



2026-27 BOYS & GIRLS SOCCER TOURNAMENT MANAGERS MANUAL

KEY REVIEW POINTS

- In each of four Divisions, schools will be assigned to one of 16 Districts.
- The first round of Boys Districts shall be played Oct. 14-16, with the semis and final scheduled from Oct. 19-24. The first round of Girls Districts shall be played May 26-28, with the semis and finals scheduled from June 1-5.
- From each District, the winning team advances to one of four Regionals in each Division.
- Boys Regional dates are Oct. 27-31. Girls Regional dates are June 8-12.
- Regional champions will advance to MHSAA Semifinal games in each Division. Boys Semifinals will be conducted on Nov. 4. Girls Semifinals will be conducted on June 15-16.
- Boys MHSAA Finals will be played Nov. 7 at one site with four Finals games on one day. Girls MHSAA Finals will be played June 18-19 at one site with two Finals games on each day.
- **Schools are required to have a school administrator or designee at each tournament game.**
- Tournament Managers hire officials for District-level games. The MHSAA assigns officials at the Regional, Semifinal and Final-level games.
- For Districts, the home team is the higher-seeded team. For Regionals and beyond, the home team is the team on the top line of the bracket.
- Managers must forward Eligibility Lists and Rosters of winning teams to the next-level tournament manager.
- Managers must file financial reports to the MHSAA at each level. District managers should include **only District Final games** in the report. Revenue and expenses of First Round and semifinal District games are handled locally.
- Participating teams at the District level must submit Master Eligibility Lists and Rosters to the tournament manager by the Opt-Out due date of Sept. 16 in the Boys season and April 28 in the Girls season. Late submission of materials is subject to a \$50 late fee.

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ADMISSION – Starting with the District Final game, GoFan digital tickets are required. Ticket prices for MHSAA Soccer Tournament games are \$8 for District games, \$10 for Regional games, \$11 for the State Semifinal games and \$12 for State Final games.

For the first two rounds of Districts, host schools sell tickets using the same method as a regular season home game (if selling digital tickets, GoFan must be used). If you are a GoFan school or would like to use GoFan to sell tickets, you can set up the ticket yourself or we can help you. Whether you sell GoFan or cash tickets, the ticket price is \$8. If you sell via GoFan, be sure to set “Attendee pays fee” to off (which will result in a lower net fee to the host).

Service Animals – The policies of the local host site shall prevail with respect to pets/animals. In the absence of local host policy, animals or pets shall not be permitted to enter MHSAA tournament venues; including spectator and team areas. However, properly marked or documented service animals that are leashed or harnessed at all times may accompany spectators paying admission or attending with other approved team or school personnel. Individuals who bring service animals are asked to bring their own waste disposal bags and request special seating in advance of the event if this is needed.

AED – MHSAA tournament host sites must have an AED within visible distance (within 1-3 minutes) of the event.

BENCH AREAS – Teams shall be in designated team bench areas on one side of the field of play. These areas should be marked in accordance with the NFHS Rule Book, specifically with 10 feet between the touchline and the bench

CONCUSSION PROTOCOLS – “Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.” The language above, which appears in all National Federation sports rule books, reflects a strengthening of rules regarding the safety of athletes suspected of having a concussion. This language reflects an increasing focus on safety and acknowledges that the vast majority of concussions do not involve a loss of consciousness. This protocol is intended to provide the mechanics to follow during the course of contests when an athlete sustains an apparent concussion.

1. The officials will have no role in determining concussion other than the obvious one where a player is either unconscious or apparently unconscious. Officials will merely point out to a coach that a player is apparently injured and advise that the player should be examined by a healthcare professional for an exact determination of the extent of injury.

2. If it is confirmed by the school's designated health care professional that the student did not sustain a concussion, the head coach may so advise the officials during an appropriate stoppage of play and the athlete may reenter competition pursuant to the contest rules.
3. Otherwise, if competition continues while the athlete is withheld for an apparent concussion, that athlete may not be returned to competition that day but is subject to the return to play protocol.
 - a. The clearance may not be on the same date on which the athlete was removed from play.
 - b. Only an M.D., D.O., Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner may clear the individual to return to activity.
 - c. The clearance must be in writing and must be unconditional. It is not sufficient that the M.D., D.O., Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner has approved the student to begin a return-to-play progression. The medical examiner must approve the student's return to unrestricted activity.
 - d. Individual school, districts and leagues may have more stringent requirements and protocols including but not limited to mandatory periods of inactivity, screening and post-concussion testing prior to the written clearance for return to activity.
4. Following the contest, an Officials Report shall be filed with a removed player's school and the MHSAA if the situation was brought to the officials' attention.
5. Member schools are required to complete and submit the forms designated by the MHSAA to record and track head injury events in all levels of all sports.
6. In cases where an assigned MHSAA tournament physician (MD/DO/PA/NP) is present, his or her decision to not allow an athlete to return to activity may not be overruled.

[Return to Activity & Post-Concussion Form](#)

COMMUNICATION WITH PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS – Managers must prepare information packets for participating teams at all levels as follows:

District – The MHSAA will determine the draw/bracket 10 days before the start of Districts. Managers should determine the date, time, and location of the semifinals and finals prior to the draw, preferably at the beginning of the season. When the District draw is determined, managers should work with schools to gather game dates and times for First Round games, and immediately give them to the assigner and the MHSAA (the next day at the latest). In addition, managers should provide information to competing schools regarding the time schedule, location of the field, directions, locker room access (or lack of) and all other pertinent details of the tournament.

Regional – Managers must prepare a winning team packet for each District Manager to give to the winning team. This packet should include: (a) map with directions to Regional game field, (b) date and starting time of the game, (c) location of dressing and shower facilities, (d) host school facility rules, (e) parking arrangements for buses or cars of competing schools. The District Tournament Manager shall give the packet to the winning team.

Semifinal/Final – Managers must prepare a winning team packet for each Regional Manager to give to the winning team. The packet should include directions/map to the Semifinal/Final field location, time schedule, location of dressing rooms, parking arrangements for school vehicles and host school facility rules. Make sure the winning team packet is at the Regional site for distribution by the manager to winning teams prior to the Regional Championship game.

All school communication/information packets should include reminders of the school administrator attendance requirement (see School Administrator Requirement).

DATES/TIME SCHEDULES – Teams are encouraged to arrive one hour before game time. Failure to be ready for play by twenty-five minutes after the scheduled starting time will result in forfeiture. (In emergency situations and when a delay has been reported, the manager may delay the start time.)

Unlighted Fields – In the fall season, District and Regional doubleheaders are not to be played on fields without lights. District hosts without lights should play the semifinals at two sites with the higher-seeded team hosting. Regional hosts without lights will play one semifinal on Tuesday and one on Wednesday with the championship game on Saturday. If playing on an unlighted field, games should be scheduled early enough so an OT game can be completed before conditions are too dark – 4:30 should be the latest start time for an unlighted field.

District Schedule – District tournament assignments are posted on the MHSAA website. Only schools assigned to a District tournament by the MHSAA are eligible to participate.

During the boys tournament the First Round District games shall be scheduled for the Wednesday-Friday prior to the week of the District Final (Oct. 14-16). Semifinals and Finals will be played from Monday-Saturday (Oct. 19-24). For the girls tournament, the First Round District games shall be scheduled for the Wednesday-Friday prior to Memorial Day (May 26-28). Semifinals and Finals will be played from Tuesday-Saturday (June 1-5).

For all First Round games, the two competing teams must work together to determine the day and starting time. By mutual agreement, First Round games could be played on Monday or Tuesday. Start times for District semifinal and final games are determined by the host tournament manager and/or host school.

Regional Schedule – All Regional tournaments in all divisions will be four-team tournaments with assignments posted on the MHSAA website. Dates for Regional games are October 27-31 for boys and June 8-12 for girls. To determine the time schedules and dates for Regional Tournament games, the following is to be observed by Regional Tournament Managers:

Regional Tournament Managers will host all Regional games. If a manager schedules semifinal games on Tuesday or Wednesday in a doubleheader format, the Regional Championship game may not be scheduled on the next day. If a manager schedules one Regional semifinal game on Tuesday and one on Wednesday, the Regional Championship game must be scheduled on Saturday. Any deviations must be approved by the MHSAA. Start times of individual games are determined by the tournament manager. Once the schedule is posted, game dates, times and locations cannot be changed without MHSAA approval. If schools competing in Regional & Semifinal play are more than 200 miles from the host one way, the MHSAA may become involved in selecting a neutral site or modifying the time of the originally scheduled contest between the affected competing schools.

DISTRICT HOSTING OPTIONS – District Final host managers have the following options, which must be made known prior to the start of the draw. **In ALL cases, the District Final host's team may play ALL of its games at home, regardless of its seed.** The host team, if a lower seed, will wear white away jerseys, even though the game is played on its home field.

1. Host the District Final game. The Semifinals and the First Round will be played at the site of the higher-seeded team.

2. Host both Semifinal games and the District Final game. Revenue and expenses of the Semifinal games are the responsibility of the District Host. First Round District games are still hosted by the higher-seeded team.

All First Round games will be held at the higher-seeded team, with the exception that the designated host school can play all games at home even if it is not the higher seed. In addition, with approval from both schools, any other First Round game can be played at the District host site.

NOTE to District Hosts: MHSAA guarantees officials' expenses and host revenue share for District Final game only. The Tournament Financial Form is for the District Final only.

When a school is the higher-seed team for a First Round District game (and thus would be the host) but does not have a field at least 60 yards wide and 110 yards long, the game will be held at the site of the lower-seeded school. If neither school has a field at least 60 x 110 yards, the game will be held at the field offered by the higher-seeded school.

DRAW PROCEDURES – District hosts do not need to host a draw meeting. The District bracket will be determined by the MHSAA and posted to the MHSAA website on the Sunday 10 days prior to the tournament. Prior to that date, typically at the beginning of the season, District hosts are asked to notify the MHSAA and participating schools on the date, time and location of the semifinals and finals. **Within 24 hours after the District draws have been posted**, hosts should finalize First Round game days, times and locations and give to their assigner and the MHSAA. Assigners have a very short time to assign officials for these games, so this needs to be a timely process.

All teams in the District are seeded according to MPR, with #1 playing #8, #2 playing #7, and so on. Go to the MICHIGAN POWER RATING portion of this document to read about how MPR is used to seed the teams.

Other draw notes:

- The required field dimensions to host an MHSAA tournament game are a minimum of 60x110.
- The higher-seeded teams are considered the home team and will wear dark shirts and socks. If the District host is the lower-seeded team, it is considered the visiting team and will wear white. It can, however, use its traditional home bench, locker room, and scoreboard position.
- Every attempt should be made to avoid a situation in which only one of the two teams in a game play on successive days or nights.

When a team withdraws from the District Tournament after the draw has taken place the following procedures will apply:

- **Four or eight team District:** The bracket position of the team that withdraws is vacated, its opponent advances, and no re-draw is held.
- **Five team District:**
 - If the team that withdraws did not receive a bye in the initial draw and is in the bracket position for a First Round game, the bracket position of the team that withdraws is vacated, its opponent advances to the semifinal, and no re-draw is held.
 - If the team that withdraws was scheduled to play the winner of the First Round game, move the two First Round opponents directly to the semifinal.
 - If the team that withdraws received a bye into the semifinals and is scheduled to play another team that received a bye (resulting in its opponent advancing directly to the District Final without playing a game), then a re-draw of all remaining teams is required by the tournament manager.

- **Six or seven team District:** If the team that withdraws did not receive a bye in the initial draw and is in the bracket position for a First Round game, the bracket position of the team that withdraws is vacated, its opponent advances to the semifinals, and no re-draw is held. If the team that withdraws received a bye into the semifinals in the initial draw, move the two corresponding First Round opponents directly to the semifinal.

DRONE POLICY – For the purposes of this policy the word “drone” applies to all Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. The policy is written for all MHSAA tournament contests. Local laws and policies control all regular-season contests.

Drones are prohibited for all indoor tournament contests in all sports. For outdoor sports, local, state, and federal laws govern the use of drones. Drones may never be flown over spectators, athletes, or the playing surface. All drones must stay outside of the “restraining line” or the normal footprint of the playing surface. This includes never flying over bleachers, press box, or anywhere that spectators sit or gather for a contest. The operator of the drone must be registered with the FAA and follow local, state, and federal law when flying the drone. [Register Your Drone](#).

Drones can never be used for the purposes of scouting opponent’s games or practices. Facilities reserve the right to restrict drones on their property. An exception to this policy may be made in specific cases for MHSAA broadcast partners, provided the management of the tournament facility permits the presence of UAVs for broadcast purposes under the control of the MHSAA.

ELIGIBILITY LISTS/ROSTERS – Each manager must fax or email the winning team Roster and Master Eligibility List to the next level tournament manager immediately after the conclusion of the final game. It is imperative that the next level manager be made aware of, as soon as possible, what teams have progressed in the MHSAA Tournament.

The maximum player roster size is 25. An exception can be made for teams that have carried more than 25 for the entire season. The roster can change from game to game. In addition, a maximum of 6 additional coaches and/or team personnel are allowed to be in the team area.

To be eligible to compete in the MHSAA tournament for Soccer, a student must have competed in that sport in at least four games with his/her school team against other MHSAA member school teams. Visit the [Soccer PSTI](#) to view the waiver procedure.

FACILITY REQUIREMENTS – It is paramount that game fields and the surrounding areas are playable and have minimal risk. There must be designated team areas, anchored goal nets, a correctly marked and mowed game field, and restrooms. Any drain areas or track pits should be covered or protected if they come into play on or off the field. Enforce a 10-foot distance from touchline for spectators and team benches.

It is recommended that a rope, fence or other means is used to keep spectators the required distance away from the touchline. Tournament management may request that spectator sections not stand during play if standing will block the view of other spectators. If possible, policies that prohibit spectator sections from standing during play should be communicated to participating teams in advance of their arrival at the tournament site.

FINANCES/EXPENSES – Managers must fill out and submit to the MHSAA the appropriate Financial Report form following the completion of the tournament. All MHSAA host sites will be reimbursed for game officials’ expenses (officiating fee + mileage) only. Once the financial report is received by the MHSAA, our office will provide a reimbursement payment to the host school for the game officials fees and mileage, if applicable.

Revenue and expenses of games prior to the District Final are **not** to be included in the MHSAA Financial report.

Audit of Tournament Host Reports – All MHSAA tournament sports sites are subject to audit. These sites are to be randomly selected and require documentation of all income and expenses. Tournament expenses different from regular season host site expenses in that same sport will require justification before said expenses are approved for payment to or retention by the host site.

FORFEITURES/USE OF INELIGIBLES – Teams that are 25 or more minutes late for the start of a contest without prior communication with tournament management are subject to forfeiture. Managers may start games late at their discretion if communication has taken place with teams experiencing legitimate travel delays.

Individuals or teams that are defeated by an ineligible opponent or teams which allowed one or more ineligible students to participate or teams or individuals found to be in violation of contest limitations or maximums do not advance in MHSAA tournaments. If placements in MHSAA tournaments are vacated as a result of an individual being ineligible or a team allowing one or more ineligible students to participate, other individuals or teams neither advance to those placements or receive awards for those places.

GAME BALL – The Tournament Manager is requested to inform competing teams of the brand and style of soccer ball that will be used at your tournament site. The distinction between a molded or a hand-stitched ball is significant to competing teams. The MHSAA will not reimburse host schools for the cost of a game ball. The MHSAA will provide game balls (Wilson Vivido) for all Regional, Semifinal and Finals games.

INJUNCTION OR RESTRAINING ORDER PROCEDURE – Managers are reminded of the following statement adopted by the Representative Council and which is in effect for all MHSAA tournaments: "In the interest of fairness to all participants, if an injunction or restraining order is served or presented at an MHSAA tournament site and such purports to require the eligibility of or participation by a student or team which a school and/or the MHSAA has ruled to be ineligible under MHSAA regulations, the on-site tournament manager is to suspend the entire competition (team competition) or events in which that student is intending to participate (individual competition)." If the meet has begun, it shall be completed.

MEDIA NOTES – For information on credentials, locker room privacy policy, microphones, photographers, flash photography, postgame interviews, press box, results, streaming (audio and video), and videotaping, go to this [Media/Streaming Information PDF](#).

Here are a few important sections, some specific to soccer:

- **PHOTOGRAPHY** - Photographers should not be positioned within two yards of any sideline or endline. If on the end line, they may not be inside the goal box area.
- **RESULTS/SCORE REPORTING** – Tournament results should be reported to the MHSAA immediately after games, not the next morning. Scores of bracketed tournaments should be entered in the Score Center on the MHSAA web site or emailed to results@mhsaa.com. Host schools are responsible for informing local media and the major daily newspapers.
- **STREAMING – AUDIO & RADIO** – Outlets are required to submit a broadcast application for postseason events with the MHSAA. Approval or denial emails will be sent to both the outlet and host school. Outlets are encouraged to check with the host school before applying to check on space/equipment needs. There is no limit to the number of outlets that may stream

audio – as long as the host can accommodate them. In the regular season, outlets do not need to submit broadcast applications but need permission from the host school to provide an audio stream.

- **STREAMING - VIDEO (REGULAR SEASON)** – Video streaming during the regular season is allowed by the home/host school in a couple of different ways. If the home/host school is a member of the NFHS Network, they must stream games to the NFHS Network first and foremost. They can also produce a stream to broadcast on a school-controlled page (separate from the NFHS stream). Additionally, NFHS Network members can partner with local media to broadcast regular season home games on the media outlet's channel/website. Schools that are not members of the NFHS Network can stream regular season home games to a school-controlled webpage. Refer to the Multimedia Regulations for more information.
- **STREAMING - VIDEO (POSTSEASON)** - The broadcast and streaming rights of MHSAA post-season tournament events belong exclusively to the NFHS Network, the MHSAA, and those media outlets that have pre-arranged to secure those rights. Teams participating in MHSAA Tournaments are prohibited from streaming live video of any portion of an event over the Internet - including using social media platforms or any other method. Likewise, individual spectators are also prohibited from live streaming video through any means. Participating schools are responsible for informing their students, parents, and other fans of this policy and to assist the MHSAA upon request in enforcing it.

MERCHANDISING – Concession stands, whether operated by school or non-school groups, must confine sales to non-alcoholic beverages, edible items, and general school spirit items that were available at regular-season home contests. The selling of tournament-related merchandise is limited to programs offered by the MHSAA and its authorized vendors, which may be in contact with you regarding their availability. Such programs may include, but are not limited to, the following categories: T-shirts, DVDs and photography. Regardless of the availability of such authorized programs, schools may not produce their own tournament-specific merchandise items to sell at MHSAA tournament sites.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY POLICY – Host school Tournament Managers should follow all local school district policies regarding medical emergencies for participating athletes, coaches, students and adult spectators for competition conducted in school facilities. It is advised that AED devices be readily available during tournament competition. In addition:

- Trainers are an allowed expense for the tournament host and are encouraged but not required.
- If your school requires immediate and continuous attention, you are encouraged to bring your own certified athletic trainer (at your school's expense) to cover your team's needs and to also assist in the event if called upon. Your school's certified medical professional may not overrule certified medical professionals provided by tournament management.
- All MHSAA concussion protocols will be followed.
- MHSAA policy on tornado watches and warnings shall be followed.
- MHSAA policy on managing heat and humidity shall be followed.

When MHSAA tournament contests are conducted at non-school facilities, plans should be developed for the following needs and/or circumstances:

- Student, coach and spectator shelter for outdoor events.
- Host facility emergency equipment, such as AED's, fire escape, etc.
- Emergency communications, i.e. phone numbers, school administration contact.
- Coordination with facility management regarding evacuation, first aid, on-site responsibilities.
- Medical transport or first responder contact procedures.
- Proximity/directions of nearest medical facility.

- If your school requires immediate and continuous attention, you are encouraged to bring your own certified athletic trainer (at your school's expense) to cover your team's needs and to also assist in the event if called upon. Your school's certified medical professional may not overrule certified medical professionals provided by tournament management.

IMPORTANT NOTE: For all MHSAA tournaments conducted at either school or non-school facilities, an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is required to be within visible distance of the event.

MICHIGAN POWER RATING (MPR) – The Michigan Power Rating (MPR) formula will be used for boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, ice hockey, volleyball and boys and girls lacrosse. MPR is simply winning percentage times 25%, plus opponents' winning percentage times 50%, plus opponents' opponents' winning percentage times 25%. Ties count as half a win and half a loss.

The only games calculated for MPR are games played between teams that will play in the MHSAA tournament. Games that do not count include games against out-of-state schools, games versus JV teams, games against varsity B teams, games against non-school club teams, and games against MHSAA schools that are not playing in the tournament.

MPR only looks at who won and who lost – or who tied. MPR does not look at scores or margin of victory. It does not matter if you are home or away. Games at the beginning of the season are weighed the same as games at the end of the season. Scrimmages are not used in the calculation.

For soccer, games in multi-team tournaments count toward MPR as long as they are at least 40 minutes long. If multi-team tournament games are decided by shootout, those are wins and losses—not ties. In addition, games forfeited also count as a loss for one team and a win for the other.

The most current MPR for each school can be found at <https://www.mhsaa.com/MPR>. This page updates every 5 minutes, so after a score is entered into the system visitors will quickly be able to see how the result affects each team's MPR.

Schools must enter game schedules to MHSAA.com prior to the season. Games entered into Arbiter, BigTeams and Eventlink should automatically migrate to the MHSAA website. All other games can be manually entered. Schedules can also be edited throughout the season. Call the MHSAA if you are having issues.

Upon the completion of each game, the final score must be submitted. If no score is submitted three hours after the scheduled start time, an email reminder will be sent to both athletic directors and coaches. This is a crowd-sourced system – anyone with an MHSAA login can enter a game score. Schools should take advantage of this and instruct an assistant coach, or a parent, or a student to make sure all scores are posted to the system.

Only games played and scores reported through the District reporting period, 10 days before the tournament, will be included in calculations. Unreported scores and games played but missing from the published schedules will not be included.

All teams with at least eight results will be seeded first, followed by the schools with less than eight games.

The formula needs some time to start making sense. There will be many anomalies at the beginning of the season, but once each team has about 10 results reported, the MPR numbers will start to fall into place. Remember to be patient early in the season.

OFFICIALS – If a game is played at a site that is not the designated host site, the tournament manager should make clear who is in charge of arranging officials for the game. For District semifinal and championship games, managers must select officials from the list of those who attended a current year's rules meeting and who were recommended by competing schools. Schools hosting First Round District games are encouraged to select individuals who attended a Soccer Rules Meeting and were recommended by competing school coaches. It is required that all matches use three (3) officials to work a diagonal system.

The MHSAA will assign officials at the Regional, Semifinal and Final level. Tournament Managers are responsible for paying game officials. **Fees are \$100 per District and Regional game, and \$125 for State Semifinal and State Final games, with \$0.40/mile roundtrip mileage after a 50-mile deductible.** Schools will be reimbursed by the MHSAA only for the District Final, Regional and State Semifinal/Final game officials by reporting the expense on the financial report form. Managers must also notify each official of the time and place of their game.

When assigning postseason officials, MHSAA staff uses the main MHSAA Arbiter group -- #107891. If you have not had access to this group in the past, you will see an invitation to be added in the upper right-hand corner of your page in the dropdown menu once you've logged in. Please accept that invitation in order that you can view and pay the officials assigned to your games

OFFICIALS ACCOMMODATIONS – Whenever we visit, it is comforting to know that when we arrive we are both welcome and expected. An official visiting a school to officiate a game has the same needs, to be expected and to be welcome. Tournament managers can develop a routine which can provide officials with a few comforts that will make their arrival and stay pleasant. Regardless of your school size, someone can be waiting for the official to arrive so he/she can be escorted to their dressing room. The room set aside for the official should be private, clean and contain a place to secure his/her belongings. The coach's office is often used, but it may not allow for privacy nor does it always offer a space for the official to store his/her clothing or equipment.

Check your building, locate the best room and set up an officials room. It may be an unused storage area or office. If you are privileged to have a locker room which is not used on game night, it may be the spot. The official would prefer to avoid being in the same area, especially within sight or sound of the teams. Providing a private place for officials will permit the opportunity to concentrate on their duty to officiate the game. The public areas (coaches' offices) to which officials are often assigned may suffer from interruption or the fish bowl effect. All too often the official becomes involved in conversation with the residents of the office and little time is available for pre-game discussion.

Schools hosting MHSAA tournament events in every sport have a responsibility to prepare a place for the officials assigned to their site. The MHSAA has created a list of guidelines to aid tournament managers in this preparation. Adherence to the essential elements are the expected minimum for tournament hosts. The tournament manager is expected to provide the following for all tournament contests hosted.

Host – An identifiable person who will meet official, escort to the dressing area, and assist official as necessary.

Security – A person or persons identified to the officials who will assist in passage from the contest site to the dressing area. The security person will be able to unlock and lock the dressing area when necessary. A security person can be assigned to the dressing area to assure that officials are not interrupted by the media, the fans, the players or the coaches.

Officials' Room – A room for officials that is private and separate from dressing area of any contestants and provide security for valuables belonging to officials. An adjacent office within a locker room is not desirable. The area should be absent of distractions to enable a proper pre-game meeting. Separate facilities are expected for male and female officials. At no time is it reasonable to expect an official to use an area accessible to the public.

Showers/Restrooms – Showers and restroom facilities should be available to officials for private use. It is unacceptable to place officials in a position which requires them to share public facilities. In the event facilities must be shared with contestants, it is best that that use be separate and uninterrupted. The area must allow that valuables will be secure.

The tournament manager may desire to provide the following for all tournament contests hosted.

- Supervised Parking
- Game Program
- Refreshments/Snacks
- Towels & Soap

OFFICIALS AREA – There must be an officials area designated between the team areas. At Districts, Regionals, Semifinals and Finals, each Tournament Manager shall secure his/her own personnel for the position of scorer, timer and announcer.

OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPER – No MHSAA soccer game shall start without a scorekeeper who will record goals, substitutions, cautions issued and disqualifications of players and coaches. These are minimal requirements of the scorekeeper. The scorekeeper shall receive official rosters from each team which should be available at the score table in the officials' area for review by the officials. A sounding device (scoreboard horn, air horn, whistle or bell) to notify the referee of a substitution is required. Placing the scorekeeper in the officials' area greatly improves the communication and working relationship between the scorekeeper and the officials.

OPT OUT DATE/ENTRY MATERIALS – Each participating school must supply a Master Eligibility List and roster to the District tournament manager by the Opt-Out Due Date. Late submission of materials is subject to a \$50 late fee to be retained by the District tournament manager. Eligibility lists may be updated any time prior to the first MHSAA tournament date. A complete roster (first & last name, and number of each player) and list of all personnel that are going to be in the team box must be submitted to the scorer at least 5 minutes prior to game time.

PLAYING RULES/OVERTIME – All National federation playing rules will be followed during the MHSAA Tournament, including the following:

Duration of Game – All regular season varsity and MHSAA tournament competitions shall be played in two equal halves of 40 minutes.

Completed Game – Once the first half has been completed, the game shall end when a team is behind 8 goals or more in any game at any level of the MHSAA tournament.

Tied Game – See the following procedure:

When the score is tied at the end of regulation time, the referee will instruct both teams to return to their respective team areas. There will be five minutes during which both teams may confer with their coaches, and the referee will instruct both teams as to proper procedure.

1. There shall be two, full 10-minute overtime periods. (No Golden Goal)

- a. A coin toss shall be held as in Rule 5-2-2d.
 - b. At the end of the first 10-minute overtime period, teams shall change ends.
 - c. There shall be a 2-minute interval between periods.
2. If the score still remains tied, all coaches, officials and team captains shall assemble at the halfway line to review the procedure as outlined below:
 - a. The head referee shall choose the goal at which all shots from the penalty mark shall be taken. **Only officials and players taking kicks shall be on the field.**
 - b. Each coach will select any five players, including goalkeeper, on or off the field (except those who may have been disqualified) to take the kicks.
 - c. A coin toss shall be held. The team winning the toss shall have the choice of kicking first or second.
 - d. Teams will alternate kickers. There is no follow-up on the kick.
 - e. The defending team may change the goalkeeper prior to each penalty kick.
 - f. Following five kicks for each team, the team scoring on the greatest number of these kicks shall be declared the winner.
 - g. Add one goal to the winning team score and credit the team with a victory. An asterisk (*) may be placed by the team advancing to indicate the advancement was the result of a tiebreaker system.
3. If the score remains tied after each team has had five kicks:
 - a. Each coach will select five different players than the first five who already have kicked to take the kicks in a sudden-victory situation, wherein if one team scores and the other team does not score, the game is ended without more kicks being taken.
 - b. If the score remains tied, continue the sudden-victory kicks with the coach selecting any five players (except disqualified players) to take the next set of alternating kicks. If a tie still remains, repeat 3-a.

If players are cautioned during the shootout, use the Misconduct Procedures listed at the end of the Tie-Breaking Procedures in the NFHS Soccer Rules Book.

PUBLIC ADDRESS ANNOUNCER – Only public address announcements relevant to the tournament and the MHSAA should be made during your games. Additional scripts may be provided to the finals announcer on the day of the event by the MHSAA. The Public Address Announcements may be found on the soccer web pages at www.MHSAA.com.

The announcer also has the duty to verbally count down the last ten seconds of each period. This helps the official who may not be able to see the clock and the ball at the same time.

PRACTICE ON TOURNAMENT GAME FIELDS – During the weeks of District, Regional or Semifinal games, teams may not practice on the respective game fields (except the host school on its home field). If the MHSAA Final is played on artificial turf, a team in the Final who has not played on artificial turf that season may practice on the Finals field if Host Management can make arrangements to do so.

50/50 RAFFLE – MHSAA tournament hosts can conduct 50/50 raffles provided the host site manager requests and receives the appropriate license from the State of Michigan. [Charitable Gaming Raffle License](#)

RESCHEDULING POLICY – If an MHSAA tournament or meet is postponed or suspended because the facility becomes unavailable or a result of acts of persons or nature, and the playing rules require that the meet or contest must be played or resumed, the meet or contest must be played or completed on the first available subsequent date at the same facility.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR REQUIREMENT – Tournament Managers shall notify each school competing in their tournament that a school administrator or faculty designee (an employee of the school district, but not a school coach) is required by MHSAA Representative Council action to attend each MHSAA soccer tournament series game, home and away, in which its team competes. The start of the game will not be delayed; however, schools not complying will face MHSAA administrative disciplinary action.

SCOREBOARD – When available, the home school's scoreboard (stadium) clock is to indicate official time. If necessary, the referee shall immediately direct the adjustment of time on the visual clock if timing discrepancies occur. Do not turn off the visible clock. The stadium clock is the official time and the end of the game will be designated when time expires on the visible clock.

In addition, the scoreboard operator should be aware that the clock does not start when the official blows the whistle. The clock starts when the ball is actually put in play. The clock also stops when the leading team has a substitution in the last five minutes of regulation and last five minutes of overtime.

SEEDING – All teams in each District will be determined by the Michigan Power Rating formula (see MPR section earlier in this document). Seeds will be determined on the Sunday, 10 days prior to the beginning of the tournament, with District brackets posted to MHSAA.com. All results through Saturday's games will count.

District hosts no longer need to hold a District draw meeting. In a District with no designated host, the higher-seeded teams have the first priority to host.

SPECTATOR POLICIES – The following general policies apply to spectators at MHSAA Soccer Tournament events. Tournament managers may also have additional school, facility or institutional restrictions and/or policies.

- Banners are allowed with Meet Manager approval.
- Noisemakers must be approved by the Meet Manager. Air horns, whistles and vuvuzelas are not allowed.
- Pep bands are allowed as long as they do not interfere with the officials' adjudication of the game. Instruments that could potentially be confused with the official's whistle or the scoreboard horn should not be used.
- Body paint is not allowed.
- Smoking is not allowed at the tournament site.
- Tournament management may request that spectator sections not stand during play if standing will block the view of other spectators. If possible, policies which prohibit spectator sections from standing during play should be communicated to participating teams in advance of their arrival at the tournament site.
- Spectators may tape games from their normal seating area but are not to interfere with the view of other spectators or news media personnel covering the activity. A manager is not required to provide electrical hook-ups; or tripod space and may arrange spectator videotaping from a designated location(s).
- [CHART: MHSAA Guidelines For Spectators & Teams](#) (includes noisemakers and music/speakers)

SUSPENDED/POSTPONED GAMES – MHSAA Regulations regarding suspension for lightning and thunder apply to all tournament games. When lightning is observed or thunder is heard, the contest must be suspended. The occurrence of lightning or thunder is not subject to interpretation or discussion. When a contest is suspended, the home school administration shall attempt to arrange for the security of all participants. Contestants and support personnel shall be moved to appropriate indoor facilities. When lightning is observed or thunder is heard and the contest is suspended, contestants shall not return to the playing field until lightning has been absent from the local sky and thunder has not been heard for 30 minutes. Spectators shall be advised of the action being taken to seek shelter. (Some hosts may be able to offer shelter to spectators but are not required to do so.)

Weather delays in the MHSAA tournament do NOT follow the regular season guidelines. Games may be delayed by more than 90 minutes. Common sense and discussion with participating team administrators will dictate the maximum length of a delay.

For MHSAA tournament games, IF conditions make it impossible to finish any game:

- If one complete half or more of the game has been played and a team is behind by more than one goal, the referee shall declare it a completed game.
- If fewer than 60 minutes have been played and a team is behind by only one goal, then it is a suspended game.
- If at least 60 minutes have been played and one team is leading, the game is complete. If the game goes to overtime, however, the entirety of the OT must be completed.
- In all cases, whenever the suspended game is resumed it is done so from the exact point of suspension on the next available day.

SPORTSMANSHIP – MHSAA Regulation V, Section 3 applies in all tournament contests, including the following provisions:

Unsportsmanlike Conduct in Previous Contest – A player or coach who is ejected during a contest for sportsmanlike conduct shall be withheld by his/her school for at least the next day of competition for that team. If a school fails to enforce the subsequent disqualification with respect to one of its students or coaches, the tournament managers or any registered official or representative of a member school who becomes aware of the violation shall report it to the MHSAA, which shall prohibit the school from the remainder of the current tournament. Disqualified layers and coaches must also complete the NFHS Sportsmanship Course before returning to play.

Player Suspension – A suspended player is treated as an ineligible player, which means that student shall not participate. It is permissible, but is not recommended, that the player may sit with the team, even in uniform. The minimum requirement is that the suspended student shall not enter the contest as a participant.

Coach Suspension - Suspension from coaching requires at least that the coach not be at or near the team bench before, during or after the contest, not be in or near the locker room before, during or after the contest, and not give instructions directly or indirectly to coaches or players from any position in or near the gymnasium or field of play.

Multiple Disqualifications/Abuse of Officials – Any coach who is disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct two or more times during a season, any player who is disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct three or more times during a season, is not eligible to participate in the MHSAA tournament for that sport that season. If the tournament disqualifying ejection for that individual occurs during the MHSAA tournament, that player or coach is ineligible for the remainder of that tournament.

The school of the disqualified coach or player must prohibit that person from being present on the property of the tournament venue for the remainder of the tournament series. If that school fails to enforce this, the tournament manager, any registered official or representative of a member school who becomes aware of the violation shall report it to the MHSAA, which shall prohibit the school from the remainder of the current tournament.

Taunting – In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from the contest/day of competition (and the next contest/day of competition). A warning may be given but is not required before ejection.

Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs or personal matters.

At all MHSAA tournament venues, tournament management may give spectators one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt others are to be ejected by security.

Team Spectator Sports Celebrations – During contests, officials will penalize under applicable sportsmanship or playing rules student-athletes or coaches who leave the field of play and contact or approach spectator areas for celebrations.

Each school shall assign an acceptable number of adult crowd control supervisors to be stationed in front of its student cheering sections. These individuals are to be admitted free into the contest, enforce this policy and include a school administrator. Each tournament manager or the MHSAA Staff will determine the acceptable number of crowd supervisors necessary for each school dependent on the situation.

At the conclusion of contests, prior to or after awards are presented athletes shall not enter spectator areas or physically contact spectators in the stands. After awards are presented, athletes may approach their spectators (e.g. stand in front of their sections while on the field of play) but for safety reasons athletes are not to enter or physically contact spectators in the stands. Crowd supervisors are to ensure that spectators do not press the facility and possibly cause damage.

The cost for repair or replacement to facilities damaged as a result of celebrations shall be paid by the school involved directly to the host facility within 30 days of the bill being submitted to the school. MHSAA reimbursement or revenue sharing will be withheld until paid by the offending school. Future tournament hosting privileges or school reimbursements to offending schools may be withheld if payment is not made.

TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL POLICY – Use of alcohol or tobacco, including e-cigarettes or other smoking devices, is prohibited at MHSAA tournament events by players, coaches and spectators. Managers should stress in coaches meetings that they are not to use tobacco at the tournament venue.

TROPHIES/MEDALS – Tournament managers will receive both trophies and medals together in one shipment from ESCO. The box containing the trophies and medals should be opened immediately upon delivery and inspected for accurate amounts, engraving, etc. Tournament managers should contact ESCO directly (not the MHSAA) at 800-852-4266 with any questions or problems regarding trophy and medal shipments.

Distribution – Twenty-five individual members of the winning team in each division at each District and Regional level, as well as the Final championship and runner-up teams, will receive medals. District and Regional champion teams also receive trophies.

Tournament Managers are encouraged to have a short trophy and medal presentation immediately following the Championship Games. Persons making the presentations should be limited to faculty members of the host school, the Tournament Managers, members of the Representative Council, or members of the MHSAA staff. Only MHSAA-approved awards are to be presented to student-athletes at MHSAA meets and tournaments.

To order extra medals, use this [Extra Medal Order form](#).

WITHDRAWAL POLICY – If a school withdraws or fails to show for scheduled competition after the draw is completed for team sports, (or after the pairings, heat assignments or flights are determined for individual sports) of the first level of the MHSAA tournament in a sport; the MHSAA staff person responsible for the sport will request from the school principal a written explanation for the no-show/withdrawal. If the reason is determined to be unacceptable by MHSAA staff, the MHSAA Executive Director will place the school on probation for the next two school years. A second offense within the two-year probationary period will cause the school to be prohibited from tournament play in that sport for the two years following the second offense.

YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY – During the MHSAA Tournament events, the MHSAA expects all designated managers, volunteer or paid staff assisting in the event, officials, or any other personnel to follow local school district policy and state statute regarding the mandatory reporting of child abuse, bullying, hazing and sexual harassment. A report of such activity shall be made to legal authorities and to the MHSAA Executive Director or his designee.

District Soccer Schedule – Dates, Times and Locations

DISTRICT NO. _____ DIVISION _____ HELD AT _____

THIS FORM SHOULD BE FILLED OUT AT TWO DIFFERENT TIMES: 1) By Sept. 15/May 1, complete the first part of this form with Semifinal and Final dates and times, and 2) once the draw is known 10 days prior to the tournament, complete the FINAL schedule with matchups and First Round game dates and times. Note: First Round and Semifinal games expenses are borne by the home team, but the home team also keeps the entire gate.

DATE _____ DATE _____ DATE _____

At: _____ Time: _____	At: _____ Time: _____	Time: _____ _____
At: _____ Time: _____	At: _____ Time: _____	Time: _____ _____
At: _____ Time: _____	At: _____ Time: _____	
At: _____ Time: _____	At: _____ Time: _____	

When a higher-seeded school of a First Round District bracket (and thus would be the host) **does not have a field at least 60 yards wide and 110 yards long**, the game will be held at the site of the other school. If neither school has a field at least 60 x 110 yards, the game will be held at the field offered by the higher-seeded school.

IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY BY EMAIL (results@mhsaa.com): 1) Semifinal/Final schedule, 2) updated dates and times after the First Round & 3) game results EACH NIGHT.

2026-2027 BOYS & GIRLS SOCCER COMPLIMENTARY TICKET ORDER FORM

Each manager of a MHSAA Soccer Tournament is entitled to two complimentary tickets for a Soccer Tournament Final. Please reply and complete the lower portion of this memo and return it to our office prior to October 15 in the fall or June 1 in the spring. Complimentary tickets will be emailed from our office the following week. Thank you for your willingness to serve as a Host Tournament Manager.

2026 Boys Soccer Finals
Grand Ledge HS
November 7, 2026

2027 Girls Soccer Finals
Michigan State Univ
June 18-19, 2027

If you would like two complimentary tickets for a 2026-2027 Soccer Final Tournament, please mark **one** of the boxes below and email to maddie@mhsaa.com immediately. You may order tickets in the season for which you hosted an MHSAA tournament.

☐

Yes, I would like two (2) complimentary tickets for the BOYS SOCCER FINALS. These tickets are good all day.

☐

Yes, I would like two (2) complimentary tickets for the GIRLS SOCCER FINALS. These tickets can be used on either day. **Please indicate with Division/day in the box.**

I am hosting: District No. ____ Regional No. ____ Semifinal Div. ____

Manager _____

School _____

Email _____

Your Cooperation Please...

Fans are reminded that the broadcast and streaming rights of this event belong exclusively to the N-F-H-S Network, the M-H-S-A-A, and those media outlets which have pre-arranged to secure those rights. Any individual streaming of this event is strictly prohibited.

