

TASO Ethics Policy

TO: All Members of TASO

FROM: TASO Board of Directors

RE: TASO ETHICS

The following was adopted by the Texas Association of Sports Officials Association on April 14, 1985, and ratified by the membership of all member divisions by adopting the necessary Bylaws changes to give the TASO Board of Directors authority for final decisions regarding violations of an ethical nature:

SECTION 1 PURPOSE

To provide a Code of Ethical Conduct, Standards of Conduct, a course of action for officials to lodge complaints concerning ethical conduct of members and to provide "Due Process" procedure for dealing with these complaints.

SECTION 2 COMMITTEE

The TASO Ethics Committee shall be made up of the Immediate Past President of each Division of the TASO and the Executive Director of the TASO, with the Division Immediate Past President currently serving as TASO President serving as Committee Chair. If a Division has no Immediate Past President or if an Immediate Past President is for any reason unable to participate in an individual ethics proceeding, the Executive Director with consent of the President of the absent immediate past president's Division may appoint a past or present member of that Division who has served as an officer or director of that Division or of the TASO to serve during the absence of the Immediate Past President with respect to a specified ethics proceeding. An attorney appointed by the President of TASO shall serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Committee.

SECTION 3 AUTHORITY

The Ethics Committee is empowered by each Division to have complete authority, under the guidelines contained herein, to take action on questions concerning ethical behavior of any SOA member and will be directly responsible to the TASO Board of Directors.

SECTION 4 CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

ARTICLE 1. Each member of the TASO shall:

- a. Put loyalty to the highest moral principles and to TASO above loyalty to persons or individual gains.
- b. Uphold the Bylaws and legal regulations of the TASO and support members therein and never be a party to their evasion.
- c. 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.
- d. 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.
- e. Engage in no business with nonmembers, either directly or indirectly which is consistent with the conscientious performance of TASO principles.
- f. Expose corruption wherever discovered.
- g. Uphold these principles ever conscious that membership is a basic human trust.

SECTION 5 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

ARTICLE 1. 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:

- a. Using TASO for private gain.
- b. Giving preferential treatment to any person.
- c. Losing complete independence or impartiality.
- d. Making an TASO decision outside official channels.
- e. Affecting adversely the confidence of the public, schools, and universities in the integrity of the TASO.
- f. 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.
- g. No member will engage in criminal, dishonest, notoriously disgraceful, or immoral conduct or other conduct prejudicial to the TASO.
- h. If a member is convicted of a Class C Misdemeanor, excluding traffic violations, the local chapter will hear the matter and take appropriate action. Copies of all documentation shall be forwarded to the Executive Director. Appeals will be to the Division level. If a chapter office is convicted of a Class C Misdemeanor, excluding traffic violations, all documentation regarding the matter will be reported and forwarded to the appropriate division for disposition.

If a member is convicted of a Class A or Class B Misdemeanor, the local chapter will investigate the matter and forward all findings and documentation to the respective division for disposition.

If a member is charged or indicted of a felony, the member is automatically suspended. This action is to be taken by the local chapter with a copy of the suspension letter forwarded to the Executive Director. Suspension is to remain in effect until the charge or indictment is resolved.

If a member is convicted of a felony or pleads guilty or no contest to a felony, membership is automatically terminated. NO APPEAL! Local chapter will notify and forward copies of all documentation to the Executive Director.

- i. Use intoxicating beverages or tobacco products while engaged in officiating activities.
- j. Use of illegal drugs which may be grounds for removal from TASO.
- k. Consume alcohol the day of the game.
- l. Consume alcohol in public after a contest.

SECTION 6 EACH MEMBER OF THE TASO IS OBLIGATED TO THE FOLLOWING CODE OF ETHICS

ARTICLE 1. TASO Code of Ethics

- a. The official shall be a member in good standing of his/her Association each year.
- b. The official uniform and patches as designated by each Association shall be worn.

- c. No official shall partake of any substance prior to officiating a game/match which would impair his/her physical or mental performance. An official shall not compromise the integrity of the Association while in any article of clothing identifying themselves as an official following a game/match.
- d. Every member's conduct, speech, and actions during or enroute to and from a game/match shall be above reproach and should always demonstrate the example of sportsmanship, courtesy, and self control.
- e. The official should arrive at the game/match with sufficient time to inspect facility and equipment, discuss ground rules, instruct supplementary officials, and discuss any pertinent information with the coaches.
- f. No official shall criticize any other official or any individual association within TASO in the presence of coaches, players, spectators, or the news media before, during, or after a game/match.
- g. No official shall cancel on officiating assignment to accept another more advantageous UIL sanctioned 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.
- h. 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. If the cancellation occurs less than 24 hours before the scheduled game or match time, the official shall recommend an available, qualified replacement.
- i. No official shall seek to influence a coach for the purpose of promoting personal officiating opportunities.
- j. 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.
- k. No official shall solicit games/matches unless he/she is operating as an individual contracting agent in an area without an assigning secretary.
- l. No official shall falsify records or reports for personal gain.
- m. No official shall engage in scouting activities or engage in conversation with coaches regarding officiating assignments.