

GTOA OFFICIATING STANDARDS

Great officiating at any level begins with understanding what is expected. The GTOA Officiating Standards are broken into two areas: Crew Standards and Individual Standards. These ideas are not new or groundbreaking but simply a reminder of how we are expected to perform as officials.

Crew Standards

The crew officiating components are determined by what the official does while on the field and while off the field.

In the area of On-Field Crew Officiating, there are two components:

1. Game Flow and Control

- **Crew members work together to ensure their game performance does not interrupt game flow**
- **Crew conferences are not excessive or lengthy, except when necessary to determine “calls of consequence”**
- **Penalties are enforced expeditiously, without avoidable delay**
- **Crew members work together to help control the game**
- **Crew members work together to ensure unnecessary team actions do not delay the game, for example side-line huddles or delays after timeouts and halftime**
- **Crew members work together to minimize player disruptions, such as scuffles**

2. Team Work

- **Crew members share responsibility for game officiating**
- **Crew members check rule application and/or enforcement made by other Crew members before play is resumed**
- **Crew members continually share observations of player/team actions and/or changes to game intensity**
- **Crew members step out of primary areas of responsibility as needed to ensure proper game coverage**
- **When appropriate, the Crew works together in conferences involving rule application and/or enforcement**
- **Crew members each defer to majority or Referee decisions in cases of rule application**
- **Crew limits conference participation to only those Officials who can contribute to a decision**

- Crew members who are not in the conference keep players clear of the conference

In the area of Off-Field Crew Work, there are five components, two of which apply specifically to Referees.

1. Game Readiness

- Crew prepares to correctly officiate the distinguishing characteristics of each game
- Crew prepares to cover the team play styles for each game (e.g., running or passing teams, huddle or no huddle) and demonstrates their readiness through correct officiating during the game
- Crew presents itself at all times in a professional manner and does not jeopardize the impartiality expected at all times of the officiating staff.
- Crew prepares to manage the unique circumstances of each game (e.g., volatile matchups, or traditional rivalries) and demonstrates their readiness by using preventative officiating
- Crew prepares to work as a team to manage any game situation
- Crew prepares to continually communicate with one another using signals, whistles, electronic devices, or voice as appropriate, and demonstrates their preparation through communication, coverage and accuracy
- Crew prepares to operate seamlessly in situations not specifically covered by position mechanics and demonstrates their preparation by improvising as a team when necessary to cover plays

2. Performance Assessment

- Crew conducts useful development-focused discussions about game performance
- Crew discusses good performance and areas for development in a frank and critical manner
- Crew identifies both specific successes and opportunities to improve
- Crew devises effective and executable plans/methods to improve performance
- Crew collectively accepts responsibility for performance
- Score at minimum 75% on proctored crew test

3. Game Production

- Crew establishes confidence and uses preventative officiating to facilitate game flow
- Crew works together by meeting equally with representatives from both teams and avoiding unnecessary conversations

- Crew collectively learns about atypical plays from head coaches and possibly assistant coaches, and ensures the plays are officiated correctly and/or rule infractions are prevented by communicating potential problems to teams
- Coaches/teams are aware of points of emphasis and/or rule interpretations
- “Get-back” coach keeps the sideline clear
- Crew is made aware of players with casts and casts meet requirements for safety
- Game time is correct and clock is reset when necessary
- Field markings (e.g., hash marks) are in accordance with NFHS rules and adjustment is made if necessary
- Crew performs all administrative tasks accurately and in a timely manner

There are specific areas of responsibility for the Referee as the crew chief that are expected in the area of Off-Field Crew Work.

4. Team Building

- Fosters an environment of camaraderie and a shared vision
- Roles for Crew members are clear before the season
- Crew members approach one another for advice and counsel
- All Crew members maintain respect for one another, particularly when they disagree
- Crew members that harm Crew camaraderie are appropriately addressed to prevent a divide among the Crew
- If possible, provide opportunities for Crew to interact socially

5. Meeting and Discussion Facilitation

- Ensures effective facilitation of pre-game meetings
- Crew members are confident when leaving the locker room and focused on the game
- Ensures effective facilitation of post-game discussions
- Crew members participate actively in discussions
- Performance conversations (for both areas of improvement and areas of excellence) revolve around specific observations rather than generalizations
- Insight from Crew members (particularly veteran officials) and trainers is actively sought and valued
- Crew members, individually and collectively, accept responsibility for performance
- Methods to improve performance are continually sought, developed and implemented

Individual Standards

1. Officiating Accuracy

- **Makes accurate calls and no-calls**
- **Calls in primary area of responsibility**
- **No-calls in primary area of responsibility are correct**
- **Calls made in another official's area of responsibility when necessary are correct**
- **Correctly enforces penalties**
- **Penalties assessed on calls are correct**
- **Penalties assessed reflect rule interpretations, points of emphasis, or established philosophies**
- **Down, distance, yard line, hash, time, time-outs, penalty enforcement, are all administered correctly**

2. Officiating Consistency

- **Makes consistent calls and no-calls from game-to-game, team-to-team, play-to-play and player-to-player**
- **Correct calls or correct no-calls, made under one set of circumstances are made correctly in a similar set of circumstances**
- **Calls or correct no-calls made differently in similar circumstances are defensible**

There are three components to Field Presence.

1. Decisiveness

- **Makes straightforward or easy-to-make calls quickly, firmly and unmistakably**
- **Does not hesitate or appear to lack confidence when making signals or decisions**
- **Does not delay on rulings**
- **Does not seek Crew members for "second opinion" or to diffuse responsibility**
- **Takes necessary time before making a difficult call or a call on an obstructed play**
- **Deliberately takes time to determine outcome of complex, close or buried plays**
- **Seeks Crew member observations or confirmation to resolve uncertainty**

2. Professionalism

- **Respects coaches, players, media, stadium personnel, crew, etc.**
- **GTOA does not receive valid complaints concerning an official's lack of respect or arrogance**

- **Conversations are polite, with a level of familiarity as appropriate**
- **Maintains temperament under all circumstances**
- **Appropriately answers questions and responds to comments from observers and/or supervisors**
- **Interacts with coaches, players, media, stadium personnel, etc., in a confident, appropriate, and deliberate manner**
- **Appropriately answers questions and responds to comments from coaches and players during the game**
- **Does not act inappropriately with players, coaches, administrators or fans before, during or after the game**
- **Uses interpersonal skills to diffuse or prevent confrontational situations with coaches and/or players**
- **Appropriately closes coach or player dialogue when questions become prolonged or argumentative**
- **Uses deliberate, selective body language, with coaches and players, which may change in intensity depending on the situation, but remains under control**
- **Makes precise signals when communicating**
- **Signals are understood**
- **Signals are emphatic, but under control**
- **Preliminary signals are made when appropriate**
- **Uses whistles and flags effectively**
- **Blows an effective whistle to communicate with Crew and players, as needed**
- **When in position to have definitive knowledge that the ball is dead by rule, blows whistle to indicate the same when that area is his responsibility**
- **Throws flag deliberately, confidently and away from players**
- **Does not show excessive emotion when throwing flag**

3. Game Oversight

- **Displays an awareness of game status and changes**
- **Uses signals to communicate the number of players on the field**
- **Ensures downs are correctly counted and displayed**
- **Ensures clocks accurately display game and play time or are reset immediately, when necessary**
- **Keeps track of time outs**
- **Monitors inappropriate dead-ball action and intervenes or makes calls when necessary**
- **Does not unnecessarily prevent play from continuing by holding up play when circumstances do not warrant such action**
- **Ensures coaches and players maintain appropriate side-line position**
- **Places player safety over other administrative responsibilities (i.e., never turns away from player action or threat of action early to retrieve game ball)**
- **Performs preventative officiating to facilitate game flow**
- **Quickly diffuses inflammatory situations or prevents them altogether by**

- **taking appropriate measures before an issue arises**
- **Quickly disperses player scraps or prevents them altogether by taking appropriate measures before a scrap arises**
- **Where appropriate, informs coaches or players of tactics or behavior that may result in a penalty**

There are two additional components to Field Presence for Referees.

4. Game Facilitation

- **Provides steady, efficient pace during game**
- **Uses effective verbal and non-verbal communication to ensure Crew is working together throughout the entire game**
- **Intensifies Crew leadership to manage events that may affect game flow and control**
- **Ensures that penalties are administered efficiently and decisively**
- **Confers with relevant Officials when necessary**

5. Call Announcements

- **Effectively communicates call announcements**
- **Does not delay announcements unnecessarily**
- **Speaks clearly, authoritatively and deliberately to be understood and command respect**
- **Uses correct NFHS signals to accompany verbal announcement**
- **Assumes the nearest stationary position prior to making announcements**
- **Explains calls and events appropriately and definitively**
- **Ensures microphone is off when appropriate (if applicable)**

There are two components to Fitness and Appearance.

1. Fitness

- **Maintains necessary physical fitness to perform officiating duties and be in proper position throughout game**

2. Appearance

- **Maintains an athletic appearance**
- **Wears a clean, neat, and properly fitted uniform**
- **Presents himself in appropriate attire during travel and during pre and post game responsibilities**

There are two components to Rules and Mechanics Knowledge.

1. Knowledge of the Rules and Philosophy

- Understands and can competently apply NFHS rules and philosophies
- Scores at minimum 75% on the NFHS Rules Exam.

2. Knowledge of Officiating Mechanics and Procedures

- Performs pre-snap position mechanics confidently, precisely and consistently
- Carries or passes ball to appropriate expected place quickly according to position responsibility
- Mechanics demonstrate a complete and confident understanding of primary duties and areas of responsibility
- Identifies keys and establishes position to create best coverage according to position mechanics
- Follows play mechanics (after the snap) deliberately, fluidly and consistently
- Stays with correct keys and ensures proper coverage as play unfolds
- Moves with Purpose; and when not necessary to move, breaks down or is stationary to obtain best opportunity for visual acuity; avoids unnecessary movement which takes away from our ability to officiate accurately at a high level
- When necessary, deviates purposefully from the mechanics to provide best coverage possible
- Communicates with other officials to create opportunities for Crew to best cover play
- Changes keys appropriately as the play develops
- Maintains visual focus in area of responsibility and changes visual focus when necessary as the dynamics of the play dictate
- Can execute correct mechanics when Crew is short members
- Knows other position mechanics well enough to execute during a game
- Demonstrates knowledge of other officials' primary areas of responsibility when required

There are three components to Personal Qualities.

1. Strives for Improvement

- Demonstrates objectivity when assessing or discussing own performance and areas for improvement
- Performs critical self-assessments/reviews
- Identifies both performance strengths and areas to develop
- Accepts constructive criticism or discusses it earnestly when there is disagreement
- Demonstrates initiative in seeking methods to improve without relying on others to come up with an action plan for improvement
- Learns from mistakes, but does not dwell on them to the point of distraction

- **from development and game officiating**
- **Issues with previous game performance do not distract from upcoming games or preparation**
- **Works to improve performance and competence**
- **Actively and earnestly participates in game review, preparation and/or training discussions with Crew and trainers**
- **Seeks advice from trainers, or Officials**
- **Utilizes developmental tools, such as game video**
- **Accepts assignments with appreciation and puts forth the same effort regardless of level or position of assignment**
- **Comes prepared to officiating clinics and all crew meetings**
- **Maintains professional and committed attitude toward training events and Crew meetings**
- **Performs all required tasks and reviews rules and points of emphasis prior to events and meetings**
- **Actively participates in events and Crew pre-game meetings with a serious, professional purpose**
- **Demonstrates professional growth throughout the season and from season to season**

2. Leads by Example

- **Meets or exceeds most performance standards and works to improve performance in areas where standards are not being met**
- **Supports the initiatives of the GTOA**
- **Participates in local officiating programs wherever possible through mentoring younger officials and other initiatives designed to improve officiating at all levels. Projects a positive and interactive example to others aspiring to develop their skills as officials.**
- **Works to make Crew members better by sharing experience and wisdom**
- **Seeks opportunities to speak candidly with Crew members about performance**
- **Gives Crew members feedback messages that are based on observations and focused on development**
- **Serves as a mentor/coach when asked and approaches the role wholeheartedly and purposefully**

3. Character

- **Lives with integrity**
- **Serves with enthusiasm**
- **Gives with generosity**
- **Succeeds with humility**