



To: Managers & sports directors/editors of media outlets  
From: John E. Roberts, Executive Director  
John R. Johnson, Communications Director  
Subject: 2016-17 MHSAA Multimedia Regulations  
Date: August 8, 2016

As we approach the upcoming school year, we'd like to take a few moments to remind you about MHSAA regulations which apply to audio, video and streaming data/text coverage of regular-season high school sporting events and MHSAA post-season tournaments.

MHSAA member schools have adopted a regular season rule which prohibits their appearance on live video – regardless of the distribution platform being used (cable, internet, over-the-air) – on non-school owned and operated platforms. Schools may apply for waiver of this rule, provided they are student-produced productions on school owned and operated platforms which exclusively broadcast school-based content, using the process found in the MHSAA Handbook. Non-school entities may not request waiver of the rule.

For MHSAA Tournament events, here are reminders to outlets wishing to originate video coverage, and for blogging on a sustained basis during a game:

- Blogs describing individual plays from a game on a sustained basis (i.e., each play in football, each possession in basketball, or each at-bat in baseball-softball) are considered to be performing real-time streaming and are subject to a rights fee. Blog entries posted periodically throughout a contest are not considered real-time streaming and are not subject to a rights fee.
- The MHSAA has granted all of the video rights to all tournament events to either the NFHS Network, PlayOn! Sports, or FOX Sports Detroit. These year-round partners have the first right of refusal to originate and are allowed to originate video on a live basis. But because of the large number of games available, many events will be declined by the MHSAA's year-round partners and be available for local origination.
- Outlets originating declined games are required to submit an electronic copy (DVD, tape, computer file) of the broadcast at their own expense within 72 hours of the first local airing to the NFHS Network.

For outlets wishing to cover MHSAA Tournament events, you are reminded that you must be a registered user of the MHSAA Website to be able to apply for the rights to those games. The entire process is now online, and outlets are required to prepay their rights fees by credit card in advance before they will be approved for broadcast. To become a registered user of the MHSAA Website, e-mail us at [media@mhsaa.com](mailto:media@mhsaa.com).

Audio outlets on any platform may apply for a tournament rights fee waiver by becoming a member of the MHSAA Network. Network affiliates are obligated to carry a minimum number of network originations from the Girls and Boys Basketball Finals, air the weekly This Week In High School Sports program, and pay an annual administrative fee to receive a rights fee waiver for any tournament games they wish to originate. The MHSAA Network also provides audio streams on a syndicated basis for media outlets to pick up at no charge for Finals in Girls and Boys Soccer, Football, Girls Volleyball Semifinals and Finals, Ice Hockey Semifinals and Finals, Girls and Boys Basketball Semifinals, Baseball and Softball Semifinals and Finals, and Girls and Boys Lacrosse Finals. For more information, e-mail us at [media@mhsaa.com](mailto:media@mhsaa.com).

(more)

We also wish to bring to your attention the following items:

- The credential limit for outlets originating audio broadcasts is now two (2) in ALL SPORTS – including football. Sites may grant additional credentials on a space-available basis, but are under no obligation to do so.
- Same-day delay video distribution of regular-season and MHSAA Tournament events may begin one hour after a game's completion.
- Non-network outlets which stream their over-the-air or cable MHSAA Tournament event broadcasts on the internet, and/or sell CD's, DVD's and downloadable Podcasts as secondary forms of distribution will incur a rights fee for each such distribution.
- Outlets are responsible for their own transmission arrangements for regular-season and most MHSAA Tournament games. Schools and tournament centers are not required to have telephone lines or internet access for outlets. The MHSAA does provide telephone lines and internet access at selected Finals events for broadcasting purposes.

Consult the MHSAA Multimedia Regulations for more information. They are available on the MHSAA Website.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact this office. We appreciate your support of interscholastic athletics and look forward to serving you in the year ahead.

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