



# THE OFFICIAL WORD

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April 2023

A Publication of the Montana Officials' Association

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It is hard to believe that spring championships are around the corner. We have had a very challenging spring, with many cancellations and reschedules, but we are excited to gear up for all of our spring championships. Postseason softball is upon us and this year we will have our inaugural state baseball championship. We are in the process of hiring officials for both of these sports. Scott Wilson and Amy Bartels will be in contact as they finalize the ballots from our member schools.

Everyone in the MHS/ MOA office has had significant changes to our positions this year. The adjustments have been challenging at times, but the hard work and dedication of our staff has created a positive change in our association.; It's only after you've stepped outside your comfort zone that you begin to change, grow, and transform. We will continue to do this and are excited for the challenges in the future.

The MOA, through action by the Regional Directors, has brought forth rules and regulation changes/additions for the benefit of the MOA membership. The Regional Directors meet twice a year to discuss issues related to officiating MHS sports. The MOA Regional Directors conducted a regularly scheduled meeting on March 27-28, and the following action was taken:

- **Electronic Rule Book / Publications** - The Regional Directors approved moving to electronic NFHS Rule Books and Case Books next season. Pool leaders will receive a training packet with physical copies of the current year's available books. Each pool will receive a specified number of books based on the pool's roster size.
- A master official may reinstate to be eligible for postseason by paying a fee of \$25 per late requirement and must complete the requirement(s) per MOA rules and regulations.
- **Reciprocity** - Members of the MOA can join as members of the officials association in the bordering states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and/or Idaho by paying dues of \$20.00 per sport to the particular state organization(s). The fee in the past was \$10 per sport. All bordering states have adjusted to this \$20.00 fee.
- **Wrestling relative rule** - Officials are prohibited from working a varsity contest or tournament where they cohabitate with or have an immediate relative who is participating as an athlete or head coach. In wrestling, an exception allows for officials to avoid the weight class where an immediate relative participates in the regular season or a divisional tournament.
- Football Mechanic - The Regional Directors approved a mechanic change for football. In 5-person mechanics it is allowed for the umpire to operate from the offensive backfield.
- MOA Uniform Changes
  - Softball/Baseball - Short sleeve and long sleeve shirts are approved and do not have to match for each official working a contest.
  - The MOA logo is allowed on hats in baseball and softball.
  - The MOA logo is allowed on whistles for all sports.
  - The MOA logo is allowed on all pregame jackets for all sports.
- The Montana High School Association Executive Board conducted a regularly scheduled meeting on April 17-18, 2023, and the following action affecting MOA officials was taken.
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  - Important MOA Items
  - The Board approved one-way mileage for

- officials for the postseason.
- The Board approved an increase to the sub-varsity pay for MOA officials. The current fee is \$48 per game and this will go to \$55 per game beginning in the 2023-24 school year.
- The Board approved a change to the MOA soccer assigning policy and fee structure. [Click here to view the new policy and fee structure](#)
- The Board approved the following for walk-up music in MHSB Baseball and Softball:

Walk-up music may be played if approved by the school's administration. Each team can choose their own approved music. Administrators should review the music to determine its appropriateness. Walk-up music should stop the moment the batter steps into the batter's box. Officials may order the music turned down or off if the music is inappropriate or is interfering with the orderly administration of the game.

- The Board approved changes to the MHSB jewelry policy. Effective immediately in the 2022-23 spring season, ***Jewelry can be worn if allowed by NFHS rules or governing body for the sport (USGA or USTA).***
- The Board approved a change in Volleyball to go back to switching benches between sets.

### **2023-24 Registration Information**

Click the link for all MOA Registration Information  
[MOA Registration Information](#)

Registration Open – All Sports  
 May 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023

Late Payment  
 July 1, 2023, or after see the following regarding late payment information:

- Renewed officials will receive a \$25 late fee and will be required to retest with the score equivalent to the officials rating.
- All requirements must be completed to officiate as a MOA.
- Late pay officials at any level will not be allowed to upgrade in any sport for the 2023-24 year.
- Only MOA officials in good standing may officiate at the varsity level.

- Renewed officials must complete all requirements by the published deadlines.
- New officials or eligible reinstating officials do not have requirement deadlines but are required to follow MOA rules and regulations when officiating at all levels.

### **Master Officials - Postseason Information**

- If a master official pays dues late, they must pay the late fee of \$25 and test at the equivalent test score to be eligible. Tests must be completed prior to the published deadline.
- Late Requirement(s) – Master Official
  - A master official that does not complete the requirement(s) by the published deadline will be ineligible for any postseason.
  - A master official may reinstate to be eligible for postseason by paying a fee of \$25 per late requirement and completing the requirement(s) per MOA rules and regulations.
- All fees must be paid on Dragonfly no later than 7 days following fee notification from the MOA office.
- All requirements must be completed, uploaded and approved on Dragonfly prior to participating in any varsity contest.
- No official may participate in any contest at any level without the NFHS Concussion in Sport.

### **NFHS Network Access**

NFHS Network codes and instructions for accessing your network subscriptions will be sent out via email starting on **Thursday, July 27, 2023**, from Dana Pappas at the NFHS. The email will come from [dpappas@nfhs.org](mailto:dpappas@nfhs.org). Check your junk or spam folder for an email from her with your access code. You will only receive a code once you have paid your MOA dues on Dragonfly. Make sure your email address is current on Dragonfly. The email from Dana will go to the email you have on your Dragonfly account.

Dana will then send emails with a code and instructions every Friday after July 27th

throughout the 2023-2024 as officials continue to register.

If you are currently paying for a subscription to the NFHS network, you must cancel the subscription. NFHS will not refund you if you do not cancel your current subscription.

Make sure that you check your spam or junk folder and save all email addresses from the NFHS so you do not miss out on any emails

## **MOA Regional Directors Election**

Candidates are as follows for open regional positions:

Region 5 - Lea Potoczny  
Region 7 - Jay Lemelin  
Region 9 - Austin Stradley  
Region 10 - George Maruska

May 1st - Ballots are sent only to the regions that have an open regional director position.

May 15th - Ballots are due to the MOA office via email to Amy Bartels at [abartels@mhsa.org](mailto:abartels@mhsa.org).

## **Postseason Tournament Officials**

Follow the link below to access the MOA Tab/Archives for all archived MOA information including postseason tournament officials for all sports.

This section is in the process of being updated with all past postseason tournament officials. Additional information will continue to be added throughout the summer.

2022-2023 Postseason Officials - Click on the following link to access the MOA Archives.

[MOA Archives](#)

## **Officials Information Updates**

Official information including name, address, email, phone, sports and sport pool(s) must be updated. MOA information, digital books, NFHS network information, etc. will be sent to the information you have provided. The MHSAs/MOAs will not be responsible for late requirements due to inaccurate information on your Dragonfly account.

Contest payments: Schools will access your information from your Dragonfly account. Your address needs to be correct or they may not be able to pay you in a timely manner.

W9 Forms: Schools that require a form to be filled out must have this completed from all officials before they will be paid any contest fees. If you have questions, contact the school as necessary for information on this process.

If your pool uses Arbiter, updating your address in Arbiter does NOT update your address in Dragonfly and the MOA database – please update your changes directly to your Dragonfly account.

Do not open additional accounts due to the inability to access your Dragonfly account. This may impact rating, years of service, delay testing and uploading requirements, or games assigned games.

Contact the MHSAs/MOAs Office with all questions at 406-442-6010.

The MHSAs/MOAs office can not access the My Money Account for any official. Contact Dragonfly Support.

Dragonfly Support:  
Phone: 1-877-246-1818  
<https://www.dragonflymax.com/contact>

## **Officials Requirements**

### **NFHS Concussion in Sport:**

Each MOA or non-MOA official who works MHSAs contests must complete the NFHS Concussion in Sports course each year. That course must be

taken after June 1st for the subsequent school year and must be completed before officiating scrimmages or contests. If an official is to receive credit for attendance, they must complete the clinic prior to the published deadline in the format provided.

#### MHSA Sport Rules Clinic:

The MOA will offer rules clinics in football, basketball, soccer, volleyball, softball, baseball and wrestling. If an official is to receive credit for attendance, they must complete the clinic prior to the published deadline in the format provided. Rules Clinics must be completed by the individual official and may not be watched by a group.

#### Testing:

Officials that are required to test include new officials, eligible upgrading officials, late pay officials, and reinstating officials.

All testing officials are required to test at a score equivalent to their rating. Required scores are as follows:

Apprentice or Associate: 60% or higher  
Certified: 70% or higher  
Master: 80% or higher

All certificates **must** be uploaded or transferred into your Dragonfly account to be verified and approved.

For instructions on how to complete and upload requirements, see the MOA Training Tab on the MHSA website at: [Concussion Instructions](#)

#### Exam Dates:

Fall August 1 - August 23, 2023  
Winter November 1 - November 30, 2023  
Spring March 1 – March 22, 2024

#### Upgrading:

All officials that are eligible to upgrade are required to turn in a Request to Upgrade form to the MOA office 7 days prior to the opening of the testing window.

Upgrading officials will not be eligible to test without submitting a Request to Test Form submitted by the deadline and approved by the MOA office. Forms are available on the MHSA website at [MOA Forms](#).

#### Requirement Due Dates

Fall	August 23, 2023
Winter	November 30, 2023
Spring	March 22, 2024

#### Hall of Fame

The selection of candidates will occur every year. Nomination forms are routed through the Regional Directors and are due in the MOA office by April 1st of each year. Nominees remain in consideration for a period of five years.

April 1st: Nominations are due at the MOA office  
May 20th: Inductees are notified.  
June 15th: Winners are announced to the media

#### NFHS Publications Information

##### Electronic Rules Books:

The MOA will no longer mail officials a physical copy of the rules/case book or officials' manuals.

Pool leaders will receive a training packet with physical copies of the current year's available books. Each pool will receive a specified number of books based on the pool's roster size.

All officials will receive an electronic rule book for each paid sport that they have registered for. Officials will receive an email (see the email criteria/address below) from the NFHS with directions on how to access the sport rules book. Information will be mailed approximately 1 month prior to the season's contest start dates.

For all individuals that register outside of the registration dates (May-June), they will receive an email 4-7 days after dues are paid as an upcoming season approaches.

An email for electronic books will come from one of these two email from the NFHS:

noreply@nfhs.org or memberships@nfhs.org

Make sure to check your spam or junk folder and save all email addresses from the NFHS so you do not miss out on any emails.

- Eligibility and Equity = 1
- Sportsmanship = 1

Preseason Guides:

Preseason Guides will be mailed directly to each paid official prior to the season the official is participating in. If an official registers after the mailing date, preseason guides will be mailed out each week through the season(s).

**Pool information**

All officials must be a part of one pool for each sport. This must be updated in your Dragonfly account. If you are not a part of a pool your pool leader/assignors will not be able to assign you in Dragonfly. Many schools are requiring that all officials be added to Dragonfly for payment or contest management.

My Money Account: Dragonfly

If a school pays through the Dragonfly, you will need to set up your My Money account to access your contest fees. See the following link for help setting up your My Money account.

Here is a video link for further assistance:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BoHP6YHC9Hs>

The MOA Office cannot access any information on your My Money account. For all questions contact Dragonfly support at 1-877-246-1818 or you may communicate with their support via your Dragonfly account through the Dragonfly Chat option.

**OPI Renewal Units**

The MHSA has been approved as an OPI Renewal Unit Provider. All NFHS courses will be allowed for currently employed and licensed educators.

The following courses will be given renewal units:

- NFHS Concussion in Sport = 1
- MHSA Falls Rules Clinic = 1
- MHSA Winter Rules Clinic = 1
- MHSA Spring Rules Clinic = 1
- Rules Clinics include following:  
Officials, coaches and administrators
- New Administrator Clinic = 2
- Fundamentals of Sport = 10
- MHSA Music Adjudicator Clinic = 1

Additional information may be found at the MHSA website at [www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org). For all questions contact Amy Bartels at [abartels@mhsa.org](mailto:abartels@mhsa.org).

**MOA - Officials Apparel**

Please click the following link for all new MOA apparel selections.

<https://purchaseofficials.com/collections/montana>

**June MOA Directors Meeting**

June 7th, 2023 - MOA Regional Directors will meet via Zoom.

Reminder that all requests to have a topic discussed at the MOA Regional Directors meetings must go through your current Regional Director. Do not send requests to the MHSA/MOA office.