

NEBRASKA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

# OFFICIALS

MANUAL



2025-2026

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# 2025-2026

# NSAA Officials Manual

(updated 6.26.25)



# NEBRASKA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

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## I. BACKGROUND AND AUTHORITY

This 2025-2026 NSAA OFFICIALS' MANUAL has been prepared to provide information for officials concerning registration and classification, plus general rules and regulations concerning officials and their responsibilities toward the Nebraska School Activities Association and its member schools.

The NSAA was formed to regulate competition between schools. Rules and regulations have therefore been developed for officials and officiating. NSAA bylaws stipulate that only NSAA registered officials may be used by member schools for varsity competition in baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball, track and field, volleyball, and wrestling. The NSAA recommends the use of registered officials for swimming and diving and requires two registered swimming and diving officials for its championship meets. The NSAA staff has the responsibility of registering officials by providing member schools with a current roster of eligible game officials. All addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses submitted will be provided in the form of an online directory to all member schools.

Officiating is a difficult avocation and is not suited for everyone. An effective official must possess certain characteristics such as integrity, confidence, calmness, consistency, good judgment, cooperation, knowledge of the rules, duties and mechanics, professional appearance, conditioning, a sense of humor and courage. Demonstrated inconsistencies with these characteristics and values is grounds for prohibiting the official from officiating NSAA and member school events.

Contest rules can at times be difficult to read, understand and interpret. To achieve officiating excellence, an official must combine knowledge of the rules and the game itself with proper officiating mechanics. It is the responsibility of the official to assure each participant in the contest a fair chance to succeed.

Officials performing their duties are expected to be fair and competent. The conduct of such officials shall be in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Nebraska School Activities Association and this Manual.

## II. NSAA STAFF

Jennifer Schwartz, Executive Director  
Jeff Johnson, Associate Director  
Nate Neuhaus, Assistant Director, Supervisor of Officials  
Jakub VanWesten, Administrative Assistant, Officials' Registration  
Jon Dolliver, Assistant Director  
Jeff Stauss, Assistant Director  
Ron Higdon, Assistant Director  
Colton Wierzbicki, Assistant Director  
Taryn Retzlaff, Assistant Director

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### **III. NSAA ATHLETIC BYLAWS - OFFICIALS**

#### **3.12 Officials**

##### **3.12.1**

Approved Athletic Officials. The Executive Director shall prepare a list of registered officials who shall be available for officiating games between the member high schools of the Association.

##### **3.12.2**

Officials for Varsity Contests. Only those officials who are registered with the Association may be used by member high schools to officiate varsity competition in football, baseball, basketball, wrestling, soccer, softball, and volleyball competition, and start track and field meets.

##### **3.12.3**

Competing Schools' Approval of Officials. Officials for competitive contests shall not be chosen from cities and towns whose schools are represented without mutual consent. A list of officials agreed by consenting teams should be furnished to the visiting team(s) at least five days in advance of the scheduled contests.

##### **3.12.3.1**

Before the host school contracts officials for varsity contests, the visiting school must be given the opportunity to approve or disapprove the officials. If the visiting team disapproves of the officials, they should not be contracted.

##### **3.12.3.2**

No penalty will be assessed against a school if it refuses to play a contest because it did not have the opportunity to approve the officials.

##### **3.12.3.3**

If the officials have been approved and accepted the contract, the contract cannot be voided unless there is an emergency or there is a mutual agreement between the officials and the contracting school.

#### **3.12.4 Protests**

##### **3.12.4.1**

Protests based upon the eligibility of players will be considered by the Executive Director and Board of Directors.

##### **3.12.4.2**

Protests based upon play situations and situations which involve judgment on the part of game officials will not be considered.

## **IV. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS/CONTRACTING WITH OFFICIALS**

### **Independent Contractor Status:**

Officials are not given season schedules by the NSAA but are offered contracts by member schools on a per game basis. An official may accept or reject an offered contract from a member school. The member school will pay the official the agreed upon fee for his/her services for each game. The contracts and fees paid to the officials are determined by member schools during the regular season, with such contract provided and fees paid by the NSAA for NSAA-operated sub-district, district, playoff, and state championship contests. The NSAA does not exercise or have the right to exercise control over the officials in the performance of their services at contests, or the direction and control necessary to establish the relationship of employer and employee under the usual common law rules. As such, officials at NSAA member schools and at NSAA-operated sub-district, district, playoff, and state championship contests are independent contractors. As such, once registered, a game official serves as an independent contractor. He or she is not an employee of the NSAA or member school when serving as an official and has no other benefits consistent with NSAA employment, while arranging for contests at member schools.

### **Officials Associations:**

Officials may join local officials' associations that require membership fees and assign officials for contests. These dues/fees paid to associations and/or assigners are separate from the NSAA and are not a requirement to work NSAA contests.

### **Signed Individual Contracts:**

All officials shall sign individual contracts with member schools for regular season contests, and with the NSAA for sub-district, district, playoff, and state championship competitions.

### **Substitution of Officials:**

Substitution shall not be made unless consent is received from competing schools and signed individual contracts are obtained by the member school providing the officials.

### **Null and Void Contracts:**

A contract shall be null and void:

- If either the school or the official becomes suspended or removed from the NSAA
- If due to a merger, consolidation, school closing or cooperative sponsorship, the school ceases to have a program in the activity for which the contract was written.
- If a high school cancels its entire schedule in the sport for which the contract was written prior to the date of first permitted contest.

### **Honoring Contracts:**

Officials must honor contracts regardless of inconvenience or financial loss. Once an official has accepted a contract for a game, he or she should not ask to be released from that contract in order to accept a more lucrative assignment. Failure to honor a contract with a member school may result in immediate revocation of the official's registration. In case of a broken contract, the amount of the fee, exclusive of mileage, shall be paid by the offending party to the offended party, except when a contract is broken because of reasons beyond the control of either party or by mutual consent.

## **V. RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR OFFICIAL'S CONDUCT**

### **General:**

Officials may be denied approval, suspended, or removed from the approved and registered officials list by the NSAA for any of the following reasons, whether such violation or conduct is discovered as part of the initial application review process or at any point after the official has been registered by the NSAA, regardless of when or where the violation or conduct occurred and regardless of whether it was part of a contracted officiating event: a violation of any provision of this Manual; a violation of any other NSAA bylaws, rules, or regulations; a violation of any standards established by any other body setting ethical or performance standards for officials, such as the NFHS or NHOA; a violation of any law, regulation, or rule governing conduct of the general public or the official, specifically; failure to demonstrate competence to be an official, including knowledge of applicable contest rules, decorum expectations, and respect for all involved in any contest; engaging in any act which causes embarrassment or ridicule of the NSAA, any member school, or any participant; engaging in any act which, in the opinion of the Executive Director of the NSAA, makes the official unsuitable for continued registration with the NSAA; or for any other lawful reason.

Being a registered official is a privilege and comes with no property or other right to be accepted or remain registered by the NSAA. The NSAA and its member schools go to great efforts to foster deep respect and appreciation for the important work officials do providing opportunities for Nebraska students. As a result, it is the intent of the NSAA that these rules be interpreted broadly and to allow officials to be denied approval, suspended, or removed from the approved and registered officials list, if necessary, to the maximum extent allowed by law. This is a fundamental interest shared by the NSAA and its member schools given the age of participants; the importance of activities to students, parents, patrons, the NSAA, and its member schools; and the importance of respect for officials. There is no requirement for a conviction of any crime or a specific finding by any governing body, outside of the NSAA, as to any alleged violation or conduct covered by this Manual. The only due process to which the official is entitled regarding their NSAA registration status is contained in this Manual. All determinations made will be based on a preponderance of the evidence available, even if another standard may apply to the same conduct in a different setting.

### **Comments on Contests:**

An official shall not comment on any contests, schools, or other officials, unless specifically authorized to do so by the member school or the NSAA or unless permitted by law.

### **Failure to complete Registration:**

If any official fails to complete the registration requirements and does not notify schools with which he or she has contracts, the official may not be allowed to register the following year.

### **Due Process:**

An official accused of non-compliance with this Manual shall be granted a hearing as indicated under the Due Process Procedure set forth at Article XII hereof.

## **VI. NSAA REGULATIONS GOVERNING OFFICIALS**

### **Training of Officials:**

The NSAA is a nonprofit, self-governing organization. Among the services provided to member schools is to train and develop contest officials. The NSAA does not assign officials or contract with officials for regular season contests between member schools. The NSAA has an officials' observation process and contracts with qualified officials for NSAA-controlled contests.

### **NSAA Registration of Officials:**

The NSAA annually registers and classifies officials and provides educational opportunities for the purpose of training officials on the rules and regulations.

### **Nebraska Residents:**

Any person whose legal residence is in Nebraska must be classified as Approved or Certified to officiate high school varsity contests in Nebraska.

### **Registration Requirements:**

To be classified and eligible to officiate varsity contests, all officials (excluding "Affiliate" officials) must complete the following registration requirements:

- Pay the appropriate registration fee
- View the 2025-2026 NSAA online rules meeting
- Submit the Part 1 and score a minimum of 40 out of 50 – 80%
- Submit the Part 2 and score a minimum of 35 out of 50 – 70%
- Officials must be classified as "Approved" or "Certified" to officiate varsity contests

### **Non-Nebraska Residents (Affiliate Officials):**

Officials living in and that have completed the registration process in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, South Dakota, and Wyoming may register in Nebraska as an "Affiliate" Official by paying a \$20 per sport registration fee.

## **VII. REGISTRATION PROCEDURES**

### **RETURNING OFFICIALS:**

- Log into your account and select the 'Account Information and Sport Registration' dropdown.
- Here you can edit your contact information and register to become an official for each sport.
  - 'Sport Registration (click here)'.
- On this page, you can review your mailing information and contact information.
- Below that, you can select each sport that you want to register for, with a total registration cost at the bottom of the page.
- Check the box verifying that you have read the NSAA regulations governing officials and understand that officials are considered independent contractors and not employees of the NSAA.
- Once you have selected each sport you want to register for, you can click the button at the bottom of the page to proceed to the 'Payment Page'.
- Once you have completed payment, you will receive a packet in the mail containing rulebook(s) and other materials. Packets will be sent as indicated by the schedule listed at the bottom of the page.

### **NEW OFFICIALS:**

- Create your account on the Officials Page of the NSAA Website
- Log into your account and select the 'Account Information and Sport Registration' dropdown.
- Here you can edit your contact information and register to become an official for each sport.
  - Click 'Sport Registration (click here)'.
- On this page, you can review your mailing information and contact information.
- Below that, you can select each sport that you want to register for, with a total registration cost at the bottom of the page.
- Check the box verifying that you have read the NSAA regulations governing officials and understand that officials are considered independent contractors and not employees of the NSAA.
- Once you have selected each sport you want to register for, you can click the button at the bottom of the page to proceed to the 'Payment Page'.
- Once you have completed payment, you will receive a packet in the mail containing rulebook(s) and other materials. Packets will be sent as indicated by the schedule listed at the bottom of the page.

### **Officials Packets Mailing Schedule:**

Softball	July / August
Football	July / August
Volleyball	July / August
Basketball	October / November
Wrestling	October / November
Swimming & Diving	October / November
Soccer	January / February
Baseball	January / February
Track & Field	January / February

- Packets include NFHS Rules Book, NFHS Case Book, Additional NFHS and NSAA Rules and Reminders
- **There will be a \$10 fee for returned packets. Make sure your address is correct when you register.**

### **If you have questions, please contact:**

- Nate Neuhaus, NSAA Supervisor of Officials [nneuhaus@nsaahome.org](mailto:nneuhaus@nsaahome.org)
- Jakub VanWesten, Officials Registration [jvanwesten@nsaahome.org](mailto:jvanwesten@nsaahome.org)



**Application Dates and Deadlines:**

Officials are encouraged to register as early as possible to ensure receiving the materials in sufficient time to complete the registration process.

**Registration Fees:**

The registration fee covers the cost of rules books and case books, Part 1 Test, Part 2 Test, insurance coverage through the National Federation of High Schools Officials Association, NFHS online educational opportunities, and other important NSAA information.

Softball	(1 <sup>st</sup> Year - \$10) (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year - \$25) (3 <sup>rd</sup> Year to 24 <sup>th</sup> Year - \$50) (25 <sup>th</sup> year and beyond - \$25)
Football	(1 <sup>st</sup> Year - \$10) (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year - \$25) (3 <sup>rd</sup> Year to 24 <sup>th</sup> Year - \$50) (25 <sup>th</sup> year and beyond - \$25)
Volleyball	(1 <sup>st</sup> Year - \$10) (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year - \$25) (3 <sup>rd</sup> Year to 24 <sup>th</sup> Year - \$50) (25 <sup>th</sup> year and beyond - \$25)
Basketball	(1 <sup>st</sup> Year - \$10) (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year - \$25) (3 <sup>rd</sup> Year to 24 <sup>th</sup> Year - \$50) (25 <sup>th</sup> year and beyond - \$25)
Wrestling	(1 <sup>st</sup> Year - \$10) (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year - \$25) (3 <sup>rd</sup> Year to 24 <sup>th</sup> Year - \$50) (25 <sup>th</sup> year and beyond - \$25)
Swimming & Diving	(1 <sup>st</sup> Year - \$10) (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year - \$25) (3 <sup>rd</sup> Year to 24 <sup>th</sup> Year - \$50) (25 <sup>th</sup> year and beyond - \$25)
Soccer	(1 <sup>st</sup> Year - \$10) (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year - \$25) (3 <sup>rd</sup> Year to 24 <sup>th</sup> Year - \$50) (25 <sup>th</sup> year and beyond - \$25)
Baseball	(1 <sup>st</sup> Year - \$10) (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year - \$25) (3 <sup>rd</sup> Year to 24 <sup>th</sup> Year - \$50) (25 <sup>th</sup> year and beyond - \$25)
Track & Field	(1 <sup>st</sup> Year - \$10) (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year - \$25) (3 <sup>rd</sup> Year to 24 <sup>th</sup> Year - \$50) (25 <sup>th</sup> year and beyond - \$25)

**Registration Deadlines for First Year Officials:**

Softball	August 15 <sup>th</sup>
Football	August 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Volleyball	August 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Basketball	November 21 <sup>st</sup>
Wrestling	November 21 <sup>st</sup>
Swimming & Diving	November 21 <sup>st</sup>
Soccer	March 10 <sup>th</sup>
Baseball	March 10 <sup>th</sup>
Track & Field	March 10 <sup>th</sup>

**Registration Deadlines for Previously Registered Officials:**

Softball	July 31 <sup>st</sup>
Football	July 31 <sup>st</sup>
Volleyball	July 31 <sup>st</sup>
Basketball	October 31 <sup>st</sup>
Wrestling	October 31 <sup>st</sup>
Swimming & Diving	October 31 <sup>st</sup>
Soccer	February 28 <sup>th</sup>
Baseball	February 28 <sup>th</sup>
Track & Field	February 28 <sup>th</sup>

**Late Registration Period for Previously Registered Officials:**

Softball	August 1 <sup>st</sup> - 15 <sup>th</sup>
Football	August 1 <sup>st</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Volleyball	August 1 <sup>st</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Basketball	November 1 <sup>st</sup> - 21 <sup>st</sup>
Wrestling	November 1 <sup>st</sup> - 21 <sup>st</sup>
Swimming & Diving	November 1 <sup>st</sup> - 21 <sup>st</sup>
Soccer	March 1 <sup>st</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup>
Baseball	March 1 <sup>st</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup>
Track & Field	March 1 <sup>st</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup>

**Deadlines for Part 1 Test:**

Softball	August 15 <sup>th</sup>
Football	August 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Volleyball	August 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Basketball	November 21 <sup>st</sup>
Wrestling	November 21 <sup>st</sup>
Swimming & Diving	November 21 <sup>st</sup>
Soccer	March 10 <sup>th</sup>
Baseball	March 10 <sup>th</sup>
Track & Field	March 10 <sup>th</sup>

**Schedules for Part 2 Test:**

Softball	August 16 <sup>th</sup> – September 20 <sup>th</sup>
Football	August 23 <sup>rd</sup> – September 27 <sup>th</sup>
Volleyball	August 23 <sup>rd</sup> – September 27 <sup>th</sup>
Basketball	November 22 <sup>nd</sup> – December 27 <sup>th</sup>
Wrestling	November 22 <sup>nd</sup> – December 27 <sup>th</sup>
Baseball	March 11 <sup>th</sup> – April 15 <sup>th</sup>
Soccer	March 11 <sup>th</sup> – April 15 <sup>th</sup>

**NFHS (National Federation of State High School Associations) Officials Association:**

All NSAA registered officials are members of the NFHS Officials Association. Benefits include: NFHS Insurance, Access to online rules publications and training resources.

**Nebraska High School Officials Association:**

All NSAA registered officials are members of the NHSOA. Benefits include free access to NSAA/NHSOA events such as the NSAA/NHSOA Summit as well as sport specific camps and clinics, HUDL, sport specific newsletters, and recognition of service milestones.

**NSAA Online Rules Meetings:**

Viewing the online rules meeting or attending an in-person rules meeting is mandatory each year for attaining “Approved” or “Certified” classification.

NSAA online rules meetings are offered in the following sports:

Football	Volleyball	Softball	Basketball	Wrestling
Swimming/Diving	Baseball	Soccer	Track and Field	

- **Any official who does not view the NSAA online rules meeting or attend an in-person meeting in the sport he or she wishes to officiate will not be eligible to officiate varsity contests.**

**NSAA Tests for Officials:**

The NSAA sponsors two National Federation tests - Part 1 Test and the Part 2 Test. **Each test has 50 questions.**

Softball	Part 1 and Part 2
Football	Part 1 and Part 2
Volleyball	Part 1 and Part 2
Basketball	Part 1 and Part 2
Wrestling	Part 1 and Part 2
Swimming & Diving	Part 1
Soccer	Part 1 and Part 2
Baseball	Part 1 and Part 2
Track & Field	Part 1

**Part 1 Test (50 Questions) (Must score a minimum of 40 out of 50 – 80%):**

Officials are required to take the Part 1 test each year. The test must be completed via the official's login prior to midnight central standard of the due date. Officials are allowed to retake the Part 1 test multiple times.

**Part 2 Test (50 Questions) (Must score a minimum of 35 out of 50 – 70%):**

The Part 2 test is offered in softball, football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, soccer, and baseball. The Part 2 Test is not required to be classified as "APPROVED", but officials are encouraged to take the Part 2 test to be classified as "CERTIFIED". The Part 2 test has a 60-minute time limit. Only one score will be recorded per year.

**Officiating Schedules:**

All officials are required to enter their complete varsity schedules via their personal login page and update them as necessary. The number of varsity contests worked in the previous year are calculated directly from the games each official enters.

**Classifications:**

Officials registered in softball, football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, soccer, and baseball will be classified as "Approved" or "Certified".

Officials registered in Swimming & Diving and Track & Field will be classified as "Approved".

**Approved Classification:**

An official registering for the first time will be placed in this classification.

Requirements include:

- (1) View the NSAA online rules meeting or attend an in-person rules meeting.
- (2) Submit the Part 1 test for the current year and score a minimum of 40 out of 50 – 80%.

**Certified Classification:**

Requirements include:

- (1) View the NSAA online rules meeting or attend an in-person rules meeting.
- (2) Submit the Part 1 test for the current year and score a minimum of 40 out of 50 – 80%.
- (3) Submit the Part 2 test for the current year and score a minimum of 35 out of 50 – 70%.
- (4) During the previous year, officiate a minimum number of VARSITY contests per sport:
  - Football – 4
  - Soccer – 6
  - Volleyball – 8
  - Basketball – 8
  - Wrestling – 8
    - A wrestling tournament shall count as three contests.
  - Softball – 8
  - Baseball – 8
  - Only high school varsity contests shall be counted.

**Extenuating Circumstances:**

Extenuating circumstances may prevent an official from meeting the registration requirements. Extenuating circumstances can apply only to situations beyond a person's control. An official must contact the NSAA Supervisor of Officials, Nate Neuhaus, to discuss issues pertaining to extenuating circumstances.

**Officials' Rosters:**

Officials' rosters that include an accurate list of names, addresses, phone numbers, and classification of all officials will be posted to member schools and registered officials.

- Softball, football, and volleyball rosters will be posted in August
- Basketball, wrestling, swimming and diving rosters will be posted in November
- Soccer, baseball, and track and field rosters will be posted in March

**NSAA Sports Officials' Patches:**

Each new official that completes the registration process will be sent two patches. The patches will be mailed following the Part 1 test due date. The patch is to be worn on the front left side, approximately where a pocket would be. The patch is not sport or classification specific and should be worn by all approved and certified officials. Additional patches are available to order from the NSAA by filling out the form posted online for a fee of \$5.00 each.

**NOTE – 2025 / 2026 WILL BE THE FINAL YEAR THE NSAA WILL PROVIDE OFFICIALS PATCHES. BEGINNING IN 2026 / 2027 OFFICIALS WILL BE REQUIRED TO PURCHASE UNIFORM JERSEYS THAT MEET THE SPECIFICATIONS BELOW FOR THE RESPECTIVE SPORT AND BE ADORNED WITH THE FOLLOWING SUBLIMATED ITEMS:**

NSAA OFFICIALS PATCH	– LEFT CHEST
NHSAO LOGO	– LEFT SHOULDER
AMERICAN FLAG	– CENTER BACK

**APPROVED VENDORS INCLUDE:**

SMITTY OFFICIAL'S APPAREL	<a href="https://smittyapparel.com/">https://smittyapparel.com/</a>
HONIG'S	<a href="https://honigs.com/">https://honigs.com/</a>
CLIFF KEEN	<a href="https://cliffkeen.com/">https://cliffkeen.com/</a>

**National Federation (NFHS) And NSAA Rules:**

Officials working high school contests shall follow the National Federation (NFHS) rules.

**Protests and Grievances:**

- Protests based on play situations and situations which involve judgment on the part of game officials will not be considered. After the contest has begun, the decisions of the officials are final.
- The NSAA office may have discussions with officials and school personnel regarding play situations.
- NSAA schools may put in writing the specific details of any complaint or concern they have with officiating situations.
- Officials with a complaint or concern about a school or school conduct during a contest should contact the NSAA office.

**NSAA Officials' Uniforms:**

Officials are required to dress appropriately in accordance with NFHS / NSAA rules. The uniform shall be clean, free of wrinkles, not faded or torn, and fit properly.

**NOTE – 2025 / 2026 WILL BE THE FINAL YEAR THE NSAA WILL PROVIDE OFFICIALS PATCHES. BEGINNING IN 2026 / 2027 OFFICIALS WILL BE REQUIRED TO PURCHASE UNIFORM JERSEYS THAT MEET THE SPECIFICATIONS BELOW FOR THE RESPECTIVE SPORT AND BE ADORNED WITH THE FOLLOWING SUBLIMATED ITEMS:**

NSAA OFFICIALS PATCH	– LEFT CHEST
NHSAO LOGO	– LEFT SHOULDER
AMERICAN FLAG	– CENTER BACK

**APPROVED VENDORS INCLUDE:**

SMITTY OFFICIAL'S APPAREL	<a href="https://smittyapparel.com/">https://smittyapparel.com/</a>
HONIG'S	<a href="https://honigs.com/">https://honigs.com/</a>
CLIFF KEEN	<a href="https://cliffkeen.com/">https://cliffkeen.com/</a>

**Softball**

- Powder blue shirt, pullover, or button style (but all crew members must wear the same style shirt)
- Heather gray, charcoal gray, or navy-blue slacks, navy-blue jacket, pullover knit sweater, cap and ball bag (plate umpire only)
- Shoes, socks, and belt shall be black
- If an undershirt is worn under the powder blue shirt, it shall be white and short sleeved.

**Volleyball**

- Officials shall wear a collared polo-style shirt, short or long-sleeved, that may be any of the three colors approved by the state association: white, bright blue (cyan), or gray.
- Officials will also wear black slacks, solid black athletic shoes, and black socks.
- Officials must dress in like colors.

**Football**

- Black and white vertically striped, long or short-sleeved knit shirt shall be worn. The shirts shall have either 1-inch stripes or a state association adopted shirt with a maximum of 2 ¼ inch stripes, a black knit cuff and Byron collar. All game officials, in a given game, must wear the same style of shirt.
- By state association adoption, full-length, lined black pants with a single 1¼ inch white stripe down each leg shall be worn in place of the traditional knickers if worn by the entire crew. When these black pants are worn, the game official must wear black socks.
- Black football shoes, which may include some white accents, with black laces are required. Shoes should be shined before each game.
- Black baseball-style cap with white piping is required. For the purpose of identification, the referee shall wear a solid, white baseball-style cap.
- A plain, black leather belt 1¼ to 2 inches wide with a plain buckle shall be worn.
- Standard, all-white tapered knickers may be worn with a short overlap below the knee (not more than 4 inches) by the entire crew.
- One-piece stockings with a modified northwestern stripe (½ inch white, ½ inch black, 1 inch white, ½ inch black, ½ inch white) are necessary with knickers. The width of the black showing below the knickers should be the same as the wide black band below the striping pattern.
- By state association adoption, a black and white vertically striped jacket when worn during the game by all game officials. Jackets are permitted but not encouraged.
- The uniforms should fit properly and be clean and neat.

## **Basketball**

- A short-sleeved, black and white striped “V” neck knit shirt, black pants, solid black shoes, black laces, black socks, shall be worn.
- The shirt shall be striped with either 1-inch or 2-inch vertical stripes. All officials must wear the same style shirt.
- A black nylon jacket may be worn during warm-ups. The black nylon jacket must be without stripes on cuffs and collar and no logos.

## **Wrestling**

- Wrestling officials shall wear gray, short sleeved shirts with black pinstripes, black full-length trousers, black socks, solid black shoes or black shoes with white or gray trim, and a black belt (if worn).
- Officials should also have a two-colored disk, a black lanyard with black whistle, red and green arm bands. The red armband should be worn on the left wrist and the green armband on the right wrist.
- The official should also carry a kit to conduct the random draw for duals.

## **Swimming and Diving**

- Officials shall wear the NSAA-provided light blue OR all-white, collared polo shirt.
- Officials will wear black or khaki slacks or shorts.
- Officials working a meet must be dressed alike.

## **Baseball**

- All umpires on the crew must be dressed alike.
- Umpires shall wear heather gray slacks and a baby blue or black pullover shirt.
- When needed, a black jacket or coat shall be worn.
- The hat is to be black and a sized hat is recommended.
- The trouser belt shall be black leather.
- Socks shall be black.
- The plate umpire should wear shoes designed for safety that include hard toes. The base umpire should wear the conventional oxford-type baseball shoe. Primarily black shoes designed for umpiring should be worn and shined before each game.

## **Soccer**

Officials shall be dressed alike in uniforms primarily consisting of:

- A shirt approved by the state association (Red, Green, Yellow, Blue, or Black)
- In the event of a color conflict between the officials and the field players of either team, the officials shall change to a jersey of a color distinct from the field players of both teams
- Black shorts or long trousers
- Predominantly black shoes with black knee socks with white horizontal stripes
- Two whistles, yellow card, red card, stop-watch, flipping coin, pencil, and scorecard
- A solid black cap, if worn



## **VIII. SPORTSMANSHIP BYLAWS AND APPROVED RULINGS**

The NSAA and its member schools strongly believe that the major purpose of high school athletics is to be a part of the total educational program. A major part of this purpose is to stress to coaches, players, officials, and fans the vital importance of sportsmanship. It is important that everyone understands the role they play in developing good sportsmanship.

### **Game officials play a key role in the sportsmanship process:**

- Accept your role in an unassuming manner. Avoid drawing attention to yourself by showboating and over-officiating.
- Maintain confidence and poise during each contest from start to finish.
- Know rules thoroughly and abide by the National Federation Code of Ethics.
- Do not allow the participant and coach ejection penalties to change the manner in which you officiate a contest.
- Publicly shake hands with coaches of both teams before the contest, and initiate communication equally for all schools.
- Never exhibit emotions or argue with participants and coaches when enforcing rules.
- After the contest leave the field or court immediately and be a role model for the student athletes you just officiated.

### **Reporting Ejections -- Expected of All Officials:**

- Officials are required to submit a report via their login page following any ejection of a player or coach.
- Prompt reporting to the NSAA office is necessary.
  - Officials shall submit their report to the NSAA within 24 hours of the ejection.
- Officials must be specific in their report and cite the NFHS Rule Reference.
- Affiliated officials are also required to submit a report to the NSAA following any ejection of a player or coach.
- All ejections at any level must be reported to the NSAA.

## **2.11 Penalties**

### **2.11.3**

**Participant Ejections from Athletic Contests.** Any participant ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next athletic contest at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to the other penalties the NSAA or the school may assess.

### **2.11.4**

**Coach Ejections from Athletic Contests.** Any coach ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible to coach the next athletic contest at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to the other penalties the NSAA or the school may assess.

## **3.3 General Regulations Governing Competition**

### **3.3.11**

**Conduct and Sportsmanship.** Member schools shall maintain proper crowd control and enforce the principles of good sportsmanship and ethics during all interscholastic contests. Failure to fulfill this obligation shall subject the school to penalties as provided in Article 2, Section 2.11, NSAA Bylaws Governing All Activities.

#### **3.3.11.1**

**Conduct of Coaches and Athletes.** Coaches and athletes shall conduct themselves in accordance with the playing rules of the sport contest and refrain from unsportsmanlike conduct during interscholastic competition. Failure to fulfill this obligation will subject the individual(s) to the penalties as provided in Article 2, Section 2.11, NSAA Bylaw Governing All

Activities.

### **3.3.11.2**

**Definition of Unsportsmanlike Conduct.** Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include the following: fighting, verbal abuse or dissent directed toward an official or opponent, racial or ethnic slurs, inappropriate comments or actions that may be construed as sexual harassment, profanity, obscene gestures, flagrant and violent fouls, taunting, trash talk, baiting, cheating, throwing, or abusing equipment, inappropriate posters, physical intimidation or abuse of an official or opponent, and unauthorized leaving of a team bench area.

## **IX. SELECTION OF OFFICIALS FOR DISTRICT AND STATE CONTESTS**

**Officials for all district and state contests are assigned by the NSAA.**

- Any official or football crew interested in working sub-district, district, district final, playoff or state contests shall apply to the NSAA by submitting the application via their official login page.
- Officials are required to submit and update their contest schedule throughout the season.
- Basketball - the following criteria will be used for State Tournament selection:
  - During the season you must work at least five girls' games.
  - You must work at least 20 varsity games.
  - You will be selected as an individual not as a crew.
  - You must attend or work a NSAA-approved clinic one out of every three years
    - Starting with 2026 Championship
- Officiating fees for post-season contests in football, basketball, soccer, softball, volleyball, baseball, and wrestling, shall be established by the NSAA Board of Directors.
- Consideration will be given to those individuals that attend NSAA sponsored clinics.
- Consideration will be given to Certified Officials.
- Basketball, and Volleyball - only Certified Officials will be considered for the state tournaments.

## **X. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Conflict of interest must be considered prior to accepting any contract.

Examples of conflict of interest, include but are not limited to:

- Official has a family member participating in the contest as a player or coach
- Official is a current or former employee at one of the participating schools
- Official is friends with a coach or player from one of the participating schools
- Official previously attended one of the participating schools

An official shall not knowingly accept a contract or an NSAA assigned contest if any of the following conditions exist:

- If any official or the official's spouse is employed by any school involved in a contest.
- If the official is related by blood or marriage as follows: (parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, brother-in-law, son-in-law, etc.) to a person affiliated with a team involved in a contest.
- If the official and any person affiliated with a team involved in a contest are former or present teammates, roommates, classmates, business associates, or close personal friends.

The above conflicts are not all-inclusive and do not cover all possible conflicts but should be considered by officials when considering contracts. **The perception of conflict should be avoided whenever possible.**

**The NSAA reserves the right to terminate or modify assignments at any time to avoid a perceived conflict of interest.**

## **XI. OFFICIATING IN OTHER STATES**

### **Nebraska Residents:**

An official whose legal residence is in Nebraska must be classified as Approved or Certified in order to officiate high school varsity games in Nebraska.

### **Non-Nebraska Residents (Affiliate Officials):**

Officials living in and that have completed the registration process in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, South Dakota, and Wyoming may register in Nebraska as an "Affiliate" Official by paying a \$20 per sport registration fee.

### **Reciprocity Agreement:**

Officials registered with the NSAA and living in Nebraska that want to officiate in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, South Dakota, or Wyoming, are required to contact that state association office.

### **Contact Information of Reciprocating Associations:**

#### **Colorado High School Activities Association**

14855 E. 2nd Ave.  
Aurora, CO 80011  
Phone: (303) 344-5050

#### **Iowa High School Girls Athletic Union**

5000 Westown Parkway, Suite 150  
West Des Moines, IA 50266  
Phone: (515) 288-9741

#### **Kansas State High School Activities Association**

601 SW Commerce Place  
P.O. Box 495  
Topeka, KS 66601-0495  
Phone: (785) 273-5329

#### **Missouri State High School Activities Association**

1 North Keene St.  
P.O. Box 1328  
Columbia, MO 65201-6645  
Phone: (573) 875-4880

#### **South Dakota High School Activities Association**

804 N. Euclid Ave., Suite 102  
P.O. Box 1217  
Pierre, SD 57501  
Phone: 605 224 9267

#### **Wyoming High School Activities Association**

6571 E. 2nd St.  
Casper, WY 82609  
Phone: (307) 577-0614

#### **Iowa High School Athletic Association**

1605 South Story St.  
P.O. Box 10  
Boone, IA 50036  
Phone: (515) 432-2011

## **XII. NSAA DUE PROCESS PROCEDURE**

The following due process procedure shall govern the denial of any application, suspension, or revocation of an official's registration with the NSAA.

### **Reporting a Violation:**

Any NSAA employee or NSAA member school will report to the NSAA any possible violations of this Manual or any other concerning conduct of an official, within a reasonable time after discovering the alleged violation or conduct.

### **Investigation:**

Upon receipt of the report, the Executive Director or his/her designee shall conduct an investigation of the allegations leading to the report.

### **Notice:**

If after the investigation the Executive Director determines that the official's application should be denied or that the officials should be suspended or removed from the approved and registered officials list based on the violation or conduct reported or any other information gathered through the investigation, the Executive Director shall notify the officials in writing. At the discretion of the Executive Director, the official may be suspended immediately pending the additional due process provided herein.

### **Request for an Informal Conference:**

Upon receipt of the Notice, the official may request in writing a conference with the Executive Director to discuss the proposed denial, suspension, or revocation within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of the Notice. This is an informal conference intended to allow the official to respond to the allegations orally or in writing and provide any additional information or documentation he or she would like the Executive Director to consider prior to a final determination.

### **Failure of Official to Request Informal Conference:**

Should the official receiving a Notice fail to timely request a conference with the NSAA Executive Director the proposed consequences will go into effect and no further appeal or review is permitted.

### **Decision of the Executive Director after Informal Conference:**

The Executive Director shall render a decision within seven (7) days following the informal conference. The decision shall contain a statement of facts, findings and determinations, and a final decision.

### **Official's Response to Decision of Executive Director:**

The official may within seven (7) days of the issuance of the decision of the Executive Director file with the Executive Director a written request for a Review Hearing before the Board of Directors of the NSAA.

### **Board of Director's Review:**

Upon receipt of the official's request for review by the Board, the Board at the next regular meeting will place on its agenda a review of the Decision of the Executive Director and may at its option allow for comment by the Executive Director and official provided such comments are to be limited to ten (10 minutes) each. Such review process will be held in executive session unless requested to be in open session by the official. Upon completion of the review, the Board may affirm, reverse, or modify the decision of the Executive Director. The Executive Director will provide notice of the Board's decision to the official within a reasonable time after the Board makes its determination. This notice may be provided orally, or in writing if the decision is reversed or modified. The determination of the Board shall be final.



### **XIII. CODE OF ETHICS FOR ATHLETIC OFFICIALS**

Officials at an interscholastic athletic event are participants in the educational development of high school students. As such, they must exercise a high level of self-discipline, independence, and responsibility. The purpose of this Code is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all interscholastic officials.

- Officials shall master both the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm, and controlled manner.
- Officials shall work with each other and their state associations in a constructive and cooperative manner.
- Officials shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interaction with student-athletes, coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, colleagues, and the public.
- Officials shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally, shall dress neatly and appropriately, and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.
- Officials shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual obligations.
- Officials shall remain mindful that their conduct influences the respect that student-athletes, coaches, and the public hold for the profession.
- Officials shall, while enforcing the rules of play, remain aware of the inherent risk of injury that competition poses to student-athletes. Where appropriate, they shall inform event management of conditions or situations that appear unreasonably hazardous.
- Officials shall take reasonable steps to educate themselves in the recognition of emergency conditions that might arise during the course of competition.
- Officials shall maintain an ethical approach while participating in forums, chat rooms, and all forms of social media.

--National Federation Officials Association (NFHS)

## **XIV. SOCIAL MEDIA, OFFICIATING AND ELECTRONIC CODE OF ETHICS**

With the increased use of social networking through the internet and via mobile phone and devices, it is important for officials to understand the importance of maintaining an ethical approach while participating in various forums, chat rooms, message boards, and all forms of social media.

- Violations of this code of ethics will be considered conduct “unbecoming” of an official and subject an applicant to a denial or subject a registered official to registration suspension or revocation.
- To malign or openly criticize another official in any form of electronic communication is considered not only unprofessional but also undermines officiating in general.
- It is also unprofessional for officials to offer rules clarifications or interpretations through any medium outside of a contest without the expressed written permission from the NSAA.
- Officials must be very careful with the use of social media. In many cases, closed discussion and understanding is important to consistency and rules enforcement. The line is crossed when an official states things such as, “The call should have been”, or “The rule should have been interpreted as”, for those are statements that should only be made by those officially designated by the NFHS or the NSAA to make such interpretations. Internal discussion is likely a very good thing if the audience can be securely limited. A moderator or discussion leader can then say, “We have had enough debate, we will get a clarification and post it online when we get it.” That’s the advantage of closed discussions and avoidance of public doubt about any particular rule, call, or judgement.
- The NSAA advocates and applies the recommended policy statement of the National Association of Sports Officials that states social networking sites can be wonderful communications tools. But there can be unintended consequences if they are used improperly. Because of their unique standing, officials need to be particularly careful when using those sites and to consider the obligations of this Manual and the profession generally when accessing them.
- Accountability and integrity should always be our guiding principles. Jeopardizing your impartiality or professionalism should never be a part of your actions or posts. Let this information guide your decisions and involvement with social media.
- It is important for sports officials to realize that it is considered very unprofessional to carry a cell phone on the field or court, regardless of the reason. Officials are encouraged to refrain from the use of these types of electronic devices for any communication while the official has NFHS rule book jurisdiction, including texting or other forms of messaging or communication except in the case of an emergency.

### **Reminders and Guidelines:**

- DO be aware that all posts on social media may be made visible to the general public, even through private accounts if others share information as your “friend” or contact. Even if you limit access of your page to friends, it is likely that your post will be viewed by someone beyond the circle of people you intended to see it.
- DO find out your association or league expectations regarding social media.
- DO think twice before you post. If there is anything in your post that could be construed as a criticism of officials, of officials’ decisions, or of schools, coaches, or athletes...it’s better left unsent.
- DO assume that your post will be seen by the two teams you will see in your next game and the teams you worked in your previous game as well as your partner(s) in those games.
- DON’T post anything relating to the schools you have worked or will work. It calls your objectivity into question.
- DON’T include anything in a post that refers to an upcoming assignment.
- DON’T post details about other people’s assignments.
- DON’T use social media to criticize other officials, state or local association policies, assigning practices, etc.
- As a private, nonprofit organization, no official exercises First Amendment rights with respect to their application or registration as an official with the NSAA.