

2017/18 Officials Bulletin I



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BACKGROUND CLEARANCE INFORMATION

PA State Law requires ALL registered officials to have specific clearances completed within the past five years. These clearances need to be renewed every five years. Because PIAA-registered officials are independent contractors to schools whose Contests they officiate, the officials are required to comply with the requirements for background certifications as set forth in the Public School Code and the recent revisions to the Child Protective Services Law (adopted July 1, 2015).

Question: Will I be notified when I need to obtain updated clearances?

Answer: Yes. PIAA will send an email to every official whose clearances are reaching the expiration date. An email will be sent to that official 6 months prior to expiration, 3 months prior to expiration and 1 month prior to expiration. Upon receipt of the clearance documents, they need to be uploaded to the PIAA website. Also, on each official's ID card, the expiration date for each of the 3 clearances is listed.

Question: If one of my clearances expires, am I still permitted to officiate?

Answer: No! When any of your clearances expire, you are no longer 'active'. As soon as updated clearances are uploaded and approved, you will become 'active' and can resume officiating.

To find out additional information on the clearance process and what is required, please go to www.piaa.org. On the main page, click on Officials and in the drop-down box click on Background Clearances Info. There you will find frequently asked questions and direct links to obtain these clearances.

OFFICIALS' DUES

The schedule for yearly PIAA registration dues is listed below:

- October through Jan. 15—reduced fee of \$5 per sport (\$45 per sport)
- Jan. 16 through Feb. 28—base fee of \$50 per sport
- Feb. 29 through Mar. 31—add \$25 late fee
- After Mar. 31—add \$75 reinstatement fee

Dues can be paid by mailing the invoice with a check, or they can be paid online.

To pay online, go to www.piaa.org and sign in with your access code.

In the Account Center, click on View or Pay Officials Registration Fees.

ONLINE REGISTRATION AND TESTING

Applicants are now able to submit their application online and pay with a credit card, or print out and mail in the form with payment.

The application fee is \$30 per sport.

The application fee (\$30) provides you with two credits. If you do not obtain a passing grade on your first attempt, you will have that second credit to take the exam again.

After registering, you will be mailed a rules book and a practice exam.

Testing for each sport is now completed online.

90 minutes allowed time to complete exam

Must be done in one sitting—if you exit out of the exam it will be marked complete and you will use one credit.

For additional information on applying and testing online, please go to the PIAA website, click on Officials, then click on Become an Official.

PIAA SPORTSMANSHIP MESSAGE

PIAA requires all registered sports' officials to enforce the sportsmanship rules for coaches and contestants. Actions meant to demean opposing contestants, teams, spectators, and officials are not in the highest ideals of interscholastic education and will not be tolerated. Let today's contest reflect mutual respect. Coaches please certify to the official(s) that your contestants will be legally equipped and uniformed according to NFHS rules and PIAA adoptions. Good luck in today's contest.

There have been some concerns addressed by the schools that some of our officials are not reading the PIAA Sportsmanship message prior to the contest. Officials are not to paraphrase, modify, or develop their own Sportsmanship Message to the captains and head coaches. For distribution purposes, this message is printed on the back of all PIAA registered sports officials' identification cards and is on the PIAA website under the Documents section of the Officials home page.

This message **MUST BE READ VERBATIM** by the contest officials. Coaches must certify to the contest officials their team is legally equipped and in compliance with NFHS Rules. The reading of this message will set the tone for the contest to be played in the spirit of good sportsmanship and have the coaches verbally confirm aloud their teams' adherence to compliance with equipment and safety rules. This confirmation is not only the adherence to contest rules, but also assists in alleviating the legal liability concerns for the officials if the teams subsequently violate the proper equipment provisions of the contest rules.

ID CARDS

ID cards for the new school year are mailed out to all 'active' officials in mid-August.

The ID cards list dates your clearances expire. As you update your clearances, you will receive a new ID card with the new clearance dates.

OFFICIALS' MEETING REQUIREMENTS and INFORMATION

Along with staying current with dues, an official needs to attend the required amount of meetings to maintain registration.

- 1 Rules Interpretation meeting—Each chapter will hold a rules interpretation meeting prior to the start of the sport season.
- Minimum of 6 chapter meetings—An official can get attendance credit for up to 3 chapter meetings prior to the first regular season contest date of that sport, but a total of at least 6 meetings must be attended.

If you attend a meeting at a chapter other than your home chapter, make sure that you sign in as a guest so you can obtain the credit.

To view the list of meeting schedules, follows these steps:

- ⇒ Go to www.piaa.org and click on the Officials tab
- ⇒ Click on Rules Interpretation and Chapter Meetings
- ⇒ Scroll down and click on your sport
- ⇒ Select your district
- ⇒ Uncheck the “Rules Meetings Only” box
- ⇒ Click on Search

If you are unable to attend the Rules Interpretation meeting at any of the chapters, you have the option to view the meeting online for \$50. This option is made available approximately 2 weeks after the LAST in-person Rules Interpretation meeting in the state is held. To access the online meeting, go to www.piaa.org and sign in with your access code. In the Account Center, click on “Makeup Online Rules Interpretation Meeting”.

All registered officials have the option to check their meeting credits and to find meetings for their sport.

- ⇒ Go to www.piaa.org
- ⇒ Sign in with your access code (the first 4 letters of your last name in CAPS followed by the last 4 digits of your social security number)
- ⇒ In the Account Center under Account Tools, click on:
FIND CHAPTER/RULES MEETINGS & ATTENDANCE RECORDED

For each of your registered sports, you will see your meeting attendance credits for the current school year.

To find the listing of meetings:

- ⇒ After clicking on **FIND CHAPTER/RULES MEETINGS & ATTENDANCE RECORDED** (see above), select the sport
- ⇒ If necessary, change the district
- ⇒ If you want to list both chapter and rules meetings, make sure the box next to “Rules Meetings Only” is NOT checked
- ⇒ Click Search

*** Officials attending meetings, which are not at their home chapter, must make personal contact with the chapter secretary to ensure their attendance is properly recorded.

CHAPTER SECRETARY INFORMATION REMINDERS

Below are some guidelines to help chapter secretaries within their role.

- Chapters are required to schedule a minimum of 8 chapter meetings (PIAA Officials Manual, Article IX: p. 17).
- Chapter meetings need to be scheduled under the following guidelines:
 - ◊ Fall sport meetings need to be held between July 1st and November 30th
 - ◊ Winter sport meetings need to be held between October 1st and March 31st
 - ◊ Spring sport meetings need to be held between February 1st and June 30th
- Attendance is to be entered online within one week following the meeting.
- Officials can now get credit for up to 3 chapter meetings before the first play date, but can only receive credit for 1 meeting per calendar day.
- The mandatory Rules Interpretation and chapter meeting CANNOT be held on the same date (PIAA Officials Manual, Article IX: p. 17).
- Attendance for the mandatory Rules Interpretation meeting and chapter meetings is now completed electronically. Paper copies of attendance forms are no longer accepted at the PIAA office.
- The End of Year chapter summary report (listing next years officers) is now available online - you will no longer receive a paper copy. To access this document, go to the PIAA website and sign in. Click on Manage Meetings and scroll down to the bottom. Click on “Download End of Year Chapter Summary” print it out, complete & forward to PIAA.
- It is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to make sure you give meeting credit to visitors. If you are unsure how to do this please call our office.
- Voting for Officials Representatives will only be conducted electronically. No paper ballots will be accepted (PIAA Officials Manual, Article XIII: p. 19).

