

Be Professional as an Official

Prior to the Game

- Be on time. Arrive at the site at least 30 minutes prior to the game. If this is not possible call the school's administration and notify them of the time you will arrive.
- Dress the part and act the part. In officiating, a book is judged by its cover. Your appearance before, during, and after the game is important.
- Good officials read the book often, especially if you work other levels, such as youth or college.
- Attend clinics and conferences on officiating. Keep up with mechanics, rules changes, and the finer points of the game.
- Never care who wins the game. Never use calls to favor either team for any reason.
- Conduct pre-game conferences with other officials, coaches from both teams, players from both teams, and captains. This is your opportunity to prevent problems before they occur.
- Remember your actions in every game reflect on all officials.

During the Game

- Professionals do not showboat. Any actions designed to draw attention away from the players and to the official are unacceptable and unprofessional.
- Don't criticize other officials. Let your work and the work of others speak for itself. If an official asks for your critique be honest and supportive.
- Don't anticipate the call, anticipate the play. Be aware of players who follow through with tackles after the ball has gone. Do anticipate retaliation; it is a rare player who will withstand 80 minutes of abuse, so nip it in the bud as soon as possible.
- "What you permit you promote," Inappropriate behavior by players and coaches must be dealt with immediately.
- The best way to avoid conflict is to be close to the play.
- Make use of assistant referees (do not wave them off). Encourage them to call fouls in their areas when they think the referee did not see the play.

After the Game

- The official's jurisdiction ends when they leave the field of play at the conclusion of the game. Leave the field of play as quickly as possible to avoid confrontation with players, coaches, and fans.
- Verify the score. This can be done after you leave the field of play.
- Report in writing any disqualifications and unusual incidents to the proper authorities. Unusual incidents may include poor field conditions, illegal equipment, logo violations, absence of ball holders, or balls used without the NFHS Authenticating Mark.
- Conduct a self-appraisal of how you officiated the game. Don't beat yourself up. Vow to improve by doing the things necessary to be a professional.