

NVFOA Policies and Practices (effective November 10, 2016)

Dues Policy

The annual dues for Active Members shall be an amount recommended by the Executive Committee to meet the needs of the NVFOA and will include the cost of the Annual Banquet, among other expenses. The annual dues for Inactive Members shall normally be equal to one-half of the Active Member fee. Inactive Members may not vote nor attend the annual banquet. An Inactive Member may be reinstated as an Active Member by paying both the annual dues for an Active Member plus a reinstatement fee of one-half of this amount.

There are no dues required for Honorary or Lifetime Members if they are not actively officiating in any capacity. Per the Bylaws, annual dues for a particular year are established by vote of Active Members at the NVFOA's Annual Meeting of the prior year. NVFOA membership cards will only be issued after full payment of dues to the Treasurer.

Changes to this Dues policy must be approved by a majority vote of the membership.

Awards

It is NVFOA practice to honor up to three individuals at the NVFOA annual banquet. The Awards Committee is responsible for nominating qualifying individuals, and the awards are voted by the Membership.

- 1. The **William Kirley Award** shall be awarded to a high school coach who demonstrates good ethical behavior in teaching the game of football. The coach should have achieved a high level of proficiency, and be very congenial to his or her peers.*
- 2. The **Alfred Reinertson Award** shall be presented to an individual other than a coach associated with high school football. The recipient should exemplify extraordinary conduct and decorum in the administrative aspects of football; possess and expound good ethical behavior; have achieved a high level of proficiency; and be very congenial to his or her peers.*
- 3. The **Joe Prior Award** shall be awarded to a member of the Nobscot Valley Football Officials Association who exemplifies the late Joe Prior in promoting excellence in Football officiating. Suggested criteria for nominees include five or more years of NVFOA membership, attendance at 80% of NVFOA meetings, and outstanding contributions to the NVFOA, such as participation in the Mentor Program, active participation in meetings or other assistance to Members of the NVFOA with rules knowledge and on field mechanics presentations.*

Changes to this Awards policy must be approved by a majority vote of the membership.

Meetings required to remain an NVFOA Member in Good Standing

The NVFOA wants its Members to all be able to skillfully and knowledgeably officiate football games. Consistent participation at NVFOA meetings is key to learning and applying the rules, interpretations and mechanics.

There shall be at least ten regular weekly meetings during each year's football season. The first regular meeting shall be scheduled on the fourth Thursday in August for the distribution of the rule books, rule change documents, the interpretation of new rules and other pertinent information. Attendance at this meeting is STRONGLY recommended to remain an Active Member in good standing for the coming season.

The second weekly meeting may be an on field review of officiating mechanics. The remaining regular meetings will be scheduled on Thursday evenings throughout the season by the Executive Committee. One of the later meetings may be devoted to a written exam administered by the Interpreter or Vice-President.

Each Active Member must attend a minimum of three of the first five regular meetings and a minimum of six regular meetings per season. The annual banquet shall not be considered a regular meeting.

Attendance by a Member at a meeting of another football officiating board or association recognized by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) or a college football officiating board shall be regarded as attending a meeting of the NVFOA. The Member is responsible for having the secretary of that board or association inform the Secretary of the NVFOA by email of the Member's attendance, or make equivalent arrangements to verify his or her attendance. A maximum of three such external meetings may be applied to the NVFOA meeting requirement of six per season.

The failure to attend the minimum number of regular meetings in any year shall be referred by the Secretary to the Executive Committee and may result in discipline, up to and including suspension of NVFOA membership and informing league assigners of the suspension.

Changes to this Meetings policy must be made by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Recruiting and Training of new Officials

It is the responsibility of each NVFOA member to maintain the vitality of the NVFOA by helping recruit new Candidates for membership, by recommending Transfers of football officials from other boards, and by referring officials from other sports to the NVFOA.

Individuals new to football officiating are Candidates for Active Membership in the NVFOA. The NVFOA Executive Committee is empowered to schedule an annual class, define the training process, rules examination, fees and other requirements that Candidates must follow. This is typically administered by the Vice-President of the NVFOA or his or her designate. To be approved as an Active Member, Candidates must:

- *Attend a minimum of four training clinic meetings, and*
- *Pass a written examination at the end of training, and*
- *Pay a fee to the NVFOA equal to the annual dues for Active Members, currently \$85, plus \$15 for a total of \$100. If the candidate passes the examination, has attended the required number of training clinic meetings, and has been accepted for membership by the NVFOA, this fee will pay the Candidate's annual dues and materials. If the candidate fails the written exam, the annual dues amount shall be refunded. The remaining fee will be retained by the NVFOA to cover the cost of training materials and administering the test.*
- *Candidates are reminded that all officials who work sporting events at Massachusetts public high schools must also submit to a criminal background check and pay a fee to the MIAA. Details are currently at: <https://miaa.arbitersports.com/front/110185/Site>*

Changes to this Recruiting and Training policy must be made by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Officiating Standards

Officials will damage their own reputation and that of the NVFOA by not showing up for game assignments that have been accepted. Accordingly, no Member of the NVFOA may refuse to officiate on any regularly scheduled date after having accepted an assignment for that date, unless released from the assignment by the league commissioner or assigner involved. Obviously, accidents or work emergencies may be extenuating circumstances, but officials must communicate these to the league assigner.

No Member shall criticize in public the rulings of any official. Right or wrong, this is always harmful. Questions of rule interpretation may be discussed at regular NVFOA meetings with a final interpretation of the applicable rules by the Interpreter.

The integrity of the officiating at games is essential. Any unusual ethical situation at any game observed by an NVFOA Member shall be reported by the Member in writing to the league assigner.

Each Active Member is required to officiate at least one scrimmage each season prior to the beginning of the regular season as part of his or her pre-season preparation. Scrimmages may or may not be paid.

All Active Members shall be fully equipped and properly attired when appearing to officiate a game, as may be required by the MIAA, the league commissioner or assigner.

Changes to this Officiating Standards policy must be made by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Rules Interpretation Policy

Per the NVFOA Bylaws, the Interpreter is the final arbiter of how football rules should be applied in a given circumstance. This is to ensure officiating of consistently high quality across our organization. Members are encouraged to question the Interpreter about special situations in order to improve their officiating. Our policy shall always be one rule equals one interpretation for a particular game situation. Any NVFOA Member who knowingly and willfully places his or her own interpretation before that of the Interpreter is subject to reprimand or other discipline by the Executive Committee.

Changes to this Rules Interpretation policy must be made by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.