

# OFFICIALS CODE OF ETHICS

*Professionalism • Integrity • Responsibility*

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## NFHS Officials Code of Ethics

*Printed in all NFHS rule books.*

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. This includes, but is not limited to, positive verbal and nonverbal communication with coaches, bench personnel and players.
- Officials shall not use any form of alcohol or tobacco, or be under the influence (i.e., impaired by) a controlled or illicit substance(s), beginning with arrival at the competition site until departure following the completion of the contest.
- 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, officials 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.

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## MOA Code of Ethics

*Printed in the MHSA/MOA Handbook and available online at [mhsa.org](http://mhsa.org) under MOA → Handbook.*

This code of ethics for athletic officials is intended to protect and promote the best interest of interscholastic athletics and the officiating profession.

- I will study the rules, observe the work of other officials, and will always attempt to improve myself.
- I will endeavor to keep my body in sound physical condition.
- I will remember that while my work as an official is important, I must conduct myself in such a way that attention is drawn, not to me, but to the boys and girls playing the game. I will keep in mind that the game is more important than the wishes of any individual player or the ambitions of any individual official.

- I will dress and maintain my appearance in a manner befitting the dignity and importance of my profession.
- I will shape my character and conduct so as to be a worthy example to the boys and girls who play under my jurisdiction.
- I will be fair and unbiased in my decisions, rendering them without regard to the score.
- I will give my complete cooperation to the schools which I serve, the officials' association of which I am a member, and to the MHSA.
- I will cooperate with my fellow officials and will do nothing to cause them public embarrassment.
- I will, in my actions on the floor or field, be firm but not overbearing; courteous, but not ingratiating; positive, but never rude; dignified, but never "cocky;" friendly, but not companionable; calm, but always alert.
- I will not officiate a game after having any alcoholic drink/illegal drugs that day as per MOA rules.
- I will not use any tobacco or vaping product while officiating any MHSA contest.
- I will not approach coaches or athletic directors, personally or by mail, relative to assignments or ratings or regarding game calls, mechanics or procedural duties. Those questions should be initially addressed through the pool leader, MOA Regional Director or the MOA office.
- I will not make a request to officiate a specific game or games for any coach, school or conference.
- I will not criticize or attempt to explain a fellow official's judgment or decision.
- I will honor all contracts in spite of possible inconvenience or financial loss.
- I will not contact any coach or school administrator encouraging them to select any official for post-season work.