

BYLAWS
NEW HAMPSHIRE FOOTBALL OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION, INC.
July 2021

ARTICLE I – Membership Responsibilities

Section I – Classification of Members

Members shall be placed into a classification based on the number of meetings attended during the previous season. The classifications and requirements of each classification are contained in Appendix A hereto. First year Regular Members shall be placed in Classification 1. Members may elect to be placed in a lower classification.

A member's classification will be upgraded during the season upon request by the member if that member attends the required number of meetings to qualify for the next highest classification.

Upon written request of a member, the Council may waive the classification meeting requirements for good cause. Waiver requests for members shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Section II – Apprentice Members

A. All Apprentice Members (Apprentices) shall:

1. Pay the application fee as specified in these Bylaws.
2. Complete at least one year of officiating experience in high school freshman, sub varsity or varsity scholastic football competition in New Hampshire as assigned by the Commissioner, prior to taking the Apprentice Member exams. A minimum of ten games shall be officiated in the year in which the exams are taken.
3. Attend a minimum of 80% of the Apprentice meetings.
4. Become a Provisional Member upon successful completion of the written Apprentice exam, a field exam and full payment of the subsequent year's dues, whichever occurs last.
5. Repeat the year of apprenticeship upon failure to attain passing scores on the field or written exams.

B. An Apprentice may:

1. Request in writing to the Council, with the recommendation of the Apprentice Program Chair, permission to take the Provisional Member written exam. Upon attaining a passing score, the Council may waive the Provisional Member status. If the Council does not approve the request, the Apprentice may submit a written request for an appearance before the Council to appeal the decision.

Section III – Provisional Members

All Provisional Members shall:

1. Complete at least one year of officiating experience in high school freshman, sub varsity or varsity scholastic football competition in New Hampshire as assigned by the Commissioner, prior to taking the Provisional Member exams. A minimum of ten games shall be officiated in the year in which the exams are taken.
2. Seek a mentor with the assistance of the Apprentice Program Chair to foster development, guidance and preparation for full membership in the NHFOA.
3. Attend a minimum of 75% of NHFOA scheduled local and state meetings and meet test requirements in accordance with the designated NHFOA schedule.
4. Successfully complete a written exam and a field exam.
5. Become a Regular Member of the NHFOA upon a confirming vote of the membership.

Section IV – Transfer Members

All Transfer Members shall:

1. Be required to pay annual dues and any assessments in effect on the date of transfer. Transfer Members who were formerly members of the NHFOA must have previously terminated their membership and must fulfill reinstatement procedures prescribed by the Constitution.
2. Become a Regular Member of the NHFOA upon a confirming vote of the membership.

Section V – Inactive Members

- A. Inactive Members in Classification 9 shall not have any voting privileges at NHFOA meetings. Inactive members must re-apply for active membership by May 31 in order to meet the requirements of being a Regular Member.
- B. An Inactive Member shall not:
 1. Officiate any high school varsity, prep school or sub-varsity game usually assigned by the Commissioner.
 2. Be required to attend any weekly meetings, or an annual meeting, and shall not be required to take any of the written examinations.
 3. Be required to attend a rules interpretation meeting or a mechanics meeting.

Section VI – Honorary Members

- A. Members may be considered for Honorary Regular Membership after meeting the following criteria:
 1. The member has served a minimum of twenty years of active membership in good standing.
 2. The member is in good standing at the time of nomination for Honorary Regular Membership.
- B. Members may be considered for Honorary Lifetime Membership after meeting the following criteria:

1. The member has served a minimum of twenty-five years of active membership in good standing.
 2. The member has served at least one completed term as an elected or appointed officer.
 3. The member is in good standing at the time of nomination for Honorary Lifetime Membership.
- C. The Council shall have the authority to approve induction as an Honorary Regular Member or Honorary Lifetime Member. Induction as an Honorary Lifetime Member shall be considered the ultimate recognition for those members who uphold the highest values and levels of service set forth by this Association.
- D. Honorary Members are entitled to all the privileges extended to Regular Members except the right to vote.

Section VII – All Members

- A. All members of this association shall:
1. Provide the Commissioner and Secretary with updated contact information as changes occur.
 2. Accept all assignments tendered by Commissioner, except in cases of error or omission.
 3. Work the position assigned, except in case of illness or injury to a game official.
 4. Return the completed football examinations by the dates specified in these bylaws and obtain passing grades.
 5. Pay dues, assessments and administrative fees as specified in these bylaws.
 6. Accept not less than the game fee contracted between the NHFOA and the NHIAA.
 7. Conduct themselves professionally at the game site, including abiding by the NHFOA Uniform and Dress Code Policy.
- B. Failure to comply with any of the duties set forth in this article may result in suspension by the Council. The Council will individually address issues not specified in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE II – Membership Requirements, Administrative Fees & Penalties

- A. NHFOA members must provide closed dates and preferred positions to the Commissioner no later than May 31 for the upcoming season. Reporting such information after the deadline may result in a penalty of no game assignments. Members may close unassigned dates after September 1 without penalty.
- B. NHFOA members are subject to an administrative fee, in the amount of one quarter the NHIAA High School Varsity game fee, for every game assignment turned back to the Commissioner between June 30 and November 30. Exceptions may be made at the Commissioner's discretion for injury or illness, death in the immediate family, or game postponements. The administrative fee must be paid within fourteen days; failure to pay the fee will result in the member no longer being a Member in Good Standing until such fee is paid.

- C. NHFOA members and apprentices are subject to an administrative fee in the amount of one NHIAA High School Game Fee (based on the assignment), for each assignment for which the member fails to appear. The fee is to be paid to and divided by the game officials present. Exceptions may be granted with advance notification given to the Athletic Director of the home school and to the Commissioner, with approval and replacement successfully provided. The administrative fee must be paid within fourteen days; failure to pay the fee will result in the member no longer being a Member in Good Standing.
- D. NHFOA members in Classifications 1 through 6 must attend one of the interpretation meetings (the initial meeting or a make-up meeting) given by the NHFOA Rules Interpreter. The make-up meeting will be scheduled at least one week after the initial meeting. The dates of the meetings will be determined by the Council and will be published no later than May 31. Failure to attend an interpretation may result in no varsity game assignments.
- E. Regular Members and Transfer Members must attend either a mechanics clinic or a mechanics meeting. The dates of the meetings and clinic will be determined by the Council and will be published no later than May 31. Failure to meet these requirements may result in surrender of game assignments or suspension in the succeeding season.
- F. NHFOA members must attend at least three of the first five weekly meetings and either the mechanics clinic or mechanics meeting to be eligible for playoffs. Failure to meet these requirements will make the member ineligible for playoff assignments.
- G. NHFOA members must return and obtain a passing score on required exams by the due dates published on the NHFOA Schedule of Events. Required exams include two Rules exams and a Mechanics exam. A combined average passing score of ninety percent or better is required. Failure to meet these requirements may result in surrender of game assignments, no postseason assignments, or suspension in the succeeding season.
- H. NHFOA members must rate fellow officials in accordance with the guidelines established by the Council. Failure to meet this requirement may result in surrender of game assignments, no postseason assignments, or suspension in the succeeding season.
- I. The Council, upon written request prior to May 31 from a Member in Good Standing, may waive paragraphs D, E, F and G of this Article, provided the member is a member in good standing of a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) football officiating organization and meets the requirements of that organization. The member retains all the rights and privileges of NHFOA members, but shall not be assigned by the Commissioner to New Hampshire High School games governed by rules of National Federation of State High School Associations.
- J. NHFOA members must submit to a criminal background check to be conducted by an independent entity selected by the Council prior to the commencement of each season. Criminal background checks will be performed as needed for all members and prior to the season for any member commencing their first year of membership. Any member convicted or adjudicated with a finding of fault, guilt or violation with respect to a felony, a criminal offense against a minor, a criminal offense of a sexual nature, or a criminal offense involving illegal drugs or controlled substances as determined by federal or state law will not be considered a Member in Good Standing.

- K. Upon written request of a member, the Council may waive any of the requirements in this Article for good cause, other than the requirements in Paragraph G. Waiver requests for members shall be considered on a case-by-case basis

ARTICLE III – Code of Conduct & Conflict of Interest

- A. The code of conduct for football officials is intended to guide the conduct of officials in the service they render to schools, players and coaches, sponsoring organizations and the public. The NHFOA's mission is to provide the best possible officiating service in every football game administered by its officials.
- B. All officials shall:
 - 1. Support the NHFOA in its mission. Officials must be competent, must be aware of the expectations of the client and must know when to seek assistance, as well as take every opportunity to learn and develop his or her skills.
 - 2. Devote time, thought and study to the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to carry out those rules to enable them to provide effective, high quality service in a fair and unbiased manner.
 - 3. Work with fellow officials and the state association in a spirit of harmony and cooperation, notwithstanding any differences of opinion that may arise during debate of game issues or rules interpretations.
 - 4. Be prepared for each game both physically and mentally; abide by the NHFOA's uniform and travel dress code policies; and maintain a proper appearance that is befitting the importance of the game. Officials shall arrive on time for all game assignments.
 - 5. Uphold the honor and dignity of the avocation in all personal conduct in order to set a worthy example to the clients.
 - 6. Not use his or her position as an official for personal benefit, other than the benefits enjoyed from officiating. Under all circumstances, officials must avoid promoting the special interest of any person or group of persons other than the schools and athletes they serve.
 - 7. Honor all officiating contracts and obligations regardless of possible personal inconvenience or financial loss.
 - 8. Refrain from using tobacco products of any kind at the contest site or on school property.
 - 9. Not officiate any game after having had any alcoholic drink or illegal substance that day.
 - 10. Not publicly review, criticize or second guess another official's field work or judgment when communicating with a coach, player, team or representative. Failure to abide by this requirement may result in up to one year's suspension.
 - 11. Avoid undue fraternization and conversation with coaches and players before, during or after a game, including the intermission. An official must use good judgment in limiting all conversation to avoid any appearance of favoritism.
 - 12. Treat all other officials, players, coaches and organizations with respect and shall provide the same quality service to all clients.
 - 13. Use discretion in disseminating information about the NHFOA. Officials have the obligation to understand what type of information is confidential and should not be disclosed.

14. Avoid social contact with coaches or representatives of teams who are potential clients.
- C. An official shall not accept an assignment of a varsity contest if any of the following conditions exist:
1. If the official is not a Member in Good Standing.
 2. If the official or official's spouse is employed by any school fielding a team involved in the contest.
 3. If the official is related by blood or marriage (parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, in-laws, etc.) to a person affiliated with a team involved in the contest.
 4. If the official and any person affiliated with a team involved in a contest are former or present teammates, roommates, classmates, business associates or close personal friends.
 5. If the official or official's spouse attended, worked or volunteered at either of the involved schools within the last five years.
 6. If the official has a child attending school at one of the involved schools or a child who graduated from one of the schools within the previous five years.
- D. An official must notify the Commissioner of any actual or potential conflicts of interest prior to receipt of game assignments. An official must notify the Commissioner if he or she receives a schedule and determines a conflict of interest exists. Additionally, every member of the NHFOA has a continuing obligation to notify the association of any potential conflicts of interest that occur after the season has started.

ARTICLE IV – Dues & Assessments

Section I – Dues

Payment of dues shall be made to the Treasurer of the Association.

- A. Annual dues for Regular Members, Provisional Members and Transfer Members shall be the amount of one NHIAA varsity game fee from the immediately preceding season.
- B. Annual dues (Application Fees) for Apprentice Members for the prospective year shall be determined annually by the Council following the conclusion of the season.
- C. Annual dues for Inactive Members in Classification 7 or 8 shall be the amount of one NHIAA varsity game fee from the immediately preceding season. Annual dues for Inactive Members in Classification 9 shall be one-quarter of the amount of one NHIAA High School Varsity game fee from the immediately preceding season.
- D. Except for Apprentice Members, dues for the succeeding season are payable on or before the conclusion of the Annual Meeting. Application Fees for Apprentice Members are payable on or before Labor Day of the upcoming season.
- E. Any NHFOA member in arrears with dues or administrative fees shall be considered not in good standing. Reinstatement to Member in Good Standing status must be met through provisions outlined in the Constitution, plus the member must pay an

administrative fee in the amount of one quarter of the NHIAA varsity game fee. Failure to reinstate membership within sixty days shall result in suspension.

Section II – Assessments

Payment of assessments shall be made to the Treasurer of the Association.

- A. Assessments may be levied by a simple majority vote of a quorum present at any Annual Meeting, Summer Business/First Interpretation Meeting or Special Meeting.
- B. Assessments levied by the membership are due not later than sixty days from the date of the vote. Failure to pay the assessment shall result in suspension.

ARTICLE V – Elections

Section I – Candidate Filing

- A. The Secretary shall communicate to the membership no later than September 30 of each year the officer and Councilor positions open for election in accordance with the Constitution.
- B. The Secretary shall announce/publish no later than September 30 of each year all Members in Good Standing in accordance with the Constitution, which shall be the official voter checklist.
- C. Any Regular Member who is a Member in Good Standing shall be eligible to file for election. The filing form will be available on the NHFOA web site. Eligible members shall be allowed to file as a candidate for only one position per election year, not including a Special Election.
- D. Candidates shall have until midnight on October 31 to submit the filing form with the Secretary.
- E. The Secretary shall review names for eligibility and shall place names by position on a ballot.
- F. The Secretary shall announce/publish the candidates by the date of the first weekly meeting in November.
- G. Use of the NHFOA web site and/or e-mail shall be acceptable means of announcement or publishing.

Section II – Election Campaigning

- A. Candidates shall be provided the opportunity to post a brief biography on the NHFOA web site.
- B. A biography form shall be available on the NHFOA web site.

- C. Candidates shall submit completed biography forms to the Secretary and webmaster (or designee) no later than the second Saturday of November of the election year.

Section III – Balloting Process

- A. The Council shall determine the balloting process annually. Acceptable processes include same day ballots, sealed mailed ballots, and electronic ballots.
 - 1. Electronic balloting shall require the official NHFOA Electronic Ballot link and password to be emailed to all Members in Good Standing on the third Saturday in November.
 - 2. Electronic balloting shall close at midnight of the fourth Saturday in November annually.
 - 3. Sealed mail ballots must be received by ballot officials by midnight of the fourth Saturday in November annually.
 - 4. Same day balloting shall be conducted at the Annual Meeting.
- B. The Council shall determine annually the need for a contracted ballot service. If the Council decides to utilize a contracted service, the Council shall select the contractor to conduct election voting.
- C. All voting shall be by secret ballot.

Section IV – Voting Protocol

- A. Ballots will be marked “Vote for Not More Than” for each position on the ballot.
- B. If multiple Council seats are open, the seats will be awarded proportionally. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes will be placed in the longest serving term available, with the process continuing until all Council seats are filled.
- C. If voting results create a vacancy of an existing Councilor’s seat, the seat will be awarded based upon voting results as described above. The next highest vote recipient(s) shall be awarded the seat(s).
- D. If there is a tie vote for President Elect, Commissioner or the final Council seat, a tie breaking run-off special election shall be conducted. Only the candidates named as tied shall be eligible for the run-off.
 - 1. If electronic mail or sealed mail balloting is used, a run-off special election will be announced/published on the Tuesday following the fourth Saturday of November. Voting in the special election will close at midnight on the Thursday following the fourth Saturday of November.
 - 2. If same day balloting is the selected process, the run-off special election shall be held at the Annual Meeting, immediately following the announcement of the results of the voting.
- E. Final election results shall be announced or published at the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE VI – Compensation

All officers and Councilors shall serve without pay, with the exceptions noted below:

- A. The Commissioner shall receive an annual stipend of \$500.
- B. The Secretary shall receive an annual stipend of \$400.
- C. The Treasurer shall receive an annual stipend of \$400. If the same individual serves as both Secretary and Treasurer, that individual's annual stipend shall be \$400.
- D. The Apprentice Program Chair shall receive an annual stipend of \$400.

ARTICLE VII – Amendments

The Bylaws may be amended, altered or repealed by a three-fifths majority vote of a quorum present at any Annual Meeting, Summer Business Meeting or special meeting.

Appendix A.

NHFOA MEMBER CLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE										
CLASSIFICATION					Meetings: No "penalty" for missed meetings. Can attend up to seven (7) total meetings. Two (2) State Meetings and five (5) Local meetings offered on Tuesday and Wednesday. Meeting attendance removed from end of season					
1 Varsity High School & Prep (plus 2, 3, 4 & 7)										
2 JV High School & JV Prep (plus 3,4 & 7)										
3 Freshman High School (plus 4 & 7)										
4 JH / MS / Below Grade 9 Youth Only										
5(t) Transfer ¹										
5(p) Provisional ²										
6 Apprentice										
7 Auxiliary Official (Timer, LTG Crew)										
8 NCAA Member										
9 Non-Officiating Member										
	ACTIVE MEMBERS								NACTIVE MEMBERS	
STANDARDS / CLASS	1	2	3	4	5(t)	5(p)	6	7	8	9
Dues %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	25
NHIAA / NFHS Reg.	Y	Y	Y	NO	Y	Y	Y	Y	NO	NO
Fees & Assessments	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Rules Interpretation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NO	NO	NO
Mechanics Meeting	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NO	NO	NO	NO
Exam: Rules 1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NO ³	NO	NO	NO	NO
Exam: Mechanics	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NO ³	NO	NO	NO	NO
Exam: Rules 2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NO ³	Y ⁴	NO	NO	NO
Passing Avg Score	90	90	90	90	90	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Attend Rules Meetings	5 of 7	4 of 7	3 of 7	2 of 7	5 of 7	75%	80%	0	0	0
Field Exam						Y ³				
¹ 5(t) eligible for varsity assignment at discretion of Commissioner & NFHS/NHIAA reciprocal agreement.										
² 5(p) eligible for varsity assignment based upon need and at discretion of Commissioner.										
³ Provisional Members must pass a written exam and a field exam.										
⁴ Apprentice exam.										