

GEJFA Official's Handbook- Revised 2016

General Philosophy

The highest degree of ethical conduct is expected of all officials, players and coaches in GEJFA.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules apply to GEJFA games, except as modified by GEJFA-specific rules (found on the GEJFA Pocket Rules Guide on gejfa.org under Official's Corner).

Posture and attitude play a large part in the official's approach to the game. The flow of the game, in part, has to do with the application of the rules by the officials. If high school standards are applied to a youth game, a penalty could be called on just about every play. Ask yourself, during a play, does a rule violation give a team an unfair advantage, or would the play have the same results with the violation? A **"no harm, no foul"** application of the rules is desired. Talk to the players to help control the game and keep the number of penalties to a minimum. For example, if Team A runs a sweep around the right side of the line and A's Left Tackle holds at the line of scrimmage, remind the player about the holding rule, rather than assessing a penalty. If Team A instead runs a sweep around the left side of the line and A's Left Tackle holds, then call the penalty.

Minimum Requirements

GEJFA prefers officials to be a minimum of 18 years old. However, high school students that possess a high degree of maturity are also welcome and currently constitute a large percentage of Rookie Officials. Prospective officials should have knowledge of football, but an extensive knowledge of the rules is not a prerequisite. A willingness to learn and the ability to make decisions quickly and fairly are important attributes. Rookie Officials should be able to attend one or more training classes as well as a minimum of one "jamboree" prior to the beginning of the season, to allow them to get "hands-on" experience prior to officiating regular season games.

Official Uniforms & Equipment

Basic official uniform supplies can be purchased locally from Sound Athletic Supply in Auburn (www.soundathleticsupply.com, or by phone at 253-839-8045), or online from several manufacturers, including Honig's Whistle Stop (www.honigs.com). Minimum uniform requirements include black official's cap with white piping, official's shirt (1-inch stripes and not the basketball official's shirt with no collar), black pants, beanbag, whistle and flag. For Rookie Officials, GEJFA offers uniform reimbursement for costs spent, up to \$100.00, payable at the end of the season with a minimum of 20 games worked during that season. To receive reimbursement, save the receipts for items purchased and scan copies to gejfaofficials@gmail.com no later than October 31.

GEJFA Website

The GEJFA web site is located at www.gejfa.org. It is the primary means of distributing information such as field locations/maps, game assignments, and other related information. The "Official's Corner" section has many items, including the following:

- Official's Application Form (both online and paper versions)
- Online Background Check (required before working games)
- Crew Lead Game Report (online form)

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- GEJFA Officials' Schedule (where to check for your game assignment)
- GEJFA Pocket Rules Guide
- GEJFA Official's Handbook (this document)
- "The Official's Perspective" (information on common game situations)
- Frequently Asked Questions
- W-9 Form (required for payment at the end of the season!)
- Important Dates

Pay Rates and Payment Timetable

Officials are paid on a per-game basis according to the following scale:

Rookie Officials: \$30/game

Second-Year Officials: \$35/game (minimum of 20 games worked in Year 1)

Senior Officials (3+ years with minimum of 20 games worked in two previous years): \$40/game

Crew Lead: \$45/game

Payment is made by check at the end of the season. Checks will be available at the GEJFA Championships. Any checks not picked up at the Championships will be mailed out the week following the Championships. **A W-2 Form must be completed in order to receive payment.**

Scheduling

GEJFA attempts to assign 4 officials to officiate Sophomore, Junior Varsity and Varsity games; however, as few as 3 officials may constitute a full crew. At the Rookie and Cub levels, crews of 3 may be assigned and will constitute a full crew. Game assignments will be sent to all officials early in the week, and your Crew Lead will contact you to confirm your assignment. **If you are unable to work an assigned game, you must notify the GEJFA Assigner, Leslie Stair, as early as possible by emailing gejfaofficials@gmail.com.**

Each official should list their scheduling preferences on their Registration Form. As much as is practical, officials will be assigned on a "crew" basis, working with the same officials each week to create a better working relationship and maximize the learning rate of the newer officials. From week to week, each crew will typically "cycle" through several fields in the same geographical area. There are usually 3 to 6 games at each field per game day. We request that each official commit to working a minimum of 3 games per day that they are available. More than 3 games may be assigned per the needs of GEJFA and/or per crew request.

Game Reports

The Crew Lead is responsible for submitting the Game Report as soon as possible after completing their games each week, no later than midnight on the evening of the game. The Game Report Form is found at www.gejfa.org under Official's Corner. The Crew Lead must report the field worked, the officials present and the number of games worked for each, boxes for any problem areas should be checked, and the narrative portion should be completed for any issues or problems that occurred during their games.

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If an ejection occurs, the Crew Lead must list the details of the ejection in his Game Report, **and must also email Bobby Beaulac, GEJFA Officials Coordinator, at rbeaulac@uw.edu.**

GEJFA Rules

The following information is from the official GEJFA Rules and Regulations, and information relevant to officials is reproduced below.

Field Manager Responsibilities

The general responsibilities of the Field Manager are as follows:

- Inspect the playing field for safety;
- Monitor the coaches' exchange of rosters;
- Assist in making arrangements for a chain crew, if needed;
- Check with game officials and assist as needed;
- Inform spectators to stay behind the spectator boundary line; and
- In the event a dispute arises, mediate as necessary.

Home Team Responsibilities

The Home Team must:

- Provide the official time clock, down box, yard markers and chains;
- Provide a clock operator; and
- Provide the Field Manager.

Visiting Team Responsibilities

The Visiting Team must:

- Provide volunteers to operate the down box and chains.

The down box and chains will be operated on the visitor's side of the field. When possible, adults should operate the chains.

Coach's Responsibilities

The coach must:

- Ensure the proper conduct of himself, his assistants, players, and players' parents; and
- Must assist in ensuring that all spectators remain in the bleachers or off the fenced game field (including track) or, if a fenced field does not exist, then 5 yards or more away from the sideline.

Equipment

- Jersey numbers have no relation to position played.
- Detachable cleats are not allowed.
- Gloves are legal (no sticky substances).

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- Mouth guards must be worn and helmet shields must be clear.
- No hard substances (casts) are allowed (covered or not).
- Headsets are not allowed.
- “Junior” footballs will be used for Rookie, Cub and Sophomore games. The ball must adhere to the following specifications: long circumference 25”–26”, short circumference 18”–19”, and weight 11-13 oz.
- “Youth” or “Intermediate” footballs will be used for Junior Varsity and Varsity games. The ball must adhere to the following specifications: long circumference 26”-27”, short circumference 19”-20”, and weight 12-14 oz. The determining factor of a legal ball is not the name, but the above specifications, as manufacturers may have different names for similar sized balls.

Game Day

There is a Field Locations tab on the GEJFA Website. All officials should arrive at the game location **at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the first game**. This will give the crew ample time to inspect the field, identify and speak to the field manager, clock operator, coaches, and chain crew, as well as discuss game details with the other officials. GEJFA has a limited time of use at the field, so it is critical to begin the first game on-time.

Coach's Pre-Game Meeting

In football, the pre-game briefing has been shown to be an important time where the game officials can set the tone by which the game will be played. One object should be to create a “partnership” with the coaches in managing the game for the benefit of the players. During this meeting, the Referee should remind the coach that good sportsmanship is a must and that he is responsible for the conduct of himself, his assistants, players and parents. Many newer coaches may become emotional during a game, which may result in over-zealous coaches yelling at the officials. Coaches should be reminded that GEJFA requires that they set a good example and not yell at the officials, or soon the players will adopt a similar attitude. This approach has been shown to be helpful, since an official can reference this “we are all here for the kids” attitude when a coach starts to lose perspective in the heat of the game. During the pre-game meeting, the Referee **must provide each Head Coach with a list of the officials and the positions they will be working**.

Time Management

Rookie and Cub teams play 8-minute quarters. Sophomore, Junior Varsity and Varsity teams play 10-minute quarters. All games are played per NFHS timing rules. There is a 10-minute halftime at all levels.

It is critical that the first game of the day must start on-time. If the teams are not ready, the game may be shortened to keep the rest of the games on-time. All Officials should be at the field at least 15 minutes before the starting time of the first game. The Crew Lead should arrive at the field 30 minutes before the start time of the first game.

NFHS timing rules require that both teams be given a 3-minute warm-up before the start of the second half; thus, teams should be back on the field 7 minutes into the 10-minute halftime. Whether the teams warm-up or not is their decision, but they need to be given the opportunity, and we can't afford to tack that 3 minutes onto a 10-minute halftime; it has to be part of that 10 minutes.

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To ensure effective time management for the day, all start times must be closely adhered to. The teams should be on the sidelines at least 3 minutes prior to the start of each half, and captains should be called to the field in time to have play begin as scheduled.

If a game runs over the scheduled time, try to make up time with the help of both coaches and the Field Manager. You may reduce the half time by 3-5 minutes, if necessary, as long as both coaches are aware and agree. If you are officiating a subsequent game, you may have the coaches' pre-game meeting for the next game during half time of the current game.

Special Rookie-Level Rules

One coach for each team is allowed on the field during play for Rookie games. After the offensive team breaks the huddle, neither coach on the field may communicate with their players. If they do, they should be given one warning. A second violation may result in a 5-yard penalty. The no-huddle offense is prohibited.

There is a free-punt rule. If the offensive team wishes to punt, they must notify the Referee. The clock then stops until the ball is punted. Both teams must have 8 players within 3 yards of the line of scrimmage and the coaches on the field must stay clear of the punted ball. No player may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. If a rule infraction occurs prior to the punt, the punt shall be replayed after the penalty has been assessed; however, off sides and infringement penalties shall not apply.

There is also a free-PAT rule which allows the offense to try a kicked PAT with no rush by the defense. The kicker gets one attempt to successfully convert the PAT and it is not necessary to snap the ball from center. Kicks that miss the ball count as the offense's one attempt.

Substitution Rules

Although the officials do not enforce substitution rules or substitution violations, it is good to know the rules and procedures below so that substitution violations get proper handling. The officials may be asked later for input during an investigation into substitution violations.

Upon the change of possession, a coach must empty his bench (up to 11 players) and replace all of his players on the field, if possible. Each of those players then on the field must remain on the field for four consecutive plays, unless the ball changes hands. After a minimum of four plays, a coach may substitute freely. But, when possession of the ball changes again, the coach of each team must again empty his bench (up to 11 players) and replace all players on the field, if possible, for a minimum of four consecutive plays.

Should a team score a touchdown or kick a field goal, free substitution is allowed for both the extra point and kickoff.

At the beginning of a scrimmage play following a kickoff, each team may put any 11 players on the field and, at that time, the substitution rule is re-instituted.

If a player is injured, a free substitution may be made for the injured player. The injured player may return to action, after sitting out a minimum of one play.

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Protests concerning a violation of the GEJFA substitution rule should be made in the following manner. A coach wishing to protest a violation will ask the Referee to call an official's time out for the purpose of discussing the substitution rule with the opposing coach. The protesting coach will then advance halfway across the field of play and state to the opposing coach that they would like to discuss with them an apparent violation of the substitution rule. They must then specify the exact nature of the violation to the opposing coach. The opposing coach will advance halfway across the field of play to meet the protesting coach and they will both make every effort to resolve the situation.

A second protest in the same game should be handled in the same manner as in the first instance, although the protesting coach should add, "A formal protest will be made to the GEJFA Grievance Committee." No further discussion concerning the substitution rule should occur during the game after a second protest. The Crew Lead should note the protest in their Game Report.

PAT (Point After Touchdown) Rules

A successful kicked PAT is worth 2 points.

A successful PAT run or pass will be worth 1 point.

If there is a foul by the defense on a successful PAT, the penalty may be enforced from the succeeding spot.

Lopsided Game Rules- General

It is the intent and spirit of GEJFA that no team shall defeat an opponent by more than 32 points. No particular enforcement action is necessary by the officials if a violation occurs, however, lopsided games will be managed as discussed below to assist in maintaining a more respectable score differential.

Any time a team is ahead by more than 21 or more points, either coach may request an official's time-out in order to discuss further game protocol.

If a team exceeds the 32-point margin at any point in the game with the last score coming on offense, the Head Coach of the offending team is automatically suspended by GEJFA for the next game.

Lopsided Game Rules- Running Clock

At the beginning of the 4th quarter or any time thereafter, if one team is ahead by 25 or more points, the clock shall go to a running clock and remains running for the rest of the game.

A running clock will stop only for:

- Scores by either team;
- Injury time-outs; or
- Team time-outs.

The running clock DOES NOT STOP for penalty enforcement. Thus, officials should be efficient in administering any penalties in a running-clock situation.

The clock can also go to a running clock at any time during the game if both coaches agree.

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Lopsided Game Rules- Change of Possession

When the score differential in a game is 25 or more points and the leading team takes possession outside their own 20-yard line, the ball will be moved back to that team's 20-yard line to start scrimmage (1st and 10 for the leading team at that spot). When the trailing team takes possession at their own end of the field, the ball will be moved to the 50-yard line to start scrimmage. **If the leading teams downs the ball inside the trailing team's 20-yard line, the ball will be immediately turned over to the trailing team at the 50-yard line (New for 2016).**

Lopsided Game Rules- Scoring

After a score, if a team leads by 25 or more points, the ball will be placed at the 50-yard line with the trailing team on offense. No kickoff will be made.

Lopsided Game Rules- Kickoff

Any team that is behind by 25 points or more, even after scoring a touchdown, field goal, point after touchdown, or at the start of the second half, may elect to be on offense at the 50-yard line without a kickoff. If the differential is less than 25 points after a score, the trailing team must kickoff as normal.

Tie-Breaker Rules

Tied games during regular-season play will remain a tie.

Tied games in Championships will be allowed up to two tie-breaking sessions as outlined below, after which the tie will stand.

If a playoff game ends in a tie following regulation play, the following tiebreaker format will determine the winner:

- A coin toss will determine which team gets first choice. The winner of the toss may choose the order of possession, or the goal to be defended. The loser of the toss has the remaining choice.
- Each team will have one series, 1st and Goal from the 10-yard line.
- If after one series each, the teams remain tied, then each team will have a 1st and goal from the 5-yard line.
- If after this series, the teams remain tied, then the teams will alternate series from the 5-yard line until a winner is decided.
- If a touchdown is scored, a PAT will be attempted, unless unnecessary to resolve the tie.
- The substitution rule remains in effect throughout tiebreaker play.

If a tiebreaker is needed to determine team seeding for playoff games (also known as a "shootout"), the following format will be observed:

- If three or more teams are tied, a coin toss will determine which team or teams will be awarded a first-round bye.
- Following this, the above format applies, except the first series will start at the 20-yard line and then, if still tied, at the 10-yard line.

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Miscellaneous Rules

The number of Captains for any coin-toss is limited to 6.

In inclement weather, a team may have an on-field attendant to dry a wet football between plays; but that person may not communicate with the players, coaches, or officials except as required to execute his duty.

Protests of any nature are discouraged as detrimental to the spirit and intent of the GEJFA. A protest on any official's judgment call will not be accepted. A protest of an official's interpretation of a rule may be submitted in writing to GEJFA by either head coach.