

Legacy Student Officials Program FAQs



Q: Who can become an MHSAA Student Official?

A: Any high school student at least 14 years of age. Freshman and sophomore student officials may officiate at the junior high/middle school level only, and junior and senior student officials may officiating at any subvarsity level. Junior and senior student officials may make a request to work at the varsity level depending on the sport and circumstances.

Q: What experience do I need?

A: None. It helps to have participated in the sport you officiate, but it is not necessary. Study and effort are as important as anything.

Q: What are the benefits of officiating?

A: There are several points of view but generally officials agree that these elements are benefits that make officiating worthwhile.

- An opportunity to give something back to the sports enjoyed.
- A way to stay involved in the sport(s).
- Physical activity and exercise.
- The chance to work with kids.
- Opportunity to earn extra money
- An opportunity to see your avocation become a vocation.

Q: What expectations will officiate have of me?

A: To become a respected official one must invest time to learn, time to practice and time to develop. Although the time devoted will vary from person to person, there are some requirements that must be observed. Rules meetings, clinics and officials meetings are necessary and part of the professionalism expected of officials. As with most things, officials improve according to their efforts.

Q: What does it take to become a good official?

A: It takes lots of things, but most certainly a very thorough knowledge of the rules of your sport, a love of athletics and kids, physical ability, self-confidence, the dedication and determination necessary to work hard, and above all, personal integrity. The athletes and coaches look upon each contest as being the most important thing happening in their lives at that moment, and the official must look upon each contest the same way, and react accordingly. This avocation is not for everyone, but if you have the interest and the attributes described above, you may find this to be some of the most rewarding work you will ever be involved in.

Q: What is the biggest adjustment I may need to make?

A: It is important to understand that the basic ingredient of officiating is that of being a decision maker, and sometimes people do not like decisions that don't go their way. Once you clear this hurdle and realize that people will criticize you because you make necessary decisions, rather than because you are a bad person, and you can accept this fact, you are on your way. It is not easy. Do not get discouraged! Stay in the game!

Q: What will I be paid?

A: Each individual school, or perhaps the conference or league establishes the pay schedule for regular season games.

Q: What expenses will I have?

A: Each sport requires an official to dress specifically. The MHSAA *Officials Guidebook* details the [uniform requirements](#). Some sports such as baseball require special equipment. The new official will benefit from purchasing quality uniforms and equipment. All Legacy Officials registering for the first time will be provided a gift certificate for assistance in the purchase of uniforms from [Correct Call Officiating Outfitters](#). Some associations or your mentor may help you get started by arranging the use of good, clean used items. Officials never use corduroy, denim or cotton slacks. Button-down collars are not appropriate for umpire shirts, and shoes must be solid black or in a few cases white. Officials are not permitted to become a "billboard" for manufacturers. All officials officiating a contest shall be attired identically.

Q: How does a high school student get involved in officiating?

A: To register with the MHSAA, visit MHSAA.com, Officials page to locate the Legacy registration application and the Legacy/Mentor Pledge Form. Contact someone you know or one of the [Local Approved Associations](#) to arrange for a mentor and submit a Legacy Student Official Program - Mentor Pledge with your application.

The MHSAA *Officials Guidebook* exam is required of all new officials. Football and basketball currently require each new official to take a mechanics exam before the registration is complete.

Your registration **will not be processed** for any sports until the test(s) are returned and passed with a 70% or better. When all obligations are met, the new official will receive a certificate of registration, emblem(s), plus all necessary Rules Books, Case Books and Officials Manuals where applicable.

Q: What are the registration policies for the student official?

A: An official who works any contest for member schools in grades 7-12 must be currently registered with the MHSAA in baseball, basketball, competitive cheer, football, softball, wrestling, volleyball, soccer, ice hockey, track/cross country, and swimming and diving.

Registration is for one year, August 1 through July 31 and is renewable subject to the approval of the MHSAA. Officials are expected to be neutral and competent. All MHSAA policies and regulations are to be adhered to and enforced. High school students will receive no ratings for their registration period. However, registration will apply to awards for years of service. High school student officials will benefit from a waiver of the standard processing fee/liability insurance fee for one year. Registration of the current per sport fee will be the only fee charged high school student officials.