

2025 OHSA A Track & Field and Cross Country Officials' Manual

OFFICIALS' MANUAL



Respect
THE
GAME

Updated 6-29-2025

A Message From BJ Duckworth

OHSAA Sport Administrator & Director of Officiating Development Track & Field and Cross Country

This manual has been compiled to serve as a reference for the sports of Track & Field and Cross Country, it was updated on June 29, 2025 to add additional information and/or make clarifications. This manual should be used **in conjunction** with other resources, including the 2025 NFHS Rule & Case Books and 2025-26 NFHS Officials Manual. **All changes/updates for 2025 that were added are reflected in RED. Editorial changes made in June 2025 are BLUE.**

As I reflect on the past few seasons, specifically the issues that came to my attention at League/Conference & District Tournaments, one big common theme emerges... **inconsistent application of the rules during the regular season.** I understand that many of you do not agree with all of the rules we are responsible for enforcing; however, that does not change our duty to do so. Choosing not to enforce certain rules or “let things slide” during the regular season does nothing to help the sport or the student-athletes we serve. We are actually hurting the students. There is a big difference between preventative officiating and ignoring items. **The vast majority of the issues that came my way were directly related to rules not being enforced during the regular season.** Not enforcing a rule or looking the other way may appear to help the athlete, but in the long run, it not only hurts the athlete but also your fellow officials when they properly enforce the rule and the athlete has not corrected their actions.

Change is inevitable, especially as we work to ensure we are providing our student athletes the best experience possible. **I appreciate your flexibility!** We will continue to build on the solid foundation built by those before us as we work to make our sport better for the student athletes we serve and all of you.

The work we do as officials comes at a great sacrifice to our loved ones, partners and spouses. **Please extend my gratitude to them, without their support none of us would be able to participate in these sports we love.**

THANK YOU for all you do for our sports and the student athletes of Ohio.

Sincerely,

BJ Duckworth

Sport Administrator, Director of Officiating Development, & State Rules Interpreter
Track & Field and Cross Country

bjduckworth@ohsaa.org

2025 Important Dates For Officials

2025 Track & Field

Local Meeting Window: January 26 – April 27

State Rules Interpretation Window: February 4 – March 24

State Rules Interpretation Window (**W/Late Fee**): March 25 – April 15

First Day of Coaching: February 24

Season Begins: March 29

7th & 8th Grade State Championship: May 17

District Tournaments: May 19-24

Regional Tournaments: May 28-31

State Tournament: June 6 & 7

Season Ends: June 7

2025 Cross Country

Local Meeting Window: TBD

State Rules Interpretation: July 14 – [August 18, 2025](#)

State Rules Interpretation **W/Late Fee**: [August 19 – September 10](#)

First Day of Coaching: August 1

OHSAA Pre-Season Invitational: August 16

Season Begins: August 18

District Tournaments: October 18

OHSAA 7th & 8th Grade Post Season Invitational: October 19

Regional Tournaments: October 25

State Tournament: November 1

Season Ends: November 1

2025 Contact Information



BJ Duckworth (NW)

**Sport Administrator, Director of Officiating Development & State Rules Interpreter
Track & Field and Cross Country**

bjduckworth@ohsaa.org | 614-859-0747

Track & Field and Cross-Country Assistant State Rule Interpreters



Bob Meuleman (NW)

bob@meuleman.us



Steve Hurley (SW)

stevenhurley@hotmail.com



John Daubenspeck (NE)

jdaubenspeck@gytoa.com

Track & Field and Cross-Country Support Personnel



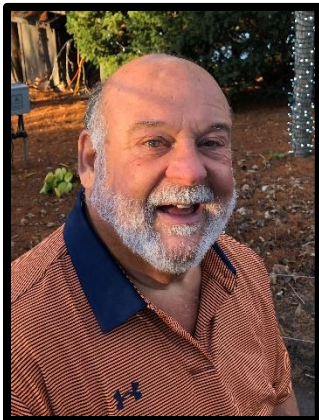
Rick Campbell (C)
Tournament Officials Assignor
Track & Field & Cross Country
assigntrackandcc@gmail.com



Dennis Sabo (NW)
Regional Contract Liaison
Track & Field Only
densabo@gmail.com



Josh Bodnar (C)
Data & Technology Manager
jbodnar@ohsaa.org



Jeff Polhemus (C)
Recruitment, Retention
& Mentorship Committee
jbpscuba@yahoo.com



Dugan Hill (E)
Cross Country State
Meet Manager
Dugan.Sharon.1979@gmail.com



Dave DeAngelo
Track State Meet Manager
Deangelo.1@osu.edu

OHSAA Officiating & Sport Administration Leadership Staff

Dr. John Kronour | Director of Sport Administration | jkronour@ohsaa.org

Beau Rugg | Director of Officiating | brugg@ohsaa.org

Keaton Jones | Manager of Officiating Technology | kjones@ohsaa.org

Charles Anderson | Manager of Officiating | canderson@ohsaa.org

Amanda Harding | Manager of Officiating Administration | aharding@ohsaa.org

Full OHSAA Staff List With Photos & Biographies | [Click Here](#)

Ohio Association of Track and Cross Country Coaches

President

Anjanette Whitman, Beaumont
awhitman@beaumontschool.org

Vice President

Matt Schock, Seneca East
mschock@se-tigers.com

Past President

Doug Joy, John Glenn High School
djoy@eastmschools.org

Secretary

Julie Cole, Chardon HS
jmcole013@gmail.com

Treasurer

James Dingus, Olentangy Liberty HS
james_dingus@olsd.us

The Ohio Association of Track & Cross Coaches (then named the Ohio Association of Track Coaches) was formed in 1941 as the brainchild of Ed Barker. During the late 70's, the name was changed to the Ohio Association of Track and Cross Country Coaches. The goals and purpose of the OATCCC are as follows:

- Promote track, field and cross country in all of the junior and senior high schools of Ohio. We also extend support to those programs in the state's colleges and universities.
- Cooperate with and assist the OHSAA and Ohio's colleges and universities in all the matters pertaining to maintenance, promotion and improvement of track and field and cross country.
- Recognize and award outstanding achievement and/or contribution by athletes, coaches, officials or supporters.

OATCCC District Contact Information Can be Found at:

<https://www.oatccc.com/Contact-Us/>



Ohio Track & Field and Cross Country Officials Association

President

Tony Mollica
Tony.mollica@yahoo.com

President-Elect

Jeff Polhemus
jbpscuba@yahoo.com

Assistant Secretary & Treasurer

Harold Grice
grices1981@gmail.com

Secretary & Treasurer

Dennis Sabo
densabo@gmail.com

The Ohio Track & Field & Cross Country Officials Association (OT&F&CCOA) was formed in 1985 with the purpose of promoting the sports of track and field and cross country in Ohio, and recruiting and retaining officials for those two sports.

The OT&F&CCOA is open to any current track/cross country official in good standing with the Ohio High School Athletic Association. Dues are \$25 per year, with half of the money earmarked for scholarships and the rest to fund annual Clinic expenses. The annual OT&F&CCOA Clinic is held the third weekend of January in the Columbus area.

The OT&F&CCOA annually awards Contributor Awards, Scholarships to children/grandchildren of officials, Joe Lenge Service Awards, and the association's highest honor, the Fredrick Cope Award to an outstanding track & field/cross country official.

The Official OT&F&CCOA website can be found at:

<https://otfccoa.wixsite.com/ohiotrackofficials>





Officials Code of Ethics



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.

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.



The Official's Role in Sportsmanship



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.
- Get fit and stay fit. An official with all of the rules and mechanics knowledge and people skills in the world does no good if he or she cannot physically 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 games 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.

The National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) conducted a survey of 550 sports officials and asked "*what is the number-one problem in our games today?*" Not too surprising, the number one response was "Poor Sportsmanship." As a result, the NASO brought together some of the best and brightest in youth, high school, collegiate and pro sports to examine the issue and explore the official's role in promoting positive on-field behavior. The results identified three critical ideas:

1. What exactly is at Stake
2. What is Expected of Officials, and,
3. What steps need to be taken

As a result, the following are important results of this study and publication:

1. 65% of respondents indicated their respective associations do not do *enough* to help improve sportsmanship.
2. 89% of officials responding consider themselves PARTNERS with players, coaches and administrators in improving sportsmanship.
3. 54% of officials responding indicated they felt they DO have the training, authority and knowledge to make an impact.

7th and 8th Grade Regulations

Order of Events (Track & Field)

The following listed Order of Events shall be used for grade 7-8 girls and boys involving Ohio schools. This bulletin supersedes the Order of Events in the NFHS Track and Field Rules Book. The javelin and hammer are **NOT** approved events and are not permitted in 7th & 8th grade competitions.

Running Events

Girls

- 1 – Relay – 4 x 800 meter or 4 x 880 yards
- 3 - Hurdles - 100 meters (10 Hurdles) (30")
- 5 - Dash - 100 meters or 100 yards
- 7 - Relay - 4x200 meters or 4x220 yards
- 9 - Run - 1600 meters or One Mile
- 11- Relay - 4x100 meters or 4x110 yards
- 13 - Dash - 400 meters or 440 yards
- 15 - Hurdles - 200 meters (30")*
- 17 - Run - 800 meters or 880 yards
- 19 - Dash - 200 meters or 220 yards **
- 21 - Relay- 4x400 meters or 4x440 yards

Boys

- 2 - Relay – 4 x 800 meter or 4 x 880 yards
- 4 - Hurdles - 110 meters (10 Hurdles) (33")
- 6 - Dash -100 meters or 100 yards
- 8 - Relay - 4x200 meters or 4x220 yards
- 10 - Run - 1600 meters or One Mile
- 12 - Relay - 4x100 meters or 4x110 yards
- 14 - Dash - 400 meters or 440 yards
- 16 - Hurdles - 200 meters (30")*
- 18 - Run - 800 meters or 880 yards
- 20 - Dash - 200 meters or 220 yards Relay **
- 22 - 4x400 meters or 4x440 yards

Note: When running simultaneous girls and boys meets, events shall be competed in the order indicated by the numerical sequence above.

* Start - 200 M. mark, 5 hurdles, spacing of hurdles 50 m to the first hurdle, 35 m between hurdles, 10 m from 5th hurdle to the finish line.

**A rest period of at least 20 minutes from the beginning of the girl's 200 M to the start of the first heat of the girls 4x400M is recommended to be given if athletes competing in the 200M are also in the 4x400 relay.

Field Events (order is optional)

Girls

- Discus (1K) (2 lbs., 3.27 oz.)
- High Jump
- Long Jump
- Shot Put (2.722K) (6 lbs.)
- Pole Vault

Boys

- Discus (1K) (2 lbs., 3.27 oz.)
- High Jump
- Long Jump
- Shot Put (4K) (8 lbs. 13 oz.)
- Pole Vault

Throwing Sectors: The degree Sector required is 34.92 degrees for Shot Put and Discus (per 2007).

Changing the Order of Events or the Actual Events Competed (Track & Field)

In dual, triangular and quadrangular meets, the listed events must be competed unless the changes are listed on the contest contract signed by the school administrators/certified OHSA assignor or communicated well in advance of the meet. If there is no exception, schools shall expect to compete in each of the events as listed. If some events are not offered or cannot be competed, the offending school, will forfeit the points.

Invitationals must list their order of events in advance of schools entering their meet; the entering of the meet is the acceptance of the modified order of events.

Participation Limitation (Track & Field)

In any one track and field contest, a participant may compete in a maximum of three events. The three events may be any combination of track and field events including relays, or may be three track events or three field events. **PARTICIPATION LIMITATION PENALTY:** An athlete who exceeds the participation limitation shall be disqualified. The forfeiture bylaws apply as written in Bylaw 11.

Events Must Take Place Outdoors (Track)

All events must take place outdoors.

Allowable Additional Events (Track & Field)

In addition to events outlined in the approved OHSAA Order of Events, schools in Ohio may compete in additional events as outlined in NFHS Rules 1 & 7. All changes to the standard OHSAA order of events from the previous slide must be communicated per the below section.

- Triple Jump must be competed following NFHS Rule 6, 7&9
- Javelin and Hammer are PROHIBITED in Ohio.
“Special Events” must be competed under USATF Youth Rules as outlined in NFHS Rule 9 unless the OHSAA has stated otherwise (mixed gender relays).
- Any event not found in NFHS Rule 1 & 7, CANNOT be competed in Ohio.
- The 5,000M cannot be participated in 7th & 8th grade
- Certified Officials may not officiate non-approved events and should not allow events to take place in any manner not outlined in the rules (including safety cages).
- None of these additional events will be part of any tournament competition, only those events in the OHSAA order of events will be part of the tournament.

Scoring & Ties (Track & Field)

Rule 2 - Scoring and Ties; exceptions to this rule are not permissible.

Cross Country Course (Cross Country)

The maximum course length may be 3,200M. Shorter courses are allowed however their length must be disclosed in advance of the contest

High School Track & Field Order of Events

The order of events in high school meets shall be as listed below: This bulletin supersedes the Order of Events in the NFHS Track and Field Rules Book. The javelin & hammer are **NOT** approved events and are not permitted in OHSA competitions.

Running Events

Girls

- 1 - Relay - 4x800 meters or 4x880 yards
- 3 - Hurdles - 100 meters (33" high)
- 5 - Dash - 100 meters
- 7 - Relay - 4x200 meters or 4x220 yards
- 9 - Run - 1600 meters or One Mile
- 11 - Relay - 4x100 meters or 4x110 yards
- 13 - Dash - 400 meters or 440 yards
- 15 - Low Hurdles - 300 meters (30" high)
- 17 - Run - 800 meters or 880 yards
- 19 - Dash - 200 meters or 220 yards
- 21 - Run - 3200 meters or Two Miles **
- 23 - Relay - 4x400 meters or 4x440 yards

Boys

- 2 - Relay - 4x800 meters or 4x880 yards
- 4 - High Hurdles - 110 meters or 120 yards (39" high)
- 6 - Dash - 100 meters
- 8 - Relay - 4x200 meters or 4x220 yards
- 10 - Run 1600 meters or One Mile
- 12 - Relay - 4x100 meters or 4x110 yards
- 14 - Dash - 400 meters or 440 yards
- 16 - Hurdles - 300 meters (36" high)
- 18 - Run - 800 meters or 880 yards
- 20 - Dash - 200 meters or 220 yards
- 22 - Run - 3200 meters or Two Miles **
- 24 - Relay - 4x400 meters or 4x440 yards

Note: When running simultaneous girls and boys meets, events shall be competed in the order indicated by the numerical sequence above.

**Anytime the 3200M is not being competed or is being competed at a different point in the meet, a rest period of 20 minutes from the beginning of the girls 200 M to the start of the first heat of the girls 4x400M MUST be given if athletes competing in the 200M are also in the 4x400 relay.

Field Events (order is optional)

Girls

- Discus (1K) (2 lbs. 3.27 oz.)
- High Jump
- Long Jump
- Shot Put (4K) (8 lbs. 13 oz.)
- Pole Vault

Boys

- Discus (1.6K) (3 lbs. 8.5 oz)
- High Jump
- Long Jump
- Shot Put (5.4K) (12 lbs.)
- Pole Vault

Throwing Sectors: The degree Sector required is 34.92 degrees for Shot Put and Discus (per 2007).

Changing the Order of Events or the Actual Events Competed (Track & Field)

In dual, triangular and quadrangular meets, the listed events must be competed unless the changes are listed on the contest contract signed by the school administrators/certified OHSA assignor or communicated well in advance of the meet. If there is no exception, schools shall expect to compete in each of the events as listed. If some events are not offered or cannot be competed, the offending school, will forfeit the points.

Invitationals must list their order of events in advance of schools entering their meet; the entering of the meet is the acceptance of the modified order of events.

Events Must Take Place Outdoors (Track)

All events must take place outdoors.

Allowable Additional Events (Track & Field)

In addition to events outlined in the approved OHSAA Order of Events, schools in Ohio may compete in additional events as outlined in NFHS Rules 1 & 7. All changes to the standard OHSAA order of events from the previous slide must be communicated per the below section.

- Triple Jump must be competed following NFHS Rule 6, 7&9
- Javelin **and Hammer Throw are** PROHIBITED in Ohio.
- “Special Events” must be competed under USATF Youth Rules as outlined in NFHS Rule 9 unless the OHSAA has stated otherwise (mixed gender relays).
 - Mixed Gender Relays must follow the rules as outlined in this manual.
- * In addition to the above, the 5,000M can be competed per the below regulations.
 - All schools have been notified in advance of the change of order of events.
 - USATF Youth Rules are followed.
 - The 5,000M and 3,200M cannot be competed at the same meet regardless of the number of days the meet spans.
- Any event not found in NFHS Rule 1 & 7, with the exception of the 5,000M, CANNOT be competed in Ohio.
- Certified Officials may not officiate non-approved events and should not allow events to take place in any manner not outlined in the rules (including safety cages).
- None of these additional events will be part of any tournament competition, only those events in the OHSAA order of events will be part of the tournament.

Scoring & Ties (Track & Field)

Rule 2 - Scoring and Ties; exceptions to this rule are not permissible.

Cross Country Course (Cross Country)

The maximum length of a course is 5,000M. **Shorter courses are allowed however their length must be disclosed in advance of the contest**

Mixed Gender Relays & Mixed Gender Team Field Events

The OHSAA has adopted the below format that **MUST BE** followed when these events are competed.

- Waiver is obtained from sports administrator allowing the events.
- All schools have been notified in advance of the change to the order of events per NFHS and OHSAA policy.
- The below competition rules are followed:
 - 4x100MR, 4x200MR, 4x400MR, 4x800MR, 4x1600MR, Distance Medley, Sprint Medley
 - Female athletes MUST be the 1st and 2nd leg
 - Male athletes MUST be the 3rd and 4th leg
 - Team Field Events
 - MUST contain an equal number of male and female athletes
 - When throwing implements are used, they MUST follow NFHS and OHSAA competition regulations F
 - **Mixed Gender Shuttle Hurdles are now PROHIBITED**
 - All events MUST be scored
 - 50% of the points awarded to each gender
 - All NFHS rules apply to competition
 - NO meet, conference, official or district may set aside these rules

OHSAA Track & Cross Country Regulations

Use of Video/Electronic Systems for Making Officiating Decisions (Track & Cross Country)

Video replay or television monitoring equipment **shall not** be used to make decisions related to the competition except for finish line placement. Coaches and/or others associated with the team are prohibited from showing video to officials per NFHS Rule 3-2-8. Coaches and/or others associated with the team that show officials video or attempt to show officials video are subject to disqualification from the meet (ejection) per NFHS Rule 3-2-8. Disqualification from the meet does also bring administrative penalties including suspension from future competitions. Officials must follow the ejection process as outlined in this document.

Modified Scoring (Cross Country)

In accordance with NFHS Rule 8-2-3 the OHSAA has adopted modified scoring. Modified scoring is a scoring procedure that would allow teams with less than five runners to score in a regular season meet. It can only be used when approved by a meet's games committee and all participating schools have been notified in advance of the meet verbally, in writing, or in the contest contract. Modified scoring does not allow games committees to change/modify any other element of the scoring process. Modified scoring shall not be used in OHSAA tournament competitions. If modified scoring is used, it **MUST** follow the procedure outlined below:

After runners in excess of each team's allotted 7 athletes are removed and the remaining runners re-ranked, the next place in the ranking will be added to each team with 4 runners. The next 2 places will be added to each team with 3 runners, and so on to give each team 5 places to be scored. This means that all teams without 5 finishers shall be awarded the same position(s) for their next scoring position(s). Therefore, if there are 109 finishers (after removing those who are not in their team's top 7), ALL teams with fewer than 5 finishers will be awarded 110th place, ALL those with fewer than 4 finishers will also be awarded 111th place, etc. until 113th place is awarded to all teams having only one runner.

Obstacles & Water Crossings (Cross Country)

Per NFHS Rule 8-1-2c obstacles such as hay/straw bales, logs, hurdles, etc. are prohibited; additionally "Water crossings" are prohibited. When a course contains an obstacle or water crossing, the referee **MUST** suspend competition until the course can be altered to become compliant. If it cannot be made compliant, the meet shall not be allowed. A game report should be filed regardless of if the issue is corrected.

A referee that allows a meet to take place that is not compliant with NFHS 8-1-2c as outlined in this presentation, takes personal responsibility for any injuries that may occur and likely will not be covered by their liability insurance.

Standing Water <i>Not an issue or perceived violation</i>	Water Obstacles <i>Would be considered a violation</i>
Puddles	Creeks
Wet courses (from rain)	Streams
Low lying area that may have some ponding from recent rain.	Drainage ditches with or without water.
	Manmade water crossings
The above are EXAMPLES only and not an exhaustive list of what is legal or illegal. The list is meant to provide guidance as to what IS and IS NOT considered a violation of NFHS Rules. This is NOT a new rule	

Participation Limitation (Track)

A competitor may compete in a maximum of four track and field events. The four events may be any combination of track and field events, including relays, or may be four track events or four field events. **This regulation applies to all competitions – regular season and OHSAA tournaments. NOTE: Once an athlete has been “checked in,” this is officially one of his/her four (4) allowable events even if he/she changes their mind at the last moment.**

An athlete who exceeds the participation limitation shall be disqualified. The forfeiture bylaws apply as written in Bylaw 11. In support of this, NFHS Rule 4-2-PEN specifies that a competitor who participates in more than the four allowable events shall forfeit all places and points and shall be disqualified from further competition in the meet/tournament. In relay events, the team’s relay points and places shall also be forfeited.

The four-event limitation applies to single and multi-day competitions – regular season and tournaments.

An athlete who has competed in an event and qualifies for the semi-finals or finals of that particular event may not withdraw from that event to compete in another event unless he/she still remains under the maximum of four allowable events.

Please see the 7th and 8th grade section of this manual for information on participation limits at that level.

No Contest (Track)

When a meet/event is canceled (by the meet referee in council with the games committee) due to weather, darkness when no lights are available, damage to the venue after the beginning of warm-up, or other issues out of the control of the meet management that occur after the meet/event begins; the below must be followed:

Track Meet

- If 60% or more of the scheduled events have been completed and scored, the meet must be scored based on the completed events and will count the same as a fully completed meet. Any events not being scored per below would not be included in this score.
- If less than 60% of the scheduled events have been completed, the meet must not be scored and will be considered a "no contest". The meet shall not be included in won-lost records, shall not count towards a student/coach fulfilling any ejection consequence, shall not count towards a student fulfilling his/her transfer consequence, and shall not count towards the number of maximum allowable regular season contests permitted.

Individual Events

- In vertical field events:
 - If all competitors who have elected to participate at opening height have completed their trials at opening height, the event should be scored based on the performances at the last height completed by all competitors who have not been eliminated from competition. The event will count as one of the allowed events for each competitor. Competitors who have passed and have not yet entered competition will be excluded from the scoring and the event will not count towards their maximum events allowed.
 - If all competitors who have elected to participate at opening height have not completed their trials at opening height, the event should be scored as a no contest and the event will not count towards the competitor’s allowed number of events.

- In horizontal field events:
 - If all competitors have completed 50% or more of their attempts (when four attempts are given) or two thirds of their preliminary attempts (when competing finals), the event shall be scored based on the performances through the last round completed by all competitors. The event will count as one of the allowed events for each competitor.
 - If all competitors have not completed 50% of their attempts (when four attempts are given) or two thirds of their preliminary attempts (when competing finals), the event should be scored as a no contest and the event will not count towards the competitor's allowed number of events.
- In any running event:
 - If all scheduled sections or preliminary heats have been completed for a running event, that event shall be scored. The event will count as one of the allowed events for each competitor.
 - If all scheduled sections or preliminary heats have not been completed for a running event, the event should be scored as a no contest and the event will not count towards the competitor's allowed number of events.

Any events canceled due to safety/facility issues before the start of competition shall follow NFHS competition rules. Related to tournament competition, all events must be completed; you cannot have a no-contest.

No Contest (Cross Country)

Any race not competed due to weather or darkness shall be scored as a no-contest. Related to tournament competition, all events must be completed; you cannot have a no-contest.

Active Flight AKA Five Alive (Track & Field)

In all OHSAA competitions, anytime nine or more participants are active at a given height, active flights shall be used. In active flights, five competitors constitute a flight. As a competitor clears a bar, passes a turn at a height or is eliminated, the next competitor in order will be moved up so that the number of competitors in the active flight remains constant. When the number of competitors remaining at a given height is fewer than nine, all competitors will be in a single continuing flight.

Notes

- If you start a height using Active Flight (Five Alive), you must use it through the completion of the height.
- Time between jumps is not determined by the number left at the height but rather by the number left in competition.
- **Active flights are mandatory at OHSAA tournaments and during the regular season.**

Referee's Jurisdiction (Track & Cross Country)

By rule, the referee shall remain available for 30 minutes after the conclusion of the competition in case a protest has been filed or if there are questions still unanswered. If there are no protests or unanswered questions, officials may leave earlier. **A meet is considered concluded once the referee has approved the final results.**

Officiating Requirements (Track & Cross Country)

A minimum of one OHSAA Class 1 Track and Field official is required at all high school track & field and cross country contests. This official shall be the meet referee. It is the responsibility of the host member school to ensure compliance with this important regulation. If the school delegates the responsibility of contracting officials to a certified OHSAA assignor, then the responsibility for compliance rests with the certified assignor. The penalty for failure to adhere to this regulation is a fine of up to \$100 for the school or certified assignor

and the officials involved who are not properly licensed. Registered officials should always be used, if available.

No Jury of Appeals in Ohio (Track & Cross Country)

In 1999, the NFHS rules changed thereby eliminating the choice of using the Jury of Appeals either as a final arbiter or in an advisory capacity. Therefore, in OHSAA track and field and cross country competition, regular season and tournament, no Jury of Appeals shall be appointed. The games committee, as per rule, may serve in this capacity but may only advise the referee. **The referee shall have the final decision in all appeals. Refer to NFHS Rule 3-5 for additional information on the appeals process.**

Please note: In all situations involving ineligible participation, the Commissioner of the OHSAA retains final authority to rule on such participation. The Commissioner has the authority to disqualify participants who are ineligible under the Bylaws and sports regulations of the OHSAA.

Required Roster (Track & Field and Cross Country)

Each school must provide a roster of athletes.

- If the meet has been managed using software like MileSplit, Baumspage, etc., then the coach does not need to provide an additional roster as it has already been uploaded electronically.
- If the meet has not used registration software, a paper roster must be provided.
- Competition must be delayed until the roster is provided.

Event Entry Limitations (Track & Field)

In all non-invitational /non-championship meets, each school is entitled to enter four competitors in individual events. The decision to increase the entry limitation shall be decided by the games committee, either in the contest contract or verbally in advance of the meet. Contest officials must be notified of any increase in entry limitations (greater than four) before accepting their officiating contract. For invitational and championship meets, the games committee retains the ability to limit the number of entries a school may have for an event. These limitations must be shared in the contest contract or verbally in advance of the meet.

According to NFHS Rule 4-2-4-d, in a relay race, only one team per school may be designated as a scoring team.

NOTES: 1) In Ohio, due to our prohibition on exhibition competition, this means that when more than one relay team from the same school is competing, **NO TEAM** shall be designated as the scoring team. Each team that is entered by a school shall have the opportunity to be the scoring team. However, only one (1) relay team from a competing school may score. No conferences, leagues or individual schools have the authority to set aside these event entry limitations. 2) Entry limitation shall be decided by the games committee, either in the contest contract or in advance of the meet. If no decision has been made and no agreement can be reached, each school is entitled to one relay team.

Sub- or Non-Varsity Competition (Track & Field and Cross Country)

There is no distinction between varsity and sub-varsity participation. All members of said team are subject to the same uniform rules. At the meet manager's discretion, a school may enter more than one team in the competition; pending the same opportunity has been given to all participating schools and all teams are eligible to score.

Boys and Girls Competing Simultaneously (Track & Field & Cross Country)

Boys and girls' competitions may be competed simultaneously provided the head coaches unanimously agree or if the referee deems it necessary. When events are competed together, they **MUST** be scored separately.

Pre-Meet Conference and Coaches Verification (Track & Field and Cross Country)

Coaches must provide a signed verification of sporting conduct and legal equipment/uniforms to the referee prior to **ALL CONTESTS**. Verbal verification is no acceptable at any meet.

- For ALL meets using MileSplit, the verification form was signed during registration for the meet and NO additional form is needed.
- This new process should help eliminate waste and streamline the process for coaches and officials.
- For the OHSAA Tournaments, coaches will complete the verification form on MileSplit when registering for the District Tournament. The form will then follow advancers through to the State Tournament, and no additional forms will be necessary.
- If the meet was not hosted on MileSplit, a verification form **MUST** be completed and turned in. Electronic collection of these forms (Google Form, etc.) is allowed.

Multiple Day Meet (Track & Field)

A meet scheduled for either a one-day period or more than one day counts as one meet. This applies even though the days of the meet are not consecutive. NOTE: The entry limitation of a maximum of four events applies even though a meet is competed on two days.

Scratch or Exhibition Competition & Eligibility (Track & Field and Cross Country)

"Scratch" or "exhibition" competition is not permitted under OHSAA Bylaws, all athletes must be eligible to score. When a student participates in a scheduled track and field competition, participation limitations do apply. **EXCEPTION:** The OHSAA Board of Directors may authorize exhibition competition in events within specific sports in order to accommodate students with disabilities without affecting team scoring in those sports. When authorized, a waiver from the OHSAA will be provided by the school/coach

No school, coach, athletic administrator, or any other individual may change the rules by mutual agreement. Officials do not have the authority to waive the rules. **If you feel exhibition competition has taken place please notify the OHSAA office.**

It is NOT an official's responsibility to interpret eligibility rules or keep track of entry limitations.

The Use of Lead Carts (Cross Country)

If the games committee authorizes the use of a lead vehicle, they **MUST** ensure that:

- Vehicle is operated by a responsible adult, no one under the age of 18
- No students, even if they are over the age of 18
- There is a safe distance maintained between the vehicle and the lead runners.
- Is fast enough to not cause a risk to the student athletes.
- No passengers are allowed unless approved by the referee
- A time clock may be carried on the back of the vehicle if it is properly secured.
 - Time clocks on lead vehicles is PROHIBITED at tournament competition

Medical Devices (Track & Field and Cross Country)

Medical devices can be utilized by athletes in track and field as it is considered a non-contact sport. These devices include but are not limited to inhalers, EpiPens, insulin pumps and heart monitors.

Per OHSAA policy, “such medical necessity shall be specified in writing and signed by the prescribing physician. **The device shall be attached to the body in a manner fitting with the device that is safe for the athlete and does not cause danger to other athletes. Items may be carried by hand or in a pouch/fanny pack if they cannot be safely attached to the body in another manner.** The medical statement shall be **shown** to the head contest official prior to the athlete’s being permitted to participate; this statement can be shown on paper or electronically. Examples of approved medical devices include but are not limited to EpiPens, inhalers, insulin pumps, glucose monitors and heart monitors. Athletes participating with these devices are still subject to NFHS Rules if their medical device is dropped or becomes dislodged from the body and interferes with other athletes.”

- **No waiver is needed from the OHSAA office.**
- Water cannot be carried in a bottle or camel back pack by an athlete; this is considered an aid.
- Water can be distributed by meet management to all runners as allowed by NFHS rules.
- Headgear worn for medical reasons is **NOT** considered a medical device and **DOES** require a waiver from the OHSAA office if it does not comply with headgear regulations.

Implements Used in Field Events (Track & Field)

All rules relative to safety in field events must be strictly adhered to. In addition, in those events in which implements must be weighed and gauged or certified as legal (shot put and discus), once those implements are certified, competitors may not remove them until the competition has concluded. **Only legal implements, as inspected by the implement inspector, shall be used IN WARM-UPS AND COMPETITION (Rule 3-19-2).** Per NFHS Rule, athletes may not use implements that are less than the minimum specifications or exceed the maximum specifications (i.e., college implements) during warm-up since **ONLY NFHS legal and approved implements are acceptable.**

The use of the term “common implements” means that the games committee has determined that competitors may use only those implements provided by the competition site. In all other circumstances, competitors may provide their own implements that shall be determined to be legal as mandated by the games committee in accordance with NFHS rules. No official has the authority to compel an athlete to share his or her implement with another competitor. **Rule 6-2-10a-** allows for an additional trial when an implement breaks and becomes non-compliant during competition due to no fault of the competitor.

In the pole vault, per Ohio modification, the Head Vault official provided that he presently holds a verified and valid OHSAA track and field officiating permit, as well as the field referee or head field judge, may verify the legality of poles.

Pole Vault Verification - NFHS Rule requires that prior to competition the coach must verify that each of that school’s pole vaulters and poles meet the requirements specified in the article that pertains to protecting the safety of the vaulter. Each state association is authorized to determine its own procedure regarding coach’s verification. For several years, Ohio has used a procedure requiring the coach to stipulate to the head pole vault event judge the weight of each vaulter and the pole rating of each pole submitted for competition for each vaulter. **Each school that conducts the pole vault event shall adopt this form or develop its own form to maintain compliance with this important rule.**

Team Competition in Field Events (Track & Field)

NFHS rule 5-10-1 clearly identifies relays as races between teams of four competitors, not one of whom may run more than one distance (leg)." Therefore, there is no such event as a relay field event. The following interpretations are made to apply to **"Team Competition in Field Events."** Invitational Meets sponsoring team field events shall determine the number permitted to participate for each team (2 or 3 or 4).

If a team enters and competes the required number (2 or 3 or 4), the team score shall be determined by adding the individual best of each team member.

If one or more team members fail to attain the starting height in pole vault or high jump, or fouls all trials in long jump, shot or discus, the team total is still determined by adding the best efforts of all team members. Thus, in a three-person team, the team score could be from the efforts of two members, and if the total is high enough, the team could still score points in that event.

In the team pole vault or high jump, the following procedure is recommended in the case of a tie in team competition:

- A. The Games Committee may establish that the tie remains a tie.
- B. If the Games Committee adopts a tie-breaking procedure, the following procedure is recommended.
 - i. The team that has the competitor with the best performance of all competitors shall be awarded the higher place.
 - ii. If the tie still remains, the team that has the competitor with the fewest misses at the height last cleared shall be awarded the higher place.
 - iii. If the tie still remains, the team that has the competitor **tied for the best performance** with the lowest total number of unsuccessful trials throughout the competition shall be awarded the higher place.
 - iv. If the tie still remains, the team with the lowest total of unsuccessful trials throughout the competition shall be awarded the higher place.
 - v. If i, ii, iii, iv fail to break the tie, the result remains a tie.
- C. In meets with limited entries, in the discus, long jump and shot put, the games committee may allow only four trials with no final trials as specified in Rule 6-2-7.

Step Up Starting Procedure (Cross Country)

Before the race

Final instructions are given (including uniform warning), and athletes should remove warm-ups upon return.

Runners to the line

- Once runners return to the line, no additional run-outs are allowed.
- Runners line up 3 meters behind the line and wait for starting commands.
- Clerks/Assistant starters may walk the starting line to ensure athletes are ready BEFORE the long whistle blast ONLY, if they are not able to confirm athlete readiness verbally.

The Start

- Hold the red flag and starting device parallel to the ground
- Signal with one long whistle blast. The red flag and starting device are slowly raised overhead at the same time
- Runners step up to the line and become motionless
- The assistant starters, positioned on the ends and/or behind the line signal with a white flag when all runners are motionless

- The starting device must not be fired until receiving the white flag from the assistant starters. A recall should be issued by the assistant if the starting device is fired before they signal with the white flag.
- The starter fires the starting device and drops the red flag at the same time.
- Move to the side as quickly as possible
 - If moving to the side is not possible, please stay motionless and let the runners know you will not be moving in your instructions.
- Fire the starting device again if a recall is needed within first 100M

Finish Line Aids

Finish line aids of soft wool yarn or other soft breakable or unbreakable material are prohibited.

Safety In Field Events (Track & Field)

Data on injuries in track and field indicate that the field events represent the greatest risk to the student athlete as well as to officials and spectators who may be in the area of an event. The following items are required of all event judges who are supervising competition in the field events. In addition, coaches and contest administrators shall make note of these items and instruct student-athletes about the safety protocol for these events in practice as well as all competitions.

- Be certain the competition area is properly prepared and ready for warm-ups. Remember, warm-ups are not permitted unless supervised by an event official or the athlete's coach.
- Prior to the event, review the assignments of judges and other workers.
- Inspect the jumping and vaulting areas, making sure all hard and unyielding surfaces around high jump/pole vault landing pads are properly padded, non-metal cross bars are being used and vaulting standards are securely fastened.
- Use traffic control ropes, flags or fences around the competition area.
- Keep the competition area clear of all non-participants.
- Keep competitors out of the impact area during warm-ups and competition.
- Implements shall be carried out of the landing sector by an official and then carried by the competitor to the waiting area.
- At the conclusion of each event, permit no practice, have all implements removed from the area and place a traffic cone in a position to indicate the area is closed.
- Remember, warming up without a coach or an event official at the venue shall lead to a warning and, if repeated, disqualification from the event. If the incident reoccurs, the athlete shall be disqualified from the competition and considered ejected from the meet for unsporting conduct. Such disqualification shall require a two-meet denial of participation in accordance with OHSA sports regulations.

Seated Athlete Guidelines (Track & Field)

Seated Athlete Competition Guide

Please visit ohsaa.org/sports/track for more information and to view the Seated Athlete Competition Guide.

Uniform, Jewelry & Headgear Regulations (Track & Field and Cross Country)

Shoes

The rules require all track and field competitors to wear on both feet shoes with an upper portion and a definitely recognizable sole and heel. The shoes must be fastened securely to the foot with laces, zippers, Velcro or other closures. Slippers and socks do not meet the rule requirements.

Removal of Any Part of the Team Uniform

Excluding shoes, while in the area of competition as defined by the games committee, is illegal. This shall lead to a warning and if repeated, to disqualification from the event. If the incident recurs, the contestant will be disqualified from further competition in the meet. (OHSAA ejection policy would apply in this case!)

Uniform Tops/One-Piece Uniforms

Each athlete must wear a full-length uniform top or a one-piece uniform issued or approved by the school. Tops must be full-length (i.e., either tucked into the bottoms or hanging BELOW the waistband of the bottoms when the athlete is standing erect). Shirts are not required to be tucked in unless they obscure a hip number. Bare midriff tops are not allowed. The top shall not be knotted or have a knot-like protrusion. Numbers are no longer required on the back of the uniform top.

Uniform Bottoms/One-Piece Uniform

Each athlete shall wear bottoms and/or a one-piece uniform issued or approved by the school. The loose-fitting boxer-style shorts are permitted for boys and girls. The waistband of a competitor's bottom can be rolled but must be worn above the waist as per Rule 4-3-1b4.

Legal Items on School Uniforms

School identification on the tops and/or bottoms and one-piece uniform; athlete's name on the top of the one-piece or two-piece uniform; a single manufacturer's logo/trade name, no more than 2 ¼ square inches with no dimension more than 2 ¼ inches on each item of apparel. **NOTE: New in 2022, Rule 4-3-1 now permits logos larger than 2 ¼ or multiple logos on the waistband of a uniform bottom ONLY.** The American flag, not exceeding 2 x 3 in permitted on EACH item of uniform; one commemorative/ memorial patch is permitted per uniform subject to the same dimensions as a manufacturer's logo.

Uniform Numbers

Uniform numbers are no longer required on the back of contestants' uniforms. It is **NOT** a uniform violation if some members of team have numbers and some do not granted all other aspects of the uniform rule are met.

Visible Undergarments

Any visible undergarment worn under the uniform top and/or bottom is now considered a foundation garment. FOUNDATION GARMENTS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO LOGO/TRADEMARK/REFERENCE OR COLOR RESTRICTIONS (Rule 4-3-1b7). Visible items worn under both the tops and the bottoms of a uniform do not have to be the same color.

Misc. Uniform Topics

Headgear, headbands, socks and shoes are not part of the competitors' uniforms and therefore **DO NOT** need to match.

Jewelry

The prohibition of wearing jewelry has been removed from the rules for track and field and cross country competitions. The referee may ask a competitor to remove an accessory if it is not properly secured, if it poses a danger to the competitor, or if it could damage equipment.

Wristwatch

A wristwatch, secured to the person, may be worn in competition. While the wearing of a GPS or Smart Watch is **not** prohibited; the use of use GPS and electronic communication on the watch is prohibited per NFHS Rule 4-6-5.

Additional Restrictions for Relay Races and Cross Country Competition

Each team member shall wear the same color and design of school uniform, although the length of the top, bottom or one-piece uniform may vary. Any visible undergarment worn under the uniform top and/or bottom is now considered a foundation garment. **FOUNDATION GARMENTS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO LOGO/TRADEMARK/REFERENCE OR COLOR RESTRICTIONS (Rule 4-3-1b7)**. Visible garments worn under the top/one-piece uniform and/or the bottom/one-piece uniform do not have to be the same color. If worn by more than one team member, that apparel does not need to be the same color nor necessarily the same length.

NFHS Rule 4-3-2: All relay and cross country team members must wear uniforms clearly indicating, through predominant color, school logo and color combination of all outer garments worn as a uniform, that members are from the same team. The official should be able to observe that all members are from the same team. For examples of legal and illegal uniforms, please refer to the state rules interpretation meeting. Manufacturer logos do not need to match.

Headgear, Hair Control Devices & Headbands

Hats, caps and headbands that are; not offensive or unsporting, not abrasive or hard, properly secured, and do not pose a danger to themselves or other competitors **are allowed**. The referee may ask a competitor to remove a hat, cap or headband if it is not properly secured, if it poses a danger to the competitor/other competitors, or if it could damage equipment. The referee has the authority to decide what is **safe**.

Section 1. Competitors may wear a Navy Watch-Style knit cap.

Section 2. Competitors may not wear a hat with a bill.

Section 3. Competitors may wear a headband with or without ear protectors, provided the headband is properly secured to the head and does not interfere with another. The headband does not need to be worn as the manufacturer intended and may include decoration.

Section 4. Pole vaulters are permitted to wear helmets and safety headgear.

Hair control devices and/or hair accessories are permitted. Bandanas, pre-wrap, or other items not intended to be used as headbands or hair control devices **are legal** as long as they are not offensive or unsporting, not abrasive or hard, properly secured, and do not pose a danger to themselves or another competitor.

Religious Apparel

Any athlete who presents that they need to wear headgear, skirts, pants, etc. for religious purposes must be allowed to participate without delay. No waiver is needed for the wearing of any religious items regardless of if it complies with uniform rules in NFHS Rule 4. Garments worn for religious reasons (e.g. dark skirts or pants) do not need to match the color and design of uniforms worn by other relay/cross country team members.

Important Officiating Reminders (Track & Field and Cross Country)

Ejection Report Forms - Updated

Officials shall file a written report with the school and the OHSA office whenever a coach or a player is ejected, the report shall be filed **through the contest in DragonFly**. In addition, the official should telephone or email the school principal or athletic administrator no later than the next business day after the ejection unless the official has notified that administrator at the match site. The offending school (coach, athletic administrator or principal) must file a written report with the OHSA anytime a coach or player is ejected from a contest, home or away.

Use of Firearms as Starter Pistols

Contest officials are not exempt from the state law prohibiting firearms to be brought onto school property. However, the following interpretation, obtained from OHSAA legal counsel, has been authorized to assist those officials who are using a starter's pistol for track and field competition.

Amended HB 442 is a recent amendment to O.R.C. §2923.161. See this link for the complete text of the amendment http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=124_HB_442. The conduct prohibited under this section is the "discharge of a firearm." A firearm, for purposes of this law, is defined as a weapon "capable of expelling or propelling one or more projectiles by the action of an explosive or combustible propellant." If the starter is using a "starter's pistol," that device does not meet the definition of a firearm and therefore does not fall under the conduct prohibited. Thus, the new provisions do not affect officials who use a true starter's pistol. However, those starters who use modified 22 caliber or other types of pistols to start competition run the risk of violating this code section and may have to defend their actions on the grounds provided in Section B, that is that they are "employees" with permission and their use of the pistol is within the scope of that permission. The difficulty in asserting this relationship is the "employee" vs. "independent contractor" status of officials. The OHSAA maintains that officials are independent contractors and not employees of member schools or the Association when officiating at regular season and/or tournament contests. The OHSAA Board of Directors will continue to investigate this matter in terms of prohibiting starting devices that are capable of discharging projectiles. Until such action is taken, officials are hereby advised of the risks of using those devices.

In addition, schools should give strong consideration to the purchase of a gunless starting device in light of the strong concerns about firearms. The OHSAA Officials Contract stipulates the following: *"The above named official is expressly authorized to bring onto school premises a **starter's pistol** for the contest as long as the same is used in connection with the event/contest identified herein. Schools that do not wish to authorize the use of starter's pistols should make gunless starting devices available for the referee/starter for cross country and track and field contests."*

Officials Uniform Requirements (Regular & Post Season)

- Black, unadorned officiating slacks/shorts/skirts (no jogging suits, stretch/yoga or denim), plain (no stripes, designs, etc).
- Short sleeved or long-sleeved white polo shirt with the *OHSAA logo embroidered or sublimated on the right chest (3"x3"), optional US Flag on right sleeve. On left sleeve, "OHSAA Registered Track & Field Official" in black letters.
- When a jacket, pullover, vest or other outer garment is worn it shall be black and unadorned except for the official *OHSAA logo on the left side (the local/state association initials, name and/or logo) may be on the right side) and the US Flag may be placed on the right sleeve, 4" down from the shoulder. The official's name may be on the right side.
- Jewelry may be worn and visible, including wedding rings and/or medical alert identification (bracelet or necklace). A religious medallion is permitted, provided it is not visible. A watch is permitted to be worn during a meet. In general, jewelry may be worn provided it is safe, tasteful, and not distracting. Meet management may request an official to remove jewelry if he/she deems it to be unsafe or a distraction.
- Rain suites/rain gear are not subject to OHSAA logo and uniform guidelines. However, they may not contain the initials, name and/or logo of other governing bodies.
- Hats are not required as part of the uniform. However, when one is worn it must meet one of following criteria:
 - a) Be unadorned other than a manufacturer's logo

- b) Include the *OHSAA logo
- c) Include the initials, name and/or logo of your local official's association
- d) Include the initials, name and/or logo of the Ohio Track and Field and Cross Country Officials Association
- e) Include the initials, name and/or logo of a OHSAA level tournament or invitational.
- Name tags/badges are not a required part of the uniform. However, when one is worn it must meet one of following criteria:
 - a) Be unadorned other than a manufacturer's logo
 - b) Include the *OHSAA logo
 - c) Include the initials, name and/or logo of your local official's association
 - d) Include the initials, name and/or logo of the Ohio Track and Field and Cross Country Officials Association
 - e) Include the initials, name and/or logo of an OHSAA level tournament or invitational.
- No items containing the name, initials or logo of other governing bodies can be worn.
- **Closed toe shoes MUST be worn**

Any official out of uniform in the regular season must be asked to change. If they cannot make their uniform legal, they should be treated as a "non-official" for the meet. Any official who is out of uniform for a tournament must be asked to change. If they can't make their uniform legal, they should be sent home without pay.

* Officials may only wear items with the "OHSAA Officiating Logo (old logo)" when officiating. Wearing anything with the "Administrative & Marketing Logo" (new logo), when officiating, is prohibited. For the purposes of this document, "OHSAA Logo" refers to the officiating logo.

Notes From the NFHS on 2025 Rules Changes

- **3-6-3, 5-7-6** — Adjusts the recall distance to within the first 50 meters.
- **5-10-1, 5-10-11, 5-11** — Clarifies the distinction between the rules for conducting relay races and the infractions for those races.
- **5-13-1** — Clarifies how to determine if an infraction occurred when an athlete leaves the track on a straightaway.
- **6-2-2f (NEW)** — Offers guidelines on how to notify athletes in field events to the time remaining while still providing various options for flexibility.
- **6-2-2 CHART** — Defines field event time limits for all competitors.
- **6-3-2 NOTES 1** — Clarifies the starting height in a jump-off with athletes at varying heights.
- **6-8-2** — Further defines an active flight and continuing flight in vertical jumps.
- **6-9-22** — Establishes a standard placement of the high jump crossbar and standards.

2025 Track and Field Editorial Changes

3-1-1c, 3-2-7, 3-2-8, 3-4-2, 4-3-1b, 6-10-6

Interpretations for the 2025 NFHS rule changes can be found on pages 4 and 5 of the 2025 NFHS Case Book.

2025 NFHS Points of Emphasis can be found on pages 4-6 of the 2025 NFHS Rules Book.

NFHS Permitted State Adoptions from Ohio (Track & Field and Cross Country)

The OHSA has maintained a stance of being “100% compliant” with NFHS Track & Field Rules. 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.**” These “State Adoptions” do not cause any fundamental change in the contest from state to state. These permitted track & field “State Adoptions,” and Ohio’s decision on the adoptions are as follows:

High School Modifications

Rule	Modification
Rule 1-3	Javelin and Hammer Throw are not permitted in Ohio.
Rule 3-2-3a	In High School, the referee/starter is required to be a Class 1 registered official; In 7 th & 8 th Grade the referee/starter may be a Class 3 registered official.
Rule 3-2-6	Conferences may not adopt special rules for interrupted events
Rule 3-2-1 3-2-4k 3-5	No Jury of Appeals in Ohio
Rule 3-4-1	Referee MUST be Class 1 registered official for high school meets (recommended for middle school)
Rule 4-1-3	Field event contestants must report before the start of their flight. For events run as “open pit” the start of their flight is the start of competition.
Rule 4-2-1	PENALTY: When athletes exceed the participation limitation, the team is penalized as if they had used an ineligible athlete
Rule 4-2-4	OHSA has established limitations as described in the Track and Field Manual. Schools and Conferences may not put aside these event entry limitations.
Rule 4-2-4-d	Teams CANNOT designate in advance which team will score in relays; however, only one team from each school may score
Rule 4-3-1a3	Spikes are limited to ½” unless the games committee stipulates a shorter length.
Rule 4-3	Head gear may be worn, including but not limited to headbands (with or without sequins) and/or ear covers and navy watch style caps.
Rule 5-3-4	In TOURNAMENT competition, the 4x400 meter relay shall start using a 3-turn stagger, the 4x800 relay and the 800 meter run shall use a 2-turn stagger, and the 1600 and 3200 meter run shall use a 1-turn stagger
Rule 5-8-2	Finish line aids are NOT permitted
Rule 6-2-10	In “team field events,” each athlete participating in horizontal events shall get 4 attempts with no finals

Rule	Modification
Rule 6-3-2b	Jump offs for qualifying places in tournaments are NOT tie breakers, and those involved in the jump off shall be allowed a reasonable warm-up after the competition is completed and before the jump off begins. If the tie for the qualifying position(s) is KNOWN to exist before the bar is raised to compete for higher places, those tied for the qualifying place(s) shall be allowed to make their fourth attempt before the bar is raised.
Rules 6-8-2	In all OHSAA competitions, anytime nine or more participants are active at a given height active flights shall be used.
Rules 6-8-23 & 6-2-13a	In the event of a broken pole, competitors are allowed one run through without a bar with a replacement pole
Rule 6-8-17	The head pole vault judge who holds a valid OHSAA T&F officiating permit may be designated to certify the legality of poles
Rule 7-2-2	The 5,000M is an allowable special event per the regulations listed in this document.
Rule -8-2-3	The OHSAA has accepted modified scoring.

Middle School Modifications

Order/Events: A revised order of events is specified in this manual. This revised order shall be used unless schools otherwise agree.

No Jury of Appeals in Ohio

In 1999, the NFHS rules changed thereby eliminating the choice of using the Jury of Appeals either as a final arbiter or in an advisory capacity. Therefore, in OHSAA track and field and cross country competition, regular season and tournament, no Jury of Appeals shall be appointed. The games committee, as per rule, may serve in this capacity but may only advise the referee. **The referee shall have the final decision in all appeals. Refer to NFHS Rule 3-5 for additional information on the appeals process.**

Please note: In all situations involving ineligible participation, the Commissioner of the OHSAA retains final authority to rule on such participation. The Commissioner has the authority to disqualify participants who are ineligible under the Bylaws and sports regulations of the OHSAA.

Ejection Procedure (Track & Field and Cross Country)

- **ALL ejections REQUIRE a report to be completed and filed with the OHSAA.**
- **Ejection Reports are completed and submitted electronically. This automatically sends the report to the school.**
- In the event of a coach or player ejection, he/she is ejected from ALL GAMES for the remainder of the day of the ejection PLUS all contests at all levels until two regular season/tournament contests are played at the same level of the ejection or disqualification. Ejected coaches may have additional penalties
- Ejected **COACHES** are required to LEAVE the premises immediately. If no assistant coach is present, that team must leave the meet; if no other teams are at the meet, the meet ends.
- Ejected **PLAYERS** are to remain in the BENCH AREA under the supervision of the coach.

- As of 2001 – Any player or coach ejected for fighting is ejected from ALL GAMES for the remainder of the day of the ejection and will be ineligible for all contests at all levels until **FOUR** regular season/tournament contests are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification.
- **ALL EJECTIONS ARE FINAL AND NOT PERMITTED TO BE APPEALED** per the OHSAA's Board of Directors.
- Though every ejection has its own story, do not call the OHSAA office asking for an appeal of the ejection. It will not and cannot be overturned. The circumstances surrounding the ejection can and should be expressed on the "School Response Form" that will be received by the school after the ejection occurs.

General Message on Health & Safety (Track & Field and Cross Country)

The safety of our student-athletes is of utmost concern at all times. Information regarding the following important topics can be found at www.ohsaa.org and at www.nfhs.org:

- 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 in the NFHS Rules Book)
- Disordered Eating
- Information on Nutritional Supplements
- 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

Concussion Management (Track & Field and Cross Country)

Implementation of State Law and NFHS Playing Rules Related to 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 STUDENT 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 <http://ohsaa.org/medicine/AuthorizationToReenter.pdf> to retrieve 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 or other licensed health care provider who makes an assessment or 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**. This course is valid for three years.

Contest Officials Requirements

State law states 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 OHSA 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. This course is valid for three years from the date of completion.

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 OHSA 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.) No exertional activity until asymptomatic.
- 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 or skating and may also begin progressive strength training activities.
- 4.) Begin non-contact skill drills specific to sport such as dribbling, fielding, batting, 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](#)

OHSA Concussion Authorization to Reenter Form

<https://www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Sports-Medicine/AuthorizationToReenter.pdf>

Communicable Disease Procedures (Track & Field and Cross Country)

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 basketball 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.

For more information, go to the OHSAA's website at: <https://www.ohsaa.org/communicablediseases>

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 volleyball 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:

Under 79.7 F	Normal activities – three separate 3-minute breaks per hour
79.8-84.6 F	Three separate 4-minute breaks per hour
84.7-87.6 F	Maximum practice time of 2 hours; four separate 4-minute breaks per hour; consider postponing practice to later in day
87.8-89.7 F	Maximum of 1 hour of training with four separate 5-minute breaks; no additional conditioning; consider postponing practice to later in day
89.8+ F	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.*

Lightning and Inclement Weather (Track & Field and Cross Country)

Recognition

Coaches, certified athletic trainers, athletes and administrators should be educated regarding the signs indicating thunderstorm development. Since the average distance between successive lightning flashes is approximately 2-to-3 miles, anytime that lightning can be seen or thunder 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. A 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.

- **Reputable Weather Apps** – Up to the second radar and weather forecasting are available on many phone apps. Only ones from reputable sources such as The Weather Channel, local news stations, etc. should be used

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 shall be announced and posted at all athletic venues.
- **Thirty-minute rule** – Once lightning has been recognized, competition shall not be resumed until at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard to begin or resume a contest. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, this would allow the storm to move 10-to-12 miles away from the area and significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes. **Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count should reset the clock, and another count should begin.**

Note: At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.

The thirty-minute rule remains in place. Any time you hear thunder, there is an automatic 30-minute wait. When lightning is seen, play would be suspended as normal and the 30-minute count would begin. The note simply allows coaches and umpires to determine whether to continue play if there is no thunder and you can determine that the lightning is not a threat. This is only applicable at night.



OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

4080 Roselea Place, Columbus, Ohio 43214

(p) 614.267.2502

(f) 614.267.1677

Web site: ohsaa.org

OHSAA TRACK & FIELD and CROSS COUNTRY

**COACH'S VERIFICATION OF SPORTING CONDUCT & LEGAL EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS
FOR USE IN REGULAR SEASON & TOURNAMENT COMPETITION**

SCHOOL NAME _____

DIVISION _____ BOYS _____ GIRLS _____

HEAD COACH'S NAME _____ (printed)

OHSAA standards require contest officials to enforce all NFHS rules relating to sporting conduct, ethical behavior and legal uniforms and equipment. Acts that intend to demean opposing competitors, team members, spectators and officials are not in keeping with the ideals of interscholastic athletics and will not be tolerated. Let this competition reflect mutual respect!

Coach's Verification

I certify to the tournament referee that all contestants under my supervision are legally equipped, attired in legal uniforms and free of all dangerous jewelry in accordance with NFHS rules. I further certify that all student-athletes and other team personnel have been advised of their responsibilities relative to good sporting conduct during this competition. In addition, I understand and accept responsibility for adhering to the OHSAA participation limitation of four events per individual athlete per tournament contest.

Coach's Signature _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to area designated by the meet officials or games committee.



Ohio High School Athletic Association

4080 Roselea Place
Columbus, Ohio 43214
(p) 614.267.2502
(f) 614.267.1677
Web Site: ohsaa.org

SAMPLE POLE VAULT CERTIFICATION FORM

Directions: Please complete all blanks and sign. This form shall be handed to the head pole vault official when the vaulter(s) report. Presenting an improperly completed form or if no form is presented will result in the vaulter(s) being excluded from competition. PLEASE PRINT. Include first and last name.

SCHOOL _____ DATE: _____

COMPETITOR	NUMBER	VAULTER'S WEIGHT	POLE RATING(S)

COACH'S SIGNATURE

Uniform Warning Report

Name: _____ Number: _____

School: _____ Event: _____

Violation: ____ (1) Illegal Logo ____ (2) Uniforms do not match
____ (3) Removal of uniform in competition area ____ (4) Other

Date: _____ Time: _____ Reporting official: _____

Referee's Decision

____ (1) Warning ____ (2) Disqualification from: ____ (a) event ____ (b) meet

Referee's Signature: _____

Uniform Warning Report

Name: _____ Number: _____

School: _____ Event: _____

Violation: ____ (1) Illegal Logo ____ (2) Uniforms do not match
____ (3) Removal of uniform in competition area ____ (4) Other

Date: _____ Time: _____ Reporting official: _____

Referee's Decision

____ (1) Warning ____ (2) Disqualification from: ____ (a) event ____ (b) meet

Referee's Signature: _____

OHSAA

**Respect
THE
GAME**

BJ Duckworth

Sport Administrator & Director of Officiating Development
OHSAA Track & Field and Cross Country
bjduckworth@ohsaa.org