

DATE: April 7, 2026

TO: All Track & Field and Cross Country Officials

FROM: BJ Duckworth | Director of Officiating Development & Sport Administrator

RE: April Officials' Memo



Virtual Local Meeting #2

The second virtual local meeting will go live this week in DragonFly. Emails will be sent directly to officials when the meeting goes live, please see that email for more details. The meeting will include a recap of the Track & Field Assignment Policy & 2026 Tournament Regulations.

2026 Tournament Assignments

Division expansion, paired with the new policies implemented in 2022, are providing more opportunities for our officials.

- This season, 22% of officials assigned by the OHSAA to the Key 10 Regional Positions received assignments for the first time, in addition 7% of those assigned received an elevated position. Overall, 29% of officials in the Key 10 Regional Positions are serving in that role for the first time.
- At the state tournament, 14% of officials were assigned for the first time and 13% of those assigned are serving in an elevated role. Overall, at the state tournament 27% of officials are serving in a new role.

Congratulations to all the officials selected to officiate at the 7th & 8th Grade State Championships, the High School State Championships, and to serve in the 10 key positions at the Regional tournaments. Those assignments can be found by clicking [HERE](#).

More information on the assignment process can be found on the [OHSAA DOD Webpage](#) and in the virtual local meeting that will be released this week.

Recording Devices

In line with NFHS Rule 4-6-6, athletes are not permitted to wear audio or video recording devices during a race or trial or in restricted areas. This includes the wearing of recording glasses (Aka Meta Glasses or AI Glasses), microphones, GoPro cameras, etc. Violation of rule 4-6-6 is disqualification from the event.

Specialty Relay Regulations

Information on allowable specialty relays, and the regulations outlining their competition can be found on page 8 of the [2026 OHSAA Track & Field Officials Manual](#).

Separating Squad to Compete as Two Or More Separately Scored Teams

We have been receiving a number of questions related to a school's ability to separate their squad into multiple separately scored teams in a meet. After reviewing the applicable NFHS and OHSAA contest and sport regulations as well as internal conversations, below is information based on the current rules and regulations. **Keep in mind that this is NOT a rule change, these rules have been in place for some time.**

Track & Field: OHSAA Track & Field Sport Regulation 1.6 states that splitting a squad into two or more teams, each with its own score, at **different** contests is allowed. **The regulation does NOT allow a squad to be split into two or more separately scored teams at the same contest.** Further competition regulations, as found on page 25 of the OHSAA Track & Field Coaches Manual (it is also in the Officials Manual on page 18), require that the number of

entries into each event be the same for each **school**, NOT for each team. These rules do not change the allowance of B & C teams in relays, when all participating schools have the same opportunity.

Cross Country: OHSAA Cross Country Sport Regulation 1.5 states that splitting a squad into two or more teams, each with its own score, at **different** contests is allowed. **The regulation does NOT allow a squad to be split into two or more separately scored teams at the same contest.** As each race is scored as its own meet in Cross Country, each race at a Cross Country meet is its own distinct contest. Therefore, schools may continue to enter teams in multiple different races at the same Cross Country meet, however, a school cannot enter more than one team in the same race.

State Rules Meeting for Track & Field

The mandatory state rules meeting is live in DragonFly per the chart below. **This meeting is mandatory to renew your license and to officiate Track & Field.**

Meeting Begins	Late Fee (\$50) Begins	Meeting Closes
January 28, 2026	March 25, 2026	April 15, 2026

If you are a coach AND an official, you must complete both State Rules Meetings.

Situations

Situation 1: Runner A1 finished the 3,200 at a district championship well ahead of the runners and lapped several competitors. After finishing, while remaining in a safe area, A1 cheers loudly for each athlete as they pass and high fives each after they have cross the finish line. The meet finish marshal observes this behavior and reports it to the meet referee.

Ruling 1: This athlete has shown tremendous sportsmanship. Rather than taunting the other athletes that they easily defeated they chose to encourage those athletes and celebrate them. The meet referee shall notify the head coach of that exceptional sportsmanship and then file a game report through DragonFly notifying the OHSAA and the school administration of this great sportsmanship.

Note 1: When officials see great sportsmanship take place, it should be celebrated. Notifying the coach is great, filing the game report ensures that the athlete's actions can be celebrated by the school administration. The best way to combat poor sportsmanship is to highlight and celebrate great sportsmanship. The best way to combat poor sportsmanship is to highlight and celebrate great sportsmanship.

Situation 2: In the long jump, the event judge notices A1 is wearing a pair of glasses that have a light on the front during warm-ups. The judge notifies the athlete that they are not permitted to wear recording (audio or visual) devices during a trial nor in restricted areas on the track.

Ruling 2: Correct procedure.

Note 2: The event judge may also notify the head field judge of the warning. If the athlete continues to wear the recording devices during a trial the athlete is disqualified from the event. [4-6-6]

Situation 3: A2 shows up to the clerk wearing sunglasses for their 400 meter race. As the clerk places each athlete in lane and notices that A2's glasses now have a light on the bridge of the glasses. The clerk notifies the athlete they are not permitted to wear audio or visual recording devices during an event.

Ruling 3: Correct procedure.

Note: The clerk may also notify the meet referee and starters of the warning. If the athlete continues to wear the recording devices during a trial the athlete is disqualified from the event. [4-6-6]

Situation 4: A3 finishes the 200 meter race and the meet referee notices that there is a recording device in their glasses. The meet referee notifies the athlete of their disqualification.

Ruling 4: Correct procedure.

Note 4: The athlete is not permitted to wear audio or video device during a race or trial or in restricted areas. [4-6-6]

Situation 5: In the final stretch of the 3200, A1 appears to be shaky, displaying lack of balance, and extremely fatigued. A1 then falls to the ground and attempts to crawl to the finish line. A medical official, approved by the games committee, comes to evaluate the downed runner (A1) and (a) walks alongside and talks with the athlete as the athlete crawls, (b) helps A1 to feet and determines A1 can complete the race on their own (c) helps A1 to their feet and assists A1 toward the finish line.

Ruling 5: (a) and (b) Legal, even though A1 was helped to their feet for the medical evaluation, A1 did not receive aid from the designated health-care professional (c) illegal, A1 was assisted down the track toward the finish line and completion of race.

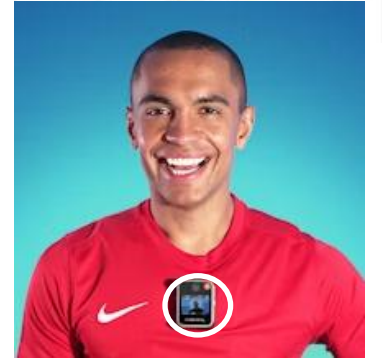
Note 5: The games committee will establish appropriate health-care professionals for a meet. These individuals may evaluate a downed competitor during a race without resulting in disqualification provided no assistance is given in progressing along the course. [4-6-5]

Situation 6: In the final 100 meter of the 1600M, A1 is running in the inside of lane 1 and B1 is running on the lane line between lanes one and two and is about two meters behind A1. As B1 starts to close the distance and begins to pass, A1 begins to move/drift from their current position on the inside of lane one to a position to the right on the lane line between lanes one and two. B1 is forced to move to the outside now running in lane three. B1 continues attempting to pass A1, A1 continues to drift outward; B1 is forced further to the outside now in lane four as A1 is in lane three.

Ruling 6: A1 is disqualified for interference per NFHS Rule 5-9-1

Note 6: Contrary to many people's belief, there does not need to be contact for interference to occur. As A1's actions changed the course of B1, per NFHS Rule 5-9-1, interference has occurred. Additionally, as this is a judgment call, it is not appealable.

The camera is circled in each photo.



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