

# **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