

Greater Naples Officials Association Policies and Procedures, Football

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The Board Members of the Football division of Greater Naples Officials Association (GNOA) establish the policies and procedures in this manual. Any policies not address or any conflicts with GNOA policies, defer to the GNOA Executive Policies and Procedures. This manual is provided to general membership for the purpose of educating and setting expectations of all GNOA, Football members.

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Membership

Obtaining Membership

Membership is comprised of any official that is registered with the FHSAA and defined as a Primary or Secondary member of Greater Naples Officials Association. Any and all rules pertaining to being an official as established by the FHSAA Officials' Guidebook apply for membership to GNOA Football Division.

Members in Good Standing

Members in good standing are those that meet all financial, training and conduct requirements. Each item is explained in detail further in this document.

Secondary Membership

Secondary members are subject to all procedures and standards established within this document. Secondary members are expected to follow standards of a Member in Good Standing. Secondary members are non-voting members, are not eligible to be committee members, selected on an officiating crew or recommended to a post-season crew.

Member Pay

Members will be paid in accordance to Greater Naples Officials Association board policies.

Personal Conduct

Meeting Conduct

The GNOA Football Board Members run all meetings. All discussion will be civil and expedient. Degrading, yelling, or disrupting proceedings will not be tolerated.

Tobacco, Alcohol, Illegal Substances

All tobacco, alcohol and illegal substances are prohibited during any GNOA sanctioned event. This includes meetings, scrimmages, trainings, and games that are assigned by GNOA. Non-sanctioned events that are outside of GNOA's purview are viewed as personal time.

Code of Ethics

GNOA operates under the Code of Ethics as established by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). These ethics can be found in Officials manuals as well as the NFHS website and include the following:

- Officials at an interscholastic athletic event 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.
- Officials shall maintain an ethical approach while participating in forums, chat rooms and all forms of social media.

Members that do not comply with this Personal Conduct section may be subject to disciplinary proceedings as defined by the Grievance procedures.

Arrival at Games

Game Officials

All game officials are expected to coordinate arrival with all other crewmates (especially Crew Chief) at the varsity and sub-varsity level. This includes dress, parking, and meeting time.

All game officials shall comply with the following dress code for their arrival to and departure from regular season games:

1. Shirt: A Collared Shirt, with either short or long sleeves. Such shirt should have no or minimal markings, labels or logos. Officials should not wear any clothing with decals or logos of any Collier County School. Shirts must be tucked in. Outerwear may be worn as needed.
2. Pants: Business-Casual type Chinos or Dress-Slacks. Worn with a belt. No jeans or denim pants.
3. Dress Shoes or Loafers. No tennis shoes or sneakers or worn work boots.

All game officials shall comply with the following dress code for playoff games:

1. Dress shirt, tie and sport coat or jacket.
2. Pants: Dress-Slacks. Worn with a belt.
3. Dress Shoes.
4. Female officials may wear a business style dress or skirt and blouse.

On Field Uniforms:

Officials: On-field officials shall wear uniforms that comply with the FHSAA uniform requirements. This includes black pants for varsity games and black shorts with a belt for sub-varsity contests. Sub-varsity contests require white crew length socks.

Officials shall use blue bean-bags as their primary bean-bags. Back Judges may carry a second color bean-bag.

Electronic Clock Operators (ECO) are considered full game officials and assigned by GNOA. They are subject by all procedures established in this document. Furthermore they shall comply with the following dress code:

1. Official GNOA Football Collared Polo Shirt. This must be worn during the contest from the time of leaving the locker room until returning. The shirt must be tucked in.
2. Pants: Business-Casual type Chinos or Dress-Slacks. Worn with a belt. No jeans or denim pants.
3. Dress Shoes or Loafers. No Tennis Shoes or Sneakers or worn work boots.

4. If necessary due to weather, a jacket or rain jacket. Such jacket should be a plain color, preferably one that is not the same color as either team in the game, and should have no or minimal markings, labels or logos.

There shall be no shorts, jeans or non-collared shirts worn by ECOs. Failure to abide by the ECO dress code may result in the loss of future ECO assignments.

All clock operators are expected to be on site when requested by the Crew Chief to participate in the pre-game discussion.

Professional Media and Social Media

GNOA prefers that no official speak to the media concerning any officiating question or issue without the prior consent of the GNOA Football Board. In any event, all members should use discretion when speaking to the media or making comments on social media. No member may hold himself or herself out as speaking on behalf of GNOA or the Football Division to the media or the public, unless specifically granted such authority from the Football Division President. Any comments that can be viewed as a detriment to the advancement of GNOA Football can be used in disciplinary hearings against the member.

Communication Channel

All members are expected to follow the communication channel for complaints or grievances. Members shall handle issues internally by communicating with Crew Chiefs, Grievance committee or a Board member, then the governing Board of GNOA. Members shall not communicate directly with School Administration, FHSAA, etc. as these organizations do not have any authority concerning GNOA grievances or business.

Board Member Elections

All board membership is subject to GNOA By-Laws. The GNOA Board intends to hold elections as required and permitted by the GNOA By-Laws, and sets forth this procedure for the implementation of the Board elections. The Football division shall call a membership meeting to establish nominations for the upcoming one-year term (the terms start July 1 of each year), during the football season. Upon accepting a nomination, that member consents to all disclosure of personal conduct violations, if any, to the voting membership. The nominations will be presented to the GNOA Board of Directors for review, consistent with the By-Laws. Once the GNOA Board of Directors returns the ballot, it will be disseminated. The vote will occur during the Football Division spring meeting.

Meeting Structure and Operation

The President shall establish agendas prior to all meetings. Meetings shall have an agenda set forth by the President and an agenda shall be sent out to members at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Primary focus of meetings shall be on training. The training component shall be in all meetings, and after the Presidents opening remarks. Any and all other matters shall follow the training component of the meeting.

The Secretary shall take minutes during the meeting, and all attendance documentation will be handled by signing out at the end and exit of the meeting. Towards the end of the meeting the Secretary will distribute the sign out sheet.

Members shall have allocated time to discuss association business but the President has the right to curtail discussion of any matter at any time.

Members are encouraged to dress appropriately and act accordingly at all meetings, as the meetings are typically held on public school grounds.

All meetings will be conducted according to GNOA executive policies.

Committees and Participation

On or before August 1st, each year, the Football Board shall select the members of each of the required committees, which shall include the evaluation, assignment, recommendations, and grievance and training committees. The committees shall be made up of either 3 or 5 members from the Primary Membership of the Football Division, and no individual may serve on more than one committee. In the event a member refuses or resigns their appointment from a committee at any time, then the Football Board shall immediately select a replacement member. Further, in the event of a change in the status of a committee member, i.e. they change to a Secondary Member after accepting their role on a committee or they lose their status of good-standing due to a disciplinary proceeding, then the Board shall replace them as soon as practical.

If selected to be on a committee, a member is expected to respond to the Ex-Officio of the committee, and participate in all necessary committee meetings and functions in good faith and to the best of their ability. The Committees shall be as follows:

Evaluation

The Evaluation Committee is responsible for setting up the process and selecting those individuals who will assist with the evaluation of member officials. The Evaluation Committee shall meet at least 1 time prior to the first game of the season to select the form and content of the evaluations, to determine who will perform the evaluations and determine a schedule for evaluations. The committee shall give strong deference to the systems set in place by prior evaluation committees, but shall not be limited to prior practices and is encouraged to continue to build on the evaluation system for GNOA. The Evaluation Committee shall continue to meet throughout the season as needed.

All evaluations shall be signed by the evaluator, who must perform his or her duty impartially and to the best of his ability in measuring the necessary criteria. All evaluations will be provided to the Ex-Officio for the evaluation committee, and reports will be disseminated to the evaluated officials only on request.

The Ex-Officio for the Evaluation committee shall insure that evaluations are made available to the Recommendation Committee, as well as to the Crew Chiefs prior to the selection of crews during the following year. The Football Secretary should maintain the evaluations for at least two years.

Grievance

The Grievance Committee is responsible for hearing complaints and appeals made or brought by one or more of its member officials or the Football Board. All situations are encouraged to be resolved without the need for a formal grievance filed. Once an official Grievance is filed, the committee is responsible to see the complaint through to completion, including filing paperwork with the Executive board of GNOA. The grievance procedures are defined by three phases: Complaint, Fact Finding, and Decision. Upon decision, if there are other parties involved, there may be appeals to the Football Division and eventually Executive Board of GNOA.

Unless or until a different procedure is dictated by the GNOA Board of Directors, all grievances should follow the following general procedure:

1. Complaints will be filed with Ex officio member of Grievance committee, and must be made in writing by the complaining member or by the Football Board Members.
2. Committee should have an initial vote, which may be by email, to first decide whether the complaint is sufficient to warrant continued investigation and consideration or should be summarily dismissed. A dismissal requires a unanimous vote of the Committee. Also, the Committee must determine if the grievance submitted must be heard by the GNOA Board of Directors, as set forth in the GNOA By-Laws.

3. If proceeding, then the complaint enters the fact-finding phase where all witnesses and or evidence is collected. The Ex-Officio member will collect any and all eye-witness accounts, in writing, as well as provide a copy of the complaint to the member being accused, so that the accused member may respond in writing to provide his version of the events.
4. After all written statements are collected, the Grievance committee shall meet, in person, to discuss the complaint and decide a discipline. The Ex-Officio may attend the meetings to disseminate the gathered information, to observe and witness the meeting, and may answer procedural questions about these procedures or the GNOA By-Laws, if necessary, but shall not otherwise participate in the choosing of discipline or vote. The final decision of the Grievance Committee shall be by majority vote of the Board Members present.
 - a. If the complainant or alleged wrong-doing official are members of the Grievance Committee, then such official shall not participate and the Football Board shall select a replacement official to serve on the Grievance Committee, or shall otherwise ensure that there are a minimum of 3 members on the Committee to perform this step.
 - b. Upon completion of the decision of the Grievance Committee, the Ex-Officio shall put the decision of the Committee in writing. The Written decision (the “Ruling”) of the committee shall be submitted to the Football Board, the Disciplined Member and the Complaining Member and email.
5. Any discipline set forth by the Committee in its Ruling shall become effective immediately upon transmitting to the Football Board.
6. Appeal: The Disciplined Member or the Complaining Member may appeal the Committee’s decision to the Football Board, by submitting a notice of the intent to appeal to the Secretary of the Football Board by 5 p.m. on the fifth day following receipt of the Ruling. The Complaining member may appeal that the discipline was not strong enough; and, the Disciplined Member may appeal that the discipline was too strong. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Football Board must meet, in person, within three (3) days to discuss and decide the appeal. If the appeal is by the Discipline member and the Football Board cannot meet within three (3) days, then the discipline will be stayed until the Football Board can take action and any further Grievance Committee action is completed pursuant to the procedure set forth below; if the discipline requires the payment of any fine, then the fine shall not be required to be paid until the appeal process is complete.
 - a. For an appeal by the Complaining Member, the Football Board must choose to either affirm the discipline or decide by majority vote that the discipline is too weak.

- b. For an appeal by the Disciplined Member, the Football Board must choose to either affirm the discipline or decide by a majority vote that the discipline is too strong.
 - c. If the Football Board affirms the discipline selected by the Committee, then the discipline goes back into effect (if it had been stayed) and the Grievance procedure is ended.
 - d. If the Football Board rejects the discipline, because it is either too strong or too harsh depending on the party who made the appeal, then the case goes back to the Grievance Committee.
7. Upon return of the case to the Grievance Committee, the Grievance Committee must meet again, in person, and modify the recommended discipline pursuant to the decision of the Football Board. If the discipline is not already stayed, then this second Committee meeting must take place within three (3) days of the Football Board's meeting, otherwise the discipline will be stayed at this point. This procedure is intended to insure that all final disciplinary decisions come from the Grievance Committee. The Football Board does not have the power to require the Committee to issue a specific discipline, rather, may only tell the Committee that it has acted too harshly and to meekly. Upon receipt of that information, the Committee shall select a new discipline that conforms with the decision of the Football Board, by majority vote and under the same guidelines as set forth above. The second Written decision (the "Second Ruling") of the committee shall be submitted to the Football Board by the Ex-Officio member, the Disciplined Member and the Complaining Member and email.
- a. The Grievance Committee's Second Ruling shall be final for all purposes. Any discipline set forth by the Committee in its Ruling shall become effective immediately upon transmitting to the Football Board. Any time that the Disciplined Member was subject to discipline without any stay during the process shall count toward the discipline.

Possible disciplines by the Committee may include, but are not limited to: Fines, suspensions, training classes, etc.

If requested by the Football Board, the Grievance Committee may also meet to determine any standing fine schedule for possible automatic monetary fines (which in no circumstance may be more than \$25) from members for circumstances which are specifically identified by the Football Board.

Recommendation

The Recommendations Committee is responsible for reviewing the evaluations of each member official during the regular seasons, and for preparing a submitting to membership a list of member officials who deserve consideration for assignment to playoff contests.

The Recommendations Committee shall meet to perform its duties in a timely manner in order for the membership to vote prior to the submission deadline published by the FHSAA. The Recommendation Committee is charged, not only with identifying the officials that should be given consideration for playoff assignment, but also for forming the crews of officials and ordering those crews. The Recommendations Committee shall be guided by the following criteria, when making their determination:

All grey-book requirements for playoff eligibility must be followed. There will be no exemptions or exceptions made for the minimum playoff eligibility criteria.

The Committee shall consider the evaluations of officials, as prepared by the Evaluation Committee.

In order to avoid the same officials being selected on the top playoff crew annually, the Committee should consider the make-up of the prior year's playoff crews, and if possible, not keep the same officials on the first playoff crew in consecutive years.

The Committee shall also consider the experience level of the officials, testing results, and Rank of the officials to be considered, in filling out the playoff crew recommendations.

To be eligible for playoff crew recommendation, an official must attend no less than 50% of the pre-season training sessions established by the training committee. Any appeals of this requirement may be directed to the Football Board.

There will not be any limit placed on the number of crews to be set for recommendation. The Committee may recommend as many or as few playoff crews as it deems to properly represent GNOA in playoff assignments.

Approval of Recommendations

The Recommendations Committee shall first publish their playoff crew recommendations to the Football Board, and the Board must vote to approve the presentation of the recommendations to the general membership. If the Board does not approve, then it should notify the Committee of the issues of disagreement, and the Committee may make any alterations it can agree upon by majority vote. If any changes are made, then those changes shall be presented to the Football Board for vote. Once the Board approves a recommendation slate, it shall be presented at the next Membership meeting for discussion and vote of the membership. If the recommendations are not approved by majority of the Membership, then the Recommendations Committee shall convene during the meeting, and make any alterations that can be approved by the majority of the Committee. If changes are made, they shall be submitted to another vote by the Membership. If the Membership does not approve by majority vote, the second time, then the Football Board may approve the second slate by majority vote. Otherwise this procedure continues until a slate of playoff crews is approved either by the majority of the membership or a majority of the Board.

Training

The training committee is responsible for establishing a training schedule for the year and requirements for those training sessions for the membership. Training sessions shall be posted to the membership prior to the registration start date defined by the FHSAA and will include regular “pre-season training sessions” that will be scheduled between July 1 and the first game of the season. The training committee is also responsible for documenting training attendance and providing those records to the Football Board for submission to the FHSAA.

Assignment

The assignment committee is responsible for checking the initial schedule defined by the Assignment Secretary (as defined below). They will review assignments and verify that they are fair and reasonable for the membership and comply with FHSAA Greybook requirements.

Assignments (Regular Season and Post-Season)

All Assignments shall fall under the authority and purview of the Assignment Secretary (the “Assigner”). The Assigner shall follow the mandates and duties as set forth in the GNOA Bylaws, which include but are not limited to following with all regulations of FHSAA (the Greybook) concerning assignments and any other directives of the GNOA Board or contracts entered by GNOA.

By majority vote of the Football Board each year, a different assigner may be appointed for youth league football contests (i.e. Saturday morning football). If this occurs, the Youth League assigner will not be a member of the Board, but will answer to both the Assigner and the Board.

The Assigner shall receive and review any and all Evaluations submitted by the Evaluation committee for the current and prior year, for consideration in making game assignments.

Working With Assignment Committee

The Assigner shall have no less than the first month’s assignments for Varsity and Sub-Varsity contests complete and submitted to the Assignment Committee, no later than fourteen days prior to the first football contest. Following the first month, the Assigner shall continue to have assignments submitted to the Assignment Committee no later than fourteen days before the scheduled contests.

Once received, the Assignment Committee shall review the schedule for compliance with the Greybook (including school blocks) as well as compliance with any school scratches or other game blocks. The Assignment Committee shall review and vote on the submitted assignments within 3 days of receiving the assignments. Any and all subsequent changes or modifications to the schedule recommended by the Assignments Committee must be made by the Assigner and the Assignment Committee as soon as possible,

to allow the schedules to be posted at least ten days prior to the scheduled contests. If the Assignment Committee meets in person, then the Assigner should attend this meeting to be on hand to answer questions.

Any substitutions or changes to the schedule, which may be required to be made after assignments are published, due to turn-backs or any other reason, may be made by the Assigner without submission to the Assignment Committee. It is understood that such flexibility is needed by the Assigner to insure the games are covered in sufficient time.

Sub-Varsity Assignments

The Board recognizes that sub-varsity games are important for the growth and development of GNOA Football officials. The Assigner must follow the Greybook requirements of having at least one Rank 1 or 2 official on every sub-varsity crew. In addition, the Board may identify officials to develop at the Referee position, and the Assigner must make it a priority to assign these officials to Referee Sub-Varsity contests.

Regular Season Assignments

The Assigner shall assign games using the crews established for that year. On days in which there are more games than crews, then the Assigner may maintain some or all of the crews, or divide up the officials, in his discretion, to cover all of the games.

It shall be within the Assigner's discretion which crews to assign on specific weeks.

The Football Board shall identify a list of Supplemental Varsity White Hats who may be used at the Referee position for Varsity Contests other than the Crew Chiefs, and the Assigner shall only use those officials as Referees for Varsity games. In the event that there is no Board approved Referees available to complete the assignments for a specific day, then and only then may the Assigner select a Referee for the game at his discretion, subject only to the Greybook requirements.

Crew Chiefs and Responsibilities

It is the belief of the Football Board that using Crews to officiate will greatly benefit the quality of football officiating in Collier County. The Board shall select the number of crews, which will be used in the upcoming football season, no later than July 1, each year.

On or before the Football Membership meeting in the spring, the Board shall ask all members to submit their name for consideration as a Crew Chief, or as a Referee "White Hat" as a supplemental varsity White Hat or underclassmen White Hat.

The Board shall select the members who will be Varsity Crew Chiefs, supplemental Varsity White hats, and underclassmen White Hats. The Supplemental Varsity White Hats will be on the underclassmen White Hat lists, along with other members identified for development at the Referee position. The Board understands that fulfilling the Crew Chief position is about more than just being a capable Referee on the field, but also requires some leadership ability. Additionally, the Crew Chiefs will represent GNOA on the field and with the coaches and players, and their overall qualification shall be considered.

Once the Crew Chiefs are identified, a Crew Selection meeting shall be scheduled for the Board and the Crew Chiefs. Prior to the Selection meeting, the Crew Chiefs may request member official evaluations from the prior year, and will be given Muster Sheet information for all the membership (Rank, years' experience and test scores) for all members from the previous year. The Selection of the crews shall be done in a straight draft format, with the order being set by the drawing of numbers from a hat prior to beginning the Selection. The number of crews and the number of officials to be selected by the Crew Chiefs shall be decided by the Football Board every year before the draft. Once all Crew Chiefs have selected their crews, each Crew Chief will select an ECO to work with their crew for the season.

In addition to selecting crews and working games, Crew Chiefs are expected to meet routinely (weekly conference call) to help with development and establish standards. They are also expected to assist in the development of young officials.

Crew Chiefs are also expected to fill out sportsmanship (good and bad) forms to be submitted to the FHSAA. This includes the report of fights, ejections, terminated games, etc. These forms can be found on FHSAA.ORG.

Supplemental Mechanics

None defined at this time

General Provisions

Policies are modifiable by the board no more than two times per year on a majority vote of the Football board. Changes shall not be made in season (first day of Football practice as defined by FHSAA to the last day of Football finals)