

OHSAA

**Ohio High School
Athletic Association**



2024-2025

**Swimming and Diving Coaches
Pre-Season Manual**

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A Message from the OHSAA



Coaches and Administrators,

Congratulations on your role as coach or administrator with oversight of the swimming and diving program at your school. This manual is designed as a quick reference for pertinent information regarding the sport of swimming and diving in the OHSAA. Due to the high volume of requests that come to our office, you are strongly encouraged to do three (3) things prior to sending an email or calling the OHSAA office:

1. Consult the subject areas in this manual.
2. Consult with your school's Athletic Administrator. He or she most likely knows the answer or has the resource to answer your questions.
3. Go to the swimming and diving webpage at <https://www.ohsaa.org/sports/swimming>. Various items are located on this site to assist you. In addition, I ask that you take note of the coach memos that will be sent out and posted to the main swimming and diving page.

This is a reminder that our State Rules Meetings remain mandatory for head coaches, which can be accessed on your Final Forms profile. This is addressed in the early pages of this manual. All rules governing OHSAA Swimming and Diving stem from the National Federation (NFHS) and the OHSAA. The NFHS Rules are specific to the playing rules while OHSAA Sports Regulations (and Bylaws) govern administrative rules specific to Ohio. No coach, administrator, or official has the authority to modify or set aside these rules.

Thank you for your professionalism, mentorship, and service to the student-athletes at your schools. I wish you all the best this swimming and diving season!

Kelly Schoenly

Kelly Schoenly

OHSAA Sport Administrator

OHSAA Mission Statement

The Ohio High School Athletic Association's mission is to serve our member schools and enrich interscholastic opportunities for student.

Important Dates

October 25, 2024	Coaching Begins
November 25, 2024	First Contest
January 20, 2025	Non-interscholastic Date/ Deadline for OHSAA Tournament Entry
February 1, 2025	Tournament Seed/Draw
February 3-8, 2025	Sectional Tournaments
February 10-15, 2025	District Tournaments
February 18-22, 2025	State Tournaments
February 22, 2025	End of the Season

OHSAA Contact Information

Kelly Schoenly	Sport Administrator, kschoenly@ohsaa.org <i>Administrates the sport and oversees tournament, writes Sport Regulations, Tournament Regulations</i>
RJ Van Almen	Director of Officials' Development, rivanalmen@ohsaa.org <i>Responsible for overseeing officials in Ohio. Serves as liaison with NFHS and oversees the education and recruitment of officials in Ohio.</i>

Rules Interpretation Meetings

Rules Interpretation Meetings are required for all coaches. The online rules meeting can be accessed through Final Forms. If you have any issues, please contact [Membership Services](#).

National Governing Body Waiver Request

Per GSR 7.7.2, a non-interscholastic waiver may be provided for a student-athlete(s) to compete in events sponsored by a National Governing Body. Swimming and Diving student-athletes that qualify for any of the following events may receive a waiver.

Junior Nationals
Senior Nationals
US Open
Pro Series Meets
Mid-State Championship

The waiver form may be access [HERE](#).

Mandatory Rules Interpretation Meeting

Rules Interpretation Meeting is mandatory for all Head Coaches.

The mandatory rules interpretation meeting is available online and accessed through each individual Final Forms account. Assistant coaches and volunteer coaches are encouraged to view this meeting as they will be held to the same regulation standard as head coaches. The online meeting is geared exclusively for coaches; officials have their own meeting with the content exclusively directed to them. For those of you who coach and serve as an official, you will be required to complete both meetings, one specific for coaches and one specific for officials. Therefore, you would be required to view two separate rules meetings if you coach and officiate.

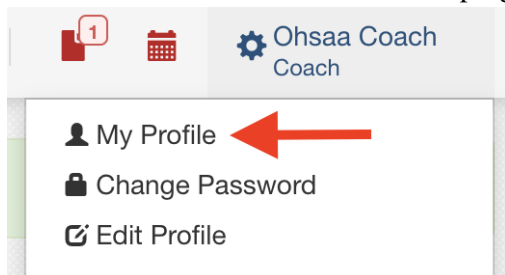
NFHS rule and editorial changes and NFHS points of emphasis are covered in detail, along with OHSAA Swimming and diving Sports Regulations, General Sport Regulations and Bylaws as they pertain to coaches and players. Though the main purpose is to provide knowledge and advice on the various NFHS and OHSAA regulations, this is the educational mechanism to ensure compliance with the various rules and regulations.

The ONLINE Rules Meeting link will be accessible on Friday October 18, 2024

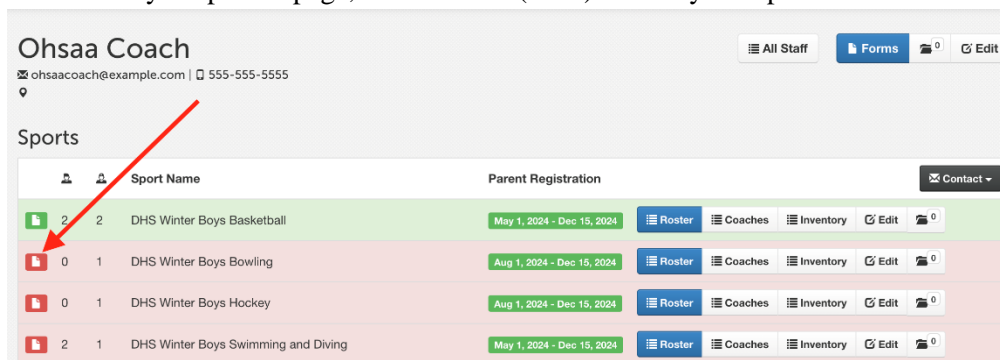
How to Complete the Rules Interpretation Meeting Online

Instructions for Coaches

1. Log in to your FinalForms account
2. Click on **Your Name** in the top right-hand corner and select **My Profile** from your dropdown menu:



3. On your profile page, click the  (form) icon in your Sport's row



4. Click on the video to watch the State Rules Meeting
5. Once you have completed the video, sign your name at the bottom of the form and click **Submit Form** to earn the credit

6. On your profile page, your Sport should now be **green**, indicating that the State Rules Meeting has been submitted.

Please complete the rules meeting by **Monday, November 25 at 11:59pm**. Failure to complete your meeting by this date will result in a late fee. Failure to complete the rules meeting at all will result in your school being ineligible for post season competition.

AFTER COMPLETION:

1. Please screenshot your final screen in the event you need to show proof of completion.
2. Check your **Final Forms** profile to verify your attendance has been recorded. Attendance will be reflected in the profile. Please do not call the OHSAA office for verification.

Mandatory Parent Pre-Season Meeting

OHSAA Bylaws mandate that schools conduct a pre-season meeting with parents and student-athletes. The meeting is determined by each school's Athletic Administrator and must be held no later than 2 weeks after the start of the season. This is the time to cover such things as eligibility requirements, individual school policies, individual sport polices, sportsmanship issues and expectations, travel plans for away contests, etc. I encourage coaches to use this time to their advantage and provide as much education as possible to parents. To access some sample meeting template information's check out the OHSAA webpage [here](#).

Pupil Activity Permit and Coaches' Toolchest

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:

1. Completed background checks.
2. Completed course from an approved First Aid for Coaches provider.
3. Completed course from an approved Concussion provider.
4. Completed course from an approved Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training provider, including Lindsay's Law.
5. Completed course from an approved Coaching Fundamentals provider.
6. Completed training course in CPR from a course approved by your school or District.
7. Completed mental health course from an approved provider.



The OHSAA has partnered with Coaches' Tool Chest (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

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.

Lindsay's Law- Sudden Cardiac Arrest

[ODE Website for Lindsay's Law](#)

Lindsay's Law, Ohio Revised Code [3313.5310](#), [3707.58](#) and [3707.59](#) became effective on August 1, 2017. In accordance with this law, the Ohio Department of Health, the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio High School Athletic Association, the Ohio Chapter of the American College of Cardiology and other stakeholders jointly developed guidelines and other relevant materials to inform and educate students and youth athletes participating in or desiring to participate in an athletic activity, their parents, and their coaches about the nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest. The following resources were developed to implement Lindsay's Law:

For parents/guardians and student- athletes in grades 7-12 in Ohio schools:

- [Required Video - Lindsay's Law](#)
- [Required SCA Informational Handout](#)
- [Required Signature Form](#)

For coaches:

If you are a coach for an interscholastic sport and are licensed by the Ohio Department of Education (all paid and volunteer coaches in Ohio), please visit their website for information about their training requirements around Lindsay's Law. The required video, informational handout and a post assessment test is available through the ODE's website. We will inform you when that component is available. If, however, you want to have your coaches view the video and review the information immediately, you may access those items below. Please be advised that as a school district, your superintendent must be able to verify that coaches have seen this video and read the informational handout if you choose to implement this requirement before it is available through ODE's LMS.

- [Required Video - Lindsay's Law](#)
- [Required SCA Informational Handout](#)

Ohio High School Swimming Coaches Association (OHSSCA)

The Ohio High School Swim Coaches Association (OHSSCA) serves as a consulting group to the OHSAA regarding swimming and diving. There are many membership benefits such as involvement with award selections, and professional development opportunities. Membership with the OHSSCA is voluntary, but broader participation from all coaches helps strengthen our voice with OHSAA. If you are interested in joining the OHSSCA, please visit ohssca.org to register.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike De Bear, OHSSCA president at coachdebear@gmail.com

2024-25 POINTS OF EMPHASIS



Athlete Well-Being

The NFHS Swimming and Diving Rules Committee is particularly conscious of athlete safety, physical and mental well-being, and overall good health of high school students. With that in mind, the committee discussed at length the issue of photography behind the blocks. Guidelines for photographer access should be clearly defined prior to the swimming and diving event. It is recommended that state associations and event hosts consider the areas, and specifically the angles, for photography of swimmers and divers, and that appropriate and reasonable guidelines are established. Due to swimmer attire and the starting positions in the sport, media access in the starting area may not be appropriate. The committee addressed Rule 3-2-2 by adding language ensuring continued involvement of health-care professionals. Rule 3-3 was also edited to align language with current national trends in reference to individuals with disabilities and continuing encouragement of participation of those individuals in swimming and diving. And finally, the committee codified consistent language for all NFHS rules books prohibiting the use of alcohol, tobacco, and controlled or illicit substances by participants, team personnel, and officials, beginning with arrival at the competition site until departure following the completion of the contest. State associations are encouraged to continue examining additional ways to ensure student well-being within the framework of swimming and diving.

Electronic Devices

Swimming, like many other high school athletic endeavors, is significantly affected by continuing developments in technology. These developments, if not carefully monitored, have the potential to alter the nature of high school swimming and diving competitions and drastically affect the competitive environment. Several factors should be kept in mind as the rules committee continues to evaluate the use of electronic devices by swimmers. Devices that collect and transmit data from the swimmer to an external recipient are permissible because they are potentially beneficial in terms of both an athlete's performance and well-being. Devices that provide information to the athlete during competition are not permitted and, when detected, result in severe penalties for both the competing athlete and team personnel. Detection of such devices is often difficult, and evaluation of performance often requires advanced technical knowledge. Officials should approach the enforcement of prohibitions on illegal devices with restraint and impose sanctions on team personnel only when it is abundantly clear that a device is being used improperly and is creating an unfair competitive advantage. State associations are empowered to address and regulate the use of electronic devices beyond those established by NFHS rules.

Risk Minimization - Backstroke Ledges

The NFHS serves as the national authority on competition rules while promoting fair play and seeking to minimize risk of injury for student participants in education-based high school athletic and activity programs. On an ongoing basis, the rules committee assesses and minimizes risks, to the extent consistent with the sound traditions of the sport. The NFHS Swimming and Diving Rules Committee continues to evaluate information regarding the use of backstroke starting ledges and the development of this equipment. At present, there is a considerable lack of reliable data assessing the safety and risk-minimization issues surrounding the use of ledges. It is anticipated that the results of a study currently underway at DePauw University will be available next year for the rules committee to consider whether to permit such equipment to be used as part of the high school swimming competitive environment. The primary concern will be, of course, athletes' safety. Additional factors that must be assessed include fiscal/budgetary constraints, impact upon the flow of competition resulting from the installation and removal of the devices for a specific event, and effects on competitive equity resulting from availability of the equipment.

The Uniform Rules for Swimming and Diving

Rule 3-3 Uniforms

ART. 1 . . . It is recommended all swimmers and divers on the team wear suits of identical coloring and pattern.

ART. 2 . . . Suits shall be of one piece. A competitor shall not be permitted to participate wearing a suit that is not of decent appearance. Males shall wear suits which cover the buttocks and shall not extend above the waist or below the top of the kneecap. Females shall wear suits which cover the buttocks and breasts and shall not extend beyond the shoulders or below the top of the kneecap, nor cover the neck.

PENALTIES: When an official discovers a competitor wearing illegal attire as described in Article 2, the official shall:

1. when observed prior to the start of the heat/dive, notify the coach of the competitor to make the suit legal before becoming eligible to compete. If the competitor cannot comply without delaying the start of the heat/ dive, the competitor is disqualified from that event/dive and shall not be eligible for further competition until in legal attire;
2. when observed after the heat/dive officially begins, disqualify the competitor at the completion of the heat/dive; nullify the competitor's performance time/score and he/she shall not be eligible for further competition until in legal attire.

ART. 3 . . . The uniform consists of a suit and, if worn, cap(s).

- a. The suit or cap(s) may display the competitor's name, school name, school nickname and/or the school logo.
- b. Advertising or names other than that permitted in 3-3-3c is prohibited.
- c. A single visible manufacturer's logo/trademark/reference, no more than 2¼ square inches with no dimension more than 2¼ inches is permitted on each item of the uniform [suit and cap(s)].
- d. One American flag, not to exceed 2 inches by 3 inches, may be worn or occupy space on each item of uniform apparel. By state association adoption, to allow for special occasions, commemorative or memorial patches, not to exceed 4 square inches, may be worn on the uniform without compromising its integrity.

NOTE: The FINA mark, individual barcode and/or USA Swimming approved checkmark logo on certain suits designating that the suit has been approved for FINA and/or USA Swimming competition is not considered to be a second manufacturer's logo nor a form of advertising. Such suits with a FINA marking and/or checkmark, if otherwise legal, shall be legal for NFHS competition.

ART. 4 . . . Suits worn by swimmers (excluding divers) shall be limited to the following requirements:

- a. Only one suit shall be permitted in the competition. (A swimmer with special needs may request for customization to the state association through his/ her school.)
- b. The suit shall be:
 1. constructed of a woven/knit textile material;
 2. permeable (100 percent to air and water), except for one post-construction, impermeable school name and/or logo which shall not exceed 9 square inches;
 3. made so as not to aid in buoyancy and shall not be altered to aid in buoyancy;
 4. made with no zippers or other fastening system other than a waist tie for a brief or jammer and

elastic material within the casing/ribbing in the terminal ends (straps, leg openings and waist openings); and

- c. Suits with a FINA marking, if otherwise legal, shall be legal for NFHS competition.

PENALTIES: When an official discovers a competitor wearing illegal attire as described in Articles 3 and 4, the official shall:

1. when observed prior to the start of the heat/dive, notify the coach or the competitor to make the attire legal before becoming eligible to compete. If the competitor cannot comply without delaying the start of the heat/ dive, the competitor is disqualified from the event/dive and shall not be eligible for further competition until in legal attire;
2. when observed after the heat/dive officially begins, disqualify the competitor at the completion of the heat/dive; nullify the competitor's performance time and he/she shall not be eligible for further competition until in legal attire.

ART. 5 . . . For religious reasons, suits providing full-body coverage are permitted. The suit must meet requirements of 3-3-4b(1-3). If a competitor's suit does not meet rule specifications, the referee must notify the state association following the completion of the contest.

ART. 6 . . . Competitors shall not wear or use any device or foreign substance to aid their speed, buoyancy or body compression. The following may be used within the stated conditions:

- a. A foreign substance may be applied if not considered excessive by the referee (if excessive, the referee shall require the competitor to remove it;
- b. Adhesives are not allowed for swimmers;
- c. Divers may wear tape or wraps for support and may also use temporarily applied adhesives.
- d. Tape may be used by a swimmer to treat a documented medical condition. The referee must be presented signed documentation from an appropriate health-care professional before permitting the athlete to compete.

NOTE: Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. The accommodations should not fundamentally alter the sport, heighten risk to the athlete/others or place opponents at a disadvantage.

PENALTY: When team personnel/competitor uses an unapproved artificial device during an event, the competitor(s) is disqualified from further competition.

ART. 7 . . . Prior to the meet, the coach shall verify with the meet referee that all competitors are legally attired.

NOTE: Religious and medical-alert medals are not required to be taped to the body. It is recommended the medical alert itself is visible to assist in care by a health-care professional.

OHSAA Regulations

General Sport Regulations will be available at [HERE](#). Tournament regulations will be available [HERE](#).

Out of State Travel

Schools may travel out of state to compete in contests in states or provinces in Canada that border Ohio regardless of distance to travel. The states are Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The province is Ontario. Additionally, schools may travel out of state one time per sport per interscholastic season to compete in contests in any location that does not border Ohio subject to approval from the Executive Director's Office. Those interested in traveling to a non-bordering state may fill out the form found [HERE](#).

Girls Participating on Boys Teams

OHSAA Bylaw 1-6-1 permits girls to participate on boys teams. Therefore, a girl that participates in boys events must compete in only boys events during that meet. She is, however, permitted to swim for the girls team during different events during the regular season, but cannot swim for both gender teams during the same event. Girls who swim in both girls and boys events may not exceed the number of contests permitted in the season.

For the OHSAA Tournament, girls who have been participating in boys and girls events during the regular season must choose to compete in either the girls or boys tournament. A school that does not wish to sponsor girls swimming and diving but has six or more girls participating may permit the girls to participate on the boys team, but they must enter the OHSAA-sponsored boys tournament competition.

Head Decorations/Headwear/Religious Apparel

Regardless of NFHS Playing rules, Ohio state law requires that officials/contest administrators not prohibit, require a waiver, or create any obstruction to wearing religious apparel when competing or participating in interscholastic athletics or extracurricular activities, unless a legitimate danger to participants is identified due to wearing religious apparel. If such a danger is identified, the administrator or official of the event or activity shall offer all reasonable accommodations to the participant wearing religious apparel.

Regular Season Contests

Schools may schedule a maximum of 16 contests for divers either within a swimming and diving contest or in a separate diving competition. No exhibitions or scrimmages are permitted.

Scheduling Contests

A school may schedule varsity and non-varsity competition to be held on the same day. The opponents and officials shall be notified in advance that the contest will consist of both varsity and non-varsity competition. Competition thus scheduled is not considered to be exhibition. All regular season swimming and diving contests that are concluded in a single day count as one contest regardless of the scoring procedure used or the number of schools competing (i.e., dual, double-dual, tri, quad, invitational, etc.)

Relay Entry

In order to be eligible for relay event entry in the OHSAA-sponsored tournaments, a school shall compete in a minimum of two interscholastic contests as a school team prior to the non-interscholastic cutoff date.

Non-Interscholastic Competition

During the Regular Season

A swimming and diving athlete who has not participated for the school in swimming and diving that season must cease non-interscholastic swimming and diving competition by **Monday, January 20, 2025** in order to be eligible for OHSAA tournament competition provided applicable Bylaws and Regulations have been followed. In addition, an athlete who has participated for the school in swimming and diving who violates this non-interscholastic competition date by participating in a non-interscholastic contest in swimming and diving shall be ineligible for OHSAA tournament competition in swimming and diving in addition to any other penalties that may be prescribed.

DIVING

For the sport of diving, other than a championship meet, the competition shall consist of one voluntary dive, which shall be done in this order: Week 1 =forward group, Week 2 = back group, Week 3 = inward group, Week 4 = twisting group, Week 5 = reverse group, etc., and five optional dives, coming from four of the five groups and which may include any of the dives other than the voluntary dive.

Any dive from a group may be designated as a voluntary dive. It will receive its assigned d.d. through 1.8. Any designated voluntary dive with a d.d. greater than 1.8 will be assigned a d.d. of 1.8.

NOTE: The following rotation is based on the current year's schedule beginning with the first week of the regular season. For specific dates, please consult the OHSAA calendar on the OHSAA Swimming and Diving sport website.

<u>WEEK OF COMPETITION BEGINS MONDAY</u>	<u>DIVE</u>
Week 1	Forward Group
Week 2	Back Group
Week 3	Inward Group
Week 4	Twist Group
Week 5	Reverse Group
Week 6	Forward Group
Week 7	Back Group
Week 8	Inward Group
Week 9	Twist Group
Week 10	Reverse Group

NOTE: This format can be referenced in the NFHS Swimming and Diving Rules Book under Rule 9-4-6.

This can also be found on the OHSAA website [HERE](#).

Miscellaneous Information

Professionalism

Your professionalism is of the utmost importance. Your athletes and fans will follow your lead. If you are respectful of the match and the officials, your athletes and fans are more likely to do the same. If you are disrespectful of the match and the officials, it will be reflected in the words and actions of your athletes and fans. Officials aren't perfect and mistakes will be made, but it is all part of the learning process for our young student-athletes. So please take those disappointments and turn them into positive learning experiences. What you permit, you promote.

Pre-Season Preparations

Pre-season meetings are **required**. As part of your pre-season preparations, you are encouraged invite a local official(s) to meet with your team during pre-season workouts. It allows the officials to meet your athletes and discuss new rules. It gives your athletes an opportunity to ask questions and have a discussion prior to match days. We would also recommend inviting an official to a pre-season meeting with your parents. Again, it provides a forum for healthy discussions and an opportunity for your parents to learn more about the match. For resource materials, you can find more information on our website [here](#).

Scheduling

PLEASE COORDINATE WITH YOUR ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATOR TO ENSURE THAT OFFICIALS ARE NOTIFIED IN ADVANCE OF ANY CHANGES. When dates, times, and / or locations are changed it not only affects the officials scheduled for that match, but also other matches they are scheduled to work. They will appreciate your help in this area.

Inquiries

Our website (www.ohsaa.org) includes a great deal of information that covers many of the inquiries we often receive. The website provides swimming and diving regulations, general sport regulations, tournament regulations, uniform regulations, etc.

Coaches' Comments to the News Media

OHSAA Bylaw 8, Section 2, 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. When the contest begins each school waives all its rights so far as objecting to the officials." 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. Failure to follow this request will result in disciplinary action.

PARA EVENTS

In October 2019, the OHSAA Board of Directors approved two additional swimming events in two categories for both boys and girls who have disabilities. Those events will take place at the OHSAA state swimming tournaments during the Division II Finals.

The general concept for this introduction into the sport of swimming was to mirror as closely as possible the wheelers events in our interscholastic track and field programs. The reason for considering this procedure is because the transition to events in track and field for students who use wheelchairs has proceeded very smoothly and is an outstanding model to emulate.

PARA CATEGORIES

Para 1 – Non-ambulatory (using a wheelchair) with limited use of all four extremities.

Para 2 – Dwarfism, multiple limb deficiencies, ambulatory with assistance, can use a wheelchair with a high functioning upper body.

NUMBER AND ORDER OF EVENTS

The para events offered are the boys and girls 50-yard freestyle and the boys and girls 100-yard backstroke. As there is no division competition (only para division)

VERIFICATION AND ELIGIBILITY

1. Only high school students who are eligible to participate in OHSAA member schools shall be eligible to participate as a para-athlete.
2. All applicable OHSAA rules and eligibility standards will apply.

3. To be considered as a para-athlete, the swimmer must have a documented permanent physical disability which limits one or more major life activities. The disability shall be confirmed by a licensed physician on a yearly basis and maintained in the permanent file or on the student's PPE at the school.
4. Schools and athletes are responsible for adhering to all tournament entry procedures as described in the OHSAA Sport Regulations.
5. Schools shall enter no more than four athletes in each para event.
6. The verification form shall be posted to the swimming and diving page and will also contain the name of any assistant or aide required to be with the athlete. It is important to identify this individual, along with the head coach.

PARA QUALIFICATION – OHSAA TOURNAMENT

Only the top sixteen (16) qualifiers (by time) in each category, in the state, will advance to compete at the state tournament. Automatic timing must be used. No stopwatch or paper timing will be accepted. A maximum of two (2) heats per category will be swam at the state tournament.

DISTRICT TOURNAMENT PARTICIPATION

Para swimmers may compete at the district level as an additional opportunity (last chance meet) to achieve a better time to advance to the state tournament. Para swimmers are not required to swim at the district level, nor would they receive district accolades for participation.

STATE TOURNAMENT PARTICIPATION

Para swimming events will be conducted during the Division II State Finals of the OHSAA Tournament.

POOL SAFETY

Safety Emphasized

Adherence to guidelines designed to protect all participants in the sports of swimming and diving is mandatory. Please refer to the Rules Book, Rule 2, for the specific, mandatory pool, lane and equipment specifications that have been adopted for competition for all Ohio schools. For Diving, Rule 9 explains all safety information.

Diving

Please refer to NFHS Swimming and Diving Rule 9 1-1 for specific standards for the pool, the diving board and other equipment. Note that pools constructed after January 1987 must have a water depth of 12 feet or more.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND NFHS WATER DEPTH STANDARDS

In June of 2000, the state of Ohio adopted the following regulations for swimming pool operators.

Regulation 3701-31-04 (I) provides that any operator of a swimming facility in this state may permit diving from starting blocks or the pool deck into shallow water for competitive racing events PROVIDED the water depth in those areas is no less than four feet. (Note: A complete transcript of all safety regulations including this one can be accessed at www.odh.state.oh – the Ohio Department of Health's Website.) **In addition, NFHS rules now require that this minimum depth of four feet at the point of entry for racing starts during practice or competition be measured for a distance from the end of the wall to minimum of 16 feet, 5 inches (5 meters) from the end wall.**

This means that schools sponsoring swimming and diving have **two options:**

1. **Relocate the starting blocks to deep water** (at least 4 feet in depth for a minimum of 5 meters' distance from the end wall) **OR**
2. **Start all races in the water** and require all members of relay teams to do the same.

In summary, the NFHS and the Ohio High School Athletic Association urge all member schools with competitive swimming and diving programs to review the suitability of the facilities in which they practice and compete in swimming and diving. Although the OHSAA does not involve itself in coaching strategies or techniques, swimming and diving coaches should review their procedures involving all aspects of instruction as they relate to safety and should keep current on all safety-related developments in the sport.

Lifeguards Required for Interscholastic Swimming and Diving Competition and Training

In accordance with final rule 3701-31-05 of Ohio's Health and Safety Code, the licensee of a public swimming pool, public spa or special use pool shall provide lifeguards. This includes pools used for interscholastic swimming and diving practice and competition. Please see the complete text of these rules by linking from the OHSAA web site at www.ohsaa.org or directly to the Ohio Department of Health site at www.odh.state.oh.us.

It is OHSAA policy to conduct competition in spite of an official's concern about whether or not a school is compliant with this administrative code. Thus, the competition should be conducted as contracted and any suspected violation of this code reported to the OHSAA for further review.

PUBLIC LAW 110-140—POOL AND SPA SAFETY (also known as the Virginia Graeme Pool and Spa Safety Act)

As enacted by Congress and effective on December 19, 2008, each public pool and spa in the United States shall be equipped with anti-entrapment devices or systems that comply with the ASME/ANSI A112.19.8 performance standard, or any successor standard; and (ii) each public pool and spa in the United States with a single main drain other than an unblockable drain shall be equipped, at a minimum, with 1 or more of the following devices or systems designed to prevent entrapment by pool or spa drains that meets the requirements of subparagraph (B):

(I) SAFETY VACUUM RELEASE SYSTEM.—A safety vacuum release system which ceases operation of the pump, reverses the circulation flow, or otherwise provides a vacuum release at a suction outlet when a blockage is detected, that has been tested by an independent third party and found to conform to ASME/ANSI standard A112.19.17 or ASTM standard F2387.

(II) SUCTION-LIMITING VENT SYSTEM — A suction- limiting vent system with a tamper-resistant atmospheric opening.

(III) GRAVITY DRAINAGE SYSTEM. —A gravity drainage system that utilizes a collector tank.

(IV) AUTOMATIC PUMP SHUT-OFF SYSTEM. — An automatic pump shut-off system.

(V) DRAIN DISABLEMENT. —A device or system that disables the drain.

(VI) OTHER SYSTEMS. —Any other system determined by the Commission to be equally effective as, or better than, the systems described in subclauses (I) through (V) of this clause at preventing or eliminating the risk of injury or death associated with pool drainage systems.

(B) APPLICABLE STANDARDS. —Any device or system described in subparagraph (A)(ii) shall meet the requirements of any ASME/ANSI or ASTM performance standard if there is such a standard for such a device or system, or any applicable consumer product safety standard.

(2) PUBLIC POOL AND SPA DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “public pool and spa” means a swimming pool or spa that is— (A) open to the public generally, whether for a fee or free of charge; (B) open exclusively to— (i) members of an organization and their guests; (ii) residents of a multi-unit apartment building, apartment complex, residential real estate development, or other multi-family residential area (other than a municipality, township, or other local government jurisdiction); or (iii) patrons of a hotel or other public accommodations facility; or (C) operated by the Federal Government (or by a concessionaire on behalf of the Federal Government) for the benefit of members of the Armed Forces and their dependents or employees of any department or agency and their dependents.

(3) ENFORCEMENT. —Violation of paragraph (1) shall be considered to be a violation of section 19(a)(1) of the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2068(a)(1)) and may also be enforced under section 17 of that Act (15 U.S.C. 2066). **SEC. 1405. STATE SWIMMING POOL SAFETY GRANT PROGRAM.** (a) IN GENERAL—Subject to the availability of appropriations authorized by subsection (e), the Commission shall establish a grant program to aid eligible States.

For more information, please go to <http://www.poolsafety.gov/pssa.pdf> or consult with your school's general counsel and/or local Department of Health.

GUIDELINES FOR MEET WARM UP

Prior to any athletes entering the water to begin warm-ups, there shall be a meeting that includes head coaches and captains from each team and officials (if available). The criteria to be reviewed include but are not limited to warm-up procedure, pool environment, water depth at both ends, jewelry and uniform rules, starting blocks, lane selection, emergency procedures, lifeguard responsibilities and other pertinent issues. In addition, the following guidelines are recommended for warm-up procedures at ALL meets.

1. A designated supervisor whose sole responsibility is to observe warm-up procedures shall be on duty prior to any athletes entering the pool/diving well and throughout the entire warm-up period.
2. Swimmers shall enter the water feet-first except for starts which are limited to specified lanes.
3. Specify lanes 2 and 5 (six lane pool) or Lanes 2 and 7 (eight lane pool) as one-way sprint lanes with racing starts permitted at the starting end of the pool.
4. Place a cone marker or similar sign on starting platforms in lanes not specified as one-way sprint lanes.
5. Specify center lanes for circle swimming (two lengths of the pool beginning at the starting end of the pool).
6. Specify the outside lanes as pace lanes (swimmers swim one or two lengths from an in-water push off position from the starting end of the pool).
7. May specify lanes for relay practice during the last 15 minutes of the warm-up.
8. Coaches should stand at the starting end of the pool and verbally start swimmers for sprint or pace work.
9. Swimmers shall not be allowed on a starting platform when a backstroker is executing a start in the same sprint lane.
10. Swimmers shall not swim in the area where diving warm-up is occurring.
11. The pool shall be closed during the coaches meeting.

It may be considered unsporting conduct when a participant violates any of these guidelines. Meet Management or a designated official may remove and eject a swimmer, coach, and/or team for violations of these recommendations. In facilities that have a warm-up and/or warm-down area, management shall always provide supervision of the area(s).

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.

CODE OF ETHICS

An Official must devote time, thought and study to the rules of the sport 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 collaborate 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.

UNIFORMS

The officiating uniform for swimming and diving officials has been changed to a white collar shirt or polo with the OHSAA logo, with navy blue slacks or shorts, white shoes and socks. Please, no denim or blue jeans. No watch except those used in timing or jewelry except a wedding band, medical I.D. or religious medal may be worn. Emblems and patches, other than the official OHSAA officiating patch, are not permitted on the uniform.

ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICIATING OHSAA SWIMMING AND DIVING TOURNAMENTS

Officials who wish to work the OHSAA tournaments and have been included in the pool will receive the notice in October with information on submitting a formal application.

NFHS STARTERS' PROTOCOLS: Use of Whistles as Preparatory Commands

FORWARD STARTS

1. Starter/referee signals the swimmers with a series of short whistles (no fewer than 4) to approach the blocks and prepare to swim, followed by the announcer or starter/referee announcing the event/distance/heat.
2. When all swimmers have approached the blocks, starter/referee blows a long whistle for the heat to step onto the block and take their preparatory position.
3. Once all swimmers are on the blocks, the referee immediately turns the heat over to the starter
4. When swimmers are settled into position, starter says "take your marks"
5. When swimmers have assumed the correct starting position and are stationary, starter activates the starting signal

BACKSTROKE STARTS

1. The starter/referee signals the swimmers with a series of short whistles (at least 4) to approach the side of the blocks and prepare to swim followed by the announcer or starter/referee announcing the event/distance heat.
2. When all swimmers are at the side of the blocks, starter/referee blows a long whistle for the heat to immediately step into the water.
3. When all swimmers have surfaced, starter/referee blows a second long whistle to have the swimmers return to the wall and immediately assume their starting positions.
4. The procedure is then the same as in steps 3-5 in the FORWARD START section.
5. Optional: If a swimmer (or swimmers) has not responded to the whistles, referee/starter may say "step up" or "step in"

Important Sports Medical Information

The safety of our student-athletes is always of utmost concern. 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

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 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](#) 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 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 and expires at the time the Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit expires.

CONTEST OFFICIALS' REQUIREMENTS

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. 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 OHSAA member schools to all students and their parents prior to each sports season. Students and parents should 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 sports such as dribbling, fielding, batting, etc.
5. Full contact in practice setting.

6. Match 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 Parents/Guardians Need to Know](#)

ADDITIONAL CONCUSSION RESOURCES

[Ohio Department of Health - Violence and Injury Prevention Program](#)

[Heads Up - Concussion in Youth Sports](#)

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

[Ohio Legislative Service Commissioner HB 143 Analysis](#)

[Brain Injury Association of Ohio](#)

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 and refer to the Sports' Medicine dropdown menu for additional information.