

OKLAHOMA OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION (OOA) CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I—NAME

The object of this Association shall be to further the best interests of athletics:

1. By aiding the officials, coaches, and players in acquiring a thorough knowledge of the playing rules of the various sports.
2. By promoting uniformity in the mechanics of officiating.
3. By encouraging observance of the spirit and letter of playing rules and ethical codes on all occasions.
4. By requiring its membership to be classified according to their duly established qualifications.

ARTICLE II—MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Any person of good character desiring to qualify as an official may present an application to the Secretary with the necessary fee. Such an application would include verification by the applicant if the applicant is registered with Oklahoma Sex Offenders Act, Oklahoma Mary Rippy Violent Crime Offenders Registration Act, or similar laws of other states.

Section 2. Background Checks

- (a) Beginning June 1, 2015, as part of the annual enrollment process, OSSAA shall conduct background checks on all individuals to enroll as game or contest officials who have never previously been enrolled as game or contest officials for OSSAA athletic activities. In addition, for the 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 school years, OSSAA shall conduct background checks on approximately one-third of the individuals who are enrolled as officials with OSSAA prior to June 1, 2015 and who are seeking to re-enroll for the upcoming school year. Thereafter, all individuals who have previously been approved for enrollment and who are seeking to re-enroll shall undergo a background check at least every three years. OSSAA may from time to time conduct follow-up background checks on individuals enrolled as game or contest officials for OSSAA athletic activities.
- (b) OSSAA may retain an outside agency to conduct these background checks. The results of these background checks may be reviewed by OSSAA staff to determine if individual applicants are approved for enrollment as game or contest officials for OSSAA athletic activities.
- (c) OSSAA staff shall deny enrollment or revoke enrollment for any individual registered under the Oklahoma Sex Offender Act, the Oklahoma Mary Rippy Violent Offenders Act, or any similar acts in other states. OSSAA staff may deny enrollment or revoke enrollment for any criminal conviction revealed during the initial background check or any subsequent background check. OSSAA staff shall inform the person of its decision to deny or revoke enrollment in writing. The OSSAA staff shall state the reasons enrollment was denied or revoked.
- (d) Any person whose enrollment was denied or revoked may challenge and/or protest OSSAA staff's decision to deny or revoke enrollment. A challenge must be made within fourteen (14) days of the receipt of the correspondence from OSSAA staff denying or revoking the enrollment. The challenge must be made to OSSAA's Executive Director in writing, and if information from the background check is being challenged as inaccurate, then correcting information must be

included. OSSAA's Executive Director shall review the denial or revocation and determine whether to affirm or reverse the OSSAA staff's decision. Within fourteen (14) days of the receipt of the challenge or protest, OSSAA Executive Director shall respond in writing. If OSSAA Executive Director affirms the OSSAA staff's decision, the individual may appeal that decision to the OSSAA Board of Directors at the next regularly scheduled OSSAA Board meeting. The OSSAA Board shall review the OSSAA Director of Officials' decision and determine whether to affirm or reverse. The appellant shall be notified in writing of the OSSAA Board's decision. The OSSAA Board's decision shall be final and shall not be subject to further review.

Section 3. Before working at any regular season and any post-season competition for students in grades 7-12 in football, basketball, wrestling, soccer, baseball, or softball, a game or contest official must have completed the on-line concussion management course available at www.nfhslearn.com. If a game or contest official suspects that a student has sustained a concussion or other serious head injury, the official should remove the student from participation.

Section 4. Any official failing to meet the requirements provided by the by-laws will cease to be a member.

ARTICLE III—MANAGEMENT

Section 1. Executive Committee

- (a) The operation and management of the Association shall be vested in the Executive Committee, which shall be composed of nine (9) persons. Eight voting members elected from the four districts described in Article III, Section 2d and one appointed member, the current OSSAA Director of Officials, who shall serve as the Association Secretary.
- (b) The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the execution of the express wishes of the membership, and for the general direction of the policies and activities of the Association and shall represent the organization in activities undertaken in cooperation with other athletic organizations.

Section 2. Mode of Election

- (a) The election of the Executive Committee shall be at the annual business meeting to be held each year, not later than September 15.
- (b) The state shall be divided into 8 regions and one Executive Committee member shall be elected from each region. NOTE: After the initial election, one Executive Committee member shall be elected from each year from odd regions and even regions.
- (c) Nominations for Executive Committee members are to be made from the nominating Regional, no later than the last week of June . The vote shall take place 2nd week of July. The majority of votes cast shall prevail. The Executive members that win the election will be announced at the annual summer convention in July.
- (d) Regions shall be determined by counties as follows:

REGION 1: Alfalfa, Beaver, Blaine, Cimarron, Custer, Dewey, Ellis, Garfield, Grant, Harper, Kingfisher, Logan, Major, Texas, Woods, Woodward.

REGION 2: Kay, Osage, Washington, Noble, Pawnee, Payne, Lincoln, Creek, Okmulgee, Okfuskee,

REGION 3: Adair, Cherokee, Craig, Delaware, Mayes, Muskogee, McIntosh, Nowata, Ottawa, Rogers, Wagoner, Sequoyah

REGION 4: Beckham, Caddo, Comanche, Cotton, Greer, Harmon, Jackson, Kiowa, Roger Mills, Stephens, Tillman, Washita.

REGION 5: Grady, McClain, Garvin, Murray, Carter, Jefferson, Love

REGION 6: Pottawatomie, Seminole, Hughes, Pittsburg, Haskell, Latimer, Leflore, Pontotoc, Coal, Atoka, Pushmataha, Johnston, Marshall, Bryan, Choctaw, McCurtain

REGION 7: Tulsa

REGION 8: Canadian, Cleveland, Oklahoma

Section 3. Term

- (a) The term of each member of the Executive Committee shall be for two years and he/she shall take office upon election. No member of this committee shall be elected for more than two consecutive terms.

Section 4. Organization of Committee

- (a) The Executive Committee shall, immediately after election, meet and select one of their number to serve as President of said Association and one to serve as Vice President.
- (b) In the case of vacancy created by removal from the district, non-membership, or resignation, the remaining members of the Executive Committee shall fill the unexpired term of such member by appointment from the proper district.
- (c) The Secretary shall have no vote except in the event of tie, at which time he/she shall have the right to vote.
- (d) A majority of the members of the Executive Committee shall be considered a quorum, and the majority vote of those present shall prevail.

ARTICLE IV—AMENDMENTS

Section 1. For the purpose of carrying into effect this Constitution as adopted, there is hereby called an immediate election upon the adoption of this Constitution, of eight officials as members of the Executive Committee who shall, after their election, immediately meet and select officers of said Association to serve until their successors are duly elected.

Section 2. Amendments to the Constitution and to the By-Laws of this organization, as adopted, may be made provided that the proposed change has been submitted by:

- (1) A recognized local officials association, or
- (2) By ten member officials, or
- (3) By the Executive Committee.

All legislation must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Association by May 1 so that all members may be notified. Such a vote to amend the Constitution shall be: (a) By a majority vote of those members at any regularly called meeting of the Association; or (b) By a majority of those voting in the event of the mailing of ballots to the members of the Association.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I—DUES

The Annual dues shall be \$62 for one sport which includes liability insurance, and \$15 for enrollment in each additional sport.

ARTICLE II—UNIFORM AND APPEARANCE

The Officials manual for each sport contains a section on the prescribed uniform and should be referred to when questions arise. The uniform should be clean and well-kept and officials are not to deviate from the prescribed uniform. All officials are expected to be well-groomed and neat in appearance when working a contest.

REGARDING REGISTRATION

- (1) Oklahoma officials' registration begins June 1 for the upcoming school year.
- (2) In order to register, an applicant must be sixteen (16) years old. High school seniors and younger may register, but may not officiate any games where high school students participate.
- (3) OUT-OF-STATE: Oklahoma has a reciprocal agreement with other states that out-of-state officials may enroll for \$10 per sport and show verification of passing the NFHS test in each sport.
- (4) Enrollment ending dates: Beginning of State Playoff series in that sport.

ARTICLE III—RATING OF OFFICIALS

Section 1 RATING CLASSIFICATION

- (a) Member officials enrolled in any sport must take and make a passing grade of 75% on NFHS Part 1 of the rules examination (effective school year 1971-72) before their enrollment will be considered complete.
- (b) In order to be eligible for a rating basketball, member officials must take and make a passing grade of 75% on Part II of the basketball examinations.
- (c) UNCLASSIFIED RATING: Officials who have not attended one Association-sponsored rules meeting, and three local rules meetings of ninety minutes of length, who have not taken and passed Part II of the rules examinations (in a sport where Part II is offered), who have

not earned 50 points and have not called at least 5 varsity games the previous season, will be rated "UNCLASSIFIED."

- (d) **REGISTERED RATING:** Officials who have attended one Association–sponsored rules meeting, and three local rules meetings of ninety minutes of length, who have taken and passed Part II of the rules examinations (in a sport where Part II is offered), who have earned 50 points, who have been enrolled in the Association for three years and have called at least 5 varsity games the previous season, will be rated "REGISTERED."
- (e) **APPROVED RATING:** Officials who have attended one Association–sponsored rules meeting, and three local rules meetings of ninety minutes of length, who have taken and passed Part II of the rules examinations (in a sport where Part II is offered), who have earned 65 points, who have been enrolled in the Association for four years and have called at least 5 varsity games the previous season, will be rated "APPROVED."
- (f) **CERTIFIED RATING:** Officials who have attended four rules meetings, one of which must be a state Association–sponsored rules meeting, and three local rules meetings of ninety minutes of length, who have taken and passed Part II of the rules examinations (in a sport where Part II is offered), who have earned 80 points, who have been enrolled in the Association for four years and have called at least 5 varsity games the previous season, will be rated "CERTIFIED."

Section 2 POINTS

Rating Points: Officials may establish a rating points in the Oklahoma Officials Association in the following manner:

1. **KNOWLEDGE OF THE RULES: 40 points possible**
 - (a) Examination—32 points (passing grade of 75%) NOTE: 95-100 examination grade, 32 points; (two points are deducted for each 5% drop in grade.) Example: 90-94, 30 points; 85-89 points, 28 points; 80-84, 26 points; etc....
 - (b) Rules Meeting Attendance—8 points. NOTE: Association-sponsored, 3 points; local meeting attendance 1 point each. All meetings must be at least ninety minutes in length.
2. **SERVICE AWARDS: 60 points possible**
 - (a) Games officiated and reported by schools—50 points. NOTE: Superior—1 point; Good—2 points; Fair—3 points; Unsatisfactory, 4 points; Poor—5 points. Example: 1.5%--50 points; 1.6%--49 points; 1.7%--48 points; 1.8%--47 points. One point is deducted for each 1/10 increase.
 - (b) Number of games officiated—5 points. NOTE: 1 point for each group of five games reported.
 - (c) Number of years experience—5 points maximum.
 - (d) Mentoring program participation.
 - (e) In football, participation in the crew test program.

TEMPORARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Requirement to Qualify:

- 1) Request for temporary leave must be made in writing and submitted to the OSSAA Director of Officials.**
- 2) Notification should also be given the Area Coordinator.**
- 3) All rules of eligibility and certification must be met with exception of number of games reported by coaches: Requirements for registration and dues, passing grade on Test I and II, Attendance of at least one (1) state rules meeting, and attendance of at least three (3) local rules meetings must all be met.**
- 4) Applicant is urged to officiate as many Jr. High or J.V. games as possible.**
- 5) At time of request, official's classification, and rating will be 'frozen' until such a time as official returns to active status.**
- 6) Request for Temporary Leave should only be used as a last option to continue in Officiating.**
- 7) Approval or denial of request will be at the discretion of the OSSAA Director of Officials.**

Reinstatement to Active Status

- 1) Request must be made in writing and submitted to OSSAA Director of Officials.**
- 2) Approval or denial of request will be at the discretion of the OSSAA Director of Officials.**
- 3) Notification must also be given to Area Coordinator.**
- 4) Upon approval for reinstatement, previous 'frozen' rating and classification will be reinstated with all requirements for eligibility to be met by applicant.**

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

- 1. Associations should foster and encourage that each of its officials acquire and wear with pride the proper official uniform.**
- 2. Associations should strive to bring new prospective officials into their group.**
- 3. Local associations should set up clinics for its officials and assume some responsibility in their training.**
- 4. Associations should establish a minimum number of meetings. NOTE: Six (6) is minimum.**
- 5. Periodic clinics should be held during the regular season to discuss problem areas and unusual situations. This can be accomplished as part of the local meetings.**
- 6. Associations are to maintain a composite list of their membership for availability to schools, coordinators, and the State office.**
- 7. Each local association should establish committees necessary to properly function as a unit, e.g. (Board of Directors, etc)**

8. Local associations should work closely with various schools for the purpose of acquiring schedules for assignments purposes, etc.
9. Local Associations shall be responsible to their designated coordinator and he/she, in turn, to the state office.
10. Local associations are to make recommendations and/or criticism to the state office through their coordinators.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATE COORDINATORS

1. Coordinators shall be appointed by the state association office for various designated local associations.
2. The coordinator shall be basically responsible for seeing that local units organize, elect officers, set local fees, establish meeting requirements and assist the local unit in every way possible.
3. The coordinator will be responsible to the state office and will offer suggestions and recommendations which will strengthen the over-all state officials' program.
4. The coordinator shall make periodic visits to the local units under his/her supervision to assist in carrying out the objectives of the local unit as well as the state office.

OFFICIALS' HONOR ROLL

Each official who has officiated in Oklahoma for twenty years or more is given a Certificate of Meritorious Service for his/her work. A plaque containing their names hangs in the Association office. For us to check back on the records of every official that we have enrolled would entail a tremendous amount of time-consuming work for our office staff. If you believe that you meet the qualifications for the honor roll, please call the Association office (405) 840-1116 and we will check our records to verify the number of years.

Any official who has a minimum of 20 years of service and who has retired may purchase a pass each year to all state sponsored activities.

RECIPROCAL GUIDELINE

The OSSAA recognizes the need for officials to work contests in Oklahoma schools that are enrolled in another state's officials' organization. The OSSAA has established the following guidelines for qualifying as a reciprocal official.

1. A reciprocal official CANNOT reside in the state of Oklahoma.
2. The official must be enrolled and eligible to officiate in his/her home state.
3. The reciprocal enrollment will apply only to the specific sport(s) enrolled and eligible in the official's home state.
4. Documentation will be required from the official showing the official has passed part one of the specific National Federation examination for the requested sport(s) and that this information is on file with the home state's official's organization.
5. An enrollment fee of \$12 will be charged for each sport. Reciprocal officials may enroll with OSSAA at <https://ossaa.arbitersports.com> and the Reciprocal Official's link on the enrollment page.

6. The OSSAA WILL NOT provide rule books to reciprocal officials.
7. Reciprocal officials CANNOT test through the OSSAA/Arbiter website.
8. An individual who is registered or is required to register under the Oklahoma Sex Offenders Registration Act or similar laws of other states cannot serve as a game or contest official under this Agreement.
9. An individual who is registered or is required to register under the Oklahoma Mary Rippy Violent Crimes Registration Act or similar laws of other states cannot serve as a game or contest official under this Agreement.

Years of service earned by out-of-state membership in officials' associations will be honored in Oklahoma upon verification from your former state association.

POLICIES

1. Football officials who officiate a state finals contest may not repeat the following year.
2. Basketball officials may not officiate a state tournament for more than three (3) consecutive years in Class B, A, 2A, 3A and 4A.
3. Basketball officials must attend an OSSAA basketball officials' camp one time in a five year period and have a current "C" rating to be eligible to officiate in the state basketball tournament.
4. Board members of the Oklahoma Officials' Association may not appoint themselves to officiate an All-State contest or an Oil Bowl contest.
5. To be eligible for the Officials' Hall of Fame, an official must be retired, be 60 years old, and have a minimum of 20 years of service. (The Board may choose to admit one individual, under special circumstances, of an elected class that does not meet the eligibility criteria.)

CODE OF ETHICS FOR ATHLETIC OFFICIALS

1. Register with the OSSAA each year on a timely basis (by July 1) and attend all required meetings. Work no interscholastic contests with officials who do not hold current registration in the sport when possible.
2. Join and actively participate in a local officials' association.
3. Execute and honor contracts.
4. Be on time for all contests.
5. Make thorough preparations, physically and mentally, for each season and every assigned contest.
6. Present a clean and professional image in terms of personal appearance and uniform, and provide a positive role model in terms of personal habits, language, and conduct. Use of tobacco within site of players and spectators and use of alcohol any time before a contest on the day of the contest is not acceptable.
7. Cultivate professional relationships with partners, players, coaches, administrators, and spectators. Refrain from comment to the media.
8. Make clear signals and concise rulings and instructions to the scorers, timers and teams. Use only those signals which have been authorized by the rules code and the OSSAA.

9. Admit and correct one's own errors, hold to correct but unpopular decisions, and support the decisions of other officials.
10. Maintain self-control at all times.
11. Recruit, encourage, and assist new officials.
12. Volunteer to work scrimmages as often as possible as a service to schools and for the opportunity to gain experience and improve officiating skills.
13. Officials should not use social networking outlets or other means of communication to communicate inappropriately with student/athletes.
14. Social networking posts and other communications made by OSSAA officials should not reference other OSSAA officials in their role as a sports official.
15. Officials should not directly contact OSSAA member school coaches for the purpose of improving the official's placement on preferential lists used in the OSSAA playoff process.
16. OSSAA Board Policy IV PUBLIC CRITICISM OF CONTEST OFFICIALS AND SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES states: Any school representative who publicly criticizes a contest official, and any contest official who publicly criticizes a school representative in connection with a contest, meet, or tournament is subject to sanctions. The sanctions could include warning or suspension. Public criticism includes, but is not limited to, comments made to the media or during a broadcasted event and comments made in a public forum.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR OSSAA OFFICIALS

It is the policy of the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association to share with each official any written criticism which is received by the Association regarding the actions of that official and to invite that official's written response to the critique.

If there is a substantiated allegation about an official's misconduct, failure to adhere to the Code of Ethics of Athletic Officials, or regarding the official's mismanagement of contest, or persistent misapplication of playing rules, the official may be censured, placed on probation (no tournament assignment), suspended, or refused registration in one or more sports for one or more years. Such actions may be taken by the OSSAA staff after the official has an opportunity to respond in writing to the allegations, but a personal conference is not required. The action may be appealed by the official to the OSSAA Board of Directors. The request to appeal must be received in writing within fourteen days after notice of the Director of Official's action is postmarked or personally received, and may include a personal appearance if requested.

If there is a substantial allegation that an official violated a Regulation of the OSSAA Handbook, the official may be censured, placed on probation, suspended, or refused registration in one or more sports for one or more years. Such actions may be taken by the OSSAA Executive Director and are governed by the Due Process Procedure.

OSSAA REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE USE OF OFFICIALS

The regulations of the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association provide that all officials used in all sports during regular season competition and Association sanctioned tournaments where participants are 7th -12th grades must be enrolled with the Association.

Approved by membership vote on July 23, 2016