



media information



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Officials Registration Goes Online In 2005-06

EAST LANSING, Mich. – June 1 – Individuals interested in becoming a high school athletic game official for the 2005-06 school year now may register with the Michigan High School Athletic Association, and for the first time, new registrants and renewals will be accepted through the MHSAA Web site – mhsaa.com.

Through July 1, Michigan's 12,000-plus game officials in 14 sports are urged to submit their applications. The July date is an important one, as it is the deadline for officials who wish to be listed in the MHSAA's annual printed Officials Directory.

“We always encourage officials to register before July 1, so they can be listed in the printed MHSAA Official’s Directory,” said Mark Uyl, MHSAA Assistant Director. “That is very beneficial for officials looking for work and schools looking for officials. Officials listed in the directory are also more visible candidates for approved association membership. Approved association benefits are numerous, so we encourage officials to either seek membership or be asked to join a local group well before the new school year begins.” Beginning with the 2005-06 school year, officials selected to work MHSAA post-season tournaments in basketball, football and wrestling will be required to be members of an approved association.

While early registration is heavily encouraged, new officials are free to register with the MHSAA any time during the year. MHSAA registration fees are among the lowest in the nation. A \$10 fee is charged for each sport an official wishes to work, and the processing fee is \$20. Officials registered in 2004-05 will be assessed a late fee of \$20 for registration after July 1. The processing fee includes liability insurance coverage of up to \$1 million for officials while working contests involving MHSAA schools.

Registration for 2005-06 begins as the Association comes off a year where through the addition of lacrosse, the total number of officials again topped the 12,000 mark, but registrations in all other sports were down. The total of 12,084 registered officials for the just-completed school year ranks third overall. The all-time high came in 2003-04 with 12,268 registrants. Of this year’s total, 206 were lacrosse officials.

“Our recruiting efforts for new officials is an ongoing process, and this past year’s statistics prove that we will be facing a lot of turnover in the future with the anticipated retirements of many officials,” Uyl said. “We must continue to promote the need for more individuals to become involved in officiating, and the recruitment, education and retention of new officials is a key to having younger folks ready when our veterans step down.”

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The MHSAA will continue to emphasize its efforts that allow high school students to become officials. The Legacy program allows 11th graders, 16 years of age and older, to officiate sub-varsity and junior high/middle school games with a mentor.

Twelfth graders, 17 years of age and older, are also allowed to officiate sub-varsity and junior high/middle school contests without a mentoring official. The changes made a few years ago in response to the concern that not enough high school students are being recruited into the officiating field through the Legacy Program, and that those who enter at that age tend to leave officiating shortly after graduating. The 2005-06 school year will be the 14th for the Legacy program. Student officials will benefit from a waiver of the standard \$20 processing fee. Registration of \$10 per sport will be the only requirement. Last year, there were 68 students in the Legacy program.

“If every school and every officials association would deliver us just one young person each year, promoting officiating as a way to stay active in sports beyond the high school playing days, we can keep our numbers strong,” Uyl said. “But we also must remember that once we’ve recruited new officials, everyone – our officials association, our school administrators and coaches, and even spectators – must assist us in the retainment process by treating these officials – in fact, all officials – with respect.”

There is an officials' registration test, which is for first-time officials and officials not registered in the past year. The test consists of 75 questions derived from the MHSAA **Officials Guidebook**, which may be used during the open book test.

"The guidebook is a good reference that can answer many questions about the way the MHSAA operates," Uyl said. "We implemented this test as a way of insuring familiarity with the guidebook and to assure that new registrants are aware of the policies, practices and protocols expected of MHSAA officials."

Online registration can be accessed by clicking “Officials” on the Home Page of the MHSAA Web site. More information about officials registration may be obtained by contacting the MHSAA at 1661 Ramblewood Drive, East Lansing, MI 48823. Telephone: 517/332-5046. E-Mail: register@mhsaa.com.

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,600 public and private senior high schools and junior high/middle schools which exists to develop common rules for athletic eligibility and competition. No government funds or tax dollars support the MHSAA, which was the first such association nationally to not accept membership dues or tournament entry fees from schools. Member schools which enforce these rules are permitted to participate in MHSAA tournaments, which attract approximately 1.6 million spectators each year.

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