

2025 MSHSAA Position Checklist

Referee - Game Day & Pre-Game Responsibilities

You're the Game Manager. This starts by being organized. Make sure your crew is prepared, on time and ready to work a game.

Hold Pre-Game (Game Officials Manual - p12) weekly, assign topics to crew members (case plays, video review and scouting reports, etc)

Preventive Officiating; Managing the Flow of the Game; Philosophy; Foul Threshold (If you "Think it's a foul," it's Not a Foul);

Sideline Management: **(9-4-8 Unintentional Contact: S38-S29/15 yds) (9-8-3 Restricted Area: S15; S7-29/5 yds; S7-S29-S27/15 yds)**

Follow MSHSAA Mechanics & Guidelines [not NCAA]. Work on Consistent Ready for Play Signal & Penalty Signal(s)

R is responsible for knowing location of security & game administration.

Any game official may join Referee at Pre-Game Meeting with Coaches. Review Wing Officials with Head Coach

Walk the field with crew in professional manner. Perform duties per MSHSAA handout.

R- Introduce Yourself to Chain Crew and Ball Boys. Thank them!

Coin Toss (p108): Referee can either face or have back to scoreboard.

Fouls / Penalties

CREW: Don't fish in someone else's pond. However, assist with information when necessary.

Calling official to provide (1) Results of the play, (2) Status of the ball when the foul occurred, (3) Foul, O/D/K/R & number. (020)

Wing Officials: Convey Foul / Penalty information to both Head Coaches. Obtain penalty choice from the offended teams Head Coach.

All officials have an obligation to enforce the penalty correctly. If it doesn't feel right, get together and discuss.

Officials should verify clock is stopped during penalty enforcement.

Each official on your crew MUST know the Rules. Know your foul/penalty expert.

Consider writing fouls on Game Card. (BJ notate fouls called by R).

Offended Teams Option to Start Clock on Snap on Accepted Penalty under 2 minutes **(3-4-7)**; Consider assigning BJ as under 2 min expert.

Game Officials Manual Points of Emphasis

Sportsmanship & Defenseless Player / Targeting

Recent Rule Changes

Forward Fumbles Out of Bounds to be Returned to the Spot of the Fumble 3-4-3, 4-3-1 EXCEPTION

All Officials Duties During Game

BJ; Responsible for all timing situations, Kicking & Passing Game

HL & LJ = Responsible for Forward Progress & Sideline Control

U = Responsible for assisting R on Penalty Enforcement & Inside Game

Focus on Being a Great Dead Ball Official (p6)

Always Hustle During the play

All officials need to be aware of the play/game clock status

Know your Key & # before the snap

Referee Pre-Snap Position & Ritual

Be on the passing arm of QB

Starting Position: 15 yds. deep / 5 yds. wide

Know your QB's and his abilities & adjust

Too Deep = You're not Involved in the play

Too Short = Get caught inside / dangerous

R => 100% responsible for QB safety

KEY: Opposite Tackle/Backs

Free Kicks / Be Alert for Short Kick

Position:	Responsibility #1:	Responsibility #2:	Count:
R @ GL	Ensure there are 4 players on each side of the kicker (6-1-4)	Momentum Rule [Bag it] (8-5-2a)	R
U @ 20YL	Progress on your side of the field. Use cross field mechanics	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB)	R
LJ @ 50YL	Encroachment by R & 1st touching by K	K's Goal Line on your side of field	K
B @ 40YL	Encroachment by K*. Pop Up Kick	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB) & K's Goal Line	K
HL @ 30YL	Progress on your side of the field. Use cross field mechanics	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB)	R

*Officiate K's Free Kick Line as a Plane for Short Kicks

Forced Touching = No Touching = Ignore It (6-1-6)

When the kick is over - Spot the ball on a yard line to start the series

Probable Penalties:

Pop Up Kick (2-24-10) (6-1-11)		S7 - S19 - 5 yards
Block Below the Waist (BBW) (2-17) (9-3-2)		S40 - 15 yards
Block in the Back (IBB) (9-3-6)	Make sure it's from the back, not in the side	S43 - 10 yards
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards
Kick Catching Interference (KCI) (6-5-6)	S33 : Options: Result of Play, 15 yards from spot of foul, OR 15 yards previous spot	
Holding (9-2-3c)	Make sure Holding is at the POA	S42 - 10 yards
Kick out of Bounds (KOB) (6-1-9)	S19 : Options: 5 yds / Re-Kick; 5 yds succeeding spot, OR 25 yds. from previous spot	
K initiating contact prior to kick traveling 10 yds; Eligible to recover FK; R initiates block in NZ (IBK) (9-3-7)		S43 - 10 yards (IBK)
Blocking (6-5-1) after signaling Valid (2-9-3) or Invalid Fair Catch Signal (2-9-4)		S43 - 10 yards (IBS)

2025 MSHSAA Position Checklist

Referee - Running Play

Count Team A players; Confirm with U; identify Eligible Backs/Receivers
 One Second count following huddle or shift (7-2-6)
 Ball, runner, action around runner & blocks behind NZ
 Know Reverse G/L mechanics. R has G/L when Reverse Mechanics in Effect.

Follow MSHSAA Mechanics & Guidelines [not NCAA]. Work on Consistent Ready for Play Signal & Penalty Signal(s)

Holding on Offense (9-2-1)	Make sure Holding is at the POA	S42 - 10 yards
Grab & Restrict (OH-GR); Hook & Restrict (OH-HR); Takedown (OH-TD); Tackle (OH-TK)		
Facemask (9-4-3h)	Major Grasp & Turn (FMM) vs. Incidental	S38-S45 - 15 yds vs S45 - 5 yds
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards
Block in the Back (IBB) (9-3-6)	Make sure it's on the back, not the side	S43 - 10 yards
UNS (9-5) / Personal Foul (PF) (9-4)	Be Alert for Off Ball Type Fouls. Talk & Prevent!	S27 / S38 - 15 yards
Illegal Substitution (ILS) (3-7)/ Formation (ILF) (7-2)		S22 / S19 - 5 yards
Illegal Motion (ILM) (7-2-7)/ Illegal Shift (ISH) (7-2-6)		S20 - 5 yards

Referee - Passing Play

Stay with / protect the QB; Rule on Illegal Forward Pass (7-5-2)
 Rule on Forward / Backward Pass behind LOS (2-31-2 / 2-31-5)
Continue to officiate behind LOS before you leave players. Don't PEEK at the pass.
After Pass is Thrown: Be Very LOUD / VOCAL. Alert the Defense the ball is gone / thrown. **Know where QB released ball - potential ING**

Probable Penalties:

Intentional Grounding (ING) (7-5-2d, e)	Obtain help from wing officials when required	S36-S9 - 5 yards & LOD
Illegal Touching (ITP) (7-5-13)		S16-S9 - 5 yards & LOD
Holding on Offense (9-2-1)	Holding at the POA with visible restriction	S42 - 10 yards
Grab & Restrict (OH-GR); Hook & Restrict (OH-HR); Takedown (OH-TD); Tackle (OH-TK)		
DPI (Requires Contact) (7-5-10)	No DPI if ball touched in flight (7-5-9c)	S33 - 15 yards
Arm Bar (DPI/AB); Cutoff (DPI/CO); Grab & Restrict (DPI/GR); Hook & Turn (DPI/HT); Not Playing ball (DPI/NPB); Playing Thru Back (DPI/PTB)		
OPI (Starts at Snap) (7-5-10)	No OPI for eligible A if ball touched in flight (7-5-9a)	S33 - 15 yards
Blocking Downfield (OPI/BD); Creating Separation (OPI/CS); Driving Thru (OPI/DT); Pickoff (OPI/PO)		
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards
Contact on Defenseless Player (UNR/HDP) (2-32-16) (9-4-3g)		S38 - 15 yards
Roughing the Passer (RPS) (9-4-4)	S34-S8 - 15 yds/AFD from dead ball spot when beyond NZ, or 15 yds/AFD from Previous Spot	

Referee - Scrimmage Kick Play

Starting Position: 3-5 yds. O/S TE & 2-3 yds. Behind Kicker. **Key:** All backs! **Primary Responsibility:** Fouls on Kicker
 R/U communicate when K is in 'scrimmage kick formation'
 Line up Covering Officials on a KOB; Stay alert for players *swimming upstream* and hits on Defenseless Players
 Help H cover goal line on long returns
 Any K player may advance scrimmage kick when it is in or behind the NZ (6-2-3)
PSK Fouls (2-16-2h); (1) Ball crosses Expanded NZ; (2) Foul occurs beyond Expanded NZ; (3) Foul before end of kick; (4) K will not put ball in play.
First Touching by K (6-2-5). Consequences of touching eliminated if offsetting fouls, or accepted foul.

Probable Penalties:

Roughing Kicker (RRK) / Holder (RFH) (9-4-5)		S38-S30-S8 - 15 yards & AFD
Running into Kicker (RNK) / Holder (RNH) (9-4-5)		S30 - 5 yards
Illegal Kick (KIK) (6-2-1)	Kicking ball beyond LOS	S31 - 15 yards
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards
Kick Catching Interference (KCI) (6-5-6)	S33: Result of Play, 15 yards from spot of foul, OR 15 yards previous spot & Re-Kick	
Block Below the Waist (BBW) (2-17) (9-3-2)		S40 - 15 yards

2025 MSHSAA Position Checklist

Umpire - Pre-Game & Game Day Management Responsibilities			
Know the Player Equipment Rules (1-5) Assist R in knowing location of security & game administration. You're the #1 Assistant to the Referee in controlling the Tempo of the Game & Establishing the Ready for Play Walk the field with crew in professional manner. Perform duties per MSHSAA handout. Follow MSHSAA Mechanics & Guidelines [not NCAA] Work on Consistent Ball placement (set ball prior to 25 sec remaining on play clock)			
Fouls / Penalties			
CREW: Don't fish in someone else's pond. If you "Think it's a foul," ... it's Not a Foul. Be the official who helps R on all Foul Enforcements Be R's - Foul Expert "See everything you call, but don't call everything you see"; "Make it Big"; "Make it be There" Remember to Stop the Clock for fouls that prevent the snap. Calling official to provide (1) Results of the play, (2) Status of the ball when the foul occurred, (3) Foul, O/D/K/R & number. (020) ALL PENALTIES: Confirm with R. Communicate with H & L on Enforcement			
Game Officials Manual Points of Emphasis			
Sportsmanship & Defenseless Player / Targeting			
Recent Rule Changes			
Forward Fumbles Out of Bounds to be Returned to the Spot of the Fumble 3-4-3, 4-3-1 EXCEPTION			
All Officials Duties During Game		Umpire Pre-Snap Position & Ritual	
BJ; Responsible for all timing situations, Kicking & Passing Game HL & LJ = Responsible for Forward Progress & Sideline Control U = Responsible for assisting R on Penalty Enforcement & Inside Game Focus on Being a Great Dead Ball Official Always Hustle During the play All officials need to be aware of the play/game clock status Know your Key & # before the snap		Starting Position = 5 to 10 yards deep Move to position to see the ball Too Deep = You're not Involved in the play Too Short = Get caught inside / dangerous Confirm Count of Team A/K players with R Five players #50-79; False Start Note position of ball between hash marks KEY(S): Guard/Center/Guard	
Free Kicks / Be Alert for Short Kick			
Position:	Responsibility #1:	Responsibility #2:	Count:
R @ G/L	Ensure there are 4 players on each side of the kicker (6-1-4)	Momentum Rule [Bag it] (8-5-2a)	R
U @ 20YL	Progress on your side of the field. Use cross field mechanics	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB)	R
LJ @ 50YL	Encroachment by R & 1st touching by K	K's Goal Line on your side of field	K
B @ 40YL	Encroachment by K*. Pop Up Kick	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB) & K's Goal Line	K
HL @ 30YL	Progress on your side of the field. Use cross field mechanics	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB)	R
*Officiate K's Free Kick Line as a Plane for Short Kicks Forced Touching = No Touching = Ignore It (6-1-6) When the kick is over - SPOT the ball on a yard line to start the series			
Probable Penalties:			
Pop Up Kick (2-24-10) (6-1-11)		S7 - S19 - 5 yards	
Block Below the Waist (BBW) (2-17) (9-3-2)		S40 - 15 yards	
Block in the Back (IBB) (9-3-6)	Make sure it's from the back, not in the side	S43 - 10 yards	
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards	
Kick Catching Interference (KCI) (6-5-6)	S33: Options: Result of Play, 15 yards from spot of foul, OR 15 yards previous spot		
Holding (9-2-3c)	Make sure Holding is at the POA	S42 - 10 yards	
Kick out of Bounds (KOB) (6-1-9)	S19: Options: 5 yds / Re-Kick; 5 yds succeeding spot, OR 25 yds. from previous spot		
K initiating contact prior to kick traveling 10 yds; Eligible to recover FK; R initiates block in NZ (IBK) (9-3-7)		S43 - 10 yards (IBK)	
Blocking (6-5-1) after signaling Valid (2-9-3) or Invalid Fair Catch Signal (2-9-4)		S43 - 10 yards (IBS)	

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Umpire - Running Play

Primary Responsibility: Free Blocking Zone @ POA. Illegal Blocks

When Play is Over: Become a presence with your voice (not your whistle)! Your job is to control the middle Hustle to obtain the ball at the end of the play. Spot It and get back into position ASAP.
When the game clock is stopped, stand over ball & face Referee until released by R
Follow MSHSAA Mechanics & Guidelines [not NCAA].

Any Run toward you [Protect Yourself] and Observe Blocks at the POA

Don't insert yourself into the game. Majority of your calls are HOLDING. Make sure these calls are BIG HOLDS.

Goal Line Mechanics:

DO NOT block the view of H & LJ at the G/L. **DO NOT** give 'secret signal' for ball breaking plane.

Probable Penalties:

Holding on Offense (9-2-1)	Make sure Holding is at the POA	S42 - 10 yards
Grab & Restrict (OH-GR); Hook & Restrict (OH-HR); Takedown (OH-TD); Tackle (OH-TK)		
Chop Block (CHB) (2-3-8) (9-3-6)	High / Low - With or Without Delay	S41 - 15 yards
Facemask by Defense (9-4-3h)	Major Grasp & Turn (FMM) vs. Incidental	S38-S45 - 15 yds vs S45 - 5 yds
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards
Block in the Back (IBB) (9-3-6)	Make sure it's on the back, not the side	S43 - 10 yards
UNS (9-5) / Personal Foul (PF) (9-4)	Be Alert for Off Ball Type Fouls. Talk & Prevent!	S27 / S38 - 15 yards

Umpire - Passing Play

Primary Responsibility: Free Blocking Zones @ POA. Illegal Blocks

Read Pass - Move towards NZ; Cover short pass over middle; Know where forward pass touches anything, and if pass crosses NZ
Assist R on Illegal Forward Pass beyond NZ

Probable Penalties:

Illegal Touching (ITP) (7-5-13)		S16-S9 - 5 yards & LOD
Holding on Offense (9-2-1)	Holding at the POA with visible restriction	S42 - 10 yards
Grab & Restrict (OH-GR); Hook & Restrict (OH-HR); Takedown (OH-TD); Tackle (OH-TK)		
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards
Unnecessary contact on a defenseless player (UNR/HDP) (2-32-16) (9-4-3g)		S38 - 15 yards
All officials need to be aware of the play/game clock status		

Umpire - Scrimmage Kick Play

Starting Position: 5-10 yards deep, favoring the LJ's side of the field, keeping snap in view. Count K players.

R/U communicate when K is in 'Scrimmage Kick Formation'

Primary Responsibility: Numbering Exceptions (7-2-5b1); Be alert to illegal contact on the snapper ("Snapper is Protected")

All officials need to be aware of the play/game clock status

Be alert to the Pull & Shoot by Defense. This is HOLDING

Assist H in determining if the ball crosses the NZ. Any K player may advance scrimmage kick when it is in or behind the NZ (6-2-3)

Stay disciplined & alert for players "swimming upstream" to Cherry Pick Defenseless Players

Be alert for Hurdling by defensive players (2-22) (9-4-3d)

PSK Fouls (2-16-2h); (1) Ball crosses Expanded NZ; (2) Foul occurs beyond Expanded NZ; (3) Foul before end of kick; (4) K will not put ball in play

First Touching by K (6-2-5). **Consequences of touching eliminated if offsetting fouls, or accepted foul**

Do not blow whistle on Field Goal / Try attempts

Probable Penalties:

Roughing the Snapper (RTS) (9-4-6)		S38-S8 - 15 yards & AFD
Chop Block (CHB) (2-3-8) (9-3-6)	High / Low - With or Without Delay	S41 - 15 yards
Block in the Back (IBB) (9-3-6)	Make sure it's on the back, not the side	S43 - 10 yards
Block Below the Waist (BBW) (2-17) (9-3-2)		S40 - 15 yards
Illegal Kick (KIK) (6-2-1)	Kicking ball beyond LOS	S31 - 15 yards
Holding on Offense (6-2-1)	Make sure Holding is at the POA	S42 - 10 yards
Grab & Restrict (OH-GR); Hook & Restrict (OH-HR); Takedown (OH-TD); Tackle (OH-TK)		
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards
Unnecessary contact on a defenseless player (UNR/HDP) (2-32-16) (9-4-3g)		S38 - 15 yards

2025 MSHSAA Position Checklist

HL & LJ - Pre-Game & Game Day Management Responsibilities			
Positions require focus and concentration the entire game - EVERY PLAY matters on Forward Progress!			
Sideline Management/Control is paramount throughout the game. Despite the heat, always be courteous with Head Coach.			
Sideline Management (9-4-8: S38-S29/15 yds) (9-8-3: S15; S7-S29/5 yds; S7-S29-S27/15 yds)			
HL - Provide Instructions to Chain Crew and Ball Boys on Your Side. LJ - Provide Instructions to Ball Boys on Your Side.			
Follow MSHSAA Mechanics & Guidelines [not NCAA]. Work on Consistent Ready for Play Signal & Penalty Signal(s)			
Be a Great Dead Ball Official			
Coin Toss: LJ bring out Kicking ball			
Fouls / Penalties			
CREW: Don't fish in someone else's pond.			
If you "Think it's a foul," ... it's Not a Foul.		Was an Advantage Gained on DPI or OPI?	Did it impact the play?
"See everything you call, but don't call everything you see"; "Make it Big"; "Make it be There"; Be Consistent in Judgement			
Calling official to provide (1) Results of the play, (2) Status of the ball when the foul occurred, (3) Foul, O/D/K/R & number. (020)			
Convey Foul / Penalty information to both Head Coaches. Obtain penalty choice from the offended teams Head Coach.			
Assist R on all UNS fouls - and remind them the 2nd UNS foul = DQ.			
Game Officials Manual Points of Emphasis			
Sportsmanship & Defenseless Player / Targeting			
Recent Rule Changes			
Forward Fumbles Out of Bounds to be Returned to the Spot of the Fumble 3-4-3, 4-3-1 EXCEPTION			
All Officials Duties During Game		HL & LJ - Pre-Snap Position & Ritual	
BJ; Responsible for all timing situations, Kicking & Passing Game		Count Defense / Confirm w/ B J	
HL & LJ = Responsible for Forward Progress & Sideline Control		Start at LOS 1 yard beyond the Sideline	
U = Responsible for assisting R on Penalty Enforcement & Inside Game		Read the Formation / Unbalanced Line	
Focus on Being a Great Dead Ball Official		Find your KEY: Tackle & I/S Receiver(s) & #'s	
Always Hustle During the play		Stay on LOS until ball crosses NZ or pass is inevitable	
All officials need to be aware of the game clock status		Know where the Line to Gain is located	
Know your Key & # before the snap		Square off on Forward Progress	
Free Kicks / Always be Alert for Short Kick			
Position:	Responsibility #1:	Responsibility #2:	Count:
R @ G/L	Ensure there are 4 players on each side of the kicker [6-1-4]	Momentum Rule [Bag it] (8-5-2a)	R
U @ 20YL	Progress on your side of the field. Use cross field mechanics.	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB)	R
LJ @ 50YL	Encroachment by R & 1st touching by K	K's Goal Line on your side of field	K
B @ 40YL	Encroachment by K*. Pop Up Kick	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB) & K's Goal Line	K
HL @ 30YL	Progress on your side of the field. Use cross field mechanics.	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB)	R
*Officiate K's Free Kick Line as a Plane for Short Kicks			
Forced Touching = No Touching = Ignore It (6-1-6)			
When the kick is over - SPOT the ball on a yard line to start the series.			
Probable Penalties:			
Pop Up Kick (2-24-10) (6-1-11)		S7 - S19 - 5 yards	
Block Below the Waist (BBW) (2-17) (9-3-2)		S40 - 15 yards	
Block in the Back (IBB) (9-3-6)	Make sure it's from the back, not in the side	S43 - 10 yards	
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards	
Kick Catching Interference (KCI) (6-5-6)	S33: Options: Result of Play, 15 yards from spot of foul, OR 15 yards previous spot		
Holding (9-2-3c)	Make sure Holding is at the POA	S42 - 10 yards	
Kick out of Bounds (KOB) (6-1-9)	S19: Options: 5 yds / Re-Kick; 5 yds succeeding spot, OR 25 yds. from previous spot		
K initiating contact prior to kick traveling 10 yds; Eligible to recover FK; R initiates block in NZ (IBK) (9-3-7)		S43 - 10 yards (IBK)	
Blocking (6-5-1) after signaling Valid (2-9-3) or Invalid Fair Catch Signal (2-9-4)		S43 - 10 yards (IBS)	

2025 MSHSAA Position Checklist

HL & LJ - Running Play

Primary Responsibilities: FST, ENC, Illegal Blocks, Forward Progress, Substitutions (3-7), ILF (No More than 4 in backfield)

Use **Cross-Field Mechanics** for Forward Progress

Run To Your Side: Observe blocks in front of runner; **Run Away From Your Side:** Watch backside

Follow MSHSAA Mechanics & Guidelines [not NCAA]

Goal Line Mechanics: Own the G/L - it's yours!

Ball snapped between B-10 & B-5: slowly release to G/L, Stay Ahead of Runner.

Inside 5 YL: Immediately release diagonally to the GL extended at the snap.

Reverse Goal Line Mechanics:

Ball Snapped between A-5 and GL: Immediately release to GL at the snap.

Pinch in on all G/L Plays. DO NOT get in a hurry. Don't signal TD until you have progress & ball.

Probable Penalties:

Holding on Offense (9-2-1)	Make sure Holding is at the POA	S42 - 10 yards
Grab & Restrict (OH-GR); Hook & Restrict (OH-HR); Takedown (OH-TD); Tackle (OH-TK)		
Illegal Participation (9-6-1, 9-6-2). Know if Receiver Steps OOBs on his own or is forced out?		S28 - 15 yards
Facemask (9-4-3h)	Major Grasp & Turn (FMM) vs. Incidental	S38-S45 - 15 yds vs S45 - 5 yds
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards
Block in the Back (IBB) (9-3-6)	Make sure it's on the back, not the side	S43 - 10 yards
UNS (9-5) / Personal Foul (PF) (9-4)	Be Alert for Off Ball Type Fouls. Talk & Prevent!	S27 / S38 - 15 yards
Illegal Substitution (ILS) (3-7)/ Formation (ILF) (7-2)		S22 / S19 - 5 yards
Illegal Motion (ILM) (7-2-7)/ Illegal Shift (ISH) (7-2-6)		S20 - 5 yards

HL & LJ - Passing Play

Primary Responsibilities: FST, ENC, Illegal Blocks, Forward Progress, Substitutions (3-7), DPI/OPI, ILF

Read Pass: Stay on LOS as long as possible. May release downfield after receiver has gone 12-15 yds downfield, or QB has released the ball.

Be ready to rule on direction of a quick pass (forward or backward), and if pass crosses NZ

Probable Penalties:

Intentional Grounding (ING) (7-5-2d, e)	Let R know if a receiver was in the area	S36-S9 - 5 yards & LOD
Illegal Touching (ITP) (7-5-13)		S16-S9 - 5 yards & LOD
Holding on Offense (9-2-1)	Holding at the POA with visible restriction	S42 - 10 yards
Grab & Restrict (OH-GR); Hook & Restrict (OH-HR); Takedown (OH-TD); Tackle (OH-TK)		
DPI (Now Requires Contact) (7-5-10)	No DPI if ball touched in flight (7-5-9c)	S33 - 15 yards
Arm Bar (DPI/AB); Cutoff (DPI/CO); Grab & Restrict (DPI/GR); Hook & Turn (DPI/HT); Not Playing ball (DPI/NPB); Playing Thru Back (DPI/PTB)		
OPI (Starts at Snap) (7-5-10)	No OPI for eligible A if ball touched in flight (7-5-9a)	S33 - 15 yards
Blocking Downfield (OPI/BD); Creating Separation (OPI/CS); Driving Thru (OPI/DT); Pickoff (OPI/PO)		
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards
Unnecessary contact on a defenseless player	(UNR/HDP) (2-32-16) (9-4-3g)	S38 - 15 yards
All officials need to be aware of the play/game clock status		

HL / LJ - Scrimmage Kick Play

LJ: Slowly Release on the Snap

H: Hold LOS at Snap. Move downfield after ball crosses Neutral Zone. **Help determine if kick crosses Neutral Zone.**

Stay disciplined & alert for players "swimming upstream" to Cherry Pick Defenseless Players

PSK Fouls (2-16-2h): (1) Ball crosses Expanded NZ; (2) Foul occurs beyond Expanded NZ; (3) Foul before end of kick; (4) K will not put ball in play

First Touching by K (6-2-5): Bean Bag. **Consequences of touching eliminated if offsetting fouls, or accepted foul.**

Probable Penalties:

Kick Catching Interference (KCI) (6-5-6)	S33: Result of Play, 15 yards from spot of foul, or 15 yards previous spot & Re-Kick	
Block in the Back (IBB) (9-3-6)	Make sure it's on the back, not the side	S43 - 10 yards
Block Below the Waist (BBW) (2-17) (9-3-2)		S40 - 15 yards
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38-S26 - 15 yards
Unnecessary contact on a defenseless player	(UNR/HDP) (2-32-16) (9-4-3g)	S38 - 15 yards

2025 MSHSAA Position Checklist

Back Judge - Pre-Game & Game Day Management Responsibilities			
Follow MSHSAA Mechanics & Guidelines [not NCAA]. Walk the field with crew in professional manner. Perform duties per MSHSAA handout. Coin Toss: Bring out Kicking Ball.			
Fouls / Penalties			
Follow MSHSAA Mechanics & Guidelines [not NCAA]. If you "Think it's a foul," ... it's Not a Foul. Was an Advantage Gained on DPI, OPI or KCI? Did it impact the play? "See everything you call, but don't call everything you see"; "Make it Big"; "Make it be There"; Be Consistent in Judgement Calling official to provide (1) Results of the play, (2) Status of the ball when the foul occurred, (3) Foul, O/D/K/R & number. (020) Assist R on all UNS fouls - and remind them the 2nd UNS foul = DQ. Assist R with clock on penalties under two minutes (3-4-7)			
Game Officials Manual Points of Emphasis			
Sportsmanship & Defenseless Player / Targeting			
Recent Rule Changes			
Forward Fumbles Out of Bounds to be Returned to the Spot of the Fumble 3-4-3, 4-3-1 EXCEPTION			
All Officials Duties During Game		Back Judge Pre-Snap Position & Ritual	
BJ; Responsible for all timing situations, Kicking & Passing Game HL & LJ = Responsible for Forward Progress & Sideline Control U = Responsible for assisting R on Penalty Enforcement & Inside Game Focus on Being a Great Dead Ball Official Always Hustle During the play All officials need to be aware of the game clock status Know your Key & # before the snap		B J must ALWAYS KNOW the Status of Clock Help R manage the Play/Game Clock Starting Position = 20-25 yards deep Ball Snapped Between B-10 & GL: start on EL Ball Snapped Between B-10 & B-15; may start in EZ Count Defense, Confirm with H/LJ 1st Move = Read the Play. Don't BAIL OUT. Too Deep = You're not Involved in the play Too Short = Get caught inside / dangerous NEVER Get Beat Deep	
BALL MECHANICS: Be Involved 99% of time. Learn and Use the Triangle Method for Ball.			
Free Kicks / Always be Alert for Short Kick			
Position:	Responsibility #1:	Responsibility #2:	Count:
R @ G/L	Ensure there are 4 players on each side of the kicker (6-1-4)	Momentum Rule [Bag it] (8-5-2a)	R
U @ 20YL	Progress on your side of the field. Use cross field mechanics	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB)	R
LJ @ 50YL	Encroachment by R & 1st touching by K	K's Goal Line on your side of field	K
B @ 40YL	Encroachment by K*. Pop Up Kick	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB) & K's Goal Line	K
HL @ 30YL	Progress on your side of the field. Use cross field mechanics	Illegal blocks (BSB, BBW, IBB)	R
*Officiate K's Free Kick Line as a Plane for Short Kicks Forced Touching = No Touching = Ignore It (6-1-6) When the kick is over - SPOT the ball on a yard line to start the series			
Probable Penalties:			
Pop Up Kick (2-24-10) (6-1-11)		S7 - S19 - 5 yards	
Block Below the Waist (BBW) (2-17) (9-3-2)		S40 - 15 yards	
Block in the Back (IBB) (9-3-6)	Make sure it's from the back, not in the side	S43 - 10 yards	
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards	
Kick Catching Interference (KCI) (6-5-6)	S33: Options: Result of Play, 15 yards from spot of foul, OR 15 yards previous spot		
Holding (9-2-3c)	Make sure Holding is at the POA	S42 - 10 yards	
Kick out of Bounds (KOB) (6-1-9)	S19: Options: 5 yds / Re-Kick; 5 yds succeeding spot, OR 25 yds. from previous spot		
K initiating contact prior to kick traveling 10 yds; Eligible to recover FK; R initiates block in NZ (IBK) (9-3-7)		S43 - 10 yards (IBK)	
Blocking (6-5-1) after signaling Valid (2-9-3) or Invalid Fair Catch Signal (2-9-4)		S43 - 10 yards (IBS)	

2025 MSHSAA Position Checklist

Back Judge - Running Play

Primary Responsibilities: Work Inside-Out Coverage. Keep play Boxed In.

Key: Widest Receiver(s) on Strong Side. Know receiver's #.

Counts defense / Confirm with H & L J

Check Play/Game Clock

Always stay behind deepest WR. After the play - BE VOCAL with players. Presence!

Follow MSHSAA Mechanics & Guidelines [not NCAA]

Probable Penalties:

Holding on Offense (9-2-1)	Make sure Holding is at the POA	S42 - 10 yards
Grab & Restrict (OH-GR); Hook & Restrict (OH-HR); Takedown (OH-TD); Tackle (OH-TK)		
Facemask (9-4-3h)	Major Grasp & Turn (FMM) vs. Incidental	S38-S45 - 15 yds vs S45 - 5 yds
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards
Block in the Back (IBB) (9-3-6)	Make sure it's on the back, not the side	S43 - 10 yards
UNS (9-5) / Personal Foul (PF) (9-4)	Be Alert for Off Ball Type Fouls. Talk & Prevent!	S27 / S38 - 15 yards

Back Judge - Passing Play

Primary Responsibilities: Work Inside-Out Coverage. Keep play Boxed In.

The Passing / Kicking Game is where a BJ earns their pay.

Know Momentum Rule (8-5-2a)

Man
Zone
Ball

Probable Penalties:

Intentional Grounding (ING) (7-5-2d, e)	Let R know if a receiver was in the area	S36-S9 - 5 yards & LOD
Illegal Touching (ITP) (7-5-13)		S16-S9 - 5 yards & LOD
Holding on Offense (9-2-1)	Holding at the POA with visible restriction	S42 - 10 yards
Grab & Restrict (OH-GR); Hook & Restrict (OH-HR); Takedown (OH-TD); Tackle (OH-TK)		
DPI (Requires Contact) (7-5-10)	No DPI if ball touched in flight (7-5-9c)	S33 - 15 yards
Arm Bar (DPI/AB); Cutoff (DPI/CO); Grab & Restrict (DPI/GR); Hook & Turn (DPI/HT); Not Playing ball (DPI/NPB); Playing Thru Back (DPI/PTB)		
OPI (Starts at Snap) (7-5-10)	No OPI for eligible A if ball touched in flight (7-5-9a)	S33 - 15 yards
Blocking Downfield (OPI/BD); Creating Separation (OPI/CS); Driving Thru (OPI/DT); Pickoff (OPI/PO)		
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)		S38 - S26 - 15 yards
Unnecessary contact on a defenseless player (UNR/HDP) (2-32-16) (9-4-3g)		S38 - 15 yards
All officials need to be aware of the play/game clock status		

Back Judge - Scrimmage Kick Play

If there is a chance something will go wrong, it'll happen on a Scrimmage Kick

Starting Position: 10-12 yds. wider & 2-3 yds than deepest receiver on H's side of field

Primary Responsibility: End of Kick (Bag) (2-24-2); 1st Touching (Bag) (2-12); KCI (6-5-6); Touchback (8-5-3); Safety (8-5-2)

Stay disciplined & alert for players "swimming upstream" to Cherry Pick Defenseless Players

Know Momentum Rule (8-5-2a)

Touchback = Kick breaks plane of R's Goal Line [dead ball] (4-2-2d) (8-5-3a)

PSK Fouls (2-16-2h); (1) Ball crosses Expanded NZ; (2) Foul occurs beyond Expanded NZ; (3) Foul before end of kick; (4) K will not put ball in play

First Touching by K (6-2-5): Bean Bag. **Consequences of touching eliminated if offsetting fouls, or accepted foul.**

Probable Penalties:

Kick Catching Interference (KCI) (6-5-6)	S33: Result of Play, 15 yards from spot of foul, or 15 yards previous spot & Re-Kick
Block in the Back (IBB) (9-3-6)	Make sure it's on the back, not the side
Block Below the Waist (BBW) (2-17) (9-3-2)	S43 - 10 yards
Blindside Block (BSB) (2-3-10) (9-4-3n)	S40 - 15 yards
Unnecessary contact on a defenseless player (UNR/HDP) (2-32-16) (9-4-3g)	S38 - S26 - 15 yards
	S38 - 15 yards