship established by the Minnesota State High School League by:

a. Making degrading/critical remarks about coaches or school administration, during or after a contest either on the "field of play," or through any public news media including social media;
b. Arguing with coaches or using motions indicating disrespect towards a coach;
c. Detaining coaches following the contest to confront a coach;
d. Use of inappropriate language in addressing a coach, player, fans, or game personnel.

Actions and Response:

Any actions listed above or other inappropriate acts of sportsmanship shall be reported to the League by the school, through their Athletic/Activities Administrator. The League shall then investigate as necessary.

Penalties for violation of these standards may include, but are not limited to: reprimand, censure, suspension from officiating, or removal of the officials eligibility to officiate.

Assault on an Official

The MSHSL Official Handbook, Bylaw 203.00 Assault on an Official, provides that:

Assault on a Game Official:

Assault shall mean any deliberate attempt by a participant to inflict bodily harm on an official, referee, umpire, judge, scorer, timer, participant or any other person.

Procedure to Report an Assault on a Game Official:

A. The assaulted person or representative must put the charge in writing within 48 hours of the event and send it to the Minnesota State High School League Office. If the charge is not submitted in writing within the specified period of time, the charge shall be waived.
B. This report will be forwarded to the principal of the school where the student is enrolled. If the student is home-schooled or enrolled in a charter school, the report shall be filed with the "host" school for the activity.
C. The principal, or in the principal's absence, the superintendent, shall conduct an immediate investigation and submit a report to the Executive Director of the MSHSL. In all cases, the student shall be ineligible for participation in League-sponsored activities until the decision is rendered.
D. The decision shall be submitted in writing to the student and the assaulted person or representative with a notification that the ruling may be appealed to the League's Board of Directors whose decision will be final.

Penalty: The student shall be disqualified from participation in all League-sponsored activities for a minimum of 4 weeks.

Appeal: In the case of an appeal, the student will be ineligible until the Board of Directors renders its decision.

Physical Contact with an Official

Physical contact between a coach and an official or between a player and an official that results from disrespectful and/or unsporting behavior will not be tolerated. When the incident is determined to be an assault as defined in Bylaw 202, the process outlined in that bylaw will be followed. When the incident does not rise to the level of assault, the guilty party or parties will be suspended, as a minimum, from the next two consecutive varsity, interscholastic contests, or two weeks (14 calendar days), whichever is greater. This penalty will be imposed during the season in which the offense occurs, when possible. The portion of the penalty that cannot be served during the current season will carry over to the next season in which the guilty party or parties play, coach, or officiate. This policy applies to officials, coaches, and participants – whoever is involved in causing the physical contact to occur. (Effective 2/4/2016)

Minnesota State Statutes - Assaulting a Sports Official

State Statute

M.S. 128C.08 (Chapter 168,1991 Session Law)

An Act relating to interscholastic athletics; providing that person(s) who assault a sports official may be excluded from certain events; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 128C.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1.

(128C.08) (ASSAULTING A SPORTS OFFICIAL PROHIBITED)

Subdivision 1

(DEFINITIONS) For the purposes of this section, the following terms have the meaning given in this subdivision.

"Assault" is (1) an act done with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death, or (2) the infliction of or attempt to inflict bodily harm upon another.

"Sports official" is a person who serves as an umpire, referee, judge, lines person, timer, scorekeeper, or in another similar capacity for an interscholastic athletic activity.

"Interscholastic athletic activity" or "activity" means an interscholastic athletic activity whose control, supervision and regulation have been delegated to the Minnesota State High School League pursuant to section 129.121.

Upon finding that the person assaulted a sports official, the board of directors of the Minnesota State High School League or school board shall notify the individual in writing and shall indicate any activity from which, and the period of time for which, the person is excluded.

Subdivision 2

(PROHIBITED CONDUCT) Any person who assaults a sports official in connection with an interscholastic athletic activity may be excluded from attending an activity for up to 12 months.

Subdivision 3

(SANCTION) The Board of Directors of the Minnesota State High School League or a school board may exclude any person except as provided in subdivision 5.

The board of directors of the Minnesota State High School League may exclude a person from:
(1) any activity of the kind in connection with which the assault occurred; or
(2) all interscholastic athletic activities.

A school board may exclude a person from any activity sponsored or participated in by the school district.

Subdivision 4

(PROCEDURE) The board of directors of the Minnesota State High School League or a school board may exclude a person from any interscholastic athletic activity if the person assaulted a sports official in connection with an activity. A person alleged to have assaulted a sports official shall be entitled to an informal hearing on the matter by the board of directors of the Minnesota State High School League or school board.

Subdivision 5

(HEAD VARSITY COACH) A head varsity coach may be excluded under this section only by the school board employing the coach.

Board Policy Statements

Chemical Awareness Statement for League Representatives

Philosophy and Standards

The Minnesota State High School League is concerned about the potential for adverse effects of alcohol and other chemicals on an individual's health and safety, as well as on the conduct of League activities.

Understanding the implications of chemical use on one's health is a personal responsibility. However, it is also the responsibility of the Minnesota State High School League to create an environment which is conducive to responsible decision-making and to establish practices which will minimize chemical abuse. Because even minimal consumption of mood-altering chemicals has an effect on individual functioning, it is of legitimate concern to the organization.

It is imperative that at all times League business is conducted in a professional and responsible manner. To this end, all representatives of the League must accept their individual responsibility to report to League functions prepared to execute their duties on behalf of the member schools.

Therefore, the Board of Directors has established the following policies and guidelines and recommends that their spirit and intent be communicated throughout all League-sponsored activities.

Policies of the Board of Directors

1. League funds shall not be used to pay for alcoholic beverages at any business or social function of the League
2. Individuals will not use or consume alcohol prior to and while conducting League business or administering League activities
3. All business meetings of the League shall be tobacco-free

By definition, these representatives and functions apply to all League activities, including the Board of Directors, Representative Assembly, Congress of Schools, Subregions and Regions, Ad Hoc Committees and Advisory Committees; Rules Interpretation Meetings, Tournaments and their personnel, and representatives of member schools at League-sponsored activities.

Guidelines for Member Schools

The Board of Directors believes that the League and each member school should set clear expectations of appropriate behavior for those individuals who are responsible for students and their welfare. The following expectations are recommended:

1. Individuals who are responsible for students/teams in a League activity should refrain from the use of alcohol during this period.
2. The use of alcohol is inappropriate as a part of any League-related function which includes students, such as banquets and other celebrations.
3. Individuals who are responsible for students/teams in a League activity should refrain from the use of tobacco in the presence of students in League activities.
4. Individuals who are responsible for students/teams in a League activity should abstain from the use of illegal controlled substances.

Commentary

Each of us as a part of an organization can understand and appreciate the need for responsible behavior in our personal use of mood-altering chemicals. The cost to society, to families, and to the individual has been documented far too many times for us, both individually and collectively, to ignore our responsibilities. Our concerns should reflect consideration for those who do not use alcohol or tobacco, and consideration of those who encounter difficulty in their personal choices to maintain a chemical-free lifestyle.

Changing attitudes and patterns of alcohol use in our society has become a national goal. We, as leaders in education, can assist this movement and increase its momentum by role modeling a chemically healthy lifestyle.

By our actions, we make a statement about our beliefs regarding mood-altering chemicals. Most of all, we can be a positive role model for young people.

Preventing chemical use problems can begin with one person. The Minnesota State High School League believes it begins with us, each and every one.

Affirmative Action

It is the policy of the MSHSL to work affirmatively to ensure that all persons, regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, religion, marital status, age, handicapped status or reliance on public assistance, political opinion or affiliation, or military service will be treated fairly and equally in employment or program participation which includes, but is not limited to, study committees, tournament work assignments, tournament officials, etc.

It is the League's policy and responsibility to aggressively and effectively take "affirmative action" to ensure fair and equal treatment for all minorities and women and handicapped persons (protected class persons).

In the area of employment, this basic policy will apply to recruitment, selection, hiring, benefits, compensation, equality of wages, employee development programs, promotion, lay-off and return from lay-off, termination and disciplinary action.

Areas not specifically mentioned in this statement will still be governed by the spirit of this statement. (Adopted by the Board of Directors, January 28, 1988).

Position Statement for The Recruitment of Men, Women, and Minorities

Resolved: That the MSHSL Board of Directors support, encourage, and promote the efforts of member schools, official associations, colleges and universities with training programs teachers/coaches and officials, and the National Federation in their efforts to recruit men, women, and minorities into coaching and officiating.

Sexual, Racial and Religious Harassment, Violence and/or Hazing Policy

I. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Minnesota State High School League believes that all individuals should be treated with respect and dignity. Therefore, it is the expectation of the League that all individuals in the course of performing their job responsibilities, conducting League business, or administering League activities will be free from sexual, racial, religious, harassment or violence and hazing as it is defined by this policy. The League will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, and to discipline any officer or employee who violates this policy.

II. SEXUAL HARASSMENT DEFINED

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which violates Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e, et seq., and Minn. Stat. 363.01-14, the Minnesota Human Rights Act. Sexual harassment is illegal under both federal and state law.

A. Sexual Harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:
   1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of obtaining or retaining employment;
   2. Submission to or rejection of that conduct by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment;
   3. That conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's employment or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment environment; or
   4. Such conduct is based on sex and would not have occurred "but for" the sex of the victim even though it is not clearly sexual in nature or an explicit sexual advance.

B. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:
   1. Verbal harassment or abuse;
   2. Subtle pressure for sexual activity;
   3. Inappropriate touching;
   4. Intentional physical contact with another employee's body;
   5. Requesting sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or education status;
   6. Requesting sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment status;
   7. Any sexually motivated unwelcome touching; or
   8. Conduct other than explicit sexual advances that would not have occurred but for the individual's sex.

III. SEXUAL VIOLENCE DEFINED

Sexual violence is a physical act of aggression that includes a sexual act or sexual purpose which involves the touching of another's intimate parts, either above or underneath the other person's clothes, or forcing another to touch one's intimate parts, either above or underneath one's clothes. Intimate parts, as defined in Minnesota Statutes 1990, Section 609.341, include the primary genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks, or breast of a human being. Sexual violence is a criminal activity.

Sexual violence may include, but is not limited to:

1. Touching, patting, grabbing, or pinching another person's intimate parts, either same sex or opposite sex.
2. Coercing or forcing sexual touching on another.
3. Coercing or forcing sexual intercourse on another.
4. Threatening to force sexual touching or intercourse on another.

IV. RACIAL HARASSMENT DEFINED

Racial harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct relating to an individual's race when the conduct:

1. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment;
2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment or academic opportunities.

V. RACIAL VIOLENCE DEFINED

Racial violence is a physical act of aggression or assault upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, race.

VI. RELIGIOUS HARASSMENT DEFINED

Religious harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct which is related to an individual's religion when the conduct:

1. has the purpose or effect or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment;
2. has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance; or
3. otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment or academic opportunities.

VII. RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE DEFINED

Religious violence is a physical act of aggression or assault upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, religion.

VIII. ASSAULT DEFINED

Assault is:

1. An act done with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death;
2. The intentional infliction of or attempt to inflict bodily harm upon another; or
3. The threat to do bodily harm to another with present ability to carry out the threat.

IX. OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES DEFINED

Officers and employees are defined as those individuals who are elected, appointed or contracted to provide services to the League. They include, but are not limited to the Board of Directors, Representative Assembly, Sub-region and Region Committees, Executive staff and support staff, rules coordinators, registered officials and judges, and vendors.

X. REPORTING PROCEDURES

An employee or officer who believes that she/he has been the victim of sexual, racial, or religious harassment or violence by an officer or an employee of the League should report the alleged act immediately to an appropriate League official as designated by the policy. In addition, anyone who has knowledge of an alleged violation of this policy should also report under the procedures set forth herein.

A report should also be made by anyone who believes that they are being retaliated against for reporting an act covered by this policy.

A. The League hereby designates the Executive Director to receive reports or complaints of sexual, racial, or religious harassment or violence. If the complaint involves the Executive Director, the complaint shall be filed directly with the President of the Board of Directors.
   The name, address, and telephone number of the Executive Director is:
   Erich Martens
   Minnesota State High School League
   2100 Freeway Boulevard
   Brooklyn Center, MN 55430-1735
   763-560-2262

B. Submission of a complaint or report of sexual, racial, or religious harassment or violence that is not frivolous and made in good faith will not affect the individual's future employment or work assignments.

C. Use of formal reporting forms is not mandatory.

The League will respect the confidentiality of the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed as much as possible, consistent with the League's legal obligations and the necessity to investigate allegations of harassment and take disciplinary action when harassment has occurred.

D. Investigation and League Action.
By authority of the League, the Executive Director shall immediately authorize an investigation upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging sexual, racial, or religious harassment or violence.
This investigation may be conducted by League officials or by a third party knowledgeable in conducting such investigations designated by the League. The investigating party shall provide a written report of the status of the investigation within 10 working days to the Executive Director.

In determining whether the alleged conduct violates this policy, the League should consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the alleged conduct, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident violates this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator.

In addition, the League may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant and employees pending completion of an investigation of alleged misconduct.

The Executive Director shall use the investigative report to make findings and conclusions and take appropriate action.

XI. REPORTING LEAGUE ACTION

A. Upon taking appropriate action, the Executive Director shall provide a written report to the Board of Directors.

B. The result of the investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures will be reported by the League in writing to the complainant. The report will document any disciplinary action taken as a result of the complainant.

XII. RIGHT TO ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse which may include filing charges with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, initiating civil action or seeking redress under state criminal statutes and/or federal.

XIII. DISCIPLINE

Any League action taken pursuant to this policy will be consistent with requirements of applicable Minnesota statutes and League policies. The League will take such disciplinary action as it deems necessary and appropriate in its sole discretion. This may include, but is not limited to warning, suspension, or immediate discharge. Immediate discharge may be taken as a first or last disciplinary step.

Position Statement: A Code of Commitment to be Multicultural, Gender Fair, and Disability Aware (Inclusive)

Philosophy

The Minnesota State High School League is concerned about the negative impact of prejudice and discrimination on the participants in the interscholastic activity programs sponsored by its member schools.

The League and its member schools are committed to creating an environment in the activity program which promotes respect for and appreciation of racial, gender, and ethnic differences and is disability aware.

League activities should be models of how individuals can live in a world free of prejudice and discrimination. Because one incident adversely impacts the individuals and activities involved, it is of legitimate concern to the organization.

League Representatives Defined

The Minnesota State High School League believes that clear expectations of appropriate behavior must be communicated to those individuals who are responsible for students in the activity program sponsored by member schools.

By definition, this code applies to all League representatives, including: the Board of Directors and Staff, the Representative Assembly, Region Committees, ad hoc and advisory committees, registered officials, rules coordinators, tournaments and their personnel, and representatives of MSHSL member schools to League-sponsored activities.

The Code of Commitment

The Board of Directors has established the following Code of Commitment and will communicate its spirit and intent throughout all League-sponsored activities:

I will support the commitment of the Minnesota State High School League and its member schools to enhance race relations, be gender fair and disability aware by:

...modeling language and behavior that is non-biased and inclusive of individuals regardless of ethnicity, race, religion, sex, or disability;

...educating and sensitizing myself to gender fairness and equity issues;

...intervening to let others know that I will not tolerate ethnic, disability, or sexist jokes, racial or religious slurs, or any action which demeans any individual or group;

...educating and sensitizing myself to the cultural heritage and traditions of others; and,

...initiating actions which would prevent prejudice and discrimination against individuals or groups in League-sponsored activities.

Commentary

Leaders of interscholastic activities are role models for young people and have a responsibility to model a lifestyle free of prejudice and discrimination.

Preventing prejudice and discrimination can begin with one person. The Minnesota State High School League believes that it begins with us, each and every one.