

**2026-27
OFFICIALS
HANDBOOK**



**WEST VIRGINIA SECONDARY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES COMMISSION
OFFICIALS' HANDBOOK**

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An Officials Advisory Committee was formed in the Spring of 1978. This committee consists of the WVSSAC Executive Director, WVSSAC Manager of Officials, two coaches or athletic directors and thirteen active officials representing the various sports in the WVSSAC. Each member shall be appointed for a 4-year term.

Officials Advisory Committee Members

Wayne Ryan, Chairman

Jill Bryant, Principal

Maria Francisco, Principal

Tim George, Athletic Director

Bobby Burnside, Coach

Jay Rutledge, Baseball

Steve Gandee, Basketball

Debbie Hartman, Cheer

Larry McCloy, Football

Dennis Brumfield, Soccer

Rick Smith, Softball

Scott Wilson, Swim

Joe Blankenship, Tennis

Richard Messenger, Track

Tonya Kidder, Volleyball

Jeremy Callen, Wrestling

David Bowles, At Large

Steve Robinson, At Large

Rex Foster, WVSSAC

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO LOCAL OFFICIALS' BOARDS

I. Each Local Officials' Board will be asked to submit to the WVSSAC Director of Officials a year end meeting attendance form. This will verify each officials attendance.

A. All local Board meetings for each sport should consist of the following:

- Date
- Location
- Time
- Agenda
- Attendance

B. Training Program for each sport

- Dates
- Locations
- Times
- Agendas
- Name of Trainer

FOREWORD

The general management of the officiating program in West Virginia secondary schools is vested with the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission.

The WVSSAC knows that quality officiating is an important part of the athletic program. For this reason, considerable time, effort, and money is spent on training programs, clinics, films, testing, promotional and classification systems and administrative details to increase the knowledge and improve the techniques of over 3,000 registered officials in our state officiating program.

Sportsmanship is an issue of extreme importance. It is an issue that is basic to the educational mission of interscholastic athletics. Without the lifetime values that come from exhibiting good sportsmanship, we lose the educational reason for sponsoring and supporting athletic activities.

Athletic environments which create positive experiences do not occur by chance, rather they are a result of the educational structure, the right perspective, the right leadership, and true understanding of sportsmanship. All participants in an athletic contest must keep a proper educational perspective, this includes players, coaches, officials, administrators, media, parents, and the community.

Rules and mechanics must be mastered by individual officials in order to conduct contests fairly and safely. Also, the mastery of rules knowledge and officiating mechanics permits officials to move to higher levels of participation in their chosen sport.

The National Federation of State High School Associations speaks directly to the role of the official: "Training programs for officials in each sport not only improve the quality of officiating but also have a great influence on the entire program of sportsmanship and on the healthy relationship among officials, coaches, administrators, and schools. The officials' training program is inseparably linked to the total athletic program."

Image is a part of officiating! An official should look, feel, and act the part. Role modeling is an important part of officiating. An official can earn respect by:

1. Being in good physical condition
2. Being neat, clean, and dressed in the proper uniform
3. Having a good attitude
4. Being approachable but not too friendly

Though often a solitary figure in the athletic arena, the game official is a beacon of fairness and sportsmanship and a symbol of everything right about sports. The sports official has a very important role to uphold and nurture - an authority to be respected and revered –

CAN YOU LIVE UP TO THESE EXPECTATIONS?

It is the official's responsibility to thoroughly read, understand, and follow all rules and regulations as set forth in this document.

To assist officials in understanding regulations, frequently asked questions and clarifications are in the back of the handbook!

CONSTITUTION

Article I - Name

The name of this organization shall be known as the WVSSAC Officials' Advisory Committee.

Article II - Objectives

To provide adequate and well-trained officials for all interscholastic athletic contests as follows:

- A. To help maintain the highest possible standards in all interscholastic officiating.
- B. To discuss matters of mutual interest.
- C. To submit to the proper organization suggestions for the improvement of interscholastic officiating.
- D. To place sources of officiating information at the disposal of officials.
- E. To work together for the improvement of conditions in interscholastic officiating.
- F. To publish and disseminate information and ideas pertaining to interscholastic officiating.
- G. To promote professional ethics among interscholastic officials.
- H. To upgrade interscholastic officiating.
- I. To assist all officials in the development of a thorough understanding of the rules as related to the different sports and the mechanics of officiating as officially adopted and published by the National Federation of State High School Associations.
- J. To surround athletics with proper safeguards, to aid in the development of a spirit of real sportsmanship, honesty, and fair play in connection with interscholastic athletics, and to promote friendly discussion insofar as it pertains to the relations and association of officials with the general public, press, coaches, players, athletic directors, principals, and representatives of participating schools and other related organizations.

Article III - Officers

- A. The officers of the committee shall be:
 - Chairman
 - Vice Chairman
 - Secretary
- B. The Chairman shall be the Executive Director or the Assistant Executive Director of the WVSSAC as determined by the Executive Director of the WVSSAC and designated to this Committee in writing every two years.
- C. The Vice Chairman and the Secretary shall be elected for a two-year term each commencing with the fall meeting of each even year.

Duties

Chairman - It shall be the duty of the chairman to preside at the meetings, to appoint committees and to call special meetings of the committee.

Vice Chairman - The vice-chairman shall act for the chairman in case of his absence.

Secretary - The secretary shall have the duties of keeping the records and minutes of the committee as well as all duties normally assigned to a secretarial post.

All vacancies shall be filled by the chairman immediately and the replacement will serve until the next time for appointing members to the committee.

Article IV - Organization and Membership

The WVSSAC Officials' Advisory Committee shall be composed of:

A. WVSSAC Representative (1) Principals (2)

Coaches and/or Athletic Directors (2)

Baseball Official (1)

Basketball Official (1)

Cheerleading (1)

Football Official (1)

Soccer Official (1)

Softball Official (1)

Swim Official (1)

Tennis (1)

Track/Cross Country Official (1)

Volleyball Official (1)

Wrestling Official (1)

At-Large Officials (2)

B. All appointments to this committee shall be made by the Chairman and/or the member representing the WVSSAC.

C. Each member shall be appointed to a four (4) year term.

Article V - Meetings

A. This committee shall hold one regular business meeting per year. Members shall be notified thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting date.

B. Additional or special meetings may be called by the chairman when deemed necessary or by written request signed by three (3) members of this committee.

C. The time and place of all regular and special meetings of this committee shall be designated by the chairman.

D. Five (5) members of this committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting and transacting business of this committee.

E. Voting shall be done by voice and/or by a show of hands if requested.

F. An agenda shall be prepared by the chairman and/or secretary.

G. All committees shall be appointed by the chairman.

H. All regular business meetings of this committee shall be conducted in accordance with the best authorities regarding parliamentary procedure.

I. Paying mileage is not required but will remain optional with the representative of the WVSSAC.

Article VI - Amendments

A. This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the committee.

B. A proposed amendment must be submitted in writing to chairman and/or secretary twenty (20) days before the next regular meeting. The chairman and/or secretary shall then send the proposed amendments to each member of this committee ten (10) days before the next scheduled meeting.

Rule 127-3-9 Game Officials abstracted from the **West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission Rules and Regulations Handbook** and the rules contained in this **Handbook** govern the officiating program in all WVSSAC member schools.

- 9.1 To improve athletic officiating and to secure acceptance of standard interpretations of rules and application of officiating techniques, a game officials' registration plan shall be established by the Board of Directors. Officials used in interscholastic games and contests played in West Virginia must be registered with the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission. In an emergency, Section 9.4 may be invoked.
- 9.2 Officials for interscholastic contests shall be mutually agreed upon by the competing schools at least two weeks before the scheduled date of contest. Coaches or other persons connected with competing schools shall not officiate at the contest unless the consent of all competing schools is given.
- 9.3 The visiting school is responsible for selection of game officials to the extent that selection is made possible by mutual agreement. The initiative is placed upon the host school by the rules. However, if names are not submitted in accordance with the rules, the visiting school should take steps to secure agreement upon satisfactory officials.
- 9.4 The Executive Director shall be empowered to authorize the use of non- registered officials for athletic contests where registered officials are not available and schools threaten the cancellation of said scheduled athletic contests.
- 9.5 All officials registered with the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission are subject to and required to abide by the rules and regulations set forth in these bylaws and the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission Officials' Handbook which is revised and published yearly. Also, WVSSAC registered officials are provided the same opportunity for appeal of any decisions as set forth in these same bylaws.
- 9.6 The Executive Director shall have the power to penalize for violations of these rules. Any official penalized under these rules shall have the right to appeal to the WVSSAC Board of Directors, and the Executive Director shall inform the official of his appeal rights in writing.

I. National Federation Code of Ethics for Athletic Officials

Officials Code of Ethics

- A. Officials at interscholastic athletic events 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.
- B. 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.
- C. Officials shall work with each other and their state associations in a constructive and cooperative manner.
- D. 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.
- E. Officials shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally, shall dress neatly and appropriately and shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.
- F. Officials shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual obligations.
- G. Officials shall remain mindful that their conduct influences the respect that student- athletes, coaches, and the public hold for the profession.
- H. 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.

- I. Officials shall take reasonable steps to educate themselves in the recognition of emergency conditions that might arise during competition.

II. Purpose

The purpose of the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission's officiating program is to further the best interest of secondary school athletic programs in West Virginia by:

- A. Aiding coaches, officials, and players in acquiring a thorough knowledge of the rules.
- B. Establish certain standards of conduct for student participants and coaches at all interscholastic athletic events of member schools.
- C. Fostering the spirit of sportsmanship and fair play.
- D. Encouraging capable people to enter the officiating program.
- E. Promoting uniformity of mechanics and interpretation of rules throughout the State.
- F. Providing a classification and promotional system for active officials.
- G. Providing general management and administration of the officiating program.

III - How to Become an Official

Inquiries from people interested in becoming a sports official will be referred to the Local Board Secretary. The local board secretary and board should stand ready to immediately follow up the request of the prospective new official. All local boards should have an active program and approach for the recruitment and retention of new officials.

Military Service and First Responders Program - All Military Service and First Responders do not pay registration fees for the first year taking a local board training class. You must supply the WVSSAC with any proof of your service and/or credentials for military service or a first responder. All other requirements for first year officials apply (see below).

A. First year officials are required to complete a training program in one of the following:

1. College Course (Under the direction of a WVSSAC registered official)
2. Adult Education Program
3. Local Board In-Person Training Program (30 hours total)
 - RefReps & In-Person Training
 - Football, program will count as 10 hours of the total of 30 needed
 - All other sports, program will count as 15 hours of the total of 30 needed
4. Combination of any of these programs

B. A training program can take place anytime during the year, but preference should be given to the time immediately preceding the season.

C. Instructors may obtain training materials from WVSSAC. (i.e. rule books, etc.)

D. Procedures for New Officials

1. All New/First Year Officials must attend and complete one of the 30-hour training classes (*Local Board, College Course, Adult Education, RefReps*). A training class consists of at least 20 hours of classroom and 10 hours of practicum.
2. Upon completion of the 30-hour training class (20 hours classroom & 10 hours practicum) the training instructor will submit to the WVSSAC Form 08 which includes the name of the new official and their email address. This information can be faxed or scanned and emailed. Form 08 must include the new officials' name and email address written legibly and not left blank.

Once the WVSSAC has received this information we will send an email to the new official with the

link required for Arbiter Sports and how to register online to pay the registration, background check, and insurance fees.

4. After the registration and background check process has been completed the WVSSAC will assign the new official a SSAC registration number and upload to the SSAC website as an active and currently registered official. The officials will be emailed with their SSAC registration number.
5. Until the new official has been assigned a registration number no assignments are to be given to any of our member schools.
6. New/First Year Officials will receive credit for one year of experience at the end of the current season provided they have successfully completed all requirements.

IV - General Requirements

A. Local Board

All officials who register with the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission shall be required to join a Local Board in the geographic area of their work or residence. If there is no local Board for a particular sport, registration in those sports shall be handled individually through the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission office. No official may officiate until registration is complete. All officials will register with the WVSSAC. Please note the following procedure:

1. All returning officials must register online with Arbiter
2. Registration will not be accepted after the make-up clinic date for that sport
3. Local Board dues will be paid by each official to his/her local secretary
4. Officials registering in more than one sport may so indicate by checking the appropriate sports and paying the appropriate fee for each sport on Arbiter
5. If you want confirmation of receipt of registration and fees, keep the receipt. Otherwise, proof of registration must be provided by the applicant

B. Age

Applicant must be 18 years of age or older. **Exception:** 16–17-year-olds may officiate only after completing the local board training class and other requirements and can only officiate middle school contests (no JV/Varsity) with a veteran official.

C. Character / Background Checks

The applicant shall be of good moral character and shall not have been previously convicted of a felony or a crime of moral turpitude. Beginning 2018-19, all officials will be subject to a background check through Arbiter Sports once every three (3) years at the officials' expense. All New/First Year Officials/Transfer Officials will be subject to a background check during the registration process.

D. Registration Deadline (Active or Inactive) - Registrations shall be completed for all sports before the first makeup clinic int that sport.

E. WVSSAC Fees for Registration

With each registration, the WVSSAC will pay the majority of the NFOA fee.

F. Late Fee

There shall be a \$25.00 late registration fee (in addition to the regular fee) assessed to any registration received after the due date of June 30th for fall sports, September 30th for Winter Sports and December 31st for Spring Sports.

G. Inactive Registration/Leave of Absence/Resigned or Failure to Register -

Officials should read this section very carefully. If you have any questions, contact the WVSSAC office prior to any action.

Inactive Registration

Any official that wishes to go Inactive must register as Inactive on Arbiter and pay the Inactive Fee before the Make-Up Clinic for that sport each year an official wants to be Inactive. *The official must also be in good standing with the WVSSAC and Local Board at time of the request.* Inactive officials shall not work in any WV Interscholastic contest, High School/JV/Middle School games while inactive.

- Classification retained if registered as inactive for 1 to 4 years. *(Provided official has maintained Inactive status by paying the \$10 inactive fee each year)*
- Officials do not gain years of experience while registered as inactive
- Must register as an active official for the fifth year
- **Suspended officials cannot register Inactive.**

Medical Leave of Absence

Any official that wishes to request a Medical Leave of Absence must:

- Provide written letter/documentation to the Executive Director
- Must pay the inactive fee for each year of medical leave requested
- Must provide medical documentation to the Executive Director
- Do not gain years of experience while on leave of absence
- Will return one step below previous classification when leave of absence began

Any official that wishes to return to officiating after a Medical Leave of Absence of 1-3 years must:

- Provide written documentation and medical doctor documentation.
- Must register; attend a WV State Rules Clinic; take the Part I and Part II tests.
- Must abide by the registration deadline for that sport
- Must attend the required local board meetings
- Will return with previous classification when leave of absence began
- Do not gain years of experience for time on leave of absence

Any official that wishes to return to officiating after a Medical Leave of Absence of 4-5 years must:

- Provide written documentation and medical doctor documentation.
- Must register; attend a WV State Rules Clinic; take the Part I and Part II tests.
- Must abide by the registration deadline for that sport
- Must attend the required local board meetings
- Will return with previous classification when leave of absence began
- Do not gain years of experience for time on leave of absence
- Must register as active for 5th year

Any official that wishes to return to officiating after a Medical Leave of Absence of more than 5 years must:

- Must join a local board in their geographical area
- Must submit registration form and fee to the WVSSAC office
- Must abide by the registration deadline for that sport

- Must attend a WV State Rules Clinic
- Must take the Part I and Part II tests
- Must attend the required local board meetings
- Will return as Class 3 for one year

Military Leave of Absence

- Any official that wishes to request a Military Leave of Absence must:
- Contact this office. Each case is decided on an individual basis
- Provide a copy of their military orders to the Executive Director
- Do not gain years of experience while on leave of absence

Any official that wishes to return to officiating after a Military Leave of Absence must:

- Contact this office
- Provide a copy of their military orders to the Executive Director
- Must register; attend a WV State Rules Clinic; take the Part I and Part II tests
- Must abide by the registration deadline for that sport
- Must attend the required local board meetings
- Do not gain years of experience for time on leave of absence
- Will return with previous classification when leave of absence began

Resigned or Failed to Register (Returning Official)

- Any official that wishes to return to officiating that resigned or failed to register for 1-4 years must:
- Must join a local board in their geographical area
- Call WVSSAC for registration process
- Must abide by the registration deadline for that sport
- Must attend a WV State Rules Clinic
- Must take the test
- Must attend the required local board meetings
- Will return one-class below classification when last registered with WVSSAC

OR

- Take the local board training class and return to the original classification.
- Must join a local board in their geographical area
- Call WVSSAC for registration process
- Must abide by the registration deadline for that sport
- Must attend a WV State Rules Clinic
- Must take the test
- Must attend the required local board meetings

Any official that wishes to return to officiating that resigned or failed to register for 5 years or more must:

- Take a local board training class and return one class below former classification.
- Must join a local board in their geographical area
- Call WVSSAC for registration process
- Must abide by the registration deadline for that sport
- Must attend a WV State Rules Clinic
- Must take the test
- Must attend the required local board meetings

Transfer of Membership

In State: To transfer membership to another officiating board within the state, an official must submit:

1. A detailed email request to the Director of Officials
2. Have your current board your current board send an email stating membership status currently and in good standing to the Director of Officials.
3. All transfer of membership requests must be approved by the Director of Officials

Out of State: If an official wants to register in West Virginia and has years from another state association, the official must:

1. Call our office.
2. Submit years of service from the state association by email. **Transfer of years is from state association to state association only.**
3. Submit all materials at one time.
4. Once registered, must join the local board, attend a WV Rules Clinic, take the sport test.
5. An official transferring into West Virginia or returning to West Virginia from another state shall be assigned a classification by the Director of the WVSSAC consistent with years of experience, attendance at local meetings, games worked during previous year, test results and coaches' rating where applicable.

I. Rules for Officials - WVSSAC Rule 127-3-9

The Executive Director shall have the power to penalize for violations of these rules. Any official penalized under these rules shall have the right to appeal to the WVSSAC Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall inform fully a penalized official of the appeal process.

1. ***Attend a WVSSAC sponsored clinic in the sport for which he or she is registered. Failure to attend the state clinic will cause you to forfeit registration fees and be suspended for the current year. An official cannot request Inactive status after Make-Up Clinic for their sport.***
2. ***Attending a minimum of four (4) local Board meetings. (Additional meeting points may be added after fulfilling the 4 required Local Board meetings.) Failure to attend the required local meetings can result in suspension the following year.***
3. ***Take the National Federation Rules Exam. There will be a 3 week window for testing.***
4. Abstain from intoxicating beverages on the day of the contest. This is to include prior to, during and after, in the vicinity of the playing area of the contest.
5. Abstain from the use of illegal drugs.
6. Abstain from the use of smokeless or any other forms of tobacco in the vicinity of the playing area of the contest.
7. Be fair, impartial, unbiased, professional, and competent in officiating.
8. Be in and maintain proper physical and mental condition; dress and appearance must be appropriate.
9. Be at the site of the contest in adequate time to perform necessary pre- contest duties or as specified in the National Federation Rules.
10. Maintain self-control under all conditions.

11. Refrain from commenting upon or discussing a team, play, game situation or fellow official.
12. Conduct the game to enlist the cooperation of players, coaches and spectators in the interest of good sportsmanship.
13. Comply with any WVSSAC rule, regulation, constitution, or directive, and particularly those regulations pertaining to filing Special Reports.
14. Honor all existing officiating contracts with member schools unless a valid reason is presented and accepted by the involved school. Accepting a game involving a higher level of competition is not a valid reason.
15. Comply with Local Board rules as set forth in Board constitution. **Suspended officials are not to officiate a member school contest during the year(s) of their suspension.**

K. Reinstatement After Suspension

Officials suspended for reasons 1 or 2 in section J will be reinstated upon proper registration the following year at one class below his or her former classification. Officials suspended for reasons other than 1 or 2 must have their application for reinstatement approved by both the Local Board and the WVSSAC.

L. Clinic Attendance

The WVSSAC conducts a series of rules clinics each year throughout the state. Each official is required to attend this yearly clinic in the sport he or she is registered. Officials' registration will not be valid if the official fails to attend a WVSSAC sponsored rules clinic for the current year in the sport of registration. **Failure to attend the required WVSSAC rule clinic may result in suspension the current season.** Any person arriving more than ten minutes late from the scheduled start time shall be given a card that will be stamped with "Appeal." This person shall set forth the reasons for his/her late arrival at the clinic, and within five (5) days from the date of the clinic, a decision will be rendered by the WVSSAC as to whether this official will be given credit for the clinic. If the reason for tardiness is not accepted, then this official will be required to attend another clinic of this sport.

Additional Option for Clinic Attendance

The rules for officials currently provide that if an official fails to attend a WVSSAC sponsored rules clinic for the sport for which he or she is registered, the official will be suspended for the current year. The Board of Directors has also approved the following:

If an official fails to attend a regularly scheduled clinic or the scheduled make-up clinic for the sport in which he or she is registered, the official will be suspended for the current year. However, the official may be reinstated for the current year upon paying a fee of \$50.00 and viewing a video make-up clinic at the WVSSAC office in Parkersburg. Clinic attendance for a given year must be accomplished on or before the first playing date (according to the Standardized Calendar) in that sport to have credit for attending the clinic and to be eligible to officiate during that year.

M. Testing

Test- Taken on the Arbiter Hub. One test per sport.

Exception:

Swim: All Swim Officials must make a score of 80 to officiate or be considered for the state tournament.

Track: All Track Officials must take the Exam to be considered for the State Tournament. If the Test is not taken within the established testing schedule, the official may pay a \$50.00 fee and take a late test.

N. Rules for Officiating -

NOTE: It Is the Responsibility of Every Official to Know the Rules Set Forth by This Office That Are Contained in The Officials' Handbook, And to Abide by Those Rules. *First-year officials and non-registered officials may not be permitted to officiate varsity football. Violation of this provision could result in a 365 suspension for the corresponding sport. Football- second year, Class III officials may officiate varsity football.*

O. Tournaments and Play-Offs

The criteria for WVSSAC (Sectional, Regional, State) tournament officials are based on the following:

1. **Must be Class I or II.** The selection process will start with Class I officials. All officials must take the Part I and Part II exams to be eligible for tournament/playoff selection in the current year.
2. Should have the following varsity contests submitted the previous year:

Football: (8) Basketball: Girls and Boys (10) Wrestling: (15)

Soccer: (10) Volleyball: (10) Baseball: (10) Softball: (10)

3. **Must** have worked at least the following number of high school varsity games or matches in West Virginia High School in the current season and be in acceptable physical condition.

Football: (a minimum of 8 games, at least 2 in WV)

Basketball: Girls (10); Boys (10) (at least 4 in WV)

All other sports: (10)

Exception: If an official experiences an illness, injury or other special circumstances which prevents the official from working during a season, he or she may apply to the Executive Director of the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission for a waiver of the requirement for working games during the year when the official was ill or injured; in the discretion of the Executive Director, waivers may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

4. Officials must submit **the Application to Officiate State Tournaments (Self-Nomination Form)** by the date designated by the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission.
5. Must have prior regional experience to be eligible for state tournaments in those sports so structured.
6. The pairing of officials will be made from the same local Board in most cases. Consequently, other eligible officials from the same Board must be available.
7. If a local Board does not send a representative to the Rules Interpreters' meeting, the members of that Board for that sport shall be ineligible for assignment to regional or state tournaments.

P. Uniform

The WVSSAC subscribes to the uniform recommended by the National Federation of State High School Associations:

NOTE 1: Officials may only wear shirts adopted by the WVSSAC Officials' Advisory Committee. Said logo/sublimation must be worn on the left breast of the shirt. If the logo/sublimation is worn on the jacket, it will be located on the left breast of the jacket and must be worn by all officials in the contest. Striped shirts can have logo/sublimation. The official patch will be eliminated from all sports except swim and soccer by the fall of 2020.

NOTE 2: In the sports of track, swim and volleyball, the logo can be embroidery as long as it's placed on a white polo shirt, and it must be done by a WVSSAC approved vendor. The swim officials' shirt shall be a white golf/polo style shirt, short sleeve with collar. The shirt must have 2 to 4 buttons at the neck, and the material of the shirt must be non-see-through, and shirt tails shall be always tucked in. Navy blue long pants, shorts, culottes or skirts are permitted during regular season, regional meets and State prelims. In State Tournament finals, all officials shall wear long pants or skirts. In State Tournament finals, the referee(s) and starter(s) shall wear white pants, navy blue blazers, white dress shirt, and tie. White athletic shoes (no sandals or crocs) and white socks are required for all meets. The officials' uniform may not

display any emblems or badges except as otherwise designated by the WVSSAC.

NOTE 3: Officials should not wear jewelry; however, officials may wear a wedding band or ring.

NOTE 4: Shirt tails shall be always tucked in.

8. FOOTBALL:

Varsity level uniform: Black and white striped shirt with 2 ¼" stripes with short or long sleeves are permitted. Black pants with 1 ¼-inch white stripe down the side of each leg and black crew socks. A black belt and predominantly black football shoes with black laces. Some white accents are allowed, a black hat with white piping will be worn. The referee will wear a white hat. Each official shall use a gold penalty marker and have a blue bean bag (a secondary white bean bag is permissible). Jackets are not mandatory but, if worn, shall be black and white striped like the officiating shirt. All officials in a given contest must be in uniform in their dress. No sunglasses are permitted to be worn. Prescription glasses with transitional lenses are permissible.

Junior varsity, ninth grade, or Middle school game officials may wear black pants (1 ¼-inch white stripe) or solid black shorts with socks or ankle socks that match the color of the shoes. The varsity uniform is permissible. All officials in each contest must be in uniform in their dress.

9. BASKETBALL:

Black and white striped shirt with black shoulders, short sleeve. Provided however, that if a tee shirt is worn under the shirt and any part of it is visible that it will be black in color and that all officials will either wear tee shirts black in color or they will wear the shirt so that no undershirt is visible. Black trousers, black shoes with black laces, black socks and black belt are required. Black Jackets: not mandatory, but if worn, all officials must wear the same style and color. All officials in each contest must be uniform in their dress. Some white is permitted on shoes.

10. WRESTLING:

Black and white or black and gray striped shirt (short sleeve w/ collar), black trousers, black shoes with black laces with an optional white or gray trim on the referee's shoes. All officials in each contest must be uniform in their dress.

11. SOCCER:

Any NISOA or USSF jersey if all the officials are dressed alike and not in conflict with field players of either team, black shorts or long trousers, predominantly black shoes and black socks with white stripes.

12. BASEBALL:

The standard uniform is a WVSSAC Logo Black shirt with either the white stripe, black shirt with charcoal inserts or a light blue shirt with the black inserts, or any shirt that is available from the WVSSAC approved suppliers. – A navy-blue shirt with red trim may also be worn. A navy, red, or black undershirt has been approved. A Jacket/pullover with Mid-Length or Wrist Length sleeves may be worn. **OPTIONS ON JACKETS-** Black Jacket with or without a white stripe(s) and Navy-Blue Jacket with red and white stripe(s) has been approved. A coat that has been made to be worn when umpiring behind the plate has been approved. This coat must be Navy Blue or Black. Charcoal or Heather grey pants, either pleated or non-pleated, are also approved. Black shoes (some white accents allowed) with black laces, black socks, and a black belt are required. A plain fitted navy blue or black cap has been approved. The umpires may agree to wear either color with or without the WVSSAC Logo. All officials in each contest must be in uniform in their dress.

13. SOFTBALL:

All standard uniforms must be a non-satin finish. The standard uniform shirt is a powder blue, short or long-sleeve pullover shirt (with a collar, button placket with navy and white trim on the collar and sleeves). **OPTIONS ON SHIRT -** Navy blue, (short or long sleeve) pullover shirt with red and white trim. The

remaining parts of the uniform are grey or charcoal pants (plain or pleated), black belt with small silver buckle, plain navy fitted cap, black socks, all black shoes and navy or grey ball bag (plate umpire only). A solid navy blue or a navy-blue jacket with navy blue, powder blue and white shoulder stripes. A navy blue or white turtleneck may be worn under the jacket and a navy or white t-shirt may be worn under the light or navy-blue uniform shirt. All officials in each contest must be in uniform in their dress.

14. VOLLEYBALL:

White shirt (golf type), short sleeve with collar. The shirt must have 2 to 4 buttons at the neck, and the material of the shirt must be non-see-through. Black slacks or black shorts (of mid-thigh or longer length), black or white shoes with socks of a corresponding color to the shoes. *Shorts are permitted only for the regular season.* The official's shirt may have the lettering "Certified Official" on the left sleeve. The lettering must be black, and the height of the letters may be no higher than 1/2 (one-half) inch in size. The volleyball official's shirt by state adoption may be gray and/or bright blue (cyan) in addition to the traditional white polo-style shirt. All officials in each contest must be in uniform in their dress.

15. TRACK:

White shirts with khaki slacks, skirts or walking shorts, khaki belts, white socks and white shoes. During inclement weather officials may wear a navy sweater or navy blazer. Starters may wear a red blazer. Track officials may wear an additional board patch. The patch shall be located on the right breast of the shirt. All officials in each contest must be in uniform in their dress.

16. SWIM:

Apparel. The officials' shirt shall be a golf/polo style white shirt, short sleeve with collar. The shirt must have 2 to 4 buttons at the neck, and the material of the shirt must be non-see-through. Navy long pants: shorts, culottes or skirts, with white socks and white shoes, are permitted during regular season, regional meets and state prelims. In State Tournament finals, all officials shall wear long pants or skirts. In State Tournament finals, the Meet Referee and Starter(s) shall wear a white polo shirt (SSAC emblem on left breast) navy blue pants, white socks, and white shoes. All officials in each contest must be in uniform in their dress.



New classification and promotional scale for officials in football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, baseball and softball

One Test- 40 points

90-100= 40

80-89= 35

70-79= 30

60-69= 25

Below 60 drops you down a class and you will not be eligible for postseason assignments in that sport.

Failure to take the test will drop you to a Class III official in that sport for the following season.

First year officials do not have to take the test, but it is recommended that they do!

Meetings- 30 points max

8 meetings= 30

7 meetings= 28

6 meetings= 25

5 meetings= 23

4 meetings= 20

First year officials are now required to attend a minimum of 4 meetings

Years of Service- 30 points max

3 points per year of service

Class I official- 85 points or more.

Class II official- 50 to 84 points

Class III- less than 50 points

Class IV- High School student

V. Reports To Be Filed by Officials

A. If an Official is required to file a Special Report, all reports should be filed online, to the WVSSAC office concerning unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of players, coaches or spectators at all contests involving member schools. The report shall be filed within 24 hours of the incident or by the next business day if the conflict occurs on a weekend. All disqualifications shall be reported. All bench decorum violations will be reported. All technical fouls in basketball will be reported. If it involves a player, his or her name and/or number must be listed.

If a player is disqualified from a contest, it is the responsibility of the official making the call to clearly inform the player and then the coach concerning the violation. The above policy involves **varsity, junior varsity, and middle school** competition. (See Item J-14)

If a disqualification or other serious incidents occur, the official shall call the appropriate WVSSAC administrator (485-5494) by 8:00 a.m. on the following day. If it occurs over the weekend, then call by 8:00 a.m. Monday morning.

VII. Officiating Fees

The WVSSAC recommends that officials and school administrators work together to establish a fee structure. Final authority for establishing a fee structure rests with those who administer the school program. Fees should be based on the ability of the school to pay a fee commensurate with the services rendered.

VIII. Non-WVSSAC Officials' Organizations

Any official who has met the provisions for West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission registration in each sport is eligible for membership and shall be required to join a local board in the geographic area of their work or residence. Such membership cannot be denied by a local association because of the official's refusal to join a related organization or association.

IX. Forming A New Officials' Board

- Proposed name of board
- Name of sport(s) involved
- Copy of constitution
- List of officers
- Proposed date, place, and agenda for meeting
- List of probable members (minimum 15 football and basketball - all other sports 5 or more)
- The final decision of the Board's charter will rest with the WVSSAC.

STATE LAW 61-2-15a - Assault, battery on athletic officials; penalties:

- A. If any person commits an assault as defined in subsection (b) section nine of this article, to the person of an athletic official during the time the official is acting as an athletic official, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than fifty dollars nor more than one hundred dollars, and imprisoned in the county jail not less than twenty-four hours nor more than thirty days.
- B. If any person commits a battery, as defined in subsection (c), section nine of this article, against an athletic official during the time the official is acting as an athletic official, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than one hundred dollars nor

more than five hundred dollars, and imprisoned in the county jail not less than twenty-four hours nor more than thirty days.

- C. For this section “athletic official” means a person at a sports event who enforces the rules of that event, such as an umpire or referee, or a person who supervises the participants, such as a coach. thereof, shall be fined not less than one hundred dollars nor more than five hundred dollars, and imprisoned in the county jail not less than twenty-four hours nor more than thirty days.
- D. For this section “athletic official” means a person at a sports event who enforces the rules of that event, such as an umpire or referee, or a person who supervises the participants, such as a coach.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: Is there a required number of hours for a training program?

Answer: Regardless of the method of training, a minimum of thirty (30) hours of training is required. 20 hours of classroom and 10 hours of practicum. Refer to Page 12 Section III HOW TO BECOME AN OFFICIAL of this handbook.

Question: Must a college course or an adult education training course be approved by the WVSSAC?

Answer: Yes.

Question: May a new official officiate before the WVSSAC receives the registration materials?

Answer: NO! Refer to: Page 11 Section III HOW TO BECOME AN OFFICIAL- #D. Registration Process for New/First Year Officials.

Question: Do first year officials have to attend a WVSSAC Rules Clinic?

Answer: No, but it is highly recommended and may be a requirement of the Local Board.

Question: Do first year officials have to take the Part II Test?

Answer: No, but it is highly recommended and only if it is a requirement of the Local Board.

Question: May a Local Board offer more than one Local Board Training Program?

Answer: Yes. Frequently, after a sport season has begun, the Local Board recognizes the need to train more officials.

Question: What will happen if a new official officiates an Interscholastic contest and is not registered with the WVSSAC?

Answer: The Executive Director may impose sanctions including but not limited to probation, suspension, and fines.

Question: Does an official have to join a Local Board and pay dues each year?

Answer: Yes.

Question: May a Local Board refuse to accept a new official who meets the geographic location requirements.

Answer: No unless extenuating circumstances are considered by the Executive Director.

Question: If an official is registered in more than one sport, do they have to send a separate check for each sport?

Answer: All officials renewing their registration must do so on Arbiter. Officials can register for more than one sport on Arbiter.

Question: May an official send cash?

Answer: No. Check or Money Order only.

Question: What happens if an official does not register by the WVSSAC Rules Make-up Clinic?

Answer: The official is considered not registered and will drop one class the following year.

Question: Can an official that did not attend a rule clinic or make-up clinic request Inactive status?

Answer: No. Requests for Inactive status must be made by the make-up clinic for that sport. Officials are considered not in good standing with the WVSSAC if they did not attend a state rules clinic or

make-up clinic.

Question: Does a suspended official have to attend four Local Board meetings?

Answer: No.

Question: If an official forgot to register, may he/she request "Inactive" status?

Answer: Yes, but only until the Make-Up Clinic for that sport and has not registered as Active.

Question: An official has registered as Active, then needs to go Inactive can he/she do that?

Answer: If an official has already registered as Active and needs to go Inactive, all requirements (rule clinics and test) must be up to date as of the time of the request. An official cannot request Inactive status to keep from being suspended for not attending a state rules clinic.

Question: What paperwork do I need to submit to the SSAC to transfer my years from an out-of-state association to West Virginia?

Answer: Call the WVSSAC and ask for the person who handles officials. You need to provide a letter from your current association stating years of service for each sport, current classification, membership standing currently, and a copy of your current registration card front and back, if applicable. Submit all materials at the same time.

Question: If an official signs a contract with a member school and then breaks the contract to officiate a contest at a higher level of competition, what is the penalty?

Answer: The Executive Director has the latitude to impose penalties including, but not limited to, fines, probation, or suspension.

Question: Does WV honor reciprocity of other states' board meetings?

Answer: No. This only occurs if your Local Board has established the agreement between both states.

Question: I am transferring as an official from out-of-state and I have submitted the materials required to become an official in WV. After I submit these materials what else should I do?

Answer: Call the SSAC to find out which Local Board you need to join. You will also need to attend a WV State Rules Clinic, take the Part 1 and Part 2 tests, attend the required local meetings.

Question: May a Local Board refuse membership to an individual who relocates into the board's geographic area?

Answer: Not if the official is in good standing with his/her prior board and WVSSAC.

Question: After reinstatement at one class below the former classification, will the official automatically return to the former classification after one year?

Answer: No. Only if the official has enough years and points acquired during the first year back.

Question: Does WV honor reciprocity of other states' rules clinics?

Answer: No. WV registered officials must attend WVSSAC Rules Clinic

Question: If an official is also military personnel and is under military obligations for all dates of the state rules clinics, what is the procedure for compliance?

Answer: The official must notify the WVSSAC prior to the State Rules Clinics and must submit a copy of military orders which verify military service for all dates of the rule clinics. The WVSSAC will then plan for the official to fulfill the rule clinic obligation.

Question: May members of a Local Board wear jackets (while officiating a contest) or caps which display the Local Board patch or name?

Answer: No.

Question: If a member of a school varsity team plays a member school junior varsity team, does it count as a Varsity Game?

Answer: No. It counts only as a junior varsity game.

Question: Must officials' contracts be used in all sports and at all grade/team levels?

Answer: NO. However, it is Highly Recommended!

Question: May Local Boards or commissioners use "blanket" contracts?

Answer: Yes. However, each official should be issued an individual contract.

Question: May schools give the official the contract when he/she arrives at the site?

Answer: Yes. However, contracts should be issued a minimum of two weeks prior to the contest.

Question: May a school refuse to use an official?

Answer: Yes, because officials are independent contractors.

Question: May a board change its constitution?

Answer: Yes; however, the Board must follow its established rules for amending the constitution. A copy of the proposed change and revised constitution must be sent to the WVSSAC office. The change is not official until it has been approved by the WVSSAC.

Question: A list of Local Board officers should be submitted annually to the WVSSAC?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Whose responsibility is it to file a complaint based upon State Law 61-2-15a?

Answer: The "athletic official" who has been the victim of assault or battery.

Question: When will officials be recognized for years of service?

Answer: Recognition will begin at 15 years of service and then in 5 year increments.

2026–2027 WVSSAC
Sports Officials Testing
Dates

Football, Volleyball,
and Soccer

Testing Window:

Monday, August 3 –

Monday, August 24

Swimming

Testing Window:

Monday, October 26 –

Monday, November 16

Basketball and

Wrestling

Testing Window:

Monday, November 9

– Monday, November

30

Baseball, Softball, and

Track

Testing Window:

Monday, March 1 –

Monday, March 22

NFHS Announces New Digital Platform for Rules Publications

By NFHS on June 17, 2025

[nfhs news](#)



The NFHS is excited to announce the launch of **NFHS Digital**, its new mobile platform designed to provide officials, coaches and educators with instant access to its rules publications library.

Available July 1 for iOS and Android devices, NFHS Digital offers a dynamic, searchable, and up-to-date library of official rules books, case books, officials manuals, handbooks, NFHS Policy Debate Quarterlies and other publications at users' fingertips.

"With NFHS Digital, the NFHS is proud to provide officials, coaches and administrators with a streamlined experience to build their own library of NFHS rules publications," said NFHS Director of Officiating Services Dana Pappas. "We want to ensure that high school leaders have easy and reliable access to playing rules and resources, ultimately leading to a better game experience for the millions of student-athletes across the country."

Developed in partnership with RefReps, an officiating education technology and curriculum company, this new online platform allows users to purchase rules publications in 18 sports displayed in a mobile-friendly format. New features will also allow users to customize their publications with bookmarks, highlighting and notes.

"The NFHS has provided the foundation of knowledge for officials and game participants in high school sports nationwide for more than 100 years. We're proud to partner with them to bring that tradition into a new era," said RefReps Founder and CEO Kyle Armstrong. "Through our work building the RefReps Officiating Education System, we continue to lead the officiating industry in a new, more sustainable direction. With the launch of NFHS Digital, we've applied what we've learned to deliver more than just a digital rules book. Alongside the NFHS, we've created a powerful technology platform for the future of officiating and rules knowledge across all sports."

In addition, state associations and officials' organizations will be able to assign publications to groups of officials, providing quick online access to NFHS rules.

For more information, visit www.nfhs.org/nfhsdigital.