

RULE 10 – OFFICIALS

10-1 GENERAL

10-1-1 The officials for all interscholastic contests must be on the IHSAA list of approved officials. All contests in which unapproved officials are used may be declared “no contest”, and schools will be subject to fine and/or suspension.

10-1-2 Code of Ethics and Background Checks for Officials

- a. The Association reserves the right to suspend or drop from the approved list any official who does not comply with the Code of Ethics for Athletic Officials, whose conduct on or away from the area of competition indicates the official is unfit to serve, or who does not wear the official uniform as prescribed by the Association.
- b. All officials must pass a criminal background check conducted by the Association upon registering and every five years thereafter. Officials cannot have been convicted of:
 1. A felony involving the use, possession or sale of a controlled substance within the last 10 years. The 10-year period of ineligibility to officiate shall commence from the date of suspension from officiating duties or from the date of conviction, whichever occurred first, or
 2. A crime involving the use or threatened use of violence against a person within the last 10 years. The 10-year period of ineligibility to officiate shall commence from the date of suspension from officiating duties or from the date of conviction, whichever occurred first, or
 3. A crime involving a minor child at any time.
- c. Officials will be suspended during any and all formal investigations.
- d. Officials are required to immediately report to the IHSAA any arrest, charge, or conviction related to criminal conduct. Failure to self-report such incidents may result in suspension or revocation of officiating privileges.

10-1-3 A coach may not officiate in varsity games in which students from his/her school may be contestants, except by mutual consent in writing by both coaches prior to the contest.

10-1-4 The IHSAA will not consider protests of sports officials’ contest decisions. The correction of any errors will be done in accordance with National Federation rules.

10-1-5 Game officials may not declare a forfeit of a state tournament game prior to consulting with the tournament manager.

10-1-6 All play in game officials in the sports of soccer, volleyball, basketball and softball will be selected and assigned by the host district.

10-1-7 Neutral officiating crews will be assigned in the sport of football for all semifinal games. District crews will have equal representation when possible.

If neutral officials are requested for the 4A, 3A, 2A and 1A quarterfinals, the requesting school will pay all additional expenses or \$250, whichever is greater, to the IHSAA. Such requests must be submitted by the school in writing to the IHSAA by the Monday prior to the contest.

The neutral crew would come from the district closest to the game site. Example: A school from District V requests their football play-off game involving District IV use officials from a neutral district. If the game is played in District IV, District III officials would be used. If the game is played in District V, District VI officials would be used.

If circumstances exist where officials are not available from a neutral district, the officials will be assigned under the IHSAA standard policy for assigning officials to play-off games.

10-2 CERTIFICATION OF OFFICIALS

All officials must be at least 16 years old.

10-2-1 There are two classes of certified officials:

- a. Varsity officials are eligible to officiate interscholastic contests, grades 9-12.
- b. Non-varsity officials are eligible to officiate non-varsity contests only.
- c. In situations where there is a lack of sufficient number of available varsity officials, non-varsity officials may be allowed to officiate varsity contests with permission of both the district commissioner and the IHSAA.

10-2-2 Registration procedures

- a. District commissioners/interpreters will forward an IHSAA email in June of each year to all previously registered officials in their district containing registration requirements and dates/sites of the State Rules Clinics. This information is also posted on the IHSAA website, idhsaa.org.
- b. First and second year officials' registration fees will be waived.

10-3 **CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

10-3-1 Varsity officials must:

- a. Attend a state rules clinic, or make arrangements with the district commissioner for a make-up session in cases of emergency or previously approved circumstances.
- b. Attend a minimum of two local meetings in addition to the state rules clinic.
- c. Score 80 or better on the required NFHS test the previous year and the current year.
- d. Receive a recommendation from the district commissioner upon completion of a background check.
- e. Complete the St. Luke's Concussion Course before officiating a regular season contest. All officials are required to review the St. Luke's Online Concussion Course on even numbered years. The IHSAA Statewide Concussion Review dates: 2026-27, 2028-29, etc. The IHSAA Board of Directors must approve alternative concussion courses or seminars.
- f. Take the NFHS Sudden Cardiac Arrest course prior to officiating a regular season contest. All officials are required to review the NFHS Sudden Cardiac Arrest Course on even numbered years. IHSAA Statewide S. C. A. Review dates: 2026-27, 2028-29, etc. Only courses completed after May 1 will be accepted.

10-3-2 Non-varsity officials must:

- a. Attend a state rules clinic, or make arrangements with the district commissioner for a make-up session in cases of emergency or previously approved circumstances.
- b. Score 70 or better on the required NFHS test for the current year.
- c. Receive a recommendation from the district commissioner upon completion of a background check.
- d. Complete the St. Luke's Concussion Course and NFHS Sudden Cardiac Arrest course as outlined above. If you are a new official in an odd year, you must take the course in that year and then again on even numbered year. The IHSAA Board of Directors must approve alternative concussion courses or seminars.

10-3-3 **Testing**

Part I is required for soccer, swimming, basketball, softball, baseball and track; Part II is required for all other sports. Required tests will be administered online through the NFHS during the testing window.

- a. Tests may be taken open book.
- b. Tests may be retaken up to five times during the testing period.

10-3-4 All sports officials used in contests involving grades 9-12 must be certified by the IHSAA. While the IHSAA has established minimum requirements that all officials must fulfill, the IHSAA is not responsible for the assigning or rating of officials during the regular season, and cannot guarantee that all officials will be assigned to officiate interscholastic contests. These responsibilities are retained by the district Board of Control in each activity district. The sports commissioner in each district usually assigns all officials for varsity contests. Officials for non-varsity contests may be assigned through appointed persons or secured independently. Selection and assignment of officials for state level competitions are administered by the IHSAA.

- 10-3-5** The district representation of officials to state tournaments shall be based upon the number of schools within an activity district that offer that sport.

Example:

	Volleyball 24 Officials	Basketball 36 Officials	Wrestling 24 Officials
Dist. I	4	4	3
Dist. II	3	4	2
Dist. III	7	12	7
Dist. IV	4	6	4
Dist. V	3	4	4
Dist. VI	3	6	4

+4 at larges

- 10-3-6** In the following sports, certified officials need not be used: cross country, swimming, tennis, golf, track (except for district and state swim and track).
- 10-3-7** In order to be eligible to officiate state tournaments, athletic officials must meet the varsity requirements and attend one additional clinic once every three years.

10-4 **SCHOOLS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each school shall administer the necessary procedures to ensure that officials will be able to officiate athletic competition in a supervised and safe environment.

10-4-1 **Pre-Game Procedures**

- A designated school official shall be available to direct officials to their assigned dressing room and shower facilities. Schools should provide towels for the officials, if possible.
- Officials' facilities should not be located where the officials would have to pass through a player locker room or coach's office, if possible.
- Officials should be paid by the school prior to the contest, if possible.

10-4-2 **Procedures During Contest**

- Home management shall escort officials to and from dressing room during halftime.
- Water or refreshments should be provided for the officials.
- Restroom facilities shall be available for officials during halftime.
- Home management is responsible for fan behavior and for removing individuals from the area for unacceptable actions towards officials.

10-4-3 **Post Game Procedures**

- Arrangements shall be made by the host school management to escort officials from the playing area to their dressing room.
- Measures shall be taken to prevent unauthorized individuals from entering the officials' dressing room after the game.
- Adequate security must be provided for official in traveling from dressing room to their vehicles.