



MHSAA Wrestling Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

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The MHSAA has been and remains committed to providing a safe and competitive interscholastic athletic experience for all participants, coaches and officials in MHSAA-sponsored sports and events, including those with and without disabilities. The following is a summary of the current wrestling accommodations for students with disabilities.

Visually Impaired Wrestler (NF WR Rule 6-2-4)

In matches involving wrestlers with visual impairments, the finger-touch method shall be used in the neutral position and initial contact shall be made from the front. Contact is to be maintained throughout the match.

Wrestler with an Artificial Limb (NF WR Rule 4-5-9)

Any contestant who has been authorized to wear an artificial limb shall weigh-in with the artificial limb if the contestant chooses to wrestle with it on. Once a wrestler has weighed in with the artificial limb, it shall not be removed during competition.

Hearing Impaired Wrestler

At all MHSAA regular season and tournament events, a sign language interpreter will be allowed to be present for any qualified wrestler who is deaf or hard of hearing. The purpose of the sign language interpreter is to relay, between anyone present including coaches, officials providing instructions to participants, referees, official scorers, and/or other competitors, and the qualified wrestler any and all auditory information including, but not limited to, instructions, reports of injuries, indications of the beginning and end of points and matches, technical advice from coaches, and all other auditory information that the interpreter, in their professional training and experience, deems necessary for the well-being of the qualified wrestler to promote safety and effective communication.

The sign language interpreter does not count against the two-person limitation of coaches in the corner. The sign language interpreter will be allowed **360 degree access** around the 28-foot circle on the qualified wrestler's mat, subject to the following requirements:

1. The sign language interpreter will be required to stay outside the active wrestling circle (28' circle) at all times.
2. If the wrestling mat and venue where the match is taking place are large enough, the sign language interpreter will be required to stay six feet from the active wrestling circle at all times. The six-foot barrier may be marked using tape or other methods.
3. If the mat and venue in question are not large enough to accommodate the six foot requirement referenced above, the sign language interpreter, after discussing the matter with the referee assigned to the match, will be allowed to position themselves closer to the 28' circle, while still remaining outside of the active wrestling circle, and ensuring they avoid contact or interference with referees, participants, and coaches.

Prior to the start of each match in which a qualified wrestler may utilize the services of a sign language interpreter, the qualified wrestler, his/her coach or interpreter shall notify the assigned referee of the sign language interpreter's presence and participation.

The sign language interpreter shall make reasonable efforts to not interfere with participants, referees, the scores officials, or coaches, or otherwise interfere with the qualified wrestler's match and/or matches occurring on adjacent mats during multi-team contests, such as unreasonably blocking or restricting movement of participants, coaches, or referees, or obstructing a coach's, referee's, or score official's view.

In the event a sign language interpreter makes contact with a participant, coach, scores official, or referee, interferes with an active match, coach, scores official, or referee, or otherwise violates any provision of this document, the referee overseeing the match in question will have the discretion to ask the sign language interpreter to position themselves farther or differently from the active wrestling circle, provided that the interpreter remains able to communicate effectively with the qualified wrestler.

By participating as an interpreter during an active match for a qualified wrestler under this procedure, the interpreter assumes the risks associated therewith and waives any and all claims against the MHSAA for injury that might result from such participation.