SECTION 4- STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Texas Association Of Sports Officials
Code of Ethics, National Federation Code of Ethics, Standards of Conduct, Conflicts of Interest, and Solicitation

Section 4.1 Code of Ethical Conduct

Each member of TASO shall:

1. Put loyalty to the highest moral principles and to TASO above loyalty to persons or individual gains.
2. Uphold the Bylaws and legal regulations of the TASO and support members therein and never be a party to their evasion.
3. Never discriminate unfairly by the dispensing of special favors or privileges to anyone, whether for remuneration or not, and never accept, for self or family, favors or benefits under circumstance which might be construed by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of TASO duties.
4. Make no private promises of any kind binding upon duties of office since a TASO member has no private word which can be binding on public duty.
5. Engage in no business with nonmembers, either directly or indirectly which is inconsistent with the conscientious performance of TASO principles.
6. Pay in full all TASO and local chapter dues and fees promptly.
7. Expose corruption wherever discovered.
8. Uphold these principles ever conscious that membership is a basic human trust.

Section 4.2 Officials Code of Ethics (National Federation)

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.

1. 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.
2. Officials shall work with each other and their state associations in a constructive and cooperative manner.
3. 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.
4. Officials shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products beginning with the arrival at the competition site until departure following the completion of the contest.
5. 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.
6. Officials shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual obligations.
7. Officials shall remain mindful that their conduct influences the respect that student- athletes, coaches and the public hold for the profession.
8. 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.
9. Officials shall take reasonable steps to educate themselves in the recognition of emergency conditions that might arise during the course of competition.
10. Officials shall maintain an ethical approach while participating in forums, chat rooms and all forms of social media.

National Federation Rulebook 2022 per Ethics Committee

Section 4.3 Standard of Conduct

Each member of the TASO must avoid any action, whether or not specifically prohibited by this code, which might result in or create the appearance of a violation of these Standards of Conduct which include but are not restricted to:

1. Using TASO for private gain.
2. Giving preferential treatment to any person.
3. Losing complete independence or impartiality.
4. Making a TASO decision outside official channels.
5. Affecting adversely the confidence of the public, schools and universities in the integrity of the TASO.
6. Solicitation of, or accept any gift, favor, entertainment, meal, loan or anything of value from any person seeking contractual or other business with TASO and supporting members.
7. No member will engage in criminal, dishonest, notoriously disgraceful or immoral conduct or other conduct prejudicial to the TASO.
8. Use of intoxicating beverages or tobacco products while engaged in officiating activities.
9. Use of illegal drugs, which may be grounds for removal from TASO.
10. No official shall partake of any substance prior to officiating a game or match which shall impair his or her physical or mental performance.
11. Consume alcohol in public after a contest in uniform.
12. No official shall cancel an officiating assignment to accept another more advantageous high school assignment. Each chapter should establish policy regarding upgrading assignments (such as college, etc.) This policy shall be reviewed with the appropriate District Director, and a copy filed with other chapter documents in the TASO office.
13. No official shall fail to honor an officiating contract. Whenever it becomes impossible to fulfill any officiating assignment, the official involved shall notify the chapter secretary, or assigner, in sufficient time that a replacement may be obtained.
14. No official shall seek to influence a coach for the purpose of promoting personal officiating opportunities.
15. An official shall never publicly criticize another official or the association, or express disagreement with another official when a spectator.
16. Every official shall seek to possess and demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the letter and intent of the playing rules and officiating mechanics.
17. No official shall solicit games/matches unless he/she is operating as a chapter assigning authority.
18. No official shall falsify records or reports.
19. No official shall engage in scouting activities or engage in conversation with coaches regarding officiating assignments.
20. No official shall engage in actively promoting a college or university to a student athlete.

Approved by the TASO Board of Directors 05-013-2011; Revised 05-04-2012

Section 4.4 Standard of Conduct – Game Assignments

An official **shall not knowingly accept assignment of a contest** if any of the following conditions exist:

a. If there is a TASO Chapter that makes assignments through an assignment secretary/director and the assignment did not come through the assignment secretary/director. Any chapter member guilty of non-compliance with this provision will not be considered a member in good standing and will not be eligible for play off, regional or state tournament assignments.
b. If any official assigned to the contest is not an ACTIVE member of the appropriate TASO ~~or UIL~~ division.
c. If the official or the official's spouse is employed by any school fielding a team involved in a contest.
d. If the official is related by blood or marriage as follows: (parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, brother-in-law, son-in-law, etc.) to a person affiliated with a team involved in a contest.
e. If the official and any person affiliated with a team involved in a contest are former or present teammates, roommates, classmates, business associates or close personal friends.
f. If the official or the official's spouse attended or worked at either school within the last 5 years.
g. If the official has a child in school in one of the involved schools, or a child who attended or graduated from one of the schools within the previous 2 years.
h. If the official has coached or been affiliated with a club or select (non-junior, middle, or high school) team in the past 2 years that has a player or coach on either roster.

Section 4.5 Game Assignments – Tournaments

Due to the complexity, the unknown teams participating, and the large manpower needed at most tournaments, Section 4.1 c, d, e, f, g, and h will not be in effect. If there is a direct conflict of interest, the official may trade with an idle official, change courts with agreeable parties and with consent of the head tournament official. If none of those solutions is viable, it is preferable the official with the conflict to serve as the R2.

Section 4.6 Known Conflicts of Interest

An official must advise the assignments secretary, in writing, of all known conflicts of interest with schools normally served by the chapter prior to any assignments for a season. In the event a chapter secretary does not know of a conflict in accordance with Section 5.1 above, an individual official shall notify the assignment secretary of all know conflicts upon receipt of the schedule and the official shall not accept an assignment without first insuring compliance with the provisions of this section.

Section 4.7 Correction of Conflicts of Interest

In the event a conflict with these provisions becomes known after acceptance of the contest, the official shall make such conflict know to the assignment secretary or assigning authority as soon as possible. If the conflict is under Section 5.1, c-g above, the official shall be removed from the contest or tournament without penalty. If the conflict is under Section 5.2 above, the assignment secretary or assigning authority, in accordance with TASO and the local chapter policy, shall inform both coaches of the possible conflict and **reassign the official in the absence of consent from both head coaches**, without penalty to the official.

Section 4.8 Penalties

It shall be a violation of the Officials Code of Ethics for an official to work a contest in violation of these provisions and an official violating these provisions may be placed on probation, fined, suspended, or terminated from membership.

Section 4.9 Exceptions

The above provisions (except provisions of Section 6.1 a & b), may be waived by mutual consent of the head coaches. The President should be notified as soon as possible if exceptions are made at the varsity level.

Section 4.10 Solicitation – Allowable Chapter Actions

A chapter may:

1. Promote the services of that chapter, via US mail or e-mail by the President and/or Secretary for the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee of the Chapter. Copies of the chapter's letter/package promotions must be sent to the District Director, the Division President and the TASO Executive Director.
2. The chapter president, secretary, or assignment secretary may contact coaches/athletic directors by telephone or in person (by appointment only) for the legal promotions of services. A member of the Board of Directors or Executive Committee may substitute for the president or secretary; however other members are prohibited from direct or indirect contact of coaches/athletic directors.
3. Provide a roster or scratch list of the members of that chapter reflecting the classification, years of experience and potential conflicts of each member or crew. A photo roster book is permissible.
4. Provide the assignment policies and procedures of the chapter for individuals or crews.
5. State the availability of chapter members for assignment to:
    a. Varsity games/matches.
    b. Sub-varsity games/matches.
    c. Scrimmages.
    d. Rules discussions with teams/coaching staffs.
    e. Review game films/videos. (Chapter President, Secretary, and Assigning Secretary only)
    f. Conduct a rules seminar/meeting for coaches provided all coaches of all levels are invited at the same time.
    g. Allow the attendance of a coach at a regular scheduled meeting. This is not a violation and is encouraged by the UIL.
6. Dates the above contact is allowed – January 1 thru August 15..

Section 4.11 Solicitation – Individual Members

An individual member SHALL NOT:

1. Influence, request or communicate, directly or indirectly, with a coach, athletic director, assigning authority or an athletic governing body to enhance the opportunity for ones assignments in contests which are assigned by any TASO chapter.
2. Give, accept or exchange any gift, favor or thing of monetary value or personal gain for possible assignment of any official to a game/match.
3. Discredit the ability or performance or criticize the assignment of another official or team of officials to gain the opportunity of assignment for his/herself or another member.
4. An individual member, or chapter designated representative SHALL NOT criticize or censure the ability, performance, or assignment of another chapter.

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