

Policies & Procedures Manual

Denver Football Officials Association

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This *Policies & Procedures Manual* is a compilation of the policies and procedures as enacted by the Area Directors of the Denver Football Officials Association (DFOA). Failure to abide by these policies may lead to suspension from the DFOA and loss of eligibility for varsity and playoff games, as well as potential penalties enacted by the Colorado Football Officials Association (CFOA) and Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA).

In cases where the CFOA Constitution or CHSAA Bylaws conflict with this document, the Constitution or Bylaws shall take precedent.

1 Alcohol Consumption and Substance Abuse

Consumption of ANY alcoholic beverage, marijuana, or illegal substance prior to the game on the day of a game is expressly forbidden. Any complaint filed by a school against an official for violation of this policy will be reviewed by the Area Directors and may result in suspension or dismissal from the organization and referral to the CFOA and CHSAA.

2 Acronyms

The following acronyms are used throughout this document:

- CFOA – Colorado Football Officials Association
- CHSAA – Colorado High School Activities Association
- DFOA – Denver Football Officials Association
- NFHS – National Federation of State High School Associations

3 Amendment of the Policies and Procedures

This document may be amended, updated, or repealed in part or in whole by a simple majority vote of the active Area Directors.

4 Appearance

One of the critical factors affecting perception of an official's ability is an individual's appearance. It is important that an official start a game in a clean uniform, including clean polished foot wear. There may be extenuating circumstances, such as closely assigned contests wherein an official may display the results or working in inclement weather. If there is travel between multiple games, the official should have extra pants/shorts and a shirt that the official should change into before starting another contest.

Personal grooming, particularly facial hair, is also important. If an official has a beard, or mustache, they should be groomed in good order. If an official is normally clean shaven they should also appear at their assignment clean shaven.

Officials should be in good physical condition and good health. The DFOA recommends that each member seek an annual physical from their physician.

5 Arbiter and ArbiterPay

All DFOA officials should be registered in Arbiter in order to receive assignments for all levels of high school football. Officials are strongly encouraged to be registered with an ArbiterPay account, as most schools pay officials only using ArbiterPay. If an official does not wish to use ArbiterPay, he should not accept any assignments from schools that pay using that method.

6 Area Directors

The DFOA Area Directors shall:

- 1) Serve as liaisons between DFOA membership and the CFOA State Board.
- 2) Develop and devise an annual DFOA budget, including necessary fundraising activities.
- 3) Maintain records of attendance, test scores and any other bookkeeping items.
- 4) Assist State Leadership with the Denver area Master Clinic.

- 5) Discipline any member not abiding by CFOA Guidelines/DFOA procedures and policies, including removal from playoff consideration and, in extreme cases, loss of DFOA membership.
- 6) Provide education of DFOA members using the latest NFHS, CFOA and CHSAA rules/mechanics
- 7) Meet with other DFOA Area Directors frequently throughout the year, including offseason meetings.
- 8) Facilitate recruitment and retention of new members.
- 9) Assist in the training of the new members.
- 10) Schedule at least 7 DFOA area meetings between August and October.
- 11) Determine and recommend playoff officials, including championship officials, as determined by CFOA and CHSAA requirements.
- 12) Attend state CFOA Board meetings biannually (June and December).
- 13) Fulfill other duties which are determined to be appropriate for the association.

The Area Directors will divide the necessary duties among the four directors each year. It is encouraged that an Area Director retain a particular duty throughout his/her term for consistency, but may adjust if necessary. Duties to be divided include: CHSAA Liaison, CFOA Liaison, Rules Interpreter, Group Lead Liaison, New Member Coordinator, Technology Coordinator, Fundraising Coordinator.

While the Area Directors will work with the Draw Manager and area assignors to help coordinate the varsity draw, ultimately varsity assignments are the responsibility of the Draw Manager. If a DFOA official does not meet CFOA/CHSAA requirements for eligibility, the Draw Manager and assignors will be notified. Area Directors do not have authority to make or remove assignments for varsity contests.

Area Directors should abide by the Policies and Procedures. The Area Directors should review this document annually to make necessary changes, especially when CFOA/CHSAA policies are modified.

An elected Area Director agrees to serve for a term of 3 years. An Area Director may run for multiple terms if desired. There are no term limits for serving as an Area Director.

6.1 Election of Area Directors

Those interested in running for an area director's position must complete an application form and submit to the current Area Directors before the end of August. Voting will be open to all members and use of online voting may be used. Voting should be concluded in September and the results published in October. Exact dates may vary depending on yearly circumstances. One or two Area Directors will be elected, depending on the year, per CFOA/CHSAA requirements.

In the result of a tie vote, if two Area Directors are being elected and the tie is between the two candidates with the most votes, those two shall be elected. In any other case, the tie shall be resolved via a random draw between the tied candidates at the meeting where the results are announced.

6.2 Resigning of Area Director

If an Area Director resigns during a term, the remaining Area Directors will determine a process for selecting a replacement Area Director, who will serve the remainder of the resigning Director's term. Depending on the length of the remaining term, this could include direct appointment of the new Director or a replacement vote by the DFOA membership.

7 Arrival at Games

Each official shall arrive at Varsity contests at least 60 minutes before the scheduled starting time of the game. For any lower level contest, officials shall arrive at least 30 minutes in advance of the scheduled game starting time. For weekday contests where an official is coming from work, the official shall arrive as soon as

possible; if the official may be arriving later than the times listed above, that official must communicate this with the other officials as soon as possible. Referees shall report to the Area Directors and appropriate assignor any official that arrives at the contest later than the scheduled starting time. Multiple instances of tardiness by an official will be addressed through review by the Area Directors.

It is the responsibility of each official to confirm the time and location of each contest, Varsity and lower level, and communicate with other officials prior to the day of the game.

8 Cell Phones

Officials should not bring cellular devices onto the field. This includes using a cell phone as a timing device or using a coin flip app.

9 Charting Penalties

First- and second-year officials are encouraged to attend at least two (2) contests to chart penalties for the crews working those contest. Members of those crews can recruit officials for this purpose if desired. Officials charting penalties should attend wearing a black shirt or jacket, black pants with a white stripe, black socks and shoes, and a black hat with white piping. The charting official should not wear a striped shirt. The charting official should arrive for the pre-game meeting with the rest of the crew, and will provide a list of penalties to the Referee after the game. The official should coordinate with the Referee prior to the day of the game to make arrangement for participating in this way.

10 Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics as published by the National Federation of State High School Associations shall be recognized by the DFOA as applicable to all members of the organization. Items apply to all levels of contests. Some items may have further embellishment in the DFOA Policies & Procedures Manual. The details of the National Federation Officials Code of Ethics follow.

- **Officials** at interscholastic athletic events are participants in the educational development of high school students. As such, they must exercise a high level of self-discipline, independence and responsibility. The purpose of this Code is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all interscholastic officials.
- **Officials** shall master both the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm and controlled manner.
- **Officials** shall work with each other and their state associations in a constructive and cooperative manner.
- **Officials** shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interaction with student-athletes, coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, colleagues, and the public.
- **Officials** shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally, shall dress neatly and appropriately, and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.
- **Officials** shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual obligations.
- **Officials** shall remain mindful that their conduct influences the respect that student-athletes, coaches and the public hold for the profession.
- **Officials** shall, while enforcing the rules of play, remain aware of the inherent risk of injury that competition poses to student-athletes. Where appropriate, they shall inform event management of conditions or situations that appear unreasonably hazardous.

- **Officials** shall take reasonable steps to educate themselves in the recognition of emergency conditions that might arise during the course of competition.

11 Committees

The Area Directors may organize committees for various purposes as deemed necessary. Examples of such committees could include Evaluation/Observation, Mentor Group composition, Fundraising, Ben Gregory Award, etc. When a committee is formed, the Area Directors shall appoint a chair for the committee.

The DFOA Membership is encouraged to participate in committee meetings as a member or to contribute input. All DFOA committee meetings are open to all members. The committee chair may ask guests to leave the room during sensitive/personnel discussions. All committees shall use a majority vote of present members when a quorum is present. Votes may be conducted electronically or manually at the discretion of the group lead. The committee chair shall be responsible for maintaining a record of votes and making the results available for the committee to review. This responsibility can be delegated to a member of the committee.

DFOA members wishing to participate in an organized committee should contact the committee chair. Suggestions for new committees may be made to the Area Directors.

The Area Directors should maintain a list of committees and committee chairs on the DFOA website.

12 Conflicts of Interest

No official shall work a contest which may be seen as a conflict of interest. Examples of such conflicts include (but are not limited to):

- Child attends one of the schools (applies to all levels)
- Child plays for one of the teams (applies to all levels)
- Official works for the school (applies to all levels)
- Official works for the district of one team but not both (varsity only)
- Official attended the school within the past five years (varsity only)
- Official is related to the coach of one of the teams (varsity only)

Officials should not accept more than four games for a subvarsity team in a season. Freshman and Junior Varsity teams shall be considered different teams for this purpose.

Assignors should not work varsity contests where one team is in a league they assign and another team is not.

Officials should avoid any other situation where there can be a perceived conflict of interest that would detract from the integrity of the crew or unbiased officiating of the game.

In cases where conflicts are discovered, the official should work with the assignor to resolve the conflict, including switching games as necessary.

It is not necessarily considered a conflict of interest for an official to work for other leagues or areas, provided they do not interfere. For example, working middle school or youth leagues is acceptable. Officials working for a college conference should not turn back a high school contest to work a college contest.

13 Contractual Relationship of Members

By becoming a member of the DFOA, each member of the DFOA agrees to abide by these policies and procedures, as well as the CFOA Constitution and CHSAA Bylaws. Failure to do so can result in sanctions determined by the Area Directors, including termination of DFOA membership and recommendation for removal of assignments.

14 Crews

For the purposes of this document, a crew is the group of officials working a particular contest. Organization of the association into groups should be done each year at the discretion of the Area Directors and/or a committee instituted for that purpose, working as needed with the draw manager.

15 Dues

15.1 CHSAA/CFOA Dues

State dues shall be submitted to CHSAA no later than December 1st of the current officiating year. A late fee will be assessed for state dues received after December 1st. Failure to pay state dues before March 1st prior to a season will result in being excluded from post-season consideration. Dates, due amounts, and late fees will be determined by the CFOA. Failure to pay dues will result in the official being ineligible to work varsity and junior varsity contests.

State dues are used to pay for rulebooks, insurance, master clinics, CHSAA overhead, and other things that are applicable to all officials across the state. These dues do not return to the DFOA directly.

Refunds for state dues must be requested from CHSAA.

15.2 DFOA Dues

The Area Directors may enact local dues to be paid for by all DFOA members. These dues will be used to pay for expenses applicable to the DFOA specifically, such as championship plaques, meeting locations, etc. Area Directors may grant waivers to local dues, particularly for those that participate in and contribute to fundraising activities. Date by which dues must be paid shall be determined by the Area Directors. This will typically be December 31 of the year prior to the season. Failure to pay DFOA dues will result in loss of playoff consideration and recommendation of removal from varsity contests.

The Area Directors may suspend dues for the entire DFOA if it is determined that fundraising efforts have been sufficient to keep the association solvent.

Refunds for DFOA dues should be requested from the Area Directors prior to the first contest of the season. Refunds after the season starts shall be denied, unless granted an exception by the Area Directors. Refunds for payments to fundraising events shall be denied. Refunds requested after losing membership for failure to abide by these policies shall be denied.

16 Electronic Dissemination of Information

The Association will provide a website to disseminate organizational information in lieu of written copies. Forms and documents will be provided electronically. The official DFOA chapter website is located at

DFOA members should also be registered with the website in order to receive communications. This registration should include a valid email address. It is the responsibility of each individual member to

ensure that their email address is valid and that they are receiving these communications, notifying the Area Directors of any problems.

17 Evaluations and Observations

The Area Directors, in conjunction with any Evaluation Committee formed, may come up with a method for providing evaluations or observations of members of the association. Group or Crew leaders should be involved in this process.

18 Failure to Appear for a Contest

A failure to show up for a contest you have accepted will be reviewed by the Area Directors and the assignor. The official will be subject to penalties for failing to honor the assignment without previous notification to the assignor or without a legitimate emergency. The assignor will have ultimate decision as to penalties regarding game assignments, while the Area Directors may impose membership penalties including loss of playoff consideration, removal from DFOA membership and recommendation for removal of assignments.

19 Felony

Each member is required to list any felony conviction of record at time of application to the CFOA/CHSAA. Each member shall also be responsible for reporting the incurrence of any felony charges to the Area Directors.

20 Filling Vacancies for Varsity Games

If an official needs to cancel an assignment, the following steps should be followed:

1. Official notifies the Referee of the contest as soon as possible.
2. Official personally notifies the Draw Manager regarding the cancellation.
3. Official may recommend another official, but the Draw Manager makes the decision as to how to fill the assignment.

Officials are encouraged to inform the Draw Manager of availability throughout the season so that when vacancies from cancellations are opened they can be considered for filling the vacancy.

21 Fundraising

The Area Directors may implement and organize activities designed to raise funds for the DFOA, and may organize a committee to help do so. Additionally, individual members of the DFOA may be appointed to organize and direct specific fundraising efforts as needed. Participation in fundraisers as organizers or contributors may, at the discretion of the Area Directors, qualify the official for a waiver of DFOA dues.

22 Game Day Card

The game day referees are required to hand out cards to both head coaches and provide a card for the back judge to give to the announcer. The card should list, at a minimum, the date and official's names by position. Personal contact information, including phone numbers or email addresses, should **not** be written on the cards.

23 Game Reports

Referees are required to submit a game report to CHSAA following every varsity contest, even if there were no unusual situations. These game reports should include a penalty count as described on the game report form. If there were any ejections, the names of the player(s) or coach(es) ejected must be included on the game report. These reports should be filled out by 8am following the contest, especially if there were any ejections.

For subvarsity contests, a game report is only required if there was an ejection during the game. The game report in this case must be submitted by 8am the following day. Penalty counts and other information on the report can be omitted for subvarsity reports.

24 Independent Contractors

All officials working **any** game do so as independent contractors. As such, you are not an employee of the school, the DFOA, the CFOA, or CHSAA, and your Service as a game official **does not** come under the auspices of the Worker's Compensation Act. Payment of dues to the DFOA does not guarantee receiving any assignments to officiate. Assignments are exclusively at the option of the assignors/draw manager with input from the Area Directors..

25 Mechanics

All DFOA officials commit to using the mechanics found in the CFOA Mechanics Manual at all varsity contests. For subvarsity contests, the recommended 3- and 4-man mechanics are strongly encouraged.

26 Meeting Requirements

DFOA officials are required to attend a minimum of five (5) area meetings each year to remain varsity and playoff eligible. The Area Directors will schedule a minimum of 7 area meetings to meet this requirement. Additionally, a meeting credit may be received for working a scrimmage (see XX Scrimmages), and another may be received for attending and participating in an authorized test study session. If circumstances beyond an officials control prevents them from meeting this requirement, this should be discussed individually with the Area Directors as soon as possible.

27 Personal Conduct

Each official is required to act in a professional manner. Officials are to avoid any derogatory comments towards players, coaches, administrators, fellow officials or spectators. Officials will avoid hostile contact with any player, coach, fan or other official. Failure to abide by this rule may lead to suspension or revocation of DFOA membership and/or loss of playoff privileges.

28 Playoffs

The Area Directors will recommend officials for playoff selection each year. The manner which this will occur will be decided by the Area Directors, and may involve input from the DFOA membership.

In addition to CFOA/CHSAA requirements, to be eligible for playoffs, an official must attend 5 area meetings and work a minimum of 3 subvarsity games.

An official who works a championship game is not eligible to work another championship games for three years, and not eligible to work a semifinal for the following year. For example, an official who works a

championship in 2016 will not be eligible to work a championship until 2020, and ineligible to work a semi-final until 2018.

Area Directors are eligible to be nominated for all levels of playoff contests.

29 Radios

Radios are permitted as a way for officials to communicate with each other on the field. When used, all officials should use them. The wire for the headset should be tucked underneath the shirt. When using a radio, communication should be kept succinct, avoiding unnecessary chatter.

30 Scrimmages

During the off season, officials are encouraged to work scrimmages to prepare for the season. When possible, these should be worked with others that the official will work with during the season. Details for individual scrimmages will be provided by the host. Officials should wear full equipment for a scrimmage, with shorts being permitted even for a varsity scrimmage.

Officials may receive a single meeting credit for working a scrimmage each year. To qualify, it must be a varsity scrimmage that involves teams from at least two different schools, and has to be registered in Arbiter or on the DFOA website. A scrimmage that involves subvarsity teams only does not qualify, though if the subvarsity scrimmage is done in conjunction with the varsity one, it will if the varsity scrimmage is worked. Only one meeting credit from scrimmages may be gained per year, regardless of number of scrimmages worked.

31 Tobacco

No member shall use tobacco products within the proximity of high school or youth football fields. All High Schools are posted as non-smoking and are tobacco free environments. Any complaint filed by any venue against an official for violation of this policy will be reviewed by the Area Directors.

32 Treasurer

The Area Directors can appoint an association Treasurer. This does not have to be an Area Director, but can be any active member of the association. The treasurer will keep track of all funds coming in and out of the association, and will make the budget and financial information available to the membership yearly.

33 Uniform and Equipment for Contests

Uniforms at all contests at all levels should be clean and well-kept. When working as a crew, all officials should be wearing similar apparel. For instance, in a game you should not have some officials wearing long-sleeve shirts while others are wearing short-sleeve shirts. Uniforms that are stained should be replaced.

Shoes should be mostly black; while some white is OK, it should not be excessive.

The Referee's white cap should be clean and white. The white piping on the other officials caps should also be clean. Caps should not be adjustable, but should be solid in the back.

Whistles should not be pea-whistles. Finger whistles are acceptable, though wing officials are encouraged to use whistles with a lanyard so as not to have hand signals compromised.

Beanbags can be blue, black, or white. The whole crew should use the same color whenever possible. When an official uses two beanbags, they should be different colors, with one being the color matching the rest of the crew.

Flags should be mostly yellow. Black or white “balls” are OK, with black being recommended. The weight in the flag should not be made of a material that could cause injury if it inadvertently hits someone.

It is recommended to remove jewelry before a contest. Any jewelry that could cause injury to another person should always be removed.

All officials working a varsity contest should wear: 2-1/4” striped shirt, solid black long officiating pants with white stripes on the outside seams, black belt, black socks, black turf shoes, cap, whistle, beanbag (2 for back judge), 2 flags, down indicator, game card and writing utensil. The Line Judge should have a watch to keep time in case the clock goes out, though all officials are encouraged to have a watch. The Head Linesman should have a clip to use on the chains to assist in resetting the chains when the chain crew needs to vacate their position.

For subvarsity contests, officials may wear solid black coaching shorts (not basketball shorts) instead of pants. If shorts are worn, all officials working the contest should wear shorts. All other equipment remains the same, including black socks.

33.1 Optional Equipment

The official keeping the play clock is encouraged to use a ReadyRef, configured for a 40 second play clock.

Communications radios for officials are highly encouraged. If used, all officials should have them. It is encouraged for officials to have their own radio. The DFOA may have some radios available for checkout during the season. If lost or damaged, the official will be expected to replace the radio.

A second “down” indicator is encouraged for Umpires to mark the lateral field location for spotting the ball.

Sunglasses are permitted in situations where sunlight may interfere with an official's ability to see.