

**2026**



**BASEBALL COACHES  
MANUAL**

## A Message from OHSAA Senior Sport Administrator, Emily Mason



Coaches,

Please take the time to review the information within this manual and continue to check the Baseball webpage on our website, where you will find many resources as well. Additionally, please work with your Athletic Director to make sure your email is listed correctly on your school's FinalForms profile, to ensure your email is up to date to receive the *This Week in Baseball* memos I send throughout the year. These memos are also archived on the Baseball webpage.

This is a reminder that our State Rules Meetings remain **mandatory** for Varsity head coaches, which can be accessed from your FinalForms profile. This is addressed in the early pages of this manual.

The Baseball Manual covers rules and regulations determined by both the OHSAA and the National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS). The NFHS rules govern all of the baseball playing rules, while the OHSAA Handbook addresses the administrative rules specific to Ohio, in particular, the OHSAA General Sport Regulations and OHSAA Baseball Regulations. The OHSAA Board of Directors approve the OHSAA Regulations annually and cover all OHSAA sanctioned sports.

This is wishing each of you a successful season. I commend you for your time and effort working with the student-athletes in the sport of baseball in Ohio!

PS—please note that I, Emily, will be out on maternity leave through the beginning of April. Dr. John Kronour ([jkronour@ohsaa.org](mailto:jkronour@ohsaa.org)) will be your contact during my maternity leave—you may either email him directly or continue to email me and my emails will be forwarded to him.

Sincerely,



Senior Sport Administrator  
Baseball Sport Administrator



# The Ohio High School Baseball Coaches Association

The purpose of the Ohio High School Baseball Coaches Association is to unify all baseball coaches in the state of Ohio, to promote high school baseball, to create an official line of communication with the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA), to foster higher standards of professionalism and ethics, and to maintain a strong contact with national, state, and local coaches organizations of baseball.

## OFFICERS

### President

Brian Hiscox, *Berkshire High School*

### Vice President

Chad Jensen, *Buckeye Central High School*

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

Aaron DeBord, *Stow High School*

### Past President & Director of Media

Mike Valesko, *Harrison Central High School*

### Executive Director

Ray Benjamin, *St. Charles Prep*

### Asst. Executive Director/Treasurer

Drew Kirby, *Dublin Jerome High School*

### Asst. Executive Director/Business Manager

Jeff Mielcarek, *Toledo Central Catholic*

### Secretary

Scott Manahan, *Capital University*

### OHSAA Consultant

Frank Gamble, *Jackson High School*

### Historian

David Burkett, *Tuslaw High School*

### Website Coordinator

Dave Hall, *Perrysburg High School*

### All Star Series Director

Craig Kyle, *Johnathan Alder High School*

### Poll Director

John Bakalar, *Chagrin Falls High School*

### Registration Chairman

Glen Morse

## Benefits of the OHSBCA

1. Conducts the annual OHSBCA Convention & Clinic
2. Conducts multiple Board Meetings per year
3. Produces web-based newsletters
4. Maintains the OHSBCA website at [www.ohsbca.org](http://www.ohsbca.org)
5. Conducts the Augusta All-Ohio Series in June honoring 80 Senior players
6. Conducts the State Coaches' Poll
7. Selects All-State Teams in each Division
8. Maintains and selects the Hall of Fame and Induction Banquet
9. Provides scholarships to graduating sons/daughters of member coaches
10. Selects an annual Academic All-Ohio team
11. Honors coaches with service and victory awards
12. Financially contributes to Team Ohio who play in the Sunbelt Classic
13. Sponsors a college "Coaches' Corner" at the OHSBCA clinic
14. Honors Past Presidents and Hall of Fame members
15. Attends all monthly OHSAA Board of Director meetings in Columbus
16. Honors Assistant Coaches through the "Assistant Coach of the Year"

## Joining the OHSBCA

1. The Ohio High School Baseball Coaches Association accepts memberships through March 15
2. Annual membership fees are \$40.00
3. Memberships are available through the OHSBCA website at <http://www.ohsbca.org/aws/OHSBCA/pt/sp/membership>

## DISTRICT REPS

### Central, Sr.

Dave Meikrantz, *Delaware Hayes High School*

### Central, Jr.

Corey Conn, *Lancaster High School*

### East, Sr.

Nathan Prati, *Coshocton High School*

### East, Jr.

DJ Butler, *Barnesville High School*

### Northeast, Sr.

Dan Ransom, *Firelands High School*

### Northeast, Jr.

Jim Hanek, *South Range High School*

### Northeast, Sr.

Dan Ransom, *Firelands High School*

### Northeast, So.

Tommy Carosielli, *Solon High School*

### Northwest, Sr.

Rick Bowerman, *Seneca East High School*

### Northwest, Jr.

Trent Thomas, *Wauseon High School*

### Southeast, Sr.

John Combs, *Whiteoak High School*

### Southeast, Jr.

Jeff Noble, *Waverly High School*

### Southwest, Sr.

Ty Welker, *Troy High School*

### Southwest, Jr.

Curt Bly, *Mason High School*

## Congratulations to the 2026 Hall of Fame Inductees!

The following coaches will be honored at this year's OHSBCA Clinic as inductees into the Class of 2026. Congratulations to these deserving coaches!

Tim Broskie, *Whetstone High School*  
 Mark Brunswick, *Bellefontaine High School*  
 Brent Renollet, *Delta High School*  
 John Sarver, *Buchtel High School*  
 Kevin Yader, *Hiland High School*



## Important Baseball Dates

<b>February 23</b>	Coaching & Tryouts Begin
<b>March 27</b>	First Contest Permitted
<b>May 10</b>	Tournament Seed/Draw Date
<b>May 18 – 23</b>	Sectional Tournament
<b>May 25 – 30</b>	District Tournament
<b>June 2 – 4</b>	Regional Tournament
<b>June 11 – 14</b>	State Tournament
<b>June 20</b>	Season Ends

## Baseball Web Resources

- OHSAA Baseball Webpage [CLICK HERE](#)
- OHSAA Baseball Regulations [CLICK HERE](#)
- NFHS Rules Books [CLICK HERE](#)
- NFHS Coaches Education [CLICK HERE](#)
- OHSBCA Website [CLICK HERE](#)

## OHSAA Baseball Contact Information

**Emily Mason**, Senior Sport Administrator | [emason@ohsaa.org](mailto:emason@ohsaa.org)  
*Administrates the sport of baseball and oversees the postseason tournaments.*

**Frank Grubb**, Director of Development for Baseball Umpiring | [fgrubb@ohsaa.org](mailto:fgrubb@ohsaa.org)  
*Responsible for overseeing baseball umpires in Ohio. Serves as liaison with NFHS Baseball playing rules.*

## State Rules Meeting

All **State Rules Meetings for coaches and officials will be required online**. This is explained on the following page. The Baseball Rules Meeting is available starting on Wednesday, February 11 at 9:00 AM through your FinalForms profile. The deadline to view the rules meeting without penalty is **Friday, March 27 at 11:59 PM**. On Saturday, March 28 at 12:00 AM, there will be a \$50 late fee to view the rules meeting. The final deadline will be Monday, April 27 at 11:59 PM. **On April 28 at 12:00 AM, the Baseball Rules Meeting will no longer be available and penalties will be assessed if not viewed by this date.**

## Important Non-Interscholastic Note

*General Sports Regulation 7* prohibits a member of the school team from participating (i.e., trying out, practicing, training, or competing) with any non-interscholastic program while a member of the school team. Please remind your student-athletes of this rule, as penalties shall apply if this Regulation is violated. Anything outside of high school season—practice, workouts or contests (including college tryouts/workouts) are considered **non-interscholastic**.

## The Non-Interscholastic Date

Though participation in any form of non-interscholastic baseball while a member of a school team is prohibited, any participation in a non-interscholastic contest **on or after this date** for a student who has not yet joined your interscholastic program results in the individual being ineligible for the OHSAA tournament in addition to any other suspensions issued.

For the 2026 baseball season, this date is: **April 6, 2026**

*Please remind the players on your team!*

# Communicating with the OHSAA

It is understandable with over 800 high schools in Ohio and the number of teams in Ohio from grades 7-12, communication to our office is in large volume. Most questions can and should be answered by the athletic administrator at your school. To make our communication as efficient as possible, we ask school administrators to communicate directly with us.

Additionally, every effort is being made to provide useful information on our website. We encourage you to check the website.

# MANDATORY STATE RULES MEETING

State Rules Meetings are mandatory for all head coaches and OHSAA umpires.

**NOTE:** *If you are both a coach and umpire, please know that there are separate Rules Meetings for coaches and officials—you will be required to complete both meetings. Rules Meetings for coaches are in FinalForms and Rules Meetings for officials are in DragonFly.*

**State Rules Meetings are mandatory for all head coaches.** All rules interpretation meetings for coaches will be conducted online through their FinalForms account.

NFHS playing rules are covered in detail, along with OHSAA Baseball Sports Regulations, General Sport Regulations and Bylaws as they pertain to coaches and players. Though the main purpose is to provide knowledge and advice on the various OHSAA Regulations, this is the educational mechanism to ensure compliance with the various rules and regulations.

## HOW TO COMPLETE STATE RULES MEETING ONLINE

All coaches will access the State Rules Meeting through their FinalForms account. Once you have logged in (full directions below) and have accessed the Rules Meeting, please follow the prompts to complete the meeting to receive meeting credit.

**Coaches** should login to their FinalForms account and use the Form icon to access the list of meetings. *Coaches should contact their Athletic Director if they do not have an account\**. Please see further directions below if you are a coach and do not have a FinalForms account. Please note that all screens of the presentation must be viewed for attendance credit to be provided.

### TO ACCESS ONLINE RULES MEETINGS

1. Login to your FinalForms account
2. On the landing page, you should see the sport(s) you have been assigned (i.e., Baseball)
3. Click on the “Form” icon on the left side of Baseball (highlighted in red)
4. Click on the “Play” button on the video and watch the entire video
5. **Enter coach name at the bottom and click “Submit”, verifying you have watched the video**
6. Once submitted, the listing of “Baseball” should turn green, as indication that credit has been received

### **\*IF YOU ARE A COACH AND DO NOT HAVE A FINALFORMS ACCOUNT**

1. Contact your Athletic Director immediately to add you to the school’s Staff Management in FinalForms

### DATES AND DEADLINES

The online Baseball State Rules Meeting will be available beginning on **Wednesday, February 11 at 9:00 AM**.

The deadline for completion of Rules Meeting is **Friday, March 27 at 11:59 PM** or a \$50.00 late fee is charged for access to the Rules Meeting. The final deadline is Monday, April 27 at 11:59 PM. Beginning on Tuesday, April 28 at 12:00 AM, the Baseball Rules Meeting is no longer available and the penalty shall apply.

**PENALTY: *If coaches do not complete the Rules Meeting by April 27 at 11:59 PM, your school will be removed from the postseason tournament and officials will be ineligible for the postseason tournament.***

### AFTER COMPLETION:

1. Your FinalForms profile will be updated to reflect your attendance.
2. Please do not call the OHSAA office for verification. Attendance will be reflected in your profile.

# MANDATORY PRE-SEASON PARENT MEETING

Pre-season meetings with parents are mandated by OHSAA Bylaws and will most likely occur at your school along with other spring sport teams. This is determined by each school's Athletic Director and must be held no later than 2 weeks after the start of the season (February 23 – March 9, 2026). This is the time to cover topics like eligibility requirements, individual school policies, individual sport policies, sportsmanship issues and expectations, travel plans for away contests, etc. We encourage coaches to use this time to their advantage and provide as much education as possible to parents. There are great resources available for coaches to use at these meetings at the Locker Room, an NFHS online education center. You can access this directly at: <http://www.nfhslearn.com/LockerRoom.aspx>

## PUPIL ACTIVITY PERMITS | COACHES TOOL CHEST

Per Ohio Administrative Code, any high school or middle school coach (volunteer or paid) must have a valid Pupil Activity Permit (PAP) issued by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). Athletic Administrators are responsible for maintaining records of compliance for each of the following:

- Completed background checks
- Completed course from an approved First Aid for Coaches provider
- Completed course from an approved Concussion provider
- Completed course from an approved Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training provider
  - Including Lindsay's Law <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/Lindsays-Law/Lindsays-Law>
- Completed course from an approved Coaching Fundamentals provider
- Completed training course in CPR from a course approved by your school or District
- Completed mental health course from an approved provider



The OHSAA has partnered with Coaches' Tool Chest ([www.coachestoolchest.com](http://www.coachestoolchest.com)) as a single source, online provider for each of the courses needed to obtain a PAP. CTC helps ensure coaches have the knowledge they need to best serve their student athletes. This annual course is updated with current best practices and training and provides a single certificate for all the coaching requirements in Ohio.

Specific information about alternative single source courses, additional details and application information can be found: <https://sboe.ohio.gov/educator-licensure/apply-for-a-new-license/pupil-activity-coaching-permits>

### Concussion Legislation as it relates to Coaching Requirements

Though the entire law is explained later, all coaches today must complete one of two (2) approved Concussion Education programs online upon renewal of their Pupil Activity Permit any time after April 26, 2013. Individual student-athletes removed from contests with a suspected concussion are no longer permitted to return to play on the same day of the contest, regardless of the diagnoses. If they are removed by one of the individuals given this authority, they simply cannot return to play the same day. Written authorization is required to return anytime thereafter and must be kept on file with the school athletic administrator indefinitely.

...CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...

# 2026 OHSAA BASEBALL REGULATION CHANGES

Please see the following changes to the 2026 Baseball Regulations, which are effective starting on August 1, 2025. Other changes made to the Baseball Regulations not mentioned below, are date changes that reflect the 2026 Baseball season.

## BASEBALL REGULATION 1.7 | END OF CONTEST

Regarding the Ohio Pitch Count rule, the following is now required for coaches at the end of the contest:

**End of the Contest:** Both team Head Coaches shall meet at the end of the completed game to verify pitch count records with each other and resolve any discrepancies onsite.

**RATIONALE:** This requires both Head Coaches to meet at the end of the completed game and verify pitch count records onsite—discrepancies are much more challenging to determine once the game has concluded and days have gone by. This ensures that the two onsite coaches can work out if there are any discrepancies in real time, in hopes to validate all pitch count records are accurate and verified by the participating schools.



## 2026 NFHS BASEBALL RULE CHANGES

All OHSAA schools shall follow the 2026 NFHS Baseball Rules Book

- 1-6-3**      **ART. 3 . . .** No player shall wear any audio (microphone) or video (camera) device during the game.
- RATIONALE:** In high school baseball, players are not permitted to wear any audio or video equipment for the purpose of broadcasting or live recording while actively participating in the contest. This rule protects safety, fairness, competitive integrity, privacy of others, focus on education and the educational mission of high school sports.
- 2-10-3, 3-4-6**      **ART. 3 . . .** A player-to-player defensive meeting includes two or more defensive players (3-4-6).
- ART. 6 . . .** Each team, when on defense, may be granted not more than one player-to-player meeting during an inning to permit players to confer with defensive personnel. The umpires shall deny any subsequent player-to-player defensive team requests for meetings for that half-inning.
- RATIONALE:** Utilizing the rule additions, clarifies that the defensive players can offer support and provide camaraderie to their pitcher and limits the occurrences. The new rule also clarifies that it is not a charged conference and maintaining the integrity of the existing rule. It is hopeful that these changes prevent teams from stalling to gain an unfair advantage when weather or darkness is approaching.
- 1-4-4**      Effective, January 1, 2027, the school's name, school's nickname, school's logo, school's mascot, and/or the player's name are permitted on the uniform top and/or pants. One American flag 2 inches x 3 inches may be worn or occupy space on each item of uniform apparel.
- RATIONALE:** Clear uniform guidelines help maintain the integrity, fairness, and educational purpose of high school baseball. Uniforms represent the team and school, not individual expression, and must comply with NFHS rules. Defined standards prevent confusion, promote equality, and teach values like respect, discipline, and accountability—hallmarks of education based athletics.
- NOTE:** Not effective until the 2027 baseball season.
- 1-2-9, 2-5-1h, 2-16-1h, 8-2-1, 8-2-2(a), 8-2-7, 8-4-1g(1)**      **ART. 9 . . .** Effective January 1, 2027, the double first base will be required. The double first base shall be a white base and a contrasting solid color. The white portion of the base is located in fair territory and the colored base shall be located in foul territory. The double first base is split by the first base foul line. They shall be installed with no space between the two portions of the double first base. Both double first bases (white and colored), second and third bases shall be white bags, 15 inches square and 2 to 5 inches in thickness, and made of canvas filled with a soft material, or molded rubber or synthetic material, and shall be securely attached to the ground or an anchor system as in Diagram 2. Bases may have tapered edges and/or be designed to disengage from their anchor systems.
- RATIONALE:** A double first base enhances player safety by reducing the risk of collisions between the batter-runner and the first baseman on close plays. It provides a separate space for each player—fair territory for the fielder and foul territory for the runner—helping to prevent injuries, while maintaining the integrity of the game.
- NOTE:** Not effective until the 2027 baseball season.



## 2026 NFHS BASEBALL POINTS OF EMPHASIS

### **Discipline**

In the game of baseball, umpires serve as impartial authorities whose primary role is to ensure that the contest is conducted fairly, safely, and within the framework of established NFHS rules. Respecting their decisions is foundational to the integrity of the sport and models appropriate behavior. When coaches and players accept umpire rulings—whether or not they agree—it promotes sportsmanship, discipline, and respect for the game. It also helps maintain focus, keeps the pace of play steady, and fosters a positive environment for all participants, including opponents and spectators. Disputing or showing visible dissent toward an umpire’s decision undermines their authority and disrupts the game. More importantly, it sets a poor example for younger players and fans. Such behavior, if left unchecked, can escalate tensions and compromise the spirit of competition.

Any unsportsmanlike conduct, arguing or disrespect directed toward umpires will result in disciplinary action, which may include warnings, restriction to the bench, or ejection from the game found in NFHS Baseball Rules 3 and 10. These penalties are not punitive in nature—they are protective of the values that define high school sports; respect, integrity and personal responsibility.

### **Sportsmanship (Bench Jockeying and Props)**

High school baseball exists within the framework of education-based athletics, where the primary goals extend beyond competition to include character development, sportsmanship, and mutual respect. With that in mind, bench jockeying has no place in the high school game. Bench jockeying—defined as negative verbal comments, taunting, or attempts to distract, intimidate, or embarrass opponents or officials from the dugout—violates the standards of conduct expected in interscholastic competition. It detracts from the integrity of the sport and undermines the core values of respect and self-control that high school sports are intended to teach. More importantly, bench jockeying often escalates tensions, provokes retaliation, and leads to unsportsmanlike behavior that can tarnish the contest and damage the experience for players, coaches, umpires, and spectators alike. High school athletes are still learning how to carry themselves with dignity and class under pressure. Allowing or ignoring bench jockeying sends the wrong message. By rule, sportsmanship (bench jockeying) is prohibited and will result in warnings, restrictions, or ejections as deemed appropriate by the umpire. Enforcement of this rule is not about silencing enthusiasm—it is about upholding the spirit of fair play and modeling appropriate conduct for students, schools, and communities.

### **Proper Pitching Positions**

The premise of the pitching positions is very basic and a violation is enforceable regardless if there is a runner on or not on base. Pitching positions have evolved over the years to stay current with existing teaching styles and the increasing skill levels of high school age students. It is one of the most talked about and modified rules in the history of NFHS rules writing. We should always be cautious and concerned that the reasons to change the rule is never associated to the whims or trends of other levels of baseball. Pitchers are required to use one of two positions: the wind-up or the set. It is important that umpires, coaches, and players know what position the pitcher is using so they know which part of Rule 6 is in play. The position of the pivot foot determines which of the pitching positions is being used. In the wind-up position, the pitcher’s pivot foot is in contact with the pitcher’s plate and is not parallel to it. They may only deliver a pitch or step backward off the pitcher’s plate with the pivot first. In the set position, the pivot foot is in contact with or directly in front of and parallel to the pitcher’s plate.

### **Running Lane Awareness**

Enforcing the running lane rule (NFHS Rule 8-4-1g) is vital for player safety, fairness, and the educational goals of high school baseball. The batter-runner must use the designated lane in foul territory during a play at first base.

1. Safety – The lane prevents collisions and protects both the runner and the fielder.
2. Fair Play – Staying in the lane avoids unfair interference with defensive plays.
3. Consistency – Regular enforcement promotes accountability and discourages rule violations.
4. Education – Teaching proper lane use reinforces respect for the rules and the game.

Violations result in interference, with the batter-runner out and runners returned. This rule is more than a technicality—it’s essential to a safe, fair, and respectful game.

# OHSAA MODIFICATION TO NFHS RULE 3-1-1 | SUB-VARSITY ONLY

*The following rule modification to NFHS Rule 3-1-1 is for sub-Varsity contests only*

**NFHS Rule 3-1-1** Any of the starting players may be withdrawn and re-entered once, including a player who was the designated hitter, provided such player occupies the same batting position whenever he is in the lineup ... A substitute who is withdrawn may not re-enter.

Ohio has the following administrative exception to NFHS Rule 3-1-1, for sub-Varsity contests only:

**EXCEPTION:** In games that are not counted as Varsity contests (i.e., sub-Varsity), re-entry may occur an unlimited number of times, given that such player(s) occupies the same batting position when they are in the lineup.

**RATIONALE:** To provide more playing opportunities for athletes at sub-Varsity levels.

## A FEW NOTES/REMINDERS:

- The exception allows for re-entry of players in a spot in the batting order lineup and a player needs to stay in the same spot in the lineup. Two players in the game on defense at the same time that occupy the same spot in the lineup would result in an illegal substitution.
- Coaches, continue to announce substitutions to the umpire and the opposing team, to avoid concerns with maintaining the lineup card.
- You do not have to use this exception to the rule at the sub-Varsity level—it is simply an option!



## NFHS STATE ADOPTIONS | OHIO



The NFHS Rules carefully permit each state the right to adopt certain rules that are specific to that state and are known as **state adoptions**. The state adoptions do not cause any fundamental change in the game from state to state. The permitted state adoptions are listed below, followed by Ohio's decision on the adoption. All of the listed have been vetted with the Ohio High School Baseball Coaches Association.

### Rule 1-2-9 permits a state to use a double first base.

A double first base is permitted (by state association adoption)

**OHIO:** *ADOPTED in the state of Ohio, but not effective until the 2027 baseball season.*

### Rule 1-4-4 permits each state to permit a commemorative or memorial patch on the uniform.

To allow for special occasions, commemorative or memorial patches, that will be uniformly placed, not to exceed 4 square inches, to be worn on jerseys in an appropriate and dignified manner without compromising the integrity of the uniform.

**OHIO:** *ADOPTED and used in Ohio.*

### Rule 2-33-1 permits for certain speed up rules.

Suggested speed-up rules.

**OHIO:** *NONE of the suggested speed-up rules have been adopted in Ohio for all games. However, in non-league games, coaches may agree to use any, all or any part of suggested speed-up rules (courtesy runners and after putouts). Agreement must be reached prior to the start of the contest.*

### Rule 4-2-2 and 4-2-4 permits states an option on how they agree to end a shortened game.

Game ending procedures may be determined.

**OHIO:** *The following game-ending procedure is adopted in the state of Ohio—for regular season contests only.*

By mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the umpire-in-chief a game may be shortened or the game terminated at any time. If there is no mutual agreement a game will be ended according to Rule 4 Section 2 and the following:

- *A game may end any time after 5 innings or after 4 1/2 innings when a team is 10 or more runs behind and has completed its term at bat.*
- *If a game is called prior to the completion of a full inning after the fifth inning, the game becomes a suspended game in the following situation:*
  - The visiting team has scored one or more runs to tie the score or to take the lead, and the home team has not retaken the lead.

If a suspended game is to be completed it will be continued from the point of suspension with the lineup and batting order of each team the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules of the game (substitution may be made). Any suspended game, if it is to be resumed, will be picked up from the point of interruption. **Once a game has started, it will not start over.** Any suspended game, regardless of where it was interrupted, will be re-started from the point where play was suspended.

*Please see other examples throughout the manual.*

#### **Rule 4-3-1 permits a state to determine how it counts a suspended game**

By state association adoption, a regulation called game, where a winner cannot be determined, shall be counted as 1/2 game won and 1/2 game lost for each team.

**OHIO:** *NOT ADOPTED in Ohio.*

**During OHSAA Tournament:** Any suspended OHSAA tournament game shall be continued from the point of suspension at a later time. All OHSAA tournament games shall be played to completion per the playing rules (the 10-run rule would be applicable).

**OHIO:** *ADOPTED in Ohio.*

#### **Rule 4-4-1a permits each state to how to determine a forfeit**

State associations are authorized to specify the time frame and/or circumstances before a forfeit shall be declared for a late arrival by one of its teams.

**OHIO:** *The following protocol has been adopted:*

No interscholastic contest is subject to forfeiture unless the contest has been started. Any scheduled regular season contest that is not started due to unforeseen circumstances such as, failure of a team to arrive, strikes, school closings are "no contest." Contests not played are not included in won-lost statistics.

#### **Rule 6-1-6 requires each state to determine a pitch count limitation**

**OHIO:** *See Ohio's pitch count rule on page 11.*

## **NFHS BAT REGULATIONS**

*Please reference NFHS Rule 1-3-2 for the entire rules listed by the NFHS*

Per *NFHS Rule 1-3-2*, each legal wood, aluminum or composite bat shall:

- Be one-piece, multi-pieces and permanently assembled, or two pieces with interchangeable barrel construction.
- Not have exposed attachments, rivets, pins rough or sharp edges or any form of exterior fastener that would present a potential hazard.
- Be free of rattles, dents, burrs, cracks and sharp edges. Bats that are broken, altered or that deface the ball are illegal. Materials inside the bat or treatments/devices used to alter the bat specifications and/or enhance performance are prohibited and render the bat illegal.
- Have a knob, handle, barrel, taper (optional transition area) and end cap.

*Bats that are not made of a single piece of wood must be marked with the **BBCOR certification mark**.* This standard, known as the "Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution", is the only standard bat permitted and recognized.

**The BBCOR mark is the only standard permitted for non-wood bats. Requirements of the BBCOR mark:**

- Rules require it to be minimum of one inch on each side
- Rules require it to be on the barrel of bat
- Rules require mark to be contrasting color to bat
- Rules require the BBCOR mark to be contrasting color to bat
- Rules require the mark to read "BBCOR .50"

Wood bats are legal. To be classified as a wood bat, the bat must be a single solid piece of wood. If the bat is *not* a solid wood bat, it must meet all the requirements of the BBCOR certification, including the BBCOR mark. Each bat not made of a single piece of wood shall:

- Have a safety grip made of cork, tape (no smooth/plastic tape) or commercially manufactured composition material. The grip must extend a minimum of 10 inches, but not more than 18 inches, from the base of the knob. Molded grips are illegal.
  - Resin, pine tar or any drying agent to enhance the hold are permitted on the bat, not to exceed beyond 18 inches from the base of the knob.
- Be 2 5/8 inches or less in diameter at thicket part and 36 inches or less in length.
- Not weigh more than three ounces less than the length of the bat (e.g., a 33-inch-long bat cannot be less than 30 ounces).

**Examples of non-wood bats:**

- Bamboo bats
- Bats with metal handles and wood barrels

**Bat tampering is illegal and can be subject to civil, and under certain circumstances, criminal action.** Bat warmers or warming of the bat with any artificial device is considered illegal as well.

## DECERTIFIED BATS

Despite the BBCOR certification mark, certain practices led the NFHS to decertify a few bats. It is not necessary to get into the process of this, however, it is important to note that the following bats have been **decertified** and will not be permitted for use:

- Reebok Vector TLS 33 inch length
- Marucci Cat 5, 33" length
- Reebok Vector TLS 32" length

*Use of any of the above listed bats during OHSAA contests is subject to the penalties outlined in Rules 4-1-3b and 7-4-1a of the NFHS Rules Book.*

# OHSAA Regulations

## OHSAA GENERAL SPORTS REGULATIONS

General Sports Regulations are available at [www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org). Under *Sports & Tournaments* select Baseball. The *General Sports Regulations* are listed under *Regulations, Policies & Manuals* on left side.

## TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS

Tournament Regulations and the State Tournament Draw will be available at [www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org) (after approval at the February Board Meeting). On the website, under *Sports & Tournaments* select Baseball. They are listed under *Tournament Information* on the left side of the Baseball page.

# OHSAA Sports Regulations

Regulations governing the sport of Baseball are divided into two basic categories: **General Sports Regulations** and **Baseball Regulations**. These are reviewed annually and approved by the OHSAA's Board of Directors.

## OHSAA GENERAL SPORT REGULATIONS

These regulations can be accessed and address regulations that affect all sports governed by the OHSAA, grades 7-12. They include, but are not limited to, such things as instructional programs outside the window of the season, physical fitness/conditioning programs, open fields, no contact periods, and ejection policies. These are important and *most* areas of concern can be addressed by reading through these Regulations or contacting your Athletic Director. They are easily accessed via the web by navigating to the Baseball webpage and clicking on "General Sports' Regulations" on the left-hand side. We **strongly encourage** you to take the time to read these to familiarize yourself and your staff with the various rules approved by our Board of Directors that govern all sports.

Though there are far too many to list in this manual, a *few* of the more common ones that affect coaches and teams are:

### No Contact Period | GSR 11

Any coach, **paid or volunteer**, is prohibited from athletic or athletic-related contact with squad members in the same sport for the period of time, **starting August 1 and ending August 31**. This includes providing instruction, overseeing/coordinating tryouts for a non-interscholastic program, open gyms, etc. Exceptions to this are all-star contests, awards ceremonies, overseeing weight training, contact with seniors to facilitate college recruiting and contact as a faculty member assigned to teach in the regular curriculum, pick up school-issued equipment and attendance at OHSAA tournaments.

### Traveling Out of State | Bylaw 9

Per *Bylaw 9-2-1*, baseball teams may travel out of state to compete in contest practices\*, scrimmages, previews and games in states or provinces in Canada that are contiguous to Ohio regardless of distance. This would include the states of Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania and West Virginia and the province of Ontario in Canada. In addition, a team may travel out of state *one-time per season*, to a state or province not contiguous to Ohio, with approval by the OHSAA office. To receive approval, schools must submit the *Travel to a Non-Bordering State Form* ([HERE](#)) to Emily Mason at [emason@ohsaa.org](mailto:emason@ohsaa.org).

*\*a practice "with" another team is considered a scrimmage*

*More information listed on page 15.*

### Protests | Bylaw 8

Bylaw 8-3-1 of the OHSAA Constitution and Bylaws reads in part, "Protests arising from the decisions and interpretations of the contest playing rules by officials will not be considered and those decisions shall be final." This means that correctable errors must be corrected during the game and within the time established by playing rules.

## Ejections | GSR 13 & 14

Any ejection that takes place during a scrimmage or contest will be reported on the Officials' Report and will require all players to be suspended in accordance with the OHSAA's Ejection Policy.

**NOTE:** Any ejection that takes place out of state or when not followed by the required paperwork that is to be submitted by the official must still follow all ejection protocol. Consequences of an ejection are required to be followed whether appropriate paperwork is filed by the official or not.

## What is Coaching? | GSR 7.1.5

Coaching refers to any organizational or instructional contact with student-athletes in the sport for which a coaching staff member in a member school is responsible. Specific activities include but are not limited to practice or other instructional situations in which the coach conducts specific drills, teaches skills, supervises match or competition-like activities or in any other way supports the instructional environment; match or competition situations in which the coach sits on the team bench, is in the direct vicinity of the competition in areas reserved for coaches and/or delivers instruction to athletes while they are competing.

## Players Receiving Outside Private Instruction | GSR 7.9.3

Individual skill instruction may be received in baseball by a squad member at any time, provided that these individual skill instructions do not violate any Board of Education, school or coaches' policies. There may be no type of team play involved. Individual skill instruction may be provided by a school coach (at any time, except for the no-contact period) or an outside instructor.

## Player Participation with Non-Interscholastic Teams/Programs | GSR 7

A member of an interscholastic baseball squad (*grades 7-12*) sponsored by the Board of Education **cannot participate in a non-interscholastic baseball program** (such as club or travel), which includes tryouts, practice and contests, as an individual or a member of a team in the sport of baseball, at any time during the school team's season. This is detailed in *General Sport Regulation 7.2.1*.

A student-athlete becomes a member of the school team when he/she participates in a scrimmage, preview or regular season or tournament game. With that being said, OHSAA Regulations would permit a student athlete to participate with a non-interscholastic program up until that student participates in their first scrimmage, preview or contest for the school. As soon as they participate in a scrimmage, preview or contest for the school team, they may no longer participate with a non-school program until the end of the school season.

A member of an interscholastic baseball team sponsored by the Board of Education **may** participate in non-interscholastic baseball (such as travel, etc.) prior to and after the school season under the following conditions:

- The number of interscholastic baseball players from the **same school** on a non-interscholastic team is limited to **six** of that non-interscholastic team. This number includes all players that played on the school team in the previous season from grades 9-11\*.
- A player may continue to play with a non-interscholastic squad in a national qualifying tournament only in excess of the 6-player limit until the squad is eliminated, but no later than Labor Day.
- A player may play in non-interscholastic baseball only when the student has completed their school season.
- Please keep in mind that from the end of the student-athletes' school baseball season through July 31, there are no player limitations from the same school on a non-interscholastic team. If there is an excess of six players from the same school, and a school coach is coaching them, they must count it as 1 of their 13 coaching days.

*\*Graduating seniors are exempt from this 6-player limitation.*

Please see further explanations under *Frequently Asked Questions* later in the manual!

## Coaching Own Student-Athletes on Non-School Teams | GSR 7.5

School coaches are permitted to coach their athletes on a non-interscholastic team outside of the school season, as long as there are 6 or less players on a non-interscholastic program, with the exception of the no contact period (August 1 – 31) or from the end of the baseball school season – July 31. From the end of the school baseball season – July 31, a school coach is permitted to work with more than 6 of their baseball athletes for a maximum of 13 days. This 13-day limitation applies to all members of the coaching staff. If there are 6 or less players, a school coach may coach their student athletes at any time, except for the no contact period.

## Individual Instruction | GSR 7.8

The Individual Instruction Regulation permits a school baseball coach to have instructional contact with **no more than six players in a group together at one time**, provided such instruction does not take place during the mandatory no contact period. The definition of individual skill instruction is "instruction or coaching provided to a member of a school team in which the techniques and skills of the sport are being taught and the activity does not involve team instruction". There may be multiple groups of 6 (or less) in the facility at the same time, but the groups may never combine to where there are more than 6 athletes working together.

The groups of 6 can rotate between coaches to receive instruction, but again, they can never combine.

Please keep in mind that this is limited to individual skill instruction only—there is no type of team play permitted.

## Open Gyms/Fields | GSR 10

A school may open its' athletic facilities for unstructured free play to a sport's student-athletes. All activity must be unorganized, and attendance shall not be mandatory. A school coach, paid or unpaid, shall not require, suggest or in any way imply, that a student's chance to be selected for the school team is contingent upon participation at an open gym/field. A school coach and/or employee may supervise the open gym (and participate in the unstructured free play!) but may not provide any instruction.

### OHSAA BASEBALL SPORT REGULATIONS

Each spring, Regulations for the upcoming school year are approved by the Board of Directors for every sport sponsored by the OHSAA. Coaches should familiarize their entire staff with the importance of these regulations as they directly affect the eligibility of student-athletes.

### Individual Player Limitations

Each athlete may play in games on a maximum of **32 dates**. This provides more flexibility for using Varsity and JV players interchangeably and provide more opportunity. Moving players up and down to utilize their maximum number of dates also creates a need to track this carefully by coaches. A player that exceeds the number of dates (32) becomes *ineligible*. *Using an ineligible player in a contest results in forfeiture of the contest.*

### End of Season Date

Teams may schedule games beginning March 27, 2026 and no later than **June 2, 2026**. This means that you can continue scheduling contests and scrimmages throughout the regular and postseason tournament, through June 21. Keep in mind that playing this late also eliminates any opportunity for an athlete to play non-interscholastic baseball until the school season is complete.

### Doubleheaders

Doubleheaders are permitted, but keep in mind that no team or individual may play in more than two games per day. There are also no restrictions on playing doubleheaders on school nights, as determined by the local school/athletic board.

**Note:** Completion of a suspended game along with a regularly scheduled game(s) is not considered a doubleheader (*Penalty – see Sports Regulation 20*).

### Umpires

**All umpires used for Varsity games must be Class 1 umpires.** A Class 2 official may be used in emergency situations only with permission from the Executive Director's Office. If a Class 2 official is used in a varsity game, the Class 1 shall be the lead Official and determine which official will work the plate.

**Non-varsity games require a minimum of one Class 1 or Class 2 umpires to officiate the game.** Umpires used for JV and Varsity contests must be OHSAA Class 1 or Class 2 umpires. Class 1, 2 or 3 are recommended for Freshmen games.

### OHSAA BASEBALL CONTEST/INDIVIDUAL LIMITATIONS

#### SCHOOL CONTEST LIMITATIONS (Grades 9-12)

<b>Maximum number of contests permitted</b>	<b>27 contests</b> (on no more than 27 playing dates) plus OHSAA postseason tournament
<b>Total number of contests per day permitted</b>	No team or individual may play more than two games per day
<b>Scrimmages/previews</b>	Maximum of <b>4</b> scrimmages and/or previews; not to exceed 4 in total
<b>Scrimmage note</b>	Scrimmages may be held at any time during pre-season, postseason or during the season, but must count the same for both competing teams. In other words, Team A cannot count it as a scrimmage while Team B counts the competition as a contest.
<b>Alumni games</b>	Must be counted as a scrimmage, preview or contest
<b>Practicing with other schools</b>	Any practice with another school must be counted as one of the 4 permitted scrimmages

#### INDIVIDUAL CONTEST LIMITATIONS (Grades 9-12)

<b>Individual scrimmages permitted</b>	No Individual may participate in more than 4 scrimmages and/or previews
<b>Individual contests permitted</b>	No individual may participate on more than <b>32 playing dates</b> (plus OHSAA postseason tournament) per season
<b>Total number of contests per day permitted</b>	No team or individual may play more than two games per day

#### SCHOOL CONTEST LIMITATIONS (Grades 7-8)

<b>Maximum number of contests permitted</b>	<b>17 contests</b> (on no more than 17 playing dates) plus one postseason tournament not to exceed 4 games
<b>Total number of contests per day permitted</b>	No team or individual may play more than two games per day
<b>Scrimmages/previews</b>	Maximum of <b>2</b> scrimmages

<b>Scrimmage note</b>	Scrimmages may be held at any time during pre-season, postseason or during the season, but must count the same for both competing teams. In other words, Team A cannot count it as a scrimmage while Team B counts the competition as a contest.
<b>Alumni games</b>	Must be counted as a scrimmage or contest
<b>Practicing with other schools</b>	Any practice with another school must be counted as one of the 2 permitted scrimmages

## INDIVIDUAL CONTEST LIMITATIONS (Grades 7-8)

<b>Individual scrimmages permitted</b>	No Individual may participate in more than 2 scrimmages
<b>Individual contests permitted</b>	No individual may participate on more than <b>21 playing dates</b> (plus OHSAA postseason tournament) per season
<b>Total number of contests per day permitted</b>	No team or individual may play more than two games per day

# OHSAA PITCH COUNT RULE

### The Pitch Count

#### 1.7 of the Baseball Regulations reads:

*Pitching restrictions in grades 9-12 shall adhere to the following pitch/rest limitations:*

Level	Daily Pitch Limit	0 Days of Rest	1 Day of Rest	2 Days of Rest	3 Days of Rest
<b>Grades 7-12</b>	125 pitches	1 – 30 pitches	31 – 50 pitches	51 – 75 pitches	76 + pitches

- 1.71) A pitcher may finish the current batter if the daily pitch limit is reached during that at bat.
- 1.72) At the end of each contest, coaches will submit pitcher number and pitches thrown in the designated data collection system, if such data collection system is determined by the OHSAA.
- 1.73) All pitches thrown in a suspended game or a “no contest” game shall count toward the daily pitch limit and the total number of pitches thrown.
- 1.74) All pitches thrown in a scrimmage or preview shall count toward the daily pitch limit and the total number of pitches thrown.
- 1.75) Each school/team must keep a record of all pitches thrown by each of their players in each game and make this available to the OHSAA upon request.
- 1.76) Any player pitching during a period in which rest is required is considered to be pitching as an ineligible player.

Any victorious contest in which an ineligible player is participating will result in forfeiture of the contest.

**NOTE:** The daily pitch limit days of rest are based on full and complete days and not (24) hours.

**END OF THE CONTEST:** Both team Head Coaches shall meet at the end of the completed game to verify pitch count numbers with each other and resolve any discrepancies onsite.

**DISCREPANCIES:** Should there be any pitch count discrepancies discovered during the contest, time shall be called and the two head coaches shall discuss on-site. Should there be a pitch count discrepancy discovered after the contest, the two schools shall discuss. If an agreement cannot be made, the official pitch count shall be the count in the book of the home team. The OHSAA Director may assist with discrepancies and apply penalties as outlines in Bylaw 11.

### A Few Facts Regarding this Regulation:

1. This is a National Federation Rule (NFHS) that requires each state to adopt a pitch count limitation;
2. The OHSAA Constitution requires us to follow the sport rules (NFHS) for each adopted sport;
3. The regulation is in effect for all 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> school sponsored baseball teams in Ohio.

..CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE..

# END OF GAME PROCEDURES

## SUSPENDED/COMPLETE GAME PROCEDURES

PRINT AND KEEP THIS PAGE WITH YOU DURING GAMES

The information below outlines game ending and suspending/interrupted game procedures in Ohio.

Most baseball games end when the team behind in the score completes its turn at bat in the seventh inning (or an extra inning) or when the home team scores the go-ahead run in the seventh inning (or an extra inning). The following exceptions to this are:

- Coaches and the plate umpire may mutually agree to end a game early. This could be in situations where there is a tremendous lead after 2 or 3 innings and both coaches simply agree to end the game. **The score stands and the game is over.**
- Anytime a team has a 10-run lead and the team behind in the score has completed its turn at bat in the fifth inning OR the home team takes a 10-run lead in the fifth inning, **the game ends.**

Though a game also ends when it is forfeited under *NFHS Rule 4-3*, no OHSAA contest can be forfeited until **after it has started.**

- A game that is not started is considered a no contest, regardless of reason.

## SUSPENDED GAME PROCEDURES

**No game is ever called and started over at a later date.** When a regular season game is interrupted or suspended for any reason and the game cannot be resumed that date, the game will be **suspended** if the team behind in the score has not completed its turn at bat in the fifth inning.

When a game has gone beyond the fifth inning, it is a complete game, subject to these two exceptions:

1. **THE GAME IS TIED.** The OHSAA does not permit any baseball game to end in a tie. All games are considered won, lost, or suspended. Therefore, a tied game is a suspended game.
2. **THE GAME HAS GONE FIVE INNINGS AND THE VISITING TEAM HAS SCORED ONE OR MORE RUNS TO TIE THE SCORE OR TAKE THE LEAD AND THE HOME TEAM HAS NOT RE-TAKEN THE LEAD AND THE GAME IS CALLED WHILE AN INNING IS IN PROGRESS BUT BEFORE IT IS COMPLETED.**

### Examples of Completed/Suspended Games

1. In a regular season game, the home team is ahead 2-0 after FIVE innings and:
  - The game is called prior to the start of the sixth inning due to darkness: **RULING: COMPLETE GAME**
  - The first batter in the top of the sixth inning is at bat with any count on the batter and the game cannot be completed: **RULING: COMPLETE GAME**
  - The first batter in the top of the sixth inning reaches base and the game is called. **RULING: COMPLETE GAME**
  - The visiting team scores one run in the top of the sixth inning and the game is called at any time during the sixth inning. **RULING: COMPLETE GAME**
  - The visiting team scores two runs in the top of the sixth inning and the sixth inning is not complete, nor does the home team re-take the lead in the bottom half of the sixth inning. **RULING: SUSPENDED GAME**
  - The visiting team scores two or three runs in the top of the sixth inning and the home team retakes the lead in the bottom of the sixth inning. The game is called later in the bottom half of the sixth inning or after six complete innings. **RULING: COMPLETE GAME**

When a suspended game is completed, it shall be continued from the point of suspension with batting orders and lineups the same. Substitutions may be made. Any player that may have been suspended from the original contest is suspended and not able to play in the resumed game.

Suspended games that are never completed simply go down as a "no contest".

## VARSITY B TEAMS

What is a Varsity B team? A Varsity B team would be an additional Varsity team at a school. Please keep in mind, however, that only **one** Varsity team from each school may enter the OHSAA Tournament. A Varsity B team is just like any other squad that is permitted at a school, like a Freshman, JV, or JV-B team. A Varsity B team is no different. The Varsity B team must have a separate schedule, just like your JV and Freshman teams have their own schedules. *The purpose of a Varsity B team is not to add 5 games to your Varsity schedule*, even if the intent is to allow more playing time for some of the non-starters.

When considering implementing a Varsity B team, the following must be applied:

- No team may participate in more than 27 regular season games on 27 playing dates;
- No individual player may play on more than 32 playing dates;
- No team or individual may play more than two games per day;
- The team must have its own roster;
- The team must have its own schedule.

### **PENALTIES SHALL BE APPLIED IF ANY OF THE ABOVE ARE VIOLATED**

Please review the Varsity B Issue of *This Week in Baseball* posted to the This Week in Baseball section on the Baseball webpage for further information and FAQ's and scenarios regarding this topic.

## GAME BALL INFORMATION

During tournament time only, the Rawlings R100 baseball is the official ball used throughout the tournament series. Please know that you are *not* required to use the Rawlings R100 baseball during the season if you do not prefer to do so.

Any baseball used must meet the requirements specified in *NFHS Rule 1-3-1*. NFHS Rules require that the baseball shall meet the current NOCSAE standard, requiring that the baseball have the NOCSAE mark/stamp on them. **All baseballs used in OHSAA competition shall require the NOCSAE and NFHS mark/stamp on the baseball.** Please know that the OHSAA stamp is not required during regular season.

These requirements apply to *all* levels of play, grades 7-12.

## THIS WEEK IN BASEBALL MEMOS

Throughout the year, particularly during the school season, coaches will receive an emailed memo called *This Week in Baseball*, highlighting current information and important reminders. These are emailed directly to the Head Coach via the email entered into the school's FinalForms profile by the Athletic Director. We encourage you to provide this memo to your assistant/sub-varsity coaches. Each TWIB memo is archived to allow coaches to view past postings at any time, directly on the OHSAA Baseball webpage.

## SCHEDULING OUT OF STATE CONTESTS

The first date contests may be played are **Friday, March 27, 2026**. This could influence any team that was planning on a trip to a non-bordering state.

- You may not play any regular season contest prior to Friday, March 27.
- If you scrimmage another opponent, it counts as a scrimmage for the opposing team as well. In other words, it cannot be a scrimmage for your team and a regular season contest for the other team. The event (scrimmage or contest) must be classified the same by both competing teams.
- Teams may travel out of state to practice, scrimmage or compete in contests.
- All competition must be officiated by licensed umpires in the state of competition and NFHS Baseball Rules must be followed.
- Teams may travel to a non-bordering state one time per season and must receive approval by sending in the *Travel to a Non-Bordering State Form* ([HERE](#)) and sending it to Emily Mason at [emason@ohsaa.org](mailto:emason@ohsaa.org).

**The adopted and approved penalty for violations of the above is ineligibility for the OHSAA postseason tournament.**

## TRANSFER STUDENTS

Each school is required to complete an eligibility certificate (*Bylaw 3-6-1*) outlining the eligible athletes for each sports roster. Please ensure you receive clearance from your school's Athletic Director before your first contest, clarifying which athletes are eligible to participate. Please note that transfer students may be subject to a period of ineligibility beginning with contest #15 in the sport of baseball. Your school's Athletic Director will work with the OHSAA Compliance Department in order to determine if any exception can be met for a transfer student to play the entire season.

# POSTSEASON TOURNAMENTS

The OHSAA sponsors the OHSAA Baseball Tournament in 7 divisions. Each of the state’s District Athletic Boards are empowered by the OHSAA Constitution to organize and conduct baseball tournaments at the Sectional and District levels. They are conducted according to the Tournament Regulations adopted by the Board of Directors at the February meeting. Typically, EMIS numbers will be utilized for a 2-year period with Competitive Balance Roster numbers used annually from the previous season’s required submissions. As a result, enrollment numbers will change annually, and divisional alignments will change annually instead of the 2-year cycle used for several years. Divisional alignments listed below utilize Competitive Balance numbers from the previous year’s roster submissions and are in effect for the 2026 Tournament.

<u>DIVISION</u>	<u>BOYS ENROLLED</u>	<u>TOTAL SCHOOLS</u>
<b>I</b>	624 and more	<b>65</b>
<b>II</b>	430 – 623	<b>72</b>
<b>III</b>	265 – 429	<b>122</b>
<b>IV</b>	197 – 264	<b>123</b>
<b>V</b>	143 – 196	<b>121</b>
<b>VI</b>	101 – 142	<b>123</b>
<b>VII</b>	100 and less	<b>122</b>

### TOURNAMENT DRAW MEETING

The draw date for tournaments is established by the Board of Directors. The official date for 2026 is **Sunday, May 10 at 2:00 PM.**

## STATE TOURNAMENT DATES & SITES

June 11 – 14, 2026  
 Canal Park | Akron, OH  
 Thurman Munson Stadium | Canton, OH

### Athletic Districts

Representation to the Regional tournament from District winners is determined by a formula based upon the number of teams participating in the previous year’s tournament. The complete Tournament Regulations that were adopted by the Board of Directors will be able to be read in their entirety by logging on to [www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org) and navigating to the Baseball webpage under the *Sports & Tournaments* drop-down menu. With a few exceptions, most schools in the counties listed below are assigned sites from the respective District Athletic Boards. You are encouraged to visit their websites for additional information.

Northwest District: [ohsaa.org/NWDAB-Home](http://ohsaa.org/NWDAB-Home)

Central District: [ohsaa.org/CDAB-Home](http://ohsaa.org/CDAB-Home)

Southwest District: [ohsaa.org/SWDAB-Home](http://ohsaa.org/SWDAB-Home)

Northeast District: [ohsaa.org/NEDAB-Home](http://ohsaa.org/NEDAB-Home)

East District: [ohsaa.org/EDAB-Home](http://ohsaa.org/EDAB-Home)

Southeast District: [ohsaa.org/SEDAB-Home](http://ohsaa.org/SEDAB-Home)

## LIGHTNING & INCLEMENT WEATHER

Emphasis on lightning and inclement weather is addressed in *General Sport Regulation 30*. The lightning and inclement weather policy is relative to all OHSAA sports.

### RECOGNITION

Coaches, Athletic Trainers, athletes, administrators and contest officials should be educated regarding the signs indicating thunderstorm development. Since the average distance between successive lightning flashes is approximately two to three miles anytime that lightning can be seen or heard, the risk is already present. Weather can be monitored using the following methods:

**Monitor Weather Patterns** – Be aware of potential thunderstorms by monitoring local weather forecasts the day before and morning of the competition, and by scanning the sky for signs of potential thunderstorm activity.

**National Weather Service** – Weather can also be monitored using small, portable weather radios from the NWS. The NWS uses a system of severe storm watches and warnings watch indicates conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area; a warning indicates severe weather has been reported in an area, and everyone should take proper precautions. Any thunderstorm poses a risk of injury or death even if it does not meet the criteria for severe weather. Therefore, anytime thunderstorms are in the forecast (even if it is only a 20 percent chance), event organizers should be at a heightened level of awareness to the potential danger of lightning.

### MANAGEMENT

**Evacuation:** If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators shall evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced and displayed on placards at all athletic venues.

**Thirty-minute rule:** Competition or practice shall be suspended once lightning has been recognized or thunder is heard. It is required to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming practice or competition. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10-12 miles away from the area. This significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes.

**Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.**

## EJECTION PROTOCOL

No later than noon of the first school day following an ejection, the officials are required to make contact with the Athletic Director or Principal of the violator's school to advise the administration of the ejection. Also, upon an ejection, the official **files a report online in the DragonFly system with the OHSAA**. Since the procedures listed below are all triggered by the submission of the Officials' Report online, officials are penalized in accordance with OHSAA adopted policies in the event they do not submit the report. After this written report that includes narrative is submitted:

- **The report is automatically sent electronically to the OHSAA and copies to the school's Athletic Director.**
- **The school's Athletic Director is required to submit a reply that includes the school and coach/player side of the events/ejection**
- **In the submitted reply from the school's Athletic Director, he/she is required to submit the coach's email address**
- **Upon the Athletic Director's submission of the Response Form, an email is sent to the ejected coach explaining the consequences (below) of the ejection:**
  - **An ejected coach is suspended from all matches for the remainder of the day of the ejection plus all matches until 2 at the level of the ejection are completed.** Thus, a JV coach ejected from a JV contest cannot coach a JV OR Varsity contest until 2 JV contests have been played.
  - Ejected coaches must also pay a \$100.00 fine and complete the National Federation of State High School Association's (NFHS) "Teaching and Modeling Behavior" course within 30 days of the ejection. The payment of the fine is completed with an online payment per the instructions provided to the coach on the email he/she receives that is triggered by submission of the School Response Form.
  - Consequences of ejections are to be enforced by the school administration and served by coaches/players even if the above protocol is not completed.

### EJECTION PROTOCOL POLICY FOR FIGHTING (PLAYERS AND COACHES):

- Any player or coach ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day.
- The penalty for being ejected for fighting is ineligibility for the next four (4) contests at the same level of play that the ejection occurred in.

**ALL PLAYER AND COACH EJECTIONS ARE FINAL.**  
**They are not permitted to be appealed, per the OHSAA Board of Directors.**

- Per *OHSAA Bylaw 4-5-4*, any student ejected or disqualified from a match must immediately be placed under direct supervision of a school official or coach. This may be on the bench or in the team area but the player is not to be removed from the site. Coaches are required to leave the facility immediately upon ejection. In the event there is no coach remaining to coach/supervise the team, the match is completed at that point.
- Any player or coach ejected from a scrimmage held prior to the start of the regular season are suspended from the **first regular season contest**. If the ejection occurs from a scrimmage held during the season, the player is suspended from the next regular season contest or OHSAA Tournament contest.
- Other pertinent ejection information:
  - During the suspension period, the player MAY practice with the team;
  - During the suspension period, the player MAY be in the bench area and in the locker room before during and after the contest;
  - During the suspension period, the player MAY travel with the team to an away contest;
  - During the suspension period, the player **is not permitted in uniform at any time before during or after the contest and may not be on the field for warm-up or to assist with warm-ups.**

## SPORTSMANSHIP

### NFHS Sporting Conduct Mission Statement

Good sportsmanship is viewed by the NFHS as a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. The ideals of sportsmanship apply equally to all activity disciplines. Individuals, regardless of their role in activities, are expected to be aware of their influence on the behavior of others and model good sportsmanship.

### Special Baseball Coaches' Note on Sporting Conduct

Expectations need to be placed on team members relative to sporting behavior. We urge coaches to be at the forefront of setting examples of behavior and into expectations for their student-athletes. It is good for the game and will allow the continued growth of baseball.

## THE OHSAA & SPORTSMANSHIP

As we prepare for the upcoming seasons, the OHSAA wishes to emphasize to each of you the importance of your leadership role in the promotion of sportsmanship, ethics and integrity. The professional manner in which coaches and officials conduct themselves prior to, during and following a contest unquestionably impacts the behavior of others who may be involved.

The OHSAA has joined the NFHS in its quest to improve sportsmanship, ethics and integrity. We are involved in an ongoing campaign in every sport to do just that. Printed below is the mission statement of the NFHS concerning sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity. Please take the time to read and digest this statement and then carefully consider your impact upon students, officials, coaches and fans. Thank you and have a great season!

The Ohio High School Athletic Association challenges all of us in the sports community to take positive steps toward the goal of attaining the high ideal of good sportsmanship. It is the responsibility of each of us to serve as a positive role model and set high expectations for others.

### ADMINISTRATORS

Athletic Departments are comprehensive, pre-eminent teaching departments with a subject matter all their own: self-confidence, leadership, teamwork, discipline, perseverance, respect for others, strategic thinking, dedication, the importance of rules and sportsmanship. These are true life lessons and participation in athletics provides another forum for learning. Coaches and officials are responsible for promoting sportsmanship and positive behavior on the field. Administrators, we need your continued assistance in promoting sportsmanship and controlling fan behavior in the stands! Let the parents and fans know what you expect.

### COACHES

Your athletes will demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors they have learned from you, either through direct instruction or through observation of your actions. ***Never underestimate the influence you have on your players!*** You must:

- Abide by and teach the rules of the game in letter and in spirit;
- Set a good example for players and spectators to follow;
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials—treat them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, which will serve to create a positive impression of you and your team;
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat;
- Develop a program that rewards participants and spectators for displaying proper sportsmanship and enforces penalties on those who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.

## OFFICIALS

Your job is not an easy one, but the official must be aware that they are an important component in the educational development of students. To carry out this responsibility, you must:

- Know the rules and mechanics of our sport and the philosophy behind them;
- Be in proper physical shape to keep up with play;
- Maintain professional and ethical relationships with athletic administrators, especially in the area of fulfilling game contracts;
- Work cooperatively with fellow officials during matches and within the referees' association to improve members' performances;
- Maintain at all times and when interacting with all participants, an attitude of civility and professionalism;
- Practice effective preventive officiating as much as possible before, during, and after a game. The quiet word, proper signals, timely verbal instructions, a simple thank-you to a player for avoiding an unsporting act, and well-thought-out pre-game conferences with the teams and other game officials will result in an improvement of sportsmanship by eliminating the chance for things to go wrong.

## STUDENT-ATHLETES

You serve as a role model for your younger siblings, young fans in the stands, your teammates, and your classmates. Set high expectations for everyone and help them follow-through! You must:

- Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of representing your school and the community;
- Live up to the standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff;
- Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with others. This will assist everyone in the achievement of a better understanding and appreciation of the game;
- Treat opponents as you would like to be treated—with respect;
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will serve to create a positive impression of you and your team.

## SPORTSMANSHIP RESOURCES

On the OHSAA's *Respect the Game* webpage you will find fair play codes for athletes, coaches, and fans, as well as additional information regarding parents' role in interscholastic athletics. Please take time to visit this from the OHSAA's website along with many helpful items previously mentioned on the NFHS Learn website at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com).

## COMMENTS BY COACHES TO MEDIA

Emotions run high at the end of a contest and coaches are often tempted to make inappropriate comments to the news media covering a match. The OHSAA Constitution and Bylaws reads in part "***Great care shall be exercised in the selection of officials, well in advance of the contest and agreed upon by schools involved.***" Public criticism of officials is a direct reflection upon those who were responsible for assigning the officials to the match. Officials are trained and expected to make no derogatory comments regarding the players, coaches, or schools. Coaches are expected to follow the same procedure in regard to the officials. Coaches violating this rule may be subject to penalties listed in the *Media Regulation* section in our OHSAA Handbook.

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## NFHS COACHES' CODE OF ETHICS

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student should be treated with the utmost respect and his or her welfare should be considered in decisions by the coach at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFHS Board of Directors.

**The Coach** shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

**The Coach** shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with students, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

**The Coach** shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse.

**The Coach** shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct the program in harmony with the total school program.

**The Coach** shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

**The Coach** shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.

**The Coach** shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

**The Coach** should meet and exchange cordial greetings with the opposing coach to set the correct tone for the event before and after the contest.

**The Coach** shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give students special consideration.

**The Coach** shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic association.

## RATING & VOTING OF OFFICIALS

**NOTE: With the change from myOHSAA to DragonFly as our official's database, there is currently no working feature to vote/rate officials in DragonFly. The Officiating Department will communicate with the coaching and school community, if this will be implemented during your sport season. However, it is still important to know the following information.**

*General Sports Regulation 3* requires head coaches and Athletic Directors to rate/vote for officials.

To make this process work it requires coaches and Athletic Directors to do their part. A few important things to note:

1. "Pools" of officials are created as a result of ratings and votes. These pools are arranged into a "State Pool", "Regional Pool" and "Sectional/District Pool". Each pool has more officials than are needed at that level. Pools are created by mathematically calculating the following:
  - Total of each of the 4 categories = Score
2. District Athletic Boards utilize the various pools to assign officials to **Sectional and District Tournaments** in their respective Athletic Districts. The process of assignment from approved pools is at the discretion of each District Athletic Board.

**Note:** The total score is not made available to those making assignments; merely the pool itself is made available to them.
3. The OHSAA Office utilizes the pools to assign officials to the **Regional and State Tournament**.

**Complete Information found at:** <http://www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Officiating/OHSAAOfficialsHandbook.pdf#page=26>

# OFFICIATING ETHICS & CODE OF CONDUCT

(From [www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org) and the OHSAA Handbook for Officials)

Our member schools have entrusted officials to assist them in the education and development of their youth through athletics. This requires officials to be independent, impartial, and responsible to the people they serve. In recognition of these expectations there is an established **Code of Ethics** and **Code of Conduct** for all officials. The purpose of the code is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all officials.

## OFFICIATING CODE OF ETHICS

**An Official must devote time, thought and study to the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to carry out these rules so that one may render effective and credible service in a fair and unbiased manner**

**An Official must work with fellow officials and the state association in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during debate of points or rules at issue**

**An Official must resist every temptation and outside pressure to use one's position as an official to benefit oneself. Under all circumstances, officials must avoid promoting the special interest of any person or group of persons other than the athletes we serve**

**An Official must constantly uphold the honor and dignity of the avocation in all personal conduct and relations with the student-athletes, coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, colleagues, and the public, to be a worthy example to the athletes under one's jurisdiction**

**An Official will be prepared both physically and mentally, dress accordingly to expectations and maintain a proper appearance that is befitting the importance of the game**

**An Official shall avoid the use of tobacco and related products at the contest site**

**An Official must remember and recognize that it is important to honor contracts regardless of possible inconvenience or financial loss**

Every member of the officiating profession carries a responsibility to act in a manner becoming a professional person. The conduct of any official influences the attitude of the public toward the profession in general as well as toward the official in particular.

Sports officials bear great responsibility for engendering public confidence in sports. They are critical to the health of athletic competitions. Officials ensure games are played fairly, by the rules, within the spirit of the rules and in a safe manner. Officiating takes a great deal of preparation, continuing education and commitment of time.

## PRE-SEASON PREPARATIONS

*We have encouraged coaches to invite local officials to meet with their team during pre-season workouts. It allows the officials to meet the athletes and discuss new rules. It gives athletes an opportunity to ask questions and have a discussion prior to competition days. We also recommended inviting an official(s) to a pre-season meeting with team parents. Again, it provides a forum for healthy discussions and an opportunity for parents to learn more about the sport. Many of you already participate in such activities, but for those that do not, please get involved!*

## WEBSITE RESOURCES

Our website includes a great deal of information specifically geared for officials. Go to [www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org) and click on the "Officiating" tab on the top of the home page. On the Officiating page you will find the following information. When you have questions, this may be a great place to start!

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: When is baseball's no-contact period?**

**A:** The no-contact period for baseball is August 1 – August 31.

**Q: Can middle school/junior high players practice or play with high school players?**

**A:** No. OHSAA Bylaws prohibit student-athletes in grades 7 & 8 from practicing or competing with high school student-athletes (grades 9-12) during the season of play in all sports.

**Q: Can middle school/junior high players participate in open gyms/fields at the high school level?**

**A:** Yes. OHSAA Bylaws and Sports Regulations do not prohibit anyone from participating in open gyms/fields/facilities.

**Q: Can middle school/junior high players participate with high school players during summer or fall ball?**

**A:** Yes. Any competition that occurs outside the defined season of play is not considered OHSAA sponsored and therefore not under any regulations that limit 7-8 from playing with 9-12 individuals.

**Q: Can middle school players be included with high school players during individual instruction (provided by a school coach)?**

**A:** Yes. Since it is outside the season, there is no restriction on age groups. Any individual receiving instruction must be counted as one of the six (6) permitted in each individual instruction group.

**Q: What can we as coaches do during an open field?**

**A:** Coaches may supervise the open field. Open fields cannot be made mandatory. Open fields must be 'free and unstructured play', so no coaching may take place during an open field. Open fields/gyms are defined in their entirety in *General Sport Regulation 10* in the OHSAA Handbook. Under no circumstances may open fields be a disguise for an early start to practice.

**Q: What can coaches do during conditioning programs?**

**A:** First, conditioning programs (defined as "Physical Fitness Programs" in the OHSAA Handbook) cannot be made mandatory. *General Sport Regulation 9* defines Physical Fitness/Conditioning Programs. Conditioning programs cannot be used as a disguise for conducting out of season practices.

**Q: Who can volunteer to be a member of the coaching staff?**

**A:** To work with student-athletes in any school program, an individual must receive his/her Pupil Activity Permit through the Ohio Department of Education and be approved by the school's Board of Education. Once achieving these requirements, a volunteer falls under all Bylaws and Sports Regulations of the OHSAA which limits them to the same out-of-season coaching limitations as paid staff members.

**Q: Can a volunteer school coach, coach players from the school team from the end of their school season through July 31?**

**A:** Yes. Any school coach is permitted to coach their own school players, on the same team, from the end of their school season through July 31.

**Q: Can a school coach coach players from the school team during off-season baseball such as travel or fall ball (or other non-school baseball)?**

**A:** Yes, as long as there are no more than 6 players from their school and not during the no-contact period. However, from the end of their school season – July 31, there may be an unlimited number of players from the same school team, on the same non-interscholastic team.

**Q: If my son or daughter plays on a non-interscholastic team, can I coach them if I am a school coach?**

**A:** Yes, as long as there are no more than 6 players from their school and as long as it is not during the no-contact period. From the end of their school season – July 31, there may be an unlimited number of players from the same school team, on the same non-interscholastic team.

**Q: Can a player on my team participate in a non-interscholastic program during the school season?**

**A:** No. *General Sport Regulation 7* prohibits student-athletes from participating in any non-interscholastic programs (i.e., ACME, travel, club) during the season of play. Coaches should go to great lengths to explain this to players on their teams and remind them periodically throughout the season.

**Q: When can a player on my team participate in non-interscholastic baseball?**

**A:** As soon as their school season is complete. This means a Varsity player may participate as soon as their last game (including tournament) is played. Any sub-varsity player may play non-interscholastically when their season is complete, but it must be kept in mind that they cannot return to dress/participate in any OHSAA tournament game. Many school administrators will safeguard this by allowing no level of player to participate in non-interscholastic baseball until the Varsity's last tournament game. Though not entirely necessary, this does safeguard all athletes.

**Q: How many players can participate on a non-interscholastic team or program?**

**A:** Six (6). OHSAA Sports Regulations limit the number of participants on any non-interscholastic roster during all months **except the end of the school's baseball season through July 31** to six players.

**Q: How are players classified when middle school/junior high players play with high schools' players in the off-season?**

**A:** Players are always defined by the previous school season. For example, four 8<sup>th</sup> graders could participate on a non-interscholastic team along with four 9<sup>th</sup> graders from the same school/district. They are considered separate, as grades 7-8 are separate from grades 9-12.

**Q: During the summer, how many days are we permitted to coach our players?**

**A:** From the end of the school season – July 31, a coaching staff is limited to a maximum of 13 coaching days, if they are working with 6 or more athletes at one time. If there are 6 athletes or fewer present, it does not have to count as 1 of their 13 coaching days. These guidelines should be established by the school Athletic Department. Please keep in mind the intent of the summer is to provide the athletes with a break.

**Q: Are players permitted to receive private instruction from individuals such as outside/private pitching instructors or hitting instructors during the season of play?**

**A:** Yes, if your school Athletic Department approves it.

**Q: One of my players was selected to play in a basketball or football All-Star game during the baseball season. Is he/she permitted to play in that contest?**

**A:** Yes. The Regulations prohibit players from playing non-interscholastic baseball during the baseball season. They do not prevent a player from playing in another sport.

**Q: Given the above, does that mean a baseball player is permitted to play on an AAU basketball team during the baseball season?**

**A:** Yes. The player would not be violating any OHSAA Sport Regulations.

**Q: Given the above, does this also mean that a player could be on our school's track team while also being on the school's baseball team?**

**A:** Yes. Any limitations on that would be imposed by individual schools.

**Q: Can players participate in hitting leagues during the off-season?**

**A:** Yes, however, they are limited to the limitation of 6 players from the same school on the same hitting league team.

**Q: Since weather issues often force games to be made up late in the season, how late can we play a game?**

**A:** The last day for a game to be played is the Saturday after the State Tournament, which is June 20, 2026.

**Q: If we have to make up games late in the season, can our players play for their summer teams while still completing our regular schedule?**

**A:** No. All non-interscholastic rules are in effect during the season, regardless of how late the season goes.

**Q: What is meant by the "Non-Interscholastic Date" listed in the Handbook and when is it?**

**A:** The "Non-Interscholastic Date" for baseball is **April 6, 2026**. Though baseball players are not permitted to tryout, practice or compete for any non-interscholastic team during the season of play, any player that has not yet become an official member of the school team (by participating in a scrimmage, preview or game), that does so on or after this date renders a player ineligible for the OHSAA tournament in addition to any other penalties.

**Q: Can I travel out of state to play a contest?**

**A:** Yes, with certain restrictions (see *Bylaw 9*). Teams may travel out of state to a bordering state (contiguous state) an unlimited number of times to play. Teams may travel to non-bordering (contiguous states) **one time** per sport per season to compete, provided they have received approval from the OHSAA office by filling out the *Travel to a Non-Bordering State Form* on the Baseball webpage.

**Q: Can I take my team out of state just to practice?**

**A:** Yes, you can practice out of state.

**Q: Can my team practice while out of state to a permitted tournament?**

**A:** Yes. OHSAA *Bylaw 9* permits a team to practice out of state while part of an approved out of state scrimmage or contest.

**Q: Can I have a scrimmage during the season or during tournament time?**

**A:** Yes. As long as a team has a scrimmage remaining, they may use it at any time. It is important to note that any scrimmage with another school must be a scrimmage for that school also; it cannot be a game for one school and a scrimmage for another school.

**Q: Can a school team practice with another school?**

**A:** Yes, but it must be counted as a scrimmage.

**Q: Can a school team play against a non-school team?**

**A:** Yes. Ohio is one of the few states that does not regulate who its teams participate against.

**Q: Can a girl play on a baseball team, even if the school has softball?**

**A:** Yes. Regardless of whether a school has a softball team, a girl may play on a baseball team if the school has no policy against it. A girl that does so is limited to playing on the baseball team only and cannot move back and forth between baseball and softball.

# IMPORTANT SPORTS MEDICINE INFORMATION

The safety of our student-athletes is of utmost concern at all times. Information regarding the following important topics can be found at the OHSAA's "Healthy Lifestyles and Sports Medicine" webpage at <http://www.ohsaa.org/medicine>. Additional information relative to various equipment and rules relative to medical issues can be found throughout this manual as well.

- Heat Stress and Athletic Participation
- Recommendations for Hydration to Prevent Heat Illness
- Suggested Guidelines for Management of Head Trauma in Sports
- Communicable Disease Procedures (can also be found on at the end of the NFHS 2013-14 Rules Book)
- Links to the following sites:
  - Joint Advisory Committee on Sports Medicine
  - Ohio Athletic Trainers Association
  - American Medical Society for Sports Medicine
  - Ohio Parents for Drug Free Youth
  - National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA)
  - Gatorade Sports Science Institute News

**NOTE:** Should you have a student-athlete that requires a medical device, like an insulin pump or cochlear implants, you must receive a waiver from our office for them to wear said device during play. You may send this request, along with a doctor's note, to Emily Mason at [emason@ohsaa.org](mailto:emason@ohsaa.org). Officials must see an official waiver from the OHSAA to allow them to wear devices during play, as these types of devices would not be permitted per NFHS rule without a waiver.

## Concussion Management

### Implementation of State Law and NFHS Playing Rules Related to Concussion and Concussed Athletes and Return to Play Protocol

It is important for all individuals involved in interscholastic athletics to recognize the potential for catastrophic injury and even death from concussions. Thus, it is extremely important that each coach, administrator, contest official and medical support personnel review their responsibilities in protecting students. Further both students and parents have responsibilities in this area as well.

**NOTE:** It has always been the ultimate responsibility of the coaching staff, in all sports, to ensure that students are only put into practice or contests if they are physically capable of performing. However, all individuals involved in the conduct of interscholastic competition have responsibilities in this endeavor.

In January 2011, the OHSAA Board of Directors adopted a sports regulation which incorporated the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) playing rules related to concussion recognition and management. On April 26, 2013, legislation adopted by Ohio's General Assembly on concussion and head injuries in youth sports became effective. On February 14, 2013, the OHSAA Board of Directors mandated that these regulations become effective on April 26, 2013, for the remainder of the spring sports season and thereafter. This OHSAA regulation, as amended to incorporate this recent legislation, now reads:

*Any student, while practicing for or competing in an interscholastic contest, who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest by either of the following:*

- 1) The individual who is serving as the student's coach during that practice or competition.
- 2) An individual who is serving as a contest official or referee during that practice or competition.

### RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

If a student is removed from practice or competition due to a suspected concussion or head injury, the coach or referee who removes the student shall not permit the student, **on the same day the athlete is removed**, to return to that practice or competition or to participate in any other practice or competition for which the coach or contest official is responsible. Thereafter, which means no earlier than the next day, the coach or contest officials shall not permit the student to return to practice or competition until both of the following conditions are satisfied:

- 1) The student's condition is assessed by either of the following:
  - a. A physician, who is a person authorized under Chapter 4731 of the Ohio Revised Code (OCR) to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine or surgery (M.D. or D.O.)
  - b. Any other licensed health care provider that the school district board of education or other governing authority of a chartered or non-chartered nonpublic school, authorizes to assess the student who has been removed from practice or competition.
- 2) The student receives **written authorization** that it is safe for the student to return to practice or competition from a physician or other licensed health care provider authorized to grant the clearance. Click here <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports-Medicine/AuthorizationToReenter.pdf> to retrieve the OHSAA's Medical Authorization to Return To Play (RTP) form.

A school district board of education or governing authority of a chartered or non-chartered nonpublic school may authorize a licensed health care provider who is NOT a PHYSICIAN to make an assessment and grant authorization for a student to return to participation only if the provider is acting in accordance with one of the following as applicable to the provider's authority to practice in Ohio:

- 1) In consultation with a physician;
- 2) Pursuant to the referral of a physician;
- 3) In collaboration with a physician, or
- 4) Under the supervision of a physician.

**NOTE:** A physician/licensed health care provider who grants clearance for a student to return to participation may be a volunteer.

### **COACHES REQUIREMENTS**

All coaches, paid and volunteer, must possess a current Department of Education-issued Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit. When renewing this permit, the coach will be required to complete an online concussion education course as stipulated in the section entitled **approved online Concussion Education course**.

### **CONTEST OFFICIALS REQUIREMENTS**

Legislation signed into law by the Governor provides that no school “shall permit” an individual to referee interscholastic athletic contests unless the individual holds a Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or has successfully completed within the last three years a training program in concussion recognition. Therefore, all OHSAA licensed officials shall possess either a current Department of Education-issued Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or show evidence of completing an approved online concussion education course as stipulated in the section entitled approved online Concussion Education courses.

### **STUDENT AND PARENT REQUIREMENTS**

All students and their parents or legal guardians shall review and sign the “Concussion Information Sheet” which has been developed by the Ohio Department of Health and which shall be distributed by OHSAA member schools to all students and their parents prior to each sports season. Students and parents shall review and sign this form each year and should keep a copy of the form. In addition, parents and students are encouraged to complete an approved concussion education course.

### **NFHS SUGGESTED MEDICAL CLEARANCE RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL**

1. Engage in activities of daily living (i.e., walking).
2. When the athlete appears clear, begin low-impact activity such as walking, stationary bike, etc.
3. Initiate aerobic activity fundamental to specific sport such as running and may also begin progressive strength training activities.
4. Begin non-contact skill drills specific to sport such as serving, hitting, setting, etc.
5. Full contact in practice setting.
6. Game play/competition.
  - Athlete must remain asymptomatic to progress to the next level. (It is often suggested that an athlete not be allowed to progress more than one level per day.)
  - If symptoms recur, athlete must return to previous level and should be reevaluated by an appropriate health care professional.
  - Medical check should occur before contact. (Final written clearance from the medical professional shall be obtained before the athlete engages in any unrestricted or full contact activity.)

## **QUICK LINKS FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

[Ohio Department of Health Concussion Information Sheet](#)

[Online Concussion Management Training](#)

[Ohio’s Return to Play Law: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Ohio’s Return to Play Law: What Coaches and Referees Need to Know](#)

[Ohio’s Return to Play Law: What Parent/Guardians Need to Know](#)

## **ADDITIONAL CONCUSSION RESOURCES**

[ODH Violence and Injury Prevention Program](#)

[Nationwide Children's Concussion Information Toolkit](#)

[CDC Information on Returning to Schools](#)

[Brain Injury Association of Ohio](#)

# CONCUSSION REPORT

Ohio High School Athletic Association  
4080 Roselea Place  
Columbus, Ohio 43214

## OHSAA CONCUSSION REPORT

State Law, NFHS Rules and OHSAA policy require a student who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors associated with concussion to be removed from a contest and not permitted to reenter competition that same day. This form shall serve to document that a student has been removed from a contest in accordance with State Law, NFHS and OHSAA rules due to exhibiting signs, symptoms and/or behaviors consistent with a concussion. The contest official must complete this form and forward it to the OHSAA within 48 hours after the conclusion of the contest. It is recommended that the official keep a copy of this report. In addition, if required by NFHS rule, an appropriate entry shall be made in the scorebook or other document as prescribed.

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sport** \_\_\_\_\_

**Level of Contest (Circle One)**    7<sup>th</sup>                      8<sup>th</sup>                      9<sup>th</sup>                      JV                      Varsity

**Official's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **OHSAA Permit #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please forward to Michelle Kern ([mkern@ohsaa.org](mailto:mkern@ohsaa.org)) at the OHSAA within 48 hours.

# RETURN TO PLAY FORM



Ohio High School Athletic Association  
4080 Roselea Place, Columbus, Ohio 43214  
B: 614-267-2502 | F: 614-267-1877  
ohsaa.org

## MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION TO RETURN TO PLAY WHEN A STUDENT HAS BEEN REMOVED DUE TO A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION

Ohio State Law as well as NFHS rules and OHSAA policy require a student who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors associated with concussion to be removed from a practice or contest and **not permitted to re-enter practice or competition on the same day as the removal**. Thereafter, **written medical authorization from a physician (M.D. or D.O.)** or another qualified licensed medical provider, who works in consultation with, collaboration with or under the supervision of an M.D. or D.O. or who is working pursuant to the referral by an M.D. or D.O., **AND** is authorized by the Board of Education or other governing board, **is required to grant clearance for the student to return to participation**. This form shall serve as the authorization that the physician or licensed medical professional has examined the student and has cleared the student to return to participation. The physician or licensed medical professional must complete this form and submit to a school administrator prior to the student's resumption of participation in practice and/or a contest. **To reiterate, this student is not permitted to reenter practice or competition on the same day as the removal.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, M.D., D.O. or \_\_\_\_\_ (other qualified licensed medical provider) have examined the following student, \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ High School/Middle School (Print name of MD, DO or Other) (Name of Student), who was removed from a \_\_\_\_\_ (sport) contest at the \_\_\_\_\_ level (V, JV, 9<sup>th</sup>, 7-8<sup>th</sup>) due to exhibition of signs/symptoms/behaviors consistent with a concussion. I have examined this student and determined that the student is cleared to resume participation upon the completion of the directions provided below.

### PLEASE INDICATE YOUR DIRECTIONS BELOW

- Return to play protocol for concussion as outlined in Amsterdam Consensus Statement 2023 or as attached.
- Return to play protocol for concussion required under direction of Licensed Athletic Trainer or other qualified Licensed medical provider as approved in above directive
- Return to play protocol for concussion not required, and the student may return to participation in practice and competition on this date \_\_\_\_\_
- Return to play clearance is limited to the following sport(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

### VALID ONLY WITH ALL INFORMATION COMPLETED

Signature of Medical Professional \_\_\_\_\_ (MD, DO or another qualified Licensed Medical Provider as Approved in the Above Directive)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

(Print or Stamp) Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to play is also subject to clarification of this document, as deemed necessary, by Licensed Athletic Trainer, other qualified Licensed medical providers authorized by Board of Education or other governing body, or school district administration. Return to play decisions are also subject to recognized principles of conditioning, skill development, mental preparedness, etc.

Parent(s)/Guardian and student are reminded that the initial signature document of awareness of signs and symptoms of concussion and need/requirement to report are still in effect. Parent(s)/Guardian and student have a responsibility to report any further signs or symptoms of a concussion or head injury to coaches, administrators and the student-athlete's doctor. Information regarding signs and symptoms are available from school district personnel or OHSAA website.

### PRESENT THIS FORM TO THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

**Note:** The school must retain this form indefinitely as a part of the student's permanent record. Medical Providers should retain a copy for their own records.

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURES

Though most schools have a Certified Athletic Trainer present at Varsity contests **and** all coaches are required to maintain a valid Pupil Activity Certificate through the Ohio Department of Education that includes a Sports' First Aid component, it is important to keep up to date on the remote risk that blood borne infectious diseases can be transmitted during practice and contests. For example, Hepatitis B can be present in blood as well as other bodily fluids. Procedures for reducing the potential transmission of these infectious diseases should include, but should not be limited to the following:

1. The bleeding must be stopped, the open wound covered and if there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform, it must be changed before the athlete may participate.
2. Routine use of gloves or other precautions to prevent skin and mucous-membrane exposure when contact with blood and other body fluids is anticipated.
3. Immediately wash hands and other skin surfaces if contaminated (in contact) with blood or other body fluids. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.
4. Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with an appropriate disinfectant before competition resumes.
5. Practice proper disposal procedures to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels and other sharp instruments or devices.
6. Although saliva has not been implicated in HIV transmission, to minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, or other ventilation devices should be available for use.
7. Athletic trainers/coaches with bleeding or oozing skin conditions should refrain from all direct athletic care until the condition resolves.
8. Contaminated towels should be properly disposed of/disinfected.
9. Follow acceptable guidelines in the immediate control of bleeding and when handling dressings, mouthguards and other articles containing body fluids.

You are encouraged to log on to the OHSAA's website at [www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org) and refer to the Sports' Medicine dropdown menu for additional information.

## H1N1 INFLUENZA POLICY

The OHSAA's Board of Directors approved the following policy with advice from the Ohio Department of Health and shall observe this policy at tournament time in the event of an H1N1 Influenza outbreak.

1. The Ohio Department of Health has advised that it will be the decision of each local health authority in Ohio as to whether or not to close a school or university due to an influenza outbreak; however, at this time the Centers for Disease Control are not recommending closures except in extreme circumstances.
2. In the event schools remain open, competitors and teams shall be expected to play tournament contests on the dates scheduled.
3. In the event schools are closed, the OHSAA, in conjunction with our District Athletic Boards and tournament personnel, shall reschedule the tournament contest for the schools thus affected.
4. Please watch the OHSAA web site home page at [www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org) and the specific sport page on the web site for more information.

## HEAT STRESS & ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

The following information should be reviewed with coaching and sports medicine staff prior to any interscholastic practice where there is a risk of exertional heat illness. While the sport of baseball does not have a required acclimatization period, please keep the following in mind when dealing with hot gyms and any outdoor activities. *Acclimatization is a period when players can become accustomed to the heat and humidity.*

All coaching and medical staff personnel shall observe the following precautions for **all sports competed outdoors and/or in a hot, humid environment.**

- **Stress to participants the importance of properly hydrating** during the day leading up to the contest/training, and to drink 8-to-12 ounces of water or sport drinks 20 minutes prior to the contest or any training session. This procedure can help prevent problems during practice and contests.
- **Schools shall have unlimited amounts of water** and sport drinks on hand during practices and contests, and coaches in team sports should be prepared to play a lot of players rather than just the starters.
- **Contest officials are permitted to establish predetermined breaks** during contests, such as halfway through each period. At that time, players can drink water and remove their equipment, which should also take place at halftime (the more skin that is exposed, the more cooling that can take place). **This provision also applies to all sports.**
- **Contest managers are advised to monitor conditions** for others affiliated with the contest, like cheerleaders, band members, coaches, officials and especially spectators.
- **Know both the Temperature and Humidity.** The greater the humidity the more difficult it is for the body to cool itself. Test the air prior to practice or a game using a wet bulb, globe, temperature index (WBGT index) which is based on the combined effects of air temperature, relative humidity, radiant heat and air movement and is the recommended standard of care for assessing risk of exertional heat illness.

The wet bulb temperature should be measured prior to practice, every 30 minutes at minimum during practice, and the intensity and duration of practice adjusted accordingly. Recommendations are as follows:

<b>Under 79.7 F</b>	Normal activities – three separate 3-minute breaks per hour
<b>79.8-84.6 F</b>	Three separate 4-minute breaks per hour
<b>84.7-87.6 F</b>	Maximum practice time of 2 hours; four separate 4-minute breaks per hour; consider postponing practice to later in day
<b>87.8-89.7 F</b>	Maximum of 1 hour of training with four separate 5-minute breaks; no additional conditioning; consider postponing practice to later in day
<b>89.8+ F</b>	No outdoor workouts and no indoor workouts unless air conditioned

The OHSAA advises careful monitoring of the weather and plans to modify training and competition including:

- 1) Modification of equipment, if applicable to the sport
- 2) Allowance for more frequent rest breaks and the use of shaded areas for those breaks
- 3) Modification of practice time
- 4) Availability of water always
- 5) Availability of cold water immersion tubs for onsite cooling
- 6) If exertional heat stroke is suspected, immediate onsite cooling using cold water immersion before transport by EMS
- 7) Review and practice of the OHSAA's recommended Emergency Action Plan, "Anyone Can a Save A Life," or similar plan for all sports teams with special emphasis on the heat illness section.

**The Ohio High School Athletic Association**  
**BASEBALL**  
**Game Introductions | SAMPLE**

Welcome to \_\_\_\_\_ High School. Ladies and Gentlemen to honor America, would you please rise, gentlemen remove your caps and join in singing our National Anthem; The Star-Spangled Banner.

**Play National Anthem**

**After National Anthem:** Good afternoon, on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ High School, welcome to today's baseball game between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

The OHSAA takes great pride in the conduct of all student-athletes and working with schools to promote good sportsmanship and the values of school-based athletics. We encourage you to cheer for your team during today's game and to show both teams the same respect you'd like them to display. This keeps with those values and ideals. Spectators are reminded that unruly behavior may result in immediate ejection from the premises. The athletic departments of BOTH schools appreciate your cooperation.

**Visiting Team:**

**Home Team:**

	#	Name	Position		#	Name	Position
1.					1.		
2.					2.		
3.					3.		
4.					4.		
5.					5.		
6.					6.		
7.					7.		
8.					8.		
9.					9.		
P					P		

The Head Coach for \_\_\_\_\_ (Visiting team) is \_\_\_\_\_ and he is assisted by \_\_\_\_\_.

The Head Coach for \_\_\_\_\_ (Home team) is \_\_\_\_\_ and the assistant coaches are: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Immediately following each half inning:**

**In that inning for \_\_\_\_\_:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Runs

\_\_\_\_\_ Hits:

\_\_\_\_\_ Errors:

and \_\_\_\_\_ LOB