

MIAA POLICY FOR  
MASSACHUSETTS HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS OFFICIALS

The MIAA is comprised of member schools whose students participate in interscholastic athletic competitions. In response to member school concerns for the safety of students and in its role as the organizer of interscholastic tournaments, and with the input of the MIAA Game Officials' Committee, the MIAA adopts this policy to address qualifications for game officials (hereinafter "official"). When game officials meet the set of criteria set forth herein, officials will be placed on the MIAA approved list.

I. Use of the MIAA list in tournament event and regular season:

The MIAA approved list shall be used by the MIAA in selecting officials for all MIAA tournament events.

As a service to its member schools, the MIAA approved list will be available for use by local or state official boards, member schools or their agents who are responsible for scheduling officials for regular season competition. The MIAA recognizes that local or state official boards or member schools may adopt minimum qualification requirements separate from the qualifications outlined herein.

NOTE: The use of the MIAA approved list by member schools does not relieve any member school or school personnel of their legal obligations related to background checks under state law.

II. Requirements to officiate in MIAA tournament events:

To be on the approved list for officials for MIAA-sanctioned contests, officials must:

- Be at least 18 years of age;
- Be a certified member of a MIAA-recognized officials' group for the specified sport;
- Provide accurate information on official MIAA background check application process;
- Be cleared through a MIAA background check procedure.

III. Required Background Check:

The MIAA will conduct background checks, including criminal conviction records, of all officials and candidates for inclusion on an approved list. The initial plan for recheck frequency of approved officials is every three years beginning the 2015-16 school year.

Subsequently, background checks will be performed on new members. Current

members can be subject to a follow-up background check at any time at the discretion of MIAA. Candidates and officials shall be responsible for the cost of their own background checks.

Subject to the review procedures in Section V, the MIAA reserves the right to exclude a candidate or remove an official from the approved list on the basis of such background check if it determines that the candidate's or official's conduct is contrary to the best interests of its member schools, provided that a criminal conviction shall be considered on its specifics and conviction will not automatically result in exclusion or removal from the list. Should the MIAA exclude a candidate or remove an official from the approved list as a result of a background check, it will notify the candidate or official of that action and provide the results of that background check. The candidate or official may request review in accordance with Section V below.

IV. Standards of Conduct:

The MIAA and its member schools expect that officials will uphold the highest ethical standards. Subject to the review procedures in Section V, the MIAA reserves the right to exclude or remove a candidate or an official from the approved list for any conduct that it determines is contrary to the best interests of its member schools. Should MIAA exclude or remove a candidate or an official from the approved list as a result of a background check, it will share the results of that background check with the candidate or official.

Conduct that is contrary to the best interests of MIAA member schools includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Making false or incomplete statements during the criminal background check process or providing false or incomplete information to MIAA regarding one's background, including criminal conviction history
2. Failure of an official on the MIA approved list to notify the local board and/or any sport officiating entity and the MIAA immediately, if charged with an alleged crime
3. Having been convicted of the following:
  - A. A crime involving the use, possession, or sale of illegal drugs or a controlled substance;
  - B. A crime involving the use or threatened use of violence against a person;
  - C. A crime that results in the individual being listed on a sex offenders' registry in any state;
  - D. Any sexual offense;
  - E. Any crime against a minor;
  - F. Other due and sufficient causes – Any conduct that, within the discretion of the MIAA, gives rise to a concern for the safety of students or others, or that indicates that the official cannot objectively perform the duties of an official; or that is otherwise inconsistent with the responsibility of the MIAA to the member schools or the student participants

NOTE: Any candidate or certified official charged with any crime or suspected of any such activity may be excluded or immediately removed from the list on a temporary basis immediately and without prejudice pending the outcome of the charges. Once the charges are resolved, the MIAA will make a final determination regarding the status candidate or official. Dismissed charges might not disqualify a candidate or official but are subject to review.

V. Review Procedures:

If a candidate or an official on the approved list receives written notification that he/she is being considered for exclusion or removal from the approved list as set forth in Sections III and IV above, he/she may submit additional information within ten (10) business days of the date of such written notification for consideration by the MIAA. Such information shall be provided in writing and addressed to the MIAA executive responsible for background checks. Any candidate awaiting a decision(s) under appeal will not be included on any MIAA approved list of officials until the MIAA appeal process is completed. The grounds for such review shall be stated in such request, e.g., mistaken identity, rehabilitation, dismissed charges or other justification for consideration. The MIAA executive responsible for background checks shall review the documents submitted, and within ten (10) business days of receipt of the information, shall take one of the following actions.

- a. Place the candidate or official on the approved list;
- b. Exclude or remove the candidate or official from the approved list.

Following action taken in accordance with items a or b above, the official or candidate may appeal an adverse decision within ten (10) business days of the date of notification that his/her request to be placed on the approved list was denied. To do so, the official or candidate shall file a written appeal with the MIAA Executive Director. Upon receipt of such appeal, the Executive Director will establish a committee composed of two (2) MIAA associate or assistant directors and a voting member of the MIAA Game Officials Committee. The committee shall consider the written record, previous information submitted to the MIAA executive responsible for background checks, and afford the official or candidate an opportunity to be heard. After considering the written record and hearing with the official or candidate (if such meeting is held), the committee shall either grant or deny the appeal. The decision will be rendered within ten (10) business days of the meeting. The applicant will be notified via certified mail about the outcome of the appeal.