2018 NFHS SOFTBALL RULE CHANGES

2-65-2, 8-1-1c, 8-4-3a, 9-6-2: The coach, pitcher or catcher of the defensive team may request an intentional walk either before or during the pitch count.

3-2-7c: Language was added to address the use and placement of the wristband playbook/play card and defines this item as a piece of equipment. It also addresses restrictions on color.

3-2-15, 10-2-3a: This change removes the responsibility of the umpires to inspect equipment prior to the start of the game. Rule 4-1-2d already requires head coaches to verify that their players are legally and properly equipped.

3-7-1 NOTE, 6-2-5 NOTE 2: Added language provides umpires with the authority to allow a reasonable number of warm-up pitches to an incoming pitcher due to circumstances that require a pitcher to be removed by rule.

6-1-2b: The pitcher may now step back with the non-pivot foot at any time prior to the start of the pitch.

2018 COMMENTS ON RULES CHANGES

2-65-2: In an effort to improve the flow of the game and align with current trends of the sport, this change will allow the coach or catcher of the defensive team to make a request to the umpire for the batter to be intentionally walked to first base.

3-2-7c: Added language to address the use and placement of the wristband playbook/play card and defines this item as a piece of equipment. It also addresses restrictions on color.

3-2-15: Removes the responsibility of the umpires to inspect equipment prior to the start of the game, and places the responsibility on the head coach as written in Rule 4-1-2d.

3-7-1 NOTE (NEW): Provides the umpires with the authority to allow a reasonable number of warm-up pitches to an incoming pitcher due to circumstances that require a pitcher to be removed by rule.
2018 COMMENTS ON RULES CHANGES CONT’D

6-1-2b: At any time prior to the start of the pitch the pitcher may step back with the non-pivot foot with the hands together or separated. There appears to be no advantage to the hands being apart or together prior to stepping back. This rule change may also help the developing pitcher.

10-2-3a: As in Rule 3-2-15, this change will eliminate the equipment inspection responsibility of the umpire, but addresses the other areas of discussion in the pre-game conference. The use of legal equipment is the responsibility of the head coach.

3-6-7 Penalty: This rule has been clarified to address the restriction of coaches to the dugout/bench after a second violation for an unreported substitution.

2018 NFHS SOFTBALL MAJOR EDITORIAL CHANGES

3-6-12, 10-1-6...Language provides clarity and consistency for restriction of alcohol and tobacco use by participants and officials.

8-1-2...This change requires the batter to make an attempt to avoid being hit by a pitched ball in the area between the plate and the batter’s box. This portion of the rule had been inadvertently omitted.

2018 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

Coaches Responsibility Pregame Conference-Equipment
Rule 3-2-15 has been removed. Per Rule 4-1-2d, coaches are responsible for verifying at the pregame conference that all their players are legally and properly equipped. Coaches should review the following rules: 1-4 Gloves/Mitts, 1-5 Bats, 1-6 Batting Helmets, 1-7 Catchers Equipment and 3-2 Uniforms and Player Equipment. Penalties for illegal equipment range from correcting the problem if possible or having the equipment removed. Possible restriction to the dugout or ejection for the player and coach depending on the severity of the infraction could occur.

Other Equipment
Coaches should also review Rule 1-8 other equipment. To be familiar with what other equipment is permitted for players and coaches. (infielders facemask)

Hit by Pitch
8-1-2c describes a situation in which the ball is not in the strike zone (this is a dead-ball strike) and is not completely in the batter’s box (hit by pitch and awarded first base). In the area between the strike zone and completely in the batter’s box, it was intended that the batter still had to make an effort to avoid being hit.

Courtesy Runner for the Pitcher and/or Catcher
8-9-2 has a unique exception: When an injury or disqualification occurs in the top of the first inning to the pitcher and/or catcher identified on the lineup card and she is unable to face the first batter in the bottom of the first inning, the player who ran for her is retroactively her substitute, no longer a courtesy runner. All substitution rules apply and the pitcher and/or catcher has left the game. If the pitcher and/or catcher is able to play at another position on the field, the player who ran for her is retroactively her substitute and is no longer a courtesy runner. All substitution rules apply.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Penalty</th>
<th>Infraction</th>
<th>Additional Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Offense</strong> — Team warning</td>
<td>1. Lineup changes after submitted and verified.</td>
<td>1. Head coach is the offender (3-1-3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Offense</strong> — Offender restricted to</td>
<td>2. Faking a tag (3-6-2).</td>
<td>2. Faking a tag is also obstruction (3-6-2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dugout/bench</td>
<td>3. Carelessly throwing a bat (3-6-3).</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Hitting balls to teammates on defense (3-6-4).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Entering behind the catcher while the opposing pitcher and catcher</td>
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<td>are in their positions (3-6-5).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. Being outside the dugout/bench (3-6-6).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. Use of amplifiers or bullhorns for coaching purposes (3-6-8).</td>
<td>7. If offender is a coach, depending on severity, on first offense the umpire</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Calling time or using any command or commit any act for the</td>
<td>may issue warning or immediately restrict to bench/dugout or eject (3-6-8).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>purpose of causing an illegal pitch (3-6-9).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9. Objects other than scorekeeping materials/devices in the coach’s box</td>
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<td>(3-6-10).</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Offense</strong> — Team warning</td>
<td>1. Illegal equipment (3-6-1).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Offense</strong> — Offender and Head</td>
<td>2. Unreported substitute (3-6-7).</td>
<td>3. Additional penalty of a called strike or ball (3-6-17).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach restricted to dugout/bench</td>
<td>3. Intentionally removing lines (3-6-17).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ejection</strong></td>
<td>1. Electronic communication devices (3-6-11).</td>
<td>1. and 3. Coaches who violate may be restricted or ejected (3-6-11, 13).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unless judged to be of a minor offense. If</td>
<td>2. Use of tobacco products (3-6-12).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>minor, offender is warned and ejected if</td>
<td>3. Unsporting acts (3-6-13).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>repeated.</td>
<td>4. Charging an umpire (3-6-14).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Arguing balls and strikes or judgment calls (3-6-15).</td>
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<td>6. Deliberately throwing equipment (3-6-16).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ejection</strong></td>
<td>1. Initiating malicious contact (3-6-18).</td>
<td>3. Offender and head coach ejected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Fighting (3-6-19).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Use of altered or non-approved bat (7-4-2).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
NFHS OFFICIAL SOFTBALL SIGNALS

A. Do not pitch
Signal toward pitcher

B. Play ball
Verbally calls “Play ball”

C. Time out/Foul ball/Dead ball
Verbally calls “Time,” “Foul ball” or “Dead ball”

D. Delayed dead ball
Extend left arm out, fist with palm down (or out)

E. Strike/Out
Fist to hammer at 90 degrees

F. Infield Fly
Verbally calls “Infield fly”

G. Safe
Verbally calls “Safe”

H. Fair Ball
Point to fair territory with hand closest to infield. No verbal call.

I. Foul Tip
Fingers touch together, chest high, followed by strike call

J. Count
Left hand indicates balls, followed by strikes on the right hand. Verbally give count.

K. Home run
Right hand in the air, rotate counterclockwise

L. Double
First two fingers in the air
ENFORCEMENT OF RULES AND USE OF SIGNALS / MECHANICS

All officials must pay particular attention to the enforcement of playing rules as they are written and also the use of approved signals and mechanics, especially as they relate to ejections. Failure to enforce the rules as written and/or failing to use approved signals and mechanics makes it difficult for PIAA to support officials when an ejection occurs.

2018 PIAA ADOPTIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

- Adopt the 2018 NFHS Softball Rules Book.
- Adopt Rule 1-2-1 NOTE, authorizing the optional use of the Double First Base.
- Adopt Rule 4-2-3, relative to suspended games.
- Adopt Rule 4-2-3 NOTE 1, 15-runs after 3 innings or 10-runs after 5 innings and 1 1/2-hour time limit or other time limit if a public park is used, all at all levels (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition.
- Adopt Rule 4-2-3 NOTE 2, to permit two 5-inning games to constitute a doubleheader only at the sub-varsity levels (junior varsity and junior high/middle school) of competition.
- Adopt Rule 4-2-6, tie-breaker procedure, upon completion of 9 innings the player who last completed her turn at bat is placed on 2nd base.
- Adopt Rule 5-2-1b NOTE, when the umpire considers the weather or ground conditions unfit for play, after 30 minutes, the umpire may declare the game ended or suspended.

OUTDOOR EVENTS: SPECTATOR DECORUM

The presence and/or the use of balloons, whistles, and/or portable listening devices (without earphones) are PROHIBITED! Persons using such items may be removed from the Contest. The use of pom-poms by cheerleaders and small portable listening devices with earphones is permitted. Spectators are prohibited from removing their shirts and/or using body paint while in attendance at District and Inter-District Championship Contests and may be removed from the Contest for doing so. Principals and Athletic Directors shall inform and publicize these regulations to students. The failure of a school to so inform or publicize will not, however, prevent removal from the Contest for violations of this policy.

As copied from the PIAA Policies and Procedures Manual.

OFFICIALS MANUAL

All officials could become aware of the contents of the Officials’ Manual which can be found under the Officials heading at www.piaa.org.

This manual provides valuable information concerning many aspects of officiating as they relate to PIAA policies and procedures.
1. The PIAA Official's Emblem must be worn on the upper left sleeve of the official's standard shirt when officiating in all PIAA sponsored games.

2. All PIAA-registered officials must wear identical uniforms during a contest.

3. Required uniform for Softball umpires:

Shirt - One of the following shirts is to be worn: (1) Navy blue pullover with red and white stripe trim on sleeves and collar; (2) Light blue pullover with navy blue and white stripe trim on the sleeves and collar with the standard buttons (no zipper style shirts permitted). The pullover style shirt shall only be of a micromesh material. (The silk / shiny dazzle type material is not approved); (3) Long sleeve shirt. The light blue shirt is the shirt of choice and will be worn at the championships.

   **Note:** If an umpire wears a long sleeve undershirt or turtleneck, the long sleeve undergarment sleeve is not to be exposed under the pullover shirt. You must wear a jacket or sweater over the long sleeve undergarment so as the undergarment sleeves are not exposed.

Patch - The **ONLY** patch that is permitted to be worn is the PIAA Keystone patch which **MUST** be worn on the left sleeve of the shirt 3” down from the shoulder seam. If you are wearing a jacket or sweater while umpiring, you are **NOT** required to have a PIAA Keystone patch on your jacket or sweater.

Jacket - The pullover style jacket must be solid navy blue only. Jackets or sweaters with identification other than PIAA are **NOT** permitted to be worn while umpiring PIAA contest at any levels.

Undershirt - Navy Blue – this also applies to a Turtleneck.

Slacks - Gray – Shorts are **NOT** permitted.

Socks - Black.

Belt - Black, if worn, with small metal buckle.

Cap - Navy Blue – Caps are to be fitted type only, not adjustable style. Both male and female umpires must wear caps properly in all positions. Cap with **Gold 1 ½” high “PIAA” letters are REQUIRED** for all regular season, district and inter-district advanced play.

Ball Bag—Navy Blue—2 Ball Bags may be worn.

Jewelry—Umpires are **NOT** permitted to wear jewelry, with the exception of your wedding band and a Medical Alert Bracelet or Necklace while umpiring. The restrictions that pertain to a player for a Medical Alert Bracelet or Necklace also pertain to umpires.

**NOTE:** **ALL UNIFORM ITEMS MUST BE IDENTICAL TO PARTNER(S), DRESS ALIKE!!!**
Prior the start of the game at the pregame conference, the head coach and the team captain(s) shall be present. The head coach of each team is responsible for verifying to the plate umpire that all his/her players are legally equipped and in compliance with the NFHS and PIAA rules and modifications.

**PENALTY** – The game will not begin until the head coach and team captain(s) attends the pregame conference and verifies their players are legally equipment and in compliance with the NFHS and PIAA rules and modifications.

**NOTE 1** – Although umpire(s) have the duty/responsibility to check/inspect the equipment, the responsibility for the use of proper equipment, rest with the school, coaches, student athletes, and their parents/guardians.

**NOTE 2** - The *PIAA Modification is the team captain(s) are required* to be at the pregame meeting with the coaches and umpires.

**POLICY REGARDING THE USE OF EYE SHADE**

The use of eye shade must be worn as a single, solid stroke under the eye. There shall be no numbers, words, logos, symbols or other detail located in the eye shade. The eye shade shall not extend below the cheek bone and extend no further than the width of the eye socket. Players having eye shade that does not meet the standard are to remove it or comply with the PIAA interpretation before participation in the game. If the players do not comply, the officials may impose unsportsmanlike conduct type penalties as determined by their respective rules code.

**PIAA BY-LAWS—ARTICLE XV; SECTION 3**

**REQUIREMENT OF WRITTEN CONTRACT**

All PIAA member schools shall enter into either paper or electronic contracts on the official contract form entitled “Contract for Officials Under PIAA Rules” with all registered sports officials retained by the schools or assigned by an assignor. Registered sports officials are independent contractors and therefore, are NOT employees of PIAA, the school, or the assignor. Disputes arising from oral agreements will not be considered by PIAA.
PIAA 2018 SOFTBALL SCHEDULE

First Practice Date.............................................. Monday, March 5
First Inter-School/Scrimmage Date............................... Saturday, March 10
First Regular Season Play Date .................................... Friday, March 23
Last Regular Season Contest Date and District Championship Deadline ......................................................... Saturday, June 2
PIAA Softball Championships:
First Round .................................................................. Monday, June 4
Quarterfinals ................................................................... Thursday, June 7
Semi-Finals ..................................................................... Monday, June 11

PIAA Softball Championship Finals
Beard Field at Nittany Lion Softball Park, Penn State Univ.............. Thursday, June 14 and Friday, June 15

Championship Schedule for Thursday, June 14, 2017:
  A Championship ........................................... June 14 @ 11:00 a.m.
  AAA Championship ............................... June 14 @ 1:30 p.m.
  AAAAA Championship ....................... June 14 @ 4:00 p.m.

Championship Schedule for Friday, June 15, 2017:
  AA Championship ................................. June 15 @ 11:00 a.m.
  AAAA Championship .......................... June 15 @ 1:30 p.m.
  AAAAAA Championship ..................... June 15 @ 4:00 p.m.

PIAA SPORTSMANSHIP MESSAGE

**This message shall be read to the head coach and captains prior to each contest officiated by a registered PIAA official. This message shall be enforced by contest officials and its enforcement shall include a strict and swift enforcement when unsportsmanlike actions involve demeaning remarks or actions that may be related to the racial or ethnic background of any party.**

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 contest officials that your contestants are legally equipped and uniformed according to NFHS rules and PIAA adoptions. Good luck in today's contest.

Chapter interpreters are requested to remind all officials to read this message at each contest they officiate.

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. This is an improper procedure and this message MUST be read. Officials are not to paraphrase, modify, or develop their own Sportsmanship Message to the captains and head coaches. The proper procedure is head coaches and captains MUST attend the pre-game reading of the sportsmanship message. For distribution purposes, this message is printed on the back of all PIAA registered sports officials' 2017-2018 identification cards.

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 Softball Rules. The reading of this message will 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.
Any coach and/or contestant who, while coaching or competing for a PIAA member school, is ejected from a Contest by a state high school association recognized and/or registered official in that sport for unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct shall be disqualified from coaching and/or participating for the remainder of the day and in all Contests on the next Contest day of the same level (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition. For a coach, participation in the next Contest includes any contact by the coach with members of the Team, including other coaches, between the time that the Team arrives at the Contest site and the conclusion of the last Contest of the day. The Principal shall direct the coach not to attend all of the Contest(s).

Any coach and/or contestant ejected from the last Contest in that sport in a sport season shall be disqualified from coaching and/or participating in the first Contest(s) in that sport in the subsequent sport season, at the same level (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition, at any PIAA member school or, if the student changes levels of competition, such as from junior varsity to varsity, the first Contest(s) in that sport.

In Softball, the athletic director and principal must meet with the ejected coach/contestant and detail in a report what corrective action has been taken. This report then must be signed by all parties and sent to the district Softball chairperson. This form is located on the PIAA website on the Softball page.

When a coach or contestant is disqualified/ejected from a Regular or Post-Regular Season Contest a report must be filed by the official who disqualified/ejected the coach or contestant. When the report is received in the PIAA Office it is viewed by the concerned school Principal and Athletic Director and mailed to the respective District Chairmen, officials’ representatives and sportsmanship chair. A copy is also given to the Assistant Executive Director and placed in the school’s file.

The official shall file a report on-line with the PIAA Office on the form prescribed for the sport involved, within twenty-four (24) hours following the completion of the Contest in which the ejection occurred. Failure to file such report shall not affect the validity or consequences of the ejection.

OFFICIALS ARE TO FILE A REPORT WITH THE PIAA OFFICE ON-LINE WITHIN 24 HOURS OF THE EJECTION OR THEY MAY BE PLACED ON PROBATION. OFFICIALS SHOULD GO TO THE “FORMS SECTION” UNDER THE OFFICIALS TAB AT www.piaa.org
### EXAMPLES OF DISQUALIFICATION PROVISION OF ARTICLE XIII, SECTION 8

The following examples are for players or coaches and are only examples and not a complete list. What this means is a player or coach ejected from a contest at any level must sit out the remainder of the day and the next day of the next contest at that level.

**Example #1:** Player/coach gets ejected from a junior varsity contest before a varsity contest. This player/coach gets disqualified for the remainder of the day and the next day of the next junior varsity contest. If this contest is followed by a varsity contest on the same day, the player/coach gets disqualified for the varsity contest also (the whole day).

**Example #2:** Player/coach gets ejected from a varsity contest on Friday, the team’s next varsity contest is Friday. Before the varsity contest is a scheduled junior varsity contest, player/coach cannot participate in any of Friday contests.

**Example #3:** Player/coach gets ejected from a varsity softball game Saturday. The next varsity contest is a game on next Friday but the game gets postponed to Saturday. On Saturday, the junior varsity team is to compete in another softball game, a player and/or coach eligible to participate in the junior varsity game? Since the Friday contest was postponed the next varsity game is the same day as the junior varsity game and the player/coach are not eligible to participate the whole day.

**Note to officials: the enforcement of the rules as written and the use of the mechanics when ejecting personnel from a contest cannot be stressed enough. PIAA cannot defend the lack of enforcement of sportsmanship rules nor the failure to use approved mechanics with regard to these ejections.**

### 2017 PIAA SOFTBALL DISTRICT INTERPRETERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sandra A. Yost</td>
<td><a href="mailto:syost77706@aol.com">syost77706@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Christopher C. Thomas</td>
<td><a href="mailto:butterpsu95@aol.com">butterpsu95@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>David A. Kolojejchick</td>
<td><a href="mailto:davekolo@verizon.net">davekolo@verizon.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thomas G. Aber</td>
<td><a href="mailto:strika1@verizon.net">strika1@verizon.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Alfred Godissart</td>
<td><a href="mailto:agodissart@centurylink.net">agodissart@centurylink.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Brian C. Sonak</td>
<td><a href="mailto:briansonak@comcast.net">briansonak@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Richard A. Kotarsky</td>
<td><a href="mailto:treerefl@verizon.net">treerefl@verizon.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Steve P. Kienzl</td>
<td><a href="mailto:skienzl@comcast.net">skienzl@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ronald J. Bure</td>
<td><a href="mailto:umppy54@yahoo.com">umppy54@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Steven C. Blackman</td>
<td><a href="mailto:blacknite76@hotmail.com">blacknite76@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Susan Kessock</td>
<td><a href="mailto:susankes@ptd.net">susankes@ptd.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Daniel Keefe</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dankeefe1@gmail.com">dankeefe1@gmail.com</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
If a PIAA member school violates or cancels a contract with an official, the District Committee or the Board of Directors, in their respective jurisdictions, may require a school so violating or so canceling to pay to the offended official the fee or fees for the Contest or Contests which have been provided in the official contract. Failure of a PIAA member school to live up to the terms of the contract shall be considered a violation of the Constitution and By-Laws of PIAA.

Comment: It has been brought to our attention on numerous occasions that officials have lost assignments or games because a school or assignor has “double booked” the contest. Officials are reminded that unless there is a written contract executed between the parties, they have no claim to any type of reimbursement from the offending school(s). Many schools have made a “good faith” effort to get them an additional assignment in the future or offer a scrimmage to pick up the lost fees. However, officially, without a written, signed, properly executed contract between the official(s) and the school(s), there is no recourse for the officials. In this day of technology it is not very hard for assignors, or schools, to execute these contracts. This is part of an assignor’s responsibility. Officials should request contracts from their assignors or schools for both parties protection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PIAA OFFICIALS INSURANCE</th>
<th>COMMUNICABLE DISEASE AND SKIN INFECTION PROCEDURES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For the 2017-2018 school year, American Specialty Insurance Services will provide the following benefits:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• One Million Dollars of Liability Coverage;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• $25,000 Excess Accident Medical Coverage (with a $250 deductible);</td>
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<tr>
<td>• $5,000 Accidental Death and Dismemberment (including a cardiac benefit).</td>
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This program is administered by American Specialty Insurance Services and underwritten by USF&G and Mutual of Omaha. Again this year, all regularly scheduled chapter meetings and the mandatory rules meeting will be covered under PIAA’s basic liability coverage. Chapters are requested to please enter their list of regularly scheduled chapter meetings online at www.piaa.org to assist procedurally in the exchange of information to have all local association meetings covered.

Contact information is as follows:
Drew Smith, Vice-President for Client Services
Sara Douglass, Administrative Assistant
American Specialty Insurances Services, Inc.
142 N. Main Street, P.O. Box 309
Roanoke, Indiana 46783-0309
Phone: 260-672-8800
Fax: 260-673-www.amerspec.com

Proper precautions are needed to minimize the potential risk of the spread of communicable disease and skin infections during athletic competition. These conditions include skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment. The transmission of infections such as Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and Herpes Gladiatorum, blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis B, and other infectious diseases such as Influenza can often be greatly reduced through proper hygiene. The NFHS SMAC has outlined and listed below some general guidelines for the prevention of the spread of these diseases.

OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include:
• Appropriate vaccination of athletes, coaches and staff as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
• During time of outbreaks, follow the guidelines set forth by the CDC as well as State and local Health Departments.

For more detailed information, refer to the Infectious Disease and Blood-borne Pathogens” and “Skin Disorders” sections contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.
INFECTIONOUS SKIN DISEASES

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these infectious agents include:

- Athletes must be told to notify a parent or guardian, athletic trainer and coach of any skin lesion prior to any competition or practice. An appropriate health-care professional should evaluate any skin lesion before returning to competition.
- If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, all team members should be evaluated to help prevent the potential spread of infection.
- Coaches, officials and appropriate health-care professionals must follow NFHS or state/local guidelines on “time until return to competition.” Participation with a covered lesion may be considered if in accordance with NFHS, state or lock guidelines and the lesion is no longer contagious.

BLOOD-BORNE INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these agents include following Universal Precautions such as:

- An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the activity (game or practice) until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to activity.
- Athletic trainers or other caregivers need to wear gloves and take other precautions to prevent blood or body fluid-splash from contaminating themselves or others.
- In the event of a blood or body fluid-splash, immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water.
- Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves when cleaning.
- Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and immediately evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.

If you are in need of updating your officiating supplies, please be reminded that Officially Sports is the official vendor of PIAA Sport Officials’ Uniforms. Please give them your consideration for any purchases regarding officials’ supplies. If interested, you may provide them with your email address to send you their catalog, seasonal specials and discounted items that may be of interest and service to your avocation of sports’ officiating. Officially Sports may be contacted via email at sales@officiallysports.com, by calling 800-934-4555 or at www.officiallysports.com.
The PIAA Sports Medicine Committee recommends that each registered sports official have an annual physical examination and practice good health habits. Being physically fit and conveying an appropriate, positive image through proper health and nutrition habits will greatly assist all officials in keeping up with the game. After all, the game, the schools, players, coaches, spectators and fellow officials deserve no less. As importantly, officials owe good health habits to themselves and their families if for nothing more, than the health of it. If officials have any chronic health condition, officials are requested to share this information with on site medical personnel at their contest(s).

- Shower immediately after every competition and practice.
- Wash all workout clothing after each practice.
- Wash personal gear (knee pads and braces) weekly.
- Do not share towels or personal hygiene products (razors) with others.
- Refrain from full body (chest, arms, abdomen) cosmetic shaving.

**Proactive Planning**

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safe areas.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play.
   - When thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for 30 minutes and take shelter immediately.
   - Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
   - Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
4. Review annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel.
5. Inform student-athletes of the lightning policy at start of season.

As copied from the NFHS 2018 Softball Rules Book.
SOFTBALL PLAYER, COACH, OR TEAM PERSONNEL DISQUALIFICATION FORM

During the softball Regular Season and Postseason, a disqualified softball player, coach, and/or Team personnel shall not be permitted to participate for the remainder of the day and in all Contests on the next Contest day of the same level (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition from which the player, coach, and/or Team personnel was previously disqualified. For a coach, participation in the next Contest includes any contact by the coach with members of the Team, including other coaches, between the time that the Team arrives at the Contest site and the conclusion of the last Contest of the day. The Principal must direct the coach not to attend all of the Contest(s), in accordance with ARTICLE XIII, Section 8, of the PIAA By-Laws. In addition, NFHS Softball Rules 2-19, 3-6-13, 3-6-19, 10-2-3f and 10-3-1 may also apply. The ejecting official must complete this form on-line, as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours following the completion of the Contest in which the disqualification took place. This form can be found at www.piaa.org under the Officials Section – Officials’ Forms category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Disqualified Player, Coach and/or Team Personnel</th>
<th>School</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of Game</td>
<td>Location of Game/Tournament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Team</td>
<td>PIAA District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Team</td>
<td>PIAA District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Official Who Issued Disqualification</td>
<td>Level of Competition</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

REASON FOR DISQUALIFICATION

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DATE OF REPORT OFFICIAL’S NAME (person issuing DQ) PIAA DISTRICT