
Colorado Springs Football Officials Association

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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CSFOA website: csfootballofficials.com

CHSAA website: http://www2.chsaa.org/officials/football/o_football.asp

How do I start officiating in Colorado Springs?

On the CSFOA website, click on “Contact Us” and submit your information and a message. Or you can send an email to colobradley@gmail.com. We will contact you with more information about becoming a Colorado Springs High School Football Official.

Who is my employer for high school football officiating?

No one. All CSFOA officials are independent contractors. When you accept an assignment, you are entering into a contract with the home school to officiate the game in exchange for payment. You determine how many games you want to officiate and which game assignments to accept.

What is the relationship and responsibilities among CHSAA, CFOA and CSFOA?

The Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) is a non-profit organization that sanctions all high school sports and activities for Colorado member schools. CHSAA’s responsibilities include arranging for officials to work sanctioned games. The Colorado Football Officials Association (CFOA) is exclusively recognized by CHSAA as the non-profit association of officials authorized to work varsity and junior varsity football contests in Colorado. CSFOA is the established officials’ association for Area 3 of CFOA. CFOA and CSFOA are both responsible to recruit, train, develop, evaluate and retain high school football officials.

What is the anticipated start-up cost?

For the 2023 season, CHSAA has a “You Look Good in Stripes” initiative which will pay for most/all (depending on the uniforms and equipment you purchase) of your startup

costs. Here is a link to the article: <https://chsaanow.com/news/2022/11/1/general-chsaa-announces-you-look-good-in-stripes-initiative-for-new-officials.aspx>

Football is fairly expensive to start. There are no financial costs (other than uniforms) to officiate Parks and Rec football. For those who officiate High School in the fall, CHSAA requires a \$10 background check when you first register and then every three years thereafter. There is also an annual \$7 fee to CHSAA for insurance regardless of how many sports you work. There is a \$10 Arbitrator Sports registration for each sport. CFOA dues are currently \$70 per year and CSFOA dues are currently \$25 per year. You can expect to invest about \$250-\$400 on equipment, including shoes, short- and long-sleeved shirts, pants and shorts, cold weather gear, hats, whistles, flags, bean bags, etc. Some officials purchase more gear (backup flags, whistles, hats, shirts, etc), so the cost will differ. Most officials will purchase a handful of new items each season. You can expect to recoup your initial equipment investment after officiating eight to ten games.

How many officials are in the Colorado Springs Football Officials Association?

In 2022, 87 members were in the association.

What is the purpose of the New Official's Clinic Class?

To work Colorado High School Football games, you must pass the National Federation of State High School Associations 100 question test with a minimum score of 85%. We provide classes each Thursday evening in July at the Trinity United Methodist Church, 701 N 20th Street, to prepare you for the exam. We will also discuss officiating philosophy and mechanics. The new officials class schedule is posted on the csfootballofficials.com website.

What about spring football?

Colorado Springs Parks & Rec has a 5-week spring season that starts at the end of March/beginning of April. To prepare for that short season, CSFOA instructors will provide a truncated new officials class that provides the essentials to officiate those games. The new officials will still attend the clinics in the summer to prepare for the fall season.

What happens after I pass the test?

In August the crew chiefs will meet with you to ask questions about your background and availability. You will then be drafted to a crew.

How often do the crews meet?

We begin association meetings with the state master clinic in early August and will meet every Tuesday night for the first month of the season. In the second month, we alternate meetings with the entire association and with individual crews (some crews combine for a larger gathering to watch film or discuss plays/situations).

Am I expected to attend all meetings?

No, each member is expected to attend a portion of the meetings to retain “member-in-good-standing” status. The Board determines the required number of meetings.

Is there a physical fitness requirement?

Yes, officials must be able to perform a 120-yard shuttle run in under 40 seconds.

When are most games played?

Varsity games are mostly played on Friday nights at 7:00pm and Saturdays in the afternoon or evening. A few varsity games are held on Thursday night. Sub-varsity games are on Monday, (a few Wednesday), and Thursday afternoons and Saturday mornings/afternoons. We also officiate 4th through 8th grade Parks & Rec games. You could possibly officiate a high school, middle school, or Parks & Rec game any day/evening except Sunday.

When does the season begin and end?

The fall season begins the last week in August and ends the first week in November.

What levels does the Colorado Springs association officiate?

We work 6-man football games (with a 5 person crew); 8-man games (with a 5 person crew); and 11-man games at the 1A through 5A levels. CHSAA (www.chsaanow.com) will publish a football bulletin with specific classification information by school.

How many games can I expect to work?

This depends on your availability. As a rookie official (unless you are a transferring official with varsity experience) you most likely will not work varsity games in your first season. With “complete” availability, you can expect to work 20-35 games in August, September, and October.

How many officials work on the field?

Schools will pay for a specific number of officials depending on level:

Parks and Rec – 3 or 4 officials depending on the level

Junior High/Middle School – 3 officials (Referee, Linesman, Umpire)

Sub-varsity – 4 officials (R, L, LJ, Umpire)

Varsity – 5 officials (R, L, LJ, U, Back Judge)

Some crews may choose to add a fourth official to Junior High/Middle School games and a fifth official to sub-varsity games and the total fee is then split between the 4 or 5.

Will I work multiple games in a single day?

That will depend on the level and on your availability. Junior High/Middle School will typically play a 7th grade game (7 min quarters) followed by an 8th grade game (8 min quarters). You will typically officiate only one High school sub-varsity game in a single day. An exception may be on a Saturday where you could work a 9:00am sub-varsity game at one location and a 12:00pm or 1:00pm game at another location.

Am I expected to work a certain number of games to maintain “good standing?”

No, you can work as many/few games as you'd like. However, the more snaps you see, the better you will get. You will not be able to work “minimal” games and progress as quickly as your peers.

How much will I be paid to work each game?

Parks & Rec/Middle School/Jr High pays \$50-\$60 per game

Sub varsity (C-Squad and JV) pays \$60 per game

Varsity pays \$85 per game

Schools will also pay a travel stipend in city and mileage for out of town games

(Note: Officials will be paid more for the 2024 and 2025 seasons.)

How far will I travel to officiate games?

Most games are in the city. However, we will travel out of the city for some games. Boundaries include Monument to the north, Genoa-Hugo to the east, Fountain-Fort Carson to the south, and Buena Vista to the west. We also may assist other associations with their games, so crews may travel longer distances.

Will I get on-field practice before the real games begin?

We will hold an on-field new official clinic before the season and your crew will also work one or two scrimmages immediately before the season begins.

What crew positions should I expect to work?

As a new official, you will spend most of your first season on the “wing” (Linesman and Line Judge). You may also work a few games as umpire. You will probably not work any games as referee or back judge.

Can I watch varsity games?

We invite all new officials to attend the varsity pre-game (1-1/2 hours prior to kick off) and also to walk the sideline behind one of the wing officials (on a non-intrusive basis). This really helps with personal development.

What can my expectations be for advancement?

This depends on quite a few variables: Your availability (the number of games you are able to work), your fitness, your performance, and the judgment of your crew chief. The most successful officials spend a lot of time studying the rule book, asking questions of other officials, finding and meeting with an informal mentor, attending varsity games to observe, and volunteering where needed/able. Depending on the number of available officials, some officials may work a varsity game in their first season.