

## NEBRASKA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

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### I. BACKGROUND AND AUTHORITY

This 2018-2019 NSAA OFFICIALS' MANUAL has been prepared to provide information for officials concerning registration and certification, 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 in the area of 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 swimming and diving officials 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 confidence, calmness, consistency, good judgment, cooperation, knowledge of the rules, duties and mechanics, professional appearance, top conditioning, a thick skin, sense of humor and courage.

The rules of athletics are 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.

### II. NSAA STAFF

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### III. NSAA ATHLETIC BYLAWS - 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 and are classified as registered, approved or certified 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 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**

**1. 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 offer from a member school. The member school pays the official a set fee for his/her services after each game. The contracts and fees paid officials are determined by member schools during the regular season, with such contract 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 over the officials in the performance of their services at contests 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.

**2. 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.

**3. Visiting School – Approval or Disapproval of Officials:** Before the host school contracts officials for a varsity contest, the visiting school must be given the opportunity to approve or disapprove the officials. If the visiting school disapproves of the officials, they cannot be contracted. 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. If the officials have been approved and have accepted the contract, the contract cannot be voided unless there is an emergency or there is a mutual agreement between the game officials and the contracting schools.

**4. 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.

**5. 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.

**6. Null and Void Contracts:** A contract shall be null and void: (a) If either the school or the official becomes suspended from the NSAA; (b) 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; (c) 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.

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

The following rules and regulations shall be understood by each official and followed:

**1. 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 as an official. 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.

**2. Moral Turpitude:** If an official has been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude or has committed any act, which subjects the NSAA or its member schools to public embarrassment or ridicule, the contract is null and void. Officials shall comply with the NSAA regulations and NFHS Code of Ethics as presented in the 2018-2019 NSAA Officials' Manual (on back page). For purposes of this rule, an act of "moral turpitude" shall include, but is not limited to, the following acts: fraud, arson, blackmail, burglary, embezzlement, extortion, false pretenses, forgery, larceny (grand or petty), malicious destruction of property, knowingly receiving stolen goods, robbery, theft (when it involves the intention of permanent taking), transporting stolen property (with guilty knowledge), damaging private property (where intent to damage not required), breaking and entering (requiring no specific or implicit intent to commit a crime involving moral turpitude), passing bad checks or counterfeit money (where intent to defraud not required); possessing

stolen property (if guilty, knowledge is not essential), trespassing bribery, counterfeiting, mail and wire fraud, perjury; tax evasion (willful); drunk or reckless driving, gambling violations, assault, contributing to the delinquency of a minor, indecency, lewdness; pandering, prostitution, and rape (including "statutory rape" by virtue of the victim's age).

**3. Comments on Contests:** An official shall not provide unwarranted, derogatory news media releases or interviews regarding contests, schools, or other officials.

**4. Failure to complete Registration or Training:** If any official fails to complete registration and training and does not notify schools with which he or she has contracts, the official shall not be allowed to register the following year.

**5. Due Process:** An official accused by a member school of non-compliance with these regulations shall be granted a hearing as indicated under the Due Process Procedure set forth at Article XII hereof.

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

**1. 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.

**2. NSAA Registration of Officials:** The NSAA annually registers and qualifies officials, and conducts clinics for the purpose of familiarizing officials with the rules and regulations governing the particular sports events at which they will officiate.

**3. Revocation or Suspension of Registration:** Under the bylaws and officials handbooks of the NSAA, general rules of conduct are prescribed for the officials and an official may be suspended or their registration revoked for violation of these rules. The association's bylaws and the rules and regulations pertaining to its operations serve principally as guidelines for the officials in order that the association may maintain standards established by the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations.

**4. Nebraska Residents:** An official whose legal residence is in Nebraska must be registered with the NSAA in order to officiate high school varsity games in Nebraska.

**5. Registration Requirements:** In order to complete registration requirements, all officials must agree to abide by the following NSAA regulations:

- A. Submit proper application fee and complete NSAA officials' application form.
- B. View the 2018-2019 NSAA online rules meeting held in the sport the official desires to officiate.
- C. Submit open book test by proper date and receive a passing score of 80% or higher.
- D. Only NSAA registered officials shall officiate varsity high school contests.

## **VII. REGISTRATION PROCEDURES**

In June of each year, the NSAA office emails each official registered in any sport the previous year the registration information for the upcoming year. Registration materials are available to print from the NSAA website (nsaahome.org). Registration by credit card is available on the NSAA website.

**1. Application Dates and Deadlines:** Officials are urged to register online as early as possible to insure receiving the materials in sufficient time to complete the registration process.

Sport	Registration Fee	Part 1 Test, Rules Books, and Other Info Mailed	Registration Deadline for New Officials	Registration Deadline for Officials Previously Registered	Late Registration for Previously Registered Officials (Add \$10.00 Late Fee)	Part 1 Test Due
Softball	\$45.00	July/August	August 10	July 31	Aug. 1-10	August 10
Football	\$45.00	July/August	August 17	July 31	Aug. 1-17	August 17
Volleyball	\$45.00	July/August	August 17	July 31	Aug. 1-17	August 17
Basketball	\$45.00	Oct./Nov.	November 17	October 31	Nov. 1-16	November 16
Wrestling	\$45.00	Oct./Nov.	November 17	October 31	Nov. 1-16	November 16
Swimming & Diving	\$45.00	Oct./Nov.	November 17	October 31	Nov. 1-16	November 16
Baseball	\$45.00	Jan./Feb	March 5	February 28	March 1-5	March 5
Soccer	\$45.00	Jan./Feb.	March 5	February 28	March 1-5	March 5
Track & Field	\$45.00	Jan./Feb.	March 5	February 28	March 1-5	March 5

**2. How to Become Registered:** An official must fill out an application, pay the registration fee, view the 2018-2019 NSAA online rules meeting, and score the required percentage on the Part 1 test. Such requirements are mandatory EACH YEAR for each sport in which he/she wishes to officiate high school varsity contests in Nebraska. The registration fee of \$45 for each sport covers the cost of rules books, Part 1 test, Part 2 test, insurance coverage through the National Federation of High Schools Officials Association, NFHS online educational opportunities and other communications coming from the NSAA office. Once registration is completed, and the Part 1 test and the online rules meeting deadlines have passed, an official will receive a classification of Registered, Approved, or Certified. Details of classification will be explained later in this manual.

**3. Officiating Rules Materials:** Officiating rules materials will be mailed to individuals who complete application, including payment of the proper fee. Football, volleyball, and softball materials will be mailed in July/August; basketball, wrestling, and swimming and diving in October/November; soccer, baseball, and track and field materials will be mailed in January/February. These materials generally include the NFHS official rules publications and other information pertinent to the individual sport.

**4. NSAA Online Rules Meetings:** Viewing the online rules meeting is mandatory for an official registering in a sport. Any official who does not view the online pre-season rules meeting shall not be allowed to complete registration. NSAA rules meetings are offered just prior to the start of the sports seasons for the following sports: football, volleyball, softball, basketball, wrestling, swimming and diving, baseball, soccer, and track and field. Any official who does not view the NSAA online rules meeting in the sport he or she wishes to officiate shall not be eligible to officiate varsity contests.

**The NSAA will offer free online rules meetings for a limited time period for 10 activities.** During the two week “no charge” period, head coaches, judges and officials will be able to login to the NSAA website by using a passcode to access the required rules meeting.

**Failure to complete the online rules meeting will prevent officials from completing the registration process and thus, officiating varsity contests.**

Head coaches in the above listed sports are also required to view the rules meeting.

**5. NSAA Tests For Officials:** The NSAA sponsors two National Federation tests in each sport – the Part 1 and the Part 2 tests. The exceptions to this are swimming and diving and track and field, which only have the Part 1 test. All officials must complete the Part 1 test online. After the NSAA has received payment for registration, each official will be issued a passcode that will be included with the officiating materials. This passcode will allow each official exclusive access to the officials’ section of the NSAA website. An official will be able to take the Part 1 test and the Part 2 test, enter their officiating schedule, read observations, apply for and accept contracts for sub-district, district, district final and state contests online.

**A. Part 1 Test:** All officials are required to take the Part 1 test each year. The test must be completed online by the due date.

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Softball	August 10
Football	August 17
Volleyball	August 17
Basketball	November 16
Wrestling	November 16
Swimming and Diving	November 16
Baseball	March 5
Soccer	March 5
Track and Field	March 5

**The Part 1 test must be completed by midnight of the due date.** Upon receipt of the completed Part 1 test with a score of at least **80% for Registered officials, 85% for Approved officials, and 90% for Certified officials**, plus verification that the official has viewed the online rules meeting, the official will become eligible to work varsity contests. Registration is not complete and an official is not eligible to officiate until the Part 1 test is submitted at the proper time with a passing score.

**B. Part 2 Test:** Opportunities will be given to all officials to take the Part 2 test in football, volleyball, softball, basketball, wrestling, soccer, and baseball. Officials are encouraged to improve their knowledge of the rules by taking the test. Officials lacking sufficient number of years of experience to move up in classification at the present time may take the Part 2 test now, and grades received will remain on record to be used when higher classification is possible. The Part 2 test is offered online for six days and has a 60 minute time limit. Only one score will be recorded per year.

Officials in the **Registered** classification are required to take the Part 2 test at least once every **five years** and score a **65%** or better. Officials who hold the classification of **Approved** are required to take the Part 2 test once every **five years** and score a **75%** or better. **Certified** officials are required to take the Part 2 test at least once every **three years** and score an **80%** or better.

The year in which an official is required to complete the Part 2 test is listed on the NSAA website.

**6. Officiating Schedules:** All officials are required to enter their complete varsity schedules and keep them up to date. The number of varsity contests worked are calculated directly from the games each official enters.

**7. Classifications:** Officials registered in football, volleyball, softball, basketball, wrestling, soccer, and baseball will be placed in one of three classifications. Swimming and diving and track and field officials will be placed in the Registered classification.

**A. Registered.** An official enrolling for the first time will be placed in this classification. Requirements for the registered classification include:

- (1) View the NSAA online rules meeting.
- (2) Submit the Part 1 test for the current year and score 80% or higher.
- (3) Submit the Part 2 test within five years and score 65% or higher.

**B. Approved.** The requirements for this class are:

- (1) Be an NSAA Registered official for two successive years.
- (2) View the NSAA online rules meeting.
- (3) Submit the Part 1 test for the current year and score 85% or higher.
- (4) Submit the Part 2 test within the previous five years and score 75% or higher.
- (5) During the previous year, work at least four contests in football or volleyball, six matches in soccer, or eight contests in basketball, wrestling, softball or baseball. A wrestling tournament shall count as three contests. Only varsity high school contests shall be counted.

**C. Certified.** Requirements for the certified class are:

- (1) Be an NSAA Approved official for two successive years.
- (2) View the NSAA online rules meeting.
- (3) Submit the Part 1 test for the current year and score 90% or higher.
- (4) Submit the Part 2 test within the previous three years and score 80% or higher.
- (5) During the previous year, work at least four contests in football or volleyball, six matches in soccer, or eight contests in basketball, wrestling, softball or baseball. A wrestling tournament shall count as three contests. Only varsity high school contests shall be counted.

## NSAA Officials' Classification Chart

Minimum Years Officiating	Classification	Minimum Part 1 Test Score	
1	R	80	Take the Part 2 test in 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> year and receive 75% or better.
2	R	80	
3	A	85	Take the Part 2 test in 3 <sup>rd</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> year and receive 80% or better.
4	A	85	
5	C	90	

An official must be aware of the Part 2 test requirement. Each official must take the Part 2 test at least once every five years. To continue as an official, an individual must score 65% or better on the Part 2 test within five years. Without a 65% or better in this five-year period, an official cannot register for his or her sixth year. Such an official could take the Part 2 test, however, make the specified score, and register the following year.

An official may be lowered in classification because of failure to make the required grade on tests or failure to work a sufficient number of varsity contests the previous year.

1. The Registered classification (requirements: each year score at least 80% on the Part 1 test; 65% on the Part 2 test once every five years after initial registration) is the lowest classification, and, therefore, an official cannot be lowered from this classification. **Failure to meet the requirements of the Registered class will prevent an official from working varsity games.** An official could remain in this classification indefinitely, assuming all requirements are met.

2. An Approved official must always score 85% or better on the Part 1 test, score 75% or better on the Part 2 test once every five years after initial registration, and meet the contest limitations of the sport. An official could remain in this classification indefinitely, assuming all requirements are met.

An Approved official who scores between 80-84% on the Part 1 test and/or scores between 65-74% on the Part 2 test within the five-year period, will be lowered to the Registered classification. Approved status can be reached again by meeting the specified standards the following year.

3. A Certified official must always score 90% or better on the Part 1 test and score 80% or better on the Part 2 test within a three-year period and meet the varsity contest limitations of the sport.

A Certified official who scores between 85-89% on the Part 1 test and/or without a score of 80% or better on the Part 2 test within the past three-year period, shall be lowered to the Approved classification. Certified classification can be achieved again by meeting the specified standards the following year.

8. **Probation:** The Association's three basic classifications of officials are Registered, Approved and Certified. A Probation classification has been added for use by the NSAA Executive Director in cases where extenuating circumstances prevent an official from meeting the registration requirements for his or her classification. An official could be on probation for one year, and will be carried as such in the NSAA listing of officials, and then shall be restored to the original classification, providing all requirements are met. **Probation refers only to fulfilling registration requirements and is not to be used as a reflection of an official's game-situation competency.** Probation status requests can apply only to situations beyond a person's control. An official must request probationary status by writing to the NSAA Supervisor of Officials and stating the circumstances causing the official to fail to meet the requirements.

9. **Officials' Rosters:** The names, addresses, phone numbers, and classification of all officials registered in football, volleyball and softball will be posted online in **August/September**; officials registered in wrestling, swimming and diving and basketball in **November/December**; officials registered in soccer, baseball, and track and field in **March**. These rosters will provide schools an up-to-date list of all officials and their classifications. Access to online rosters is limited to member schools and registered officials. Registered officials can access the roster of officials by clicking on the links section of their login page.

### 10. NSAA Sports Officials' Patches

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

**11. National Federation (NFHS) And NSAA Rules:** Officials working high school contests shall follow the National Federation (NFHS) rules.

**12. Protests and Grievances:** Protests based upon eligibility of players will be honored by the NSAA Board of Directors, but protests based upon play situations and those which involve judgment on the part of game officials will not be accepted. Schools should mutually agree in advance on the officials to be used, and after the contest has begun, the decisions of the officials are final. The Association office has many discussions with officials and school personnel over play situations. NSAA schools have been informed they should put in writing the specific details of any problems, grievances, etc., they have with serious officiating situations. This works the other way, too. Officials with a serious complaint about a school or school conduct during a contest should write to the NSAA office.

**13. NSAA Officials' Uniform:** Officials have an obligation to the profession to dress appropriately. The first impression of an official's uniform should be impeccable. The uniform for all sports shall be clean, free of wrinkles, not faded or torn, and fit properly.

**A. Baseball** - Umpires shall wear heather gray slacks and a navy blue or black pullover shirt. (Collar and sleeve trim shall be red, white, with navy). All umpires on a crew **should be dressed alike**. When needed, a navy blue or black jacket or coat shall be worn. The hat is to be navy blue and a sized hat is recommended. A red turtleneck may be substituted for a shirt when wearing a coat. The trouser belt should be black or navy blue leather. Socks should be navy blue or 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.

**B. 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 stripe. 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.**

**C. 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 officials in a given game are to wear the same type shirt. Standard, all-white knickers shall be worn with a short overlap below the knee (not more than 4 inches). One-piece stockings with a modified northwestern stripe 9 ½ inch white, ½ inch black, 1 inch white, ½ inch black, ½ inch white are required. The width of the black showing below the knickers should be the same as the wide black band below the striping pattern. All black football shoes with black laces are required. 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 black leather belt 1¼ to 2 inches wide with a plain buckle shall be worn. A black and white vertically striped jacket may be worn by all crew members. Uniforms should fit properly and be clean and neat. Shoes should be shined before each game.

Another acceptable option for an entire crew is the black football officiating pants which may be worn with solid black socks. These pants may be worn with a long-sleeved or short-sleeved shirt. However both items must be worn by all crew members, meaning all crew must wear black pants and have all the same length of sleeves. Note that the only black pants that may be worn are the style made specifically for FB officiating and must have a one inch white stripe similar to the stripe shirt going down the outside of the pants.

**D. Softball** - Powder blue shirt, pullover or button style (but all crew members shall wear the same style shirt), heather gray slacks, jackets or sweaters and cap of navy blue are to be worn. Solid black shoes with no white or colored markings shall be required and should be shined before each game.

**E. Soccer** - Officials shall be dressed alike in the uniforms primarily consisting of yellow shirts with black stripes. In the event of a color conflict between the officials and either team, the officials are required to change to the co-alternate shirt of a color distinct from both teams. The co-alternate shirts are black with white pin stripes, red with black pin stripes or blue shirts. It is mandated that all officials working the contest wear the same color shirt. Officials shall wear black shorts, predominantly black shoes and black stockings with white stripes, and a solid black cap if worn.

**F. Swimming and Diving** - Officials shall wear an all-white, collared polo shirt and khaki slacks or shorts.

**G. Volleyball** - Officials shall wear an all-white, short sleeved, collared polo shirt. Officials will also wear black slacks, solid black athletic shoes, and black socks.

**H. Wrestling** - Wrestling officials shall wear gray, short sleeved shirts with black pinstripes, black full-

length trousers, black socks, solid black shoes 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.

## VIII. SPORTSMANSHIP BYLAWS AND APPROVED RULINGS

### 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.

**Approved Ruling 2.11.3** Any participant ejected a second time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next two contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess. Any participant ejected a third time shall be ineligible for the next three contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess. When schools have students or coaches with multiple ejections, the school shall submit to the NSAA a written management plan on how they plan to remediate the problem.

- 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.

**Approved Ruling 2.11.4** Coaches who are ejected will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Sportsmanship online course within 10 days of the ejection at the coaches' expense. Failure by an ejected coach to successfully complete the NFHS Sportsmanship online course within 10 days of the ejection will result in the coach being suspended from coaching in any further competition in that activity for the remainder of the season, including all NSAA end-of-season play (sub-districts, districts, playoffs, and state competition). In those situations in which the ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Sportsmanship online course before being able to coach the following season or year. Coaches who are ejected a second time will be required to sit-out the next two contests at that level, plus all other contests at other levels during the interim and successfully complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online course within 10 days of the ejection at the coaches' expense. Failure to successfully complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online course within 10 days of the ejection will result in the coach being suspended from coaching in any further competition in that activity for the remainder of the season, including all NSAA end-of-season play (sub-districts, districts, playoffs, and state competition.) In those situations in which the ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online course before being able to coach the following season or year.

### 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.

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 understand the role they play in developing good sportsmanship.

Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include the following: fighting, verbal abuse or dissent 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.

As a part of the NSAA sportsmanship legislation, any participant ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next athletic contest at that level of competition and any other athletic contest at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess. Likewise, any coach ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct is subject to those same sit-out rules.

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

1. Accept your role in an unassuming manner. Avoid wondering about, showboating and over-officiating.
2. Maintain confidence and poise, controlling contests from start to finish.
3. Know rules thoroughly and abide by the National Federation Code of Ethics.
4. Do not allow the participant and coach ejection penalties to change the manner in which you officiate a contest.
5. Publicly shake hands with coaches of both teams before the contest, and initiate communication equally for all schools.
6. Never exhibit emotions or argue with participants and coaches when enforcing rules.
7. 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**

The following guidelines have been established for officials to report an ejection or unusual situation:

1. Officials shall file with the NSAA an electronic report for any ejection of a player or coach from a contest. Any unusual situation that occurs prior to, during, or after a contest should also be reported.
2. Prompt reporting to the NSAA office is necessary. **Officials shall submit their electronic report to the NSAA the day following the ejection.**
3. Officials registered with the NSAA are provided an online report form for an ejection and other unusual situations to be submitted. Use your passcode to access this form.
4. Officials are asked to be specific in listing the reason(s) for an ejection.
5. Affiliated officials (officials registered from contiguous states) will also be required to perform this reporting function and will be issued a passcode to submit this online report.

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

Officials for all district and state contests are selected by the NSAA. In general, the following selection criteria shall be used:

1. Observation of officials by NSAA staff and/or NSAA observers. Any official or crew interested in working sub-district, district, district final, playoff or state contests shall apply to the NSAA by submitting a completed online NSAA application form for each sport. A schedule of contests you are officiating during the season shall be submitted online as well. This should include the names, position and classification of all members of a crew. Please keep your schedules up-to-date throughout the season.
2. NSAA Officials' ballots submitted by coaches and athletic administrators form will be a part of the selection criteria.
3. Consideration will be given to experience and geographical location of officials.
4. In basketball the following criteria will be used for State Tournament selection:
  - a. You can only work five consecutive years in either gender, then you must sit out two years.
  - b. Recommendations by NSAA Evaluators.
  - c. During the season you must work at least five girls games.
  - d. You must work at least 20 varsity games.

- e. You will be selected as an individual not as a crew.
  - f. You must attend or work an NSAA approved officiating clinic one out of every three years.
  - g. Each school's recommendations will be considered.
5. Officiating fees for working post-season contests in football, basketball, soccer, softball, volleyball, baseball, and wrestling, shall be established by the NSAA Board of Directors.
  6. In basketball and volleyball, only certified officials will be considered for the state tournaments.
  7. In wrestling, only approved and certified officials will be considered for the state tournament.

## X. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

For the most part, officials tend to work any and all contests available to them. No one wants to turn down a contract. The contract offer is a compliment and the question of "Do I really have a conflict?" usually gets brushed aside.

Conflict of interest needs to be considered when accepting a contract. **If there is any doubt as to whether or not an official should work a game, he or she should probably avoid working it.** Even if there is only a perception that a conflict of interest exists, the official should excuse himself or herself from the contest. The first time you violate that trust you open the door to questionable motives.

What constitutes conflict of interest? Some examples are fairly clear: the official is working at a level beyond his or her expertise; a close family member is involved in the contest as a player or coach; or the official is an employee of the school. But there are "gray areas": the official has a friend who is a player; he or she attended one of the schools several years ago; he or she is a former player or coach; or, in a tournament situation, a family member's team will play the winner of the contest.

An official shall not knowingly accept assignment of a contest if any of the following conditions exist:

- a. If any official or the official's spouse is employed by any school involved in a contest.
- b. 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.
- c. 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 used by officials when filling out schedules. The perception of conflict should be avoided whenever possible.

## XI. AFFILIATE REGISTRATION IN OTHER STATES

**Reciprocity Agreement.** Officials registered and living in Nebraska wishing to work in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, South Dakota or Wyoming are to contact that state association office. The Wyoming and South Dakota registration fees are \$10.00 per sport; Colorado is \$15.00 per sport; Iowa Girls Union and Kansas are \$20 per sport. The Iowa High School Athletic Association is \$20 per sport and \$12 for each additional sport. These special rates are set because of the reciprocal agreement involving Nebraska.

If you are registered to work a given sport in Nebraska, then you are able to work that sport in these states after you have paid that state's registration fee as stated above. These states will send you any information they feel you need to work in their state and a registration card. The deadlines for Iowa, South Dakota and Wyoming are the same as Nebraska--late August for fall sports and late November for winter sports and mid-March for spring sports.

Officials **living in** and **registered in** Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, South Dakota and Wyoming may register in Nebraska by paying a \$15.00 per sport registration fee to the NSAA office in Lincoln.

**This reciprocity agreement applies to these states in the following sports:**

<b>Colorado</b>	<b>Iowa Girls</b>	<b>Iowa Boys</b>	<b>Kansas</b>	<b>South Dakota</b>	<b>Wyoming</b>
Football	Volleyball	Football	Football	Football	Football
Volleyball	Soccer	Basketball	Volleyball	Volleyball	Volleyball
Softball	Basketball	Swimming	Softball	Basketball	Basketball
Basketball	Softball	Wrestling	Basketball	Wrestling	Wrestling
Wrestling	Swim and Dive	Soccer	Wrestling	Soccer	Soccer
Swim and Dive	Track and Field	Track and Field	Soccer	Track and Field	Swim and Dive
Soccer		Baseball	Baseball		Track and Field
Baseball			Track and Field		
Track and Field					

If an official's home state does not register officials in a particular sport, then an official must be registered in the state in which they are going to officiate.

**Nebraska Residents:** An official whose legal residence is in Nebraska **MUST** be registered with the NSAA in order to officiate high school varsity games in Nebraska.

**Addresses of Reciprocating Associations**

**Colorado High School Activities Association**

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

**Iowa High School Girls Athletic Union**

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

**Iowa High School Athletic Association**

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

**Kansas State High School Activities Association**

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

**South Dakota High School Activities Association**

804 N. Euclid Ave., Suite 102  
P.O. Box 1217  
Pierre, SD 57501  
Phone: (605) 224-9261

**Wyoming High School Activities Association**

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

**XII. NSAA DUE PROCESS PROCEDURE**

The following due process procedure shall govern with respect to the suspension or revocation of an official's or judge's registration with the NSAA for a violation of an official of Article V regarding breach by such official of an officiating contract with a member school or with the NSAA for an NSAA-operated district or state championship contest, and/or for an act or acts of moral turpitude as defined herein.

- 1. Reporting of Violation of Article V:** NSAA member school are to report to the NSAA office any possible violations of Article V, occurring either prior to an activity season or during an activity season.
- 2. Notice:** If a report is received by the NSAA Office that a contest official, judge or prospective official or judge who is applying for registration has violated Article V, he or she will be informed of this in writing by the NSAA Office.
- 3. Investigation:** Upon receipt of the report of a possible violation of Article V, the NSAA Executive Director or his/her designee shall conduct an independent investigation of the allegations leading to the report of possible violations of such rules.
- 4. Request for an Informal Due Process Hearing:** Upon receipt of the Notice of possible violations of Article V, the official or judge may request in writing an informal due process hearing before the NSAA Executive Director within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of the Notice.
- 5. Failure of Official or Judge to Request an Informal Due Process Hearing:** Should the official or judge receiving a Notice of possible violation of Article V fail to timely request a hearing, the Executive Director of the NSAA shall conduct an investigation and determine whether the official's or judge's registration as an official or judge for member schools and NSAA contests should be suspended or revoked.

**6. Informal Due Process Hearing before the Executive Director:** Upon receipt of a timely filed request for informal due process hearing, the Executive Director shall schedule such hearing within fourteen (14) days at a date and time convenient for the Executive Director and the official or judge.

- A. The official or judge may have a representative attend the informal hearing.
- B. At the informal hearing, the Executive Director shall present the results of his/her investigation into the possible violations Article V, and the official or judge shall be afforded the opportunity to discuss and explain his or her position with regard to same and present information and to ask questions of those appearing on behalf of the NSAA and/or member school.
- C. Such informal hearings shall be held in closed session.

**7. Decision of the Executive Director:** The Executive Director shall render a decision within seven (7) following the informal hearing with regard to the official's or judge's registrations as an official or judge with the NSAA, and eligibility to officiate contests for NSAA member schools, such decision contain a statement of facts, findings and determinations and a final decision.

**8. Official's or Judge'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 NSAA offices a written "response", and may elect in such Response to request a Review Hearing before the Board of Directors of the NSAA.

**9. Board of Director's Review:** Upon receipt of the Response from the official or judge that includes a request for review by the NSAA Board of Directors, the Board of Directors at its next regular meeting will place on its agenda a review of the Decision of the Executive Director and the official's or judge's Response, and may at its option allow for comment by the Executive Director and official or judge 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 or judge. Upon completion of the review, the Board of Directors may affirm, reverse or modify the decision of the Executive Director. The determination by the Board of Directors shall be final.

### **XIII. A 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 condition 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.

--National Federation Officials Association (NFOA)

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

a) 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, and all forms of social media.

b) Violations of this policy will be considered conduct “unbecoming” of an official and subject a registered official to registration suspension.

c) To malign or openly criticize another official in any form of electronic communication is considered not only unprofessional, but also undermines sports officiating in general.

d) It is also unprofessional for officials to offer rules clarifications or interpretations through this medium without the expressed directive from the NSAA.

e) Licensed officials have to 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, “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 forums.

f) 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.

Here are some reminders and guidelines:

(1) DO be aware that posts on social media are visible to the general public. 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.

(2) DO find out your association or league expectations regarding social media. Your association may not have hard and fast rules, but find out if it has an unofficial policy.

(3) 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.

(4) 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.

(5) DON’T post anything relating to the schools you have worked or will work. It calls your objectivity into question.

(6) DON’T include anything in a post that makes reference to an upcoming assignment. If teams want to find out who is going to be working their game, they should do so through official channels, not your tweet.

(7) DON'T post details about other people's assignments, to playoff games for instance, until that information has been officially released. Don't use your page as a news service.

(8) DON'T use social media to criticize state or local association policies, assigning practices, etc.

(9) DON'T make posts regarding calls made by officials in other games, whatever the level. You and your buddies might debate the call you saw on TV, but debating the call on Facebook, Twitter or other forums and social media is a no-no.

g) 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.

h) 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.