

DATE: May 6, 2026

TO: All Track & Field Officials

FROM: BJ Duckworth Sport Administrator & Director of Officiating Development

RE: Track & Field Tournament Information For Officials



As we enter tournament season, I wanted to share a few updates with each of you.

Records

With expansion at both levels' records will be adjusted per the list below with old records being the starting point for the new divisions.

High School

- Old Div 1 = New Div 1
- Old Div 2 = New Div 2 & Div 3
- Old Div 3 = New Div 4 & Div 5

Middle School

- Old Records = New Div A & Div B

Tournament Regulations

With division expansion, several changes were made to our tournament regulations. A taskforce made up of coaches, meet managers, FAT contractors, and contest officials all collaborated to make recommendations and discuss the changes in advance of the finalization. Be sure you have reviewed the [Tournament Regulations](#), especially the changes that have been approved for 2026 that are indicated in red. In addition, a video was sent to all coaches earlier this year outlining the changes, that video can be viewed by clicking [HERE](#).

Relay Team Entries & Relay Cards

Relay cards will no longer be used during the posts season tournament. The names listed by the coaches during registration will be printed on the clerk sheet. If coaches have changes to the eight names listed for their relay they will make those changes with the clerks prior to or at the time of the team checking in for the relay. Per NFHS Rules, as was the case when cards were used, once the team checks in, the eight names the clerks have become the only eight names that can participate in that event for that round of the tournament.

For the second day of the tournament, only the eight names listed can be used, no changes can be made. This is the same as was the case when cards were used.

Pole Vault Verification

Pole vault verification cards will no longer be used for the post season tournament, it has been replaced with an electronic process. Linked on each Athletic.net meet page will be an electronic pole vault verification form. Coaches will complete their school information and list the athletes and their weight before electronically signing the form. The electronic form will feed into an Excel file that will be printed for the contest official. Coaches will no longer list the weight ratings of all the poles that will be used. Each pole checked in must have a rating at or above the weight provided on the electronic verification. Officials cannot require any additional documentation be provided or signed.

Regional & State Officiating Guides

In line with the mechanics guide published for the regular season, regional and state meet guides have been published and will be provided to all regional and state meet officials. The guides outline the mechanics for all officials, umpire assignments, and rotation requirements that shall be followed at all sites.

District & Regional Tournament Information

The tournament website can be found by clicking [HERE](#). There you will find the standard district order of events and timing for finals, links to the DAB pages, regional order of events and timing, regional site information, meet dates, and more.

State Tournament Information

The championship website can be found by clicking [HERE](#). The site currently lists the meet schedule for all divisions and very soon will be updated with more information including a meet information packet for participants, venue maps, parking maps, a preview drone video, as well as Columbus dining and attraction information.

7th & 8th Grade Championship Information

The championship website can be found by clicking [HERE](#). There you will find the meet schedule, map, meet information for qualifiers, and more. Please review this page in its entirety.

Officials Assignment Information

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.

Note For Tournament Officials From The NFHS

As the regular season concludes and state championship season begins around the country, the stakes rise not just for athletes and coaches, but for officials as well. Championship meets bring added pressure, larger crowds, stricter protocols, and tighter schedules. For officials, preparation is key to ensuring the event runs smoothly and fairly. Here's a checklist and a few essential tips to help you get ready.

Pre-Meet Checklist for Championship Officials

- Review the Rules
 - Revisit the NFHS Track and Field Rules Book.
 - Pay close attention to recent rule changes and championship-specific modifications adopted by your state association.
 - Review your state's terms and conditions for the meet.
 - Do they have any exceptions to NFHS rules?
 - Do they have policies in place for excused athletes?
 - Know the difference between NFHS and other governing bodies (e.g., NCAA or USATF).
- Know Your Event Assignment – state meets usually utilize more officials than regular season meets.

- Brush up on event-specific procedures, including relay zone exchanges, legal throws and jumps, and timing protocols.
- Know who to ask questions on the day of the meet.
- Understand Meet Schedule
 - Review the championship meet schedule and field layout.
 - Be aware of any multi-venue logistics or unique formats such as prelims/finals, flight sizes, and advancement procedures.
 - Is there a conflict sheet for athletes entered in multiple events?
- Dress Appropriately for the elements
 - Wear the correct uniform or attire as outlined by your state association.
 - Be prepared for long hours in the sun or inclement weather. Pack: sunscreen, a hat, rain gear, water, and snacks.

Maintain a Championship Mindset

Athletes train all season for this moment, and your officiating should reflect that same level of excellence. Be alert, consistent, and confident in your calls. Remain professional and approachable, recognizing that emotions can run high at championship meets. Staying composed, calm, and courteous goes a long way; a clear explanation delivered with a respectful tone can defuse most difficult situations.

Remain neutral and objective as you encounter unfamiliar teams, heightened emotions, and increased scrutiny. Stick to the facts, rely on the rule book, and trust your training. Prioritize athlete safety and fair play by monitoring venue conditions, ensuring legal equipment, and confirming proper warm-up areas. The integrity of the meet begins with the official's attention to detail.

Be familiar with your state protest and appeal procedures, as protests are more likely at championship events. Know how they are filed, who adjudicates them, and your role in the process. Always be a team player. Championship meets depend on a coordinated officiating crew that supports one another, communicates clearly, and willing to assist outside their assigned area when needed.

Championship meets celebrate high school athletics at its best. Your preparation and professionalism as an official are essential to providing a fair, safe, and memorable experience for every athlete

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