

2026 OHIO HIGH SCHOOL STATE POWERLIFTING MEET RULES

Eligibility

Lifters must go to an Ohio High School or Middle School. Middle School and High School athletes are eligible. The lifters totals will go toward the High School they attend. If they are home schooled the total would count toward the High School district they live in.

Registration and Fee

The registration fee will be \$25 per lifter at the State Meet.

Number of Participants and Coaches

Each school can enter as many lifters as they choose. Each school will be allowed to have one non-paying coach for every six lifters. All others must pay the normal price of admission.

Code of Conduct

All contestants and coaches will conduct themselves as gentlemen/ladies. Profanity will not be tolerated and will lead to disqualification. **Spotters and Coaches may not strike lifters in an attempt to “fire them up”, this type of behavior will be ruled as abuse and call for the immediate removal of the spotter or coach from the event.** Disrespectful behavior towards a judge or any other person in authority connected with the meet will lead to immediate disqualification from the meet. If a lifter is disqualified from the meet they will forfeit all awards.

Athletes must refrain from any conduct, whether in person or on social media, that brings the sport of powerlifting or this State Meet into disrepute. Publicly admitting to, promoting, or glamorizing the use of illegal or unapproved performance-enhancing substances is considered a violation of professionalism. The Meet Director reserves the right to disqualify any lifter whose public behavior undermines the integrity, safety, or family-friendly environment of the event.

Dress

All contestants shall wear a t-shirt and shorts combination. Squat suits may be worn as well. These items should be relatively tight fitting. Each judge will have the authority to instruct a lifter to change attire. **Bench Shirts are not permitted. Squat Suits must be single-ply.** If a change of attire causes a lifter to miss their turn in the competition then they will not have an opportunity to make up that attempt. **No sweats/leggings/yoga pants may be worn during the competition.** All contestants must wear soled shoes. Lifters will be allowed to wear wraps on knees and wrists. Elbow wraps will not be allowed. No straps or gloves may be worn. Lifting belts are required for the Squat and Dead lift. Lifters will not be allowed to wear tights as part of their lifting attire. **Lifters need to keep all wires and devices off of the platform.(This includes bluetooth headphones or earbuds)**

Weigh-Ins

A contestant's weight must not exceed the weight class limit. However their weight must be clearly over the limit to be in the next weight class. If the contestant's weight is within four tenths, depending on scales used, they will be considered to be in that weight class. Each contestant's weight will be recorded in tenths of pound since it can be a determining factor in the case of ties.

Declaring Weight Classes and Opening Lifts

Each lifter, at the time of weigh-ins, will declare the weight class in which they wish to compete and declare their opening lifts in all three events.

Weight Classes (Boys)

There will be 12 weight classes divided into 3 divisions. The lightweight division will be 125 lbs., 135 lbs., 145 lbs., and 155 lbs. The middleweight division will be 165 lbs., 175 lbs., 185 lbs., and 195 lbs. The heavyweight division will be 210 lbs., 225 lbs., 250 lbs., and Unlimited.

Weight Classes (Girls)

There will be 9 weight classes divided into 2 categories. The lightweight division will be 115 lbs., 125 lbs., 135 lbs., and 145 lbs. The heavyweight division will be 155 lbs., 175 lbs., 195 lbs., 225 lbs., and Unlimited.

Order and Number of Events

Classes will either bench or squat first, with the Deadlift always being the last event. Each contestant will be allowed three attempts in each event. If a contestant has won their weight class and was successful on their third attempt they may have a fourth attempt to set a record. This fourth lift will not count toward the lifters total.

Warm-up

Sufficient warm-up time will be allotted preceding each new event. Also, a lifter may warm-up at a weight during the competition after all lifters competing have attempted their lifts with approval of the judge.

Team Competition – Boys

A team will be composed of up to 12 members. Four members must be from the lightweight division, 4 must be from the middleweight division and 4 must be from the heavyweight division. Note that each of the 12 individual weight classes does not have to be represented. The team score is the total weight lifted by each of the 12-team members. A school can enter more than 12 lifters but only 12 will count toward the team score. The 12 will not be designated before the contest. Our recorders will pick out the top 12 after competition has ended.

A contestant can compete in one weight class but have his total count toward a higher weight class for the purpose of team competition only. Totals can be moved up, but they cannot be moved down. For example, a school has five terrific lightweights; in fact one of the lightweights out lifts one of the middleweights. His total will count for the team total in place of the middleweight he out lifted. Our recorders will determine the top 12 totals toward the team total.

Team Competition – Girls

A team will be composed of up to 8 members. Four members must be from the lightweight division and 4 from the heavyweight division. The team score is the total weight lifted by each of the 8-team members. A school can enter more than 8 lifters but only 8 will count toward the team total. The 8 will not be designated before the contest.

Squat Rules

The lifter will unrack the bar and step back and remain in an upright motionless position to begin the lift. If a stair step rack is used the lifter may be touched by the spotter to aid in getting into position to squat. The bar must be across the back of the shoulder and the hands must be in contact with the bar at all times. After receiving the judge's signal, the lifter shall bend their knees and lower their body until the bottoms of the thighs are at least parallel with the floor. The bottom of the thigh will be defined as the straight line extending from the back of the knee (the hamstring tendon cords) to the point where the hamstrings reach the buttocks. This means that a lifter with a well defined hamstring (one that bulges) may appear to have to go below parallel during his squat but in reality he will be going down only as far as anyone else. Each contestant will have the choice of receiving or not receiving a signal from the judge to indicate they have reached this position. The lifter will recover at will to an upright position; knees locked, and wait for the judge's signal to rack the bar. A pad may be used around the bar only and it may not exceed five centimeters in thickness. Wraps may be worn around the knees. Only **Single-Ply SQUAT SUITS permitted**. They must be marked.

Reasons for disqualification of Squat include:

1. Failure to wait for the judge's signal.
2. Taking hands off the bar during the lift.
3. More than one recovery attempt.
4. Failure to assume an upright position at the beginning or end of the lift.
5. Failure to have the bottoms of the thighs reach parallel.
6. Losing control of the bar so as to leave the platform
7. Any touching of the bar by spotters
8. Touching the legs with the arms or elbows during the lift.

Bench Press Rules

The lifter will assume a supine position on the bench. They can elect either to have their feet on the floor or on plates. After receiving the judge's signal, they can unrack the weight (with the aid of a spotter if desired) and lower it slowly so that it just touches their chest. They will then raise the weight vertically to a position where their arms are locked out straight. When they receive the judge's signal they can rack the bar. The lifter **may not use elbow wraps. Bench Shirts are not permitted, in fact no aids should be used**. They may shift their feet and head during the lift without being disqualified, as long as their feet remain in contact with the floor. The bar may rise unevenly, so long as one side is not locked out while the other has not even moved off the chest. Unless the judge deems the lift to be unsafe. It is permissible for the bar to touch the supporting racks of the bench. The upward motion of the bar can stop but once it starts back down the attempt will be disqualified.

Reasons for disqualification of lift include:

1. Raising the buttocks off the bench.
2. Bouncing the bar off the chest.
3. Racking the bar before the arms are fully extended or before receiving the judge's signal
4. A foot comes off the floor.
5. Rising of a shoulder off the bench.
6. Touching of the bar by spotters.
7. Locking the feet around the bench feet.

Dead Lift Rules

The lifter, with the bar in front of their legs, must raise the bar with two hands (type of grip is optional) from its original horizontal position on the platform to a position where they are standing erect. At the completion of the lift the knee must be locked and the shoulders thrust backward. After receiving the judge's signal, the lifter will slowly lower the weight to the floor with both hands still in contact with the bar when it hits the floor. The lifter may use chalk. The bar can stop moving but may not start back down. The lifter must wear soled shoes. An attempt will be defined as any effort to raise the bar. Neither straps nor gloves may be used. Baby powder and water sprayers will not be permitted.

Reasons for disqualification in Dead Lift include:

1. Making a second recovery attempt.
2. Hitching.
3. Not locking the knees or thrusting the shoulders back.
4. Supporting the weight on the thighs.
5. Dropping the bar to the floor without maintaining control with both hands
6. Lifting with improper attire.

Inhalants

No inhalants of any kind are permitted at the state meet. This is a High School meet and Inhalants are in no way allowed and will result in disqualification.

Spotting

Spotting will be allowed in the squat and bench press only. During the bench press a contestant can have a spotter of their choice. The spotter can give the contestant a lift off if he requests one. If the spotter touches the bar in anyway while it is on its upward movement than the lift will be disqualified. During the squat there should be spotters, one on the right, one on the left, and one standing behind. The spotter may not touch the lifters body when in the process of a lift. They can help the lifter rack and unrack the bar when told to do so by the judge and can help the lifter recover from an attempt if he cannot do so on his own and the judge has disqualified the lift.

Time Limits

Upon being called to lift a contestant will have one minute to begin his attempt. No extra allowance will be made to put on wraps or other clothing. If a lifter follows themselves then they will be allowed three minutes from the time the lift ends and the next attempt is to begin. At no time and under no circumstances will a lifter have to lift in an interval of less than three minutes. Failure to begin a lift in the designated time limit will result in the disqualification of that attempt.

Declaring Second and Third Lifts

Following a contestant's first lift, the statistician will ask for their next attempt. The contestant must either pass or give their next attempt before the next contestant begins or else they will lose their next attempt or their one pass. For example, if a contestant cannot decide on his next attempt and the next lifter makes his attempt then they have the choice of losing a lift or giving up their pass. The same procedure would apply following the second attempt. Note that a contestant can increase the weight on their second and third lifts even if they failed on the previous lift.

Passing

Each contestant will be allowed one pass per event. Passes are not cumulative though, that is if a pass is not used in one event it may not be saved and used in another event. A contestant may pass on any attempt. The statistician will pull their card from the rotation and will not enter it back into the rotation until the contestant declares their next attempt. Note that a contestant must declare a weight that is either currently on the bar or a higher weight. Once a weight has been passed up they can no longer attempt that weight. The weight on the bar will never decrease unless a judge or statistician has made an error. If using the round process of lifting this rule will be waived for the bar but not for the lifter.

Ties

When deciding winners and place finishers, body weight will be used to break ties. If two contestants tie, their pre-contest body weights will decide the winner. The contestant with lower body weight will be declared the winner. If a tie still exists, it will be decided by using the fewest misses. Duplicate awards will be awarded if a tie still exists.

Awards

The top twelve boys and top eight girls individual place finishers, based on total weight, in each weight class, will receive a 2 1/4 inch medal on a neck ribbon. The winner of each individual event in each weight class will also receive a plaque honoring them as state champion. The top lift in each event in each weight class will also receive a medal. The top five boys teams and the top four girls teams will receive a trophy.

Transgender Athletes

Athletes that want to compete as a Transgender Male or Female must meet the following rules put out by the OHSAA. Link to OHSAA Transgender Policy:

<https://www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Eligibility/OtherEligibilityDocs/TransgenderPolicy.pdf>

Athletes that meet this criteria must have a letter signed by their school's Athletic Director declaring the athlete has met the criteria and needs to fax or email the letter to the State Meet/ or Meet Director one week before the athlete is to compete.