

DATE: January 6, 2026

TO: All Track & Field and Cross Country Officials

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

RE: January Officials' Memo



Renewal

The deadline for renewal of officiating permits has passed; however, renewals submitted in January 2026 will still be accepted and will include a \$50 late fee. Please note that officials who did not renew by December 31, 2025, will not be eligible to officiate in any tournament meets, as they will not receive the questionnaire.

Tournament Questionnaire

The 2026 Track & Field Tournament Questionnaire was sent to officials on January 5, 2026, and will close at 11:59 pm on January 31, 2026. Only eligible officials will receive the questionnaire via email to complete. If you do not receive it and feel you should have, please first check your spam folder and then reach out to Keaton Jones (kjones@ohsaa.org) or myself. Failure to complete the questionnaire will mean you are not eligible to officiate at the District, Regional, or State Tournament. If you did not renew by December 31, 2025, you will not get the questionnaire.

State Rules Meeting for Track & Field

The mandatory state rules meeting will go 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.

Full instructions will be sent out when the meeting launches.

2026 Ohio Track & Field and Cross Country Officials Association Clinic and Awards

Anyone who would like to register for the OTFCCOA Clinic on January 23–24, 2026, at The Ohioan (formerly Nationwide Hotel & Conference Center) in Lewis Center, Ohio, should contact Dennis Sabo directly as registration has closed.

Dennis Sabo. densabo@gmail.com.

This is NOT an OHSAA event; it is an OTFCCOA event.

Your Officiating Dues at Work & Insurance Coverage

- Please click [HERE](#) for details on how your annual dues are put to work.
- Please click [HERE](#) for details on the insurance you receive as an official.

Please note that insurance coverage applies only to OHSAA-sanctioned sports. Therefore, officials are covered for non-professional outdoor track and cross country events, **but not for indoor track, as it is not an OHSAA-sanctioned sport.** I cannot—and will not—make any specific insurance recommendations. However, two possible sources for indoor track coverage include the [NFHS Officials Association](#) & [NASO](#). Before purchasing any policy, I strongly recommend confirming the exact coverage details directly with these organizations or any other provider.

Situations

Situation 1: In the 1600-meter run, the games committee determines that the 1600-meter run will be started using a 1-turn stagger with 2 or 3 runners per lane. In order to assist the start team in administering the start, they authorize the placement of a small cone on the inside line of each lane 50 meters from the starting line of that lane. Is this allowed?

Answer 1: Yes

Note 1: Although the recent rule change was made with the assumption that a waterfall start will be used, the rule does not require it. Nor does the rule prohibit the use of a marker to assist starters in determining the distance when a staggered start is used.

Situation 2: Athlete A1 is competing in the current flight of the Long Jump and asks to be excused to compete in the 4 x 100. The long jump judge determines that the first call has been made for the relay and notes that the clerking area is located approximately 150 meters from the long jump venue. In order to keep the event moving, the official requests that A1 report to the clerk with his teammates and then return to continue the long jump competition. The official assures A1 that he/she will then be excused in ample time to join the clerk as athletes are taken to the starting line and turned over to the starter. Is this correct?

Answer 2: This procedure is permitted only if announced in advance by the games committee.

Note 2: Athletes are NOT required to stay in the clerking area after checking in. Per NFHS regulations, only the games committee may determine the procedure for checking in and out of field events to be excused to other events.

Situation 3: The coach of Team A observes a pole vaulter from Team B spraying “Stick’um” on his /her hands before he/she vaults. He notes that the athlete then reports to the clerk for a relay race immediately following that vault. The coach then protests to the referee requesting that the athlete not be allowed to compete – citing Rule 5-11-1b. The referee should...?

Answer 3: Check the athlete's hands and allow him/her to compete only if he/she can remove any adhesives without holding up the race.

Note 3: While Rule 6-8-22 specifically allows adhesives in the pole vault, regulations specifically prohibit their use in relays. The athlete must prepare for each event accordingly. In fairness to other athletes, this rule should be applied similarly to the uniform rules, and races should not be held up while corrections are being made.

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