

Dear MSHSL Officials,

After careful consideration and extensive research, the Minnesota State High School League's Board of Directors has approved a plan to move ahead with fall co-curricular activities for individual sports and soccer as scheduled on Monday, August 17 with modifications and plans for interruptions. The plan was a recommendation of the Return to Participation Task Force and approved at the Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday, August 4. In consultation with the League's Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and the Minnesota Department of Health, the board chose to delay football and volleyball until the spring. This will require the further development of flexed seasons through the winter and spring to provide opportunities for participation in multiple activities with minimal overlap of seasons. Return to Participation for Adapted Soccer will be addressed through collaborative planning with the Minnesota Adapted Athletics Association and the League.

Prioritizing the health and safety of players, coaches, officials, and fans was one of the primary guiding principles during the exploratory process of how to proceed with participation for the 2020-2021 school year. The League's Officials Program thanks you for your patience as these guidelines and recommendations were formulated and researched. If competition during the 2020-2021 activities seasons are negatively impacted, the Board of Directors will strongly consider a credit toward the 2021-2022 school year for registration dues.

The Board of Directors considered the following guiding principles in approving the recommendation of the task force:

- Prioritize health and safety to the greatest extent possible
- Align with state organizations and agencies around return to learn models
- Provide an opportunity for education-based participation in each sport and activity
- Demonstrate equity and fairness
- Acknowledge financial implications
- Apply guidelines consistently

The League understands that many officials chose to wait to register until a decision was made relative to participation during the fast-approaching school year. We also understand that many of you may not choose to come back to officiating this year. We understand and support the decision you make in this regard. Your decision needs to reflect the needs of you and your family. We will welcome you back when you feel you can return to officiating MSHSL events.

With the Return to Participation recommendation approved, we are looking to moving ahead with registration and review of official's information in preparation for the 2020-2021 school year.

Registration for the 2020-2021 season is open -

2020-2021 Registration Fees:

	First Sport	Each Additional Sport
Returning Veteran Officials	\$55.00	\$16.00
Second Year Officials	\$30.00	\$15.00
First Year Officials	\$30.00	\$15.00
Late Fee (August 11 for Swim & Dive, Diving, Soccer officials. TBD for remaining sports)	\$30.00	

Link to ArbiterSports registration - <https://app.arbitersports.com/registration/official?org=1709&role=3>

- Click here to view a how-to-register screencast: <https://youtu.be/0Scf68Z2F1U>
- Chrome is the best browser to use for ArbiterSports.
- The Arbiter Registration system will accept Visa, MasterCard or Discover.
- Registration closes for each sport when the deadline for completion of the online meeting and exam has passed (adjustments will be made as seasons are adjusted).
- Adapted officials will need to complete a separate registration. Adapted officials who also work a separate non-adapted sport will receive a \$39.00 refund after completing registration.
 - Arbiter was unable to complete this as one registration as Adapted sports are known as Unified or Special Olympics in other parts of the country, thus there was not an available matching sport name to place into the system since this is a new Arbiter system this year.
 - The same applies to Dance Team. Dance Team will be selected as Dance during the registration process.
 - Arbiter will work on changing all of these sports so that they are named correctly and under one registration.
- The late fee will go into effect until August 11 for soccer and swimming and diving officials. These officials are encouraged to register as soon as possible to allow for scheduling of preseason materials and prepare for clinics which we are planning on at this time.
- **Eligibilities and the Level System** – As shared previously, the Level System will be discontinued in 2020-2021.
 - Please consider the following information; when you log in to register. The Eligibility Tiers listed below will be checked for each activity. **Please deselect Tiers that you are not interested in completing:**
 - **Regular Season Official** (For those who only desire to officiate Regular season events)
 - Will have the requirements of: payment, concussion module, background check, online meetings and exam.
 - **Section Tournament Official** (For those who desire to officiate regular season and be considered for section events)
 - Will have Regular Season requirements and in-person clinic attendance (in sports where this is applicable).
 - **State Tournament Official** (For those who desire to officiate regular season and be considered for section and state events)
 - Will have Section Tournament requirements and additional requirements as determined by the Coordinators for each sport, which could include the viewing of training videos, completion of a mechanics exam or other sport-specific requirements. These items will have adjusted due dates (not the same as the online meetings or exams) that will vary by sport.
 - **Reciprocity Official** (*for officials fully registered in other states*)

- Will have the requirements of: payment, background check, concussion module and “Home” state requirements. Reciprocity officials will be
 - **Student Official** (any official under the age of 18)
 - Will have the requirements of: payment, concussion module, online meetings and exam.
- An eligibility tutorial, further explaining the eligibility screens will be created and shared in the near future.
- Probationary status will no longer be offered. Officials who do not complete the minimum requirements for the Regular Season Tier will not be eligible for any varsity contests.
- All officials are eligible to be considered for Section Tournament or State Tournament regardless of the number of years in officiating, provided that the eligibility items under those Tiers are completed.
- The requirements for each Tier will be added over the next several weeks and months including background check status, concussion module (available now) and training clinic attendance history. The online meetings and exams will open August 10th for swimming and diving and soccer as per the schedule located on the MSHSL Arbiter Central Hub.
- Supplemental materials such as Simplified and Illustrated, Rules By Topic and the Section/State Tournament Card will not be purchased via the Registration Process. These items will be purchased via the MSHSL Online Store(<https://mshsl.myshopify.com/>). Only fully registered(paid) Minnesota officials are eligible to purchase the Section/State Tournament Card. Purchased items will not be shipped until approximately 1-2 weeks prior to the season. Only fall items are available at this time.
- Only new officials and officials who purchase supplemental materials will receive preseason packets. All returning officials should keep their rule book to use with the rule supplement that will be posted on the MSHSL Arbiter Central Hub. Gymnastics Judges will receive new rule books this year. All pertinent materials will be available for download on the MSHSL Central Hub under the sport link.
- All policies for officials are in the Manual for Athletic Officials. The updated manual is available on the MSHSL Arbiter Central Hub.
- It is likely that virtual clinic offerings will be offered in addition to the scheduled clinics throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Zoom clinic offerings will offered in soccer, swim and dive, volleyball and football over the next several weeks. Even though we will not have volleyball and football during the traditional fall season, we will still engage in staff development and training opportunities with officials during this time. The Zoom clinics will take the place of in-person clinic attendance during the fall of 2020. This communication will be sent to officials registered in that sport in the next week or so.
- **NEW - Reciprocity Officials** – you will need to complete your eligibility items in your home state or MN (as available) to work varsity events in MN.

A FAQ site has been developed to address common questions regarding registration and eligibility. See that site here: <https://sites.google.com/view/mshslarbiter/home>.

Please check out this site for answers to your questions as we will be adding topics as they come up.

An email will be sent with adjustments to playing rules and protocols that are specific to soccer and swimming and diving. We will also include Tier requirements, exam considerations and Zoom clinic dates specific to each sport.

Information for FB, VB, winter and spring sports will be shared as more information is gathered from the Governor, MDE and MDH.

This has been a challenging day for the Board of Directors and League Staff. We are hopeful and optimistic that a modified spring season will provide student-athletes, coaches, officials and communities with a high school sport experience to the greatest extent possible. We look forward to the time when virtual is an option and not a requirement. Until then, best wishes on continued good health.

Yours in officiating,

Jason Nickleby
Coordinator of Officials
MSHSL