

TASO – BASEBALL
SAN ANTONIO CHAPTER
OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All umpires shall know the intent and proper application of the rules of baseball as outlined in the NFHS Baseball Rulebook. They shall also know the proper field mechanics and coverage contained in the TASO – Baseball mechanics presentations for two (2), three (3), and four (4) man systems.
2. All umpires shall be physically, mentally, and emotionally fit to perform their duties and responsibilities on the field.
3. No member of this Chapter who is working as an umpire in a baseball game not assigned by the President, Secretary, or Assignment Director(s) shall wear any clothing or equipment bearing the TASO -Baseball insignia.
4. All umpires shall be well-groomed and dressed in a clean and neat regulation uniform with shined shoes. Facial hair shall be neatly trimmed.
5. Each umpire shall possess the equipment necessary to perform his duties, including at least the following equipment: uniform clothing conforming to official TASO – Baseball uniform codes, protective equipment, and such other equipment as is necessary to perform his duties. Members without equipment shall not be eligible for assignment to games. Only in emergency situations are members to lend equipment.
6. Each umpire shall furnish to the Secretary and assignment Director(s) all current contact information, to include telephone numbers (work, home, mobile and or pager) and an active e-mail account address to enable the member to be contacted about game assignments and Chapter business. Members shall keep their contact information current. Members shall promptly notify the Secretary and the

Assignment Director(s) regarding changes of address, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.

7. Umpires shall report to game assignments not less than thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled start time and shall start games as scheduled. The senior official in terms of experience shall act as crew chief and have primary responsibility for reporting protests, ejections, and both on-field and off-field problems to the President. All officials involved in ejections, restrictions, or early termination of a game, other than by rule, shall file an oral report with the President and the Assignment Director(s) within twelve (12) hours and a written report to TASO – Baseball using the form available on the TASO – Baseball website, with copies to the President and TASO District Director, within twenty-four (24) hours of any such occurrence. All officials assigned to a game in which such a situation arises shall make an oral and a written report.
8. Umpires shall be available for game assignments from February 1 through July 1, subject to Arbiter blackout restrictions. Other than as noted in blackout restrictions, all umpires shall give first priority to this Chapter's assignments in case of a conflict, including but not limited to participation or officiating games for any other chapter, association, or sport, unless prior approval is obtained from the President. Members shall honor all accepted game assignments, subject to the rules for cancellation included below. If working at a site where more than one (1) crew is assigned, the first crew shall wait until relieved by the second crew before departing from the site.
9. Chapter members, while umpiring or attending games as spectators, shall conduct themselves in a professional manner and shall make every effort to refrain from publicly criticizing game officials. Umpires attending games as spectators shall not wear an official uniform with the TASO insignia displayed.
10. Umpires shall not consume alcoholic beverages at any time of day prior to or during games. Umpires in uniform shall not remain in places that sell alcohol for public consumption on the premises after games. Umpires shall neither possess an open container of alcohol nor consume alcohol within one thousand feet (1,000') of any school

property. Umpires in uniform shall not use any tobacco or vaping products during games or while on school property.

11. Except in case of an emergency, umpires shall not have in their possession a cellular telephone or other non-medical electronic device. If an emergency exists that necessitates that an official be immediately available for contact, such umpire shall refrain from any use of the device except between innings.
12. Travel fees paid to umpires, other than fixed mileage fees paid to each official, shall be divided according to the following guidelines: one half (1/2) shall go to automobile expense, and the remaining one half (1/2), after expenses have been deducted, shall be divided among working passengers, provided that amounts less than two dollars and fifty cents (\$2.50) shall be ignored.
13. It is the shared responsibility of each umpire in a crew to contact his partner(s) at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to game time to confirm travel arrangements and working assignments. The seniority of either umpire is irrelevant as to whose obligation it is to make contact. If an umpire is substituted for another umpire, it is the duty of the new umpire to contact his partner as soon as possible to confirm the changed assignment. Individuals who fail to contact their partners shall both be subject to a fine based upon an investigation by the Executive Board or a committee appointed for that purpose. Both partners shall be fined if the administration of a game is affected by the failure of the partners to make contact. The Executive Board urges that, in order to avoid problems generated by a failure of the partners to make contact, each member make sure that his contact information in Arbiter is both current and correct. If an umpire is unsure of the name of his partner(s), or if the contact information seems incorrect, he should contact the Assignment Director(s) at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to game time.
14. Partners should agree to work assignments prior to arriving at the game site. Partners failing to agree to assignments should use the following guidelines:

- (a) If the umpires have worked together before, the assignments should reflect an even distribution of both plate and bases.
- (b) If the umpires have not worked together before or have worked the plate an equal number of times, the senior umpire shall decide each assignment. The senior umpire should take into consideration the following criteria in making his decision:
 - (1) The magnitude of the game versus the experience of the junior umpire;
 - (2) Whether either official has repeatedly worked the same position for one or the other team involved; and
 - (3) The opportunity to provide experience and training for the junior umpire.

II. GAME ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES

1. Conflicts of Interest

A. TASO rules define conflicts of interest in accepting game assignments. Any member who does not comply with these rules will not be considered a member in good standing and will be ineligible for any post-district, playoff, or regional or state tournament assignments. TASO conflict rules prohibit an umpire from knowingly accepting an assignment if:

- (1) A chapter makes assignments through a designated officer or assignment director, and the proposed assignment did not come through one of those persons;
- (2) An umpire is not an active member of the appropriate TASO classification;
- (3) The umpire or the umpire's spouse is employed by any school fielding a team in the assignment;

- (4) The umpire is related by blood or marriage as a parent, grandparent, child, stepchild, grandchild, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, nephew, or niece, or resides in the same household with, a person affiliated with a team involved in an assignment;
- (5) The umpire and any person affiliated with a team involved in an assignment, are or have been within the last five (5) years, teammates, roommates, close business associates, or personal friends.
- (6) The umpire or the umpire's spouse attended or worked with either school within the last five (5) years;
- (7) The umpire has a child in school at one of the schools involved in the assignment at the present time or who graduated from either school within the previous two (2) years; or
- (8) The umpire has coached or been affiliated with a club or select team, regardless of competition level, in the last two (2) years that has a player or coach on the roster of either team.

B. An umpire must notify the Secretary or Assignment Director(s), in writing, of all known conflicts of interest with schools normally served by the Chapter prior to receiving any assignments prior to the season. In the event the Secretary or the Assignment Director(s) do not know of a conflict as outlined above, an umpire shall notify the Secretary or Assignment Director(s) of any conflicts upon receiving a scheduled assignment, and an umpire shall not accept an assignment without first insuring compliance with this section.

In the event a conflict with these provisions becomes known after acceptance of an assignment, the umpire shall notify the Secretary or Assignment Director(s) as soon as practicable. If the conflict arises under Section A. above, the official shall be removed from the game or tournament without penalty. If the conflict arises under Section B. above, the Secretary and/or the Assignment Director(s) shall inform both coaches of the possible conflict, and unless the head coaches of both schools agree to waive the conflict, the umpire shall be reassigned without penalty.

C. It shall be a violation of the Code of Ethics for an umpire to knowingly work a game in violation of the provisions of this section, and said umpire shall be liable to being placed on probation, fined, suspended or expelled from membership.

D. Except for A.1, and A.2., the remaining provisions of this section may be waived by mutual consent of the head coaches of the teams involved.

2. Umpires should normally receive their assignments via computer through the Arbiter program, so it is essential that umpires provide the Assignment Director(s) and the Secretary with a correct and functional e-mail address to facilitate the assignment process. When delivered by Arbiter, each game will have a date by which officials may accept an assignment, which shall be at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the game date. Arbiter records when umpires have first reviewed their scheduled assignments, and officials have until the specified date to accept or reject assignments. If an umpire has received notice of an assignment but has taken no action to accept or decline the assignment by the end of the last day to do so, the Assignment Director(s) may reassign the game to another official without further notice.

3. The Assignment Director(s) shall make every effort to assign games initially, or to reassign games declined by umpires or resulting from inaction by a scheduled umpire within the allowed time frame, promptly so that umpires will have the maximum time to determine whether to accept all assignments. It is recommended that umpires check Arbiter frequently to make sure they are aware of all pending game assignments.

4. If an umpire receives a reassignment via computer, that umpire should receive the reassignment not less than seventy-two (72) hours prior to the game to allow the umpire a full forty-eight (48) hours in which to accept or reject the assignment without penalty. In an emergency situation in which less than a full forty-eight (48) hours is available, the Assignment Director(s) shall notify the replacement umpire directly, either by voice-to-voice or e-mail contact, to verify the assignment and record whether the replacement umpire has accepted or rejected the game.

5. Umpires may accept or decline games during the initial review period without penalty. Umpires may withdraw from previously accepted games with at least forty-eight (48) hours notice; however, umpires who withdraw from a previously scheduled and accepted game within forty-eight (48) hours of the date of the game shall be liable to a fine or other disciplinary action as described elsewhere in these Operating Policies and Procedures and/or the Bylaws. If an

umpire declines an assignment on a given date, he shall not be eligible for reassignment on that date except in an emergency in which no other qualified umpire is available.

III. POST-DISTRICT AND PLAYOFF ASSIGNMENTS

1. Only members in good standing, according to the Bylaws, as of March 1, shall be eligible for post-district and/or playoff assignments.
2. Eligibility for post-district and playoff games, Per TASO – Baseball guidelines, shall be determined according to procedures outlined in Chapter Bylaws, Article VII, Section 5.0.
3. The President or Assignment Director(s) shall notify eligible umpires of requests for post-district and/or playoff games as requests are received. Umpires must decide among possible post-district and/or playoff games to be worked by that umpire for the upcoming week by 8 A.M. of the day after they have received notice of their possible assignment(s). If a subsequent assignment becomes available during that week, based upon a coach's selection, which does not conflict with an accepted post-district and/or playoff assignment, the umpire has until 8 A.M. of the next day to accept or decline a new assignment game or series.
4. Once an umpire has agreed to work a post-district and/or playoff series, except for emergencies in which no other qualified umpire is available, he is committed to that series until its conclusion. If rain or some other unforeseen condition affects another assignment, the other conflicting assignment shall be relinquished unless the first assignment is complete. A series has priority over individual games.
5. If specific officials are not requested by name, assignments shall be made according to the following guidelines:
 - a. Specific requirements by the team requesting officials;
 - b. Certified Classification umpires that have not been selected previously shall receive first priority;

- c. Approved Classification umpires that have not been selected previously shall receive the next priority;
 - d. Registered Classification umpires shall only be assigned if requested by name, in accordance with TASO – Baseball guidelines;
 - e. If all umpires have been selected at least once previously, selections shall be made based on recommendations of the Assignment Director(s) and/or the President, which may be based on State rules and mechanics exam scores, Chapter evaluation scores, and availability.
6. Officials recommended for game assignments at the UIL State Baseball Tournament shall be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board prior to their names being submitted.

IV. ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

1. A member shall not do the following:
 - a. Privately act to influence, request, or communicate directly with a coach, athletic director, assigning authority, or athletic governing body to enhance the opportunity of assignment as an umpire of the member personally or another member. If contacted by any other person for one of the purposes above, the member shall refer the person who made the contact or directly report the request to the President or an Assignment Director(s).
 - b. Give, accept, or exchange any gift, favor, or object that has monetary value or personal gain for possible assignment as an umpire in a game or series.
 - c. Discredit the ability or criticize the assignment of another umpire or team of umpires to gain an opportunity of assignment for himself or another individual member.
 - d. Seek out coaches, school authorities, or the media before, during, or after games, other than in performance of umpiring

duties. Umpires shall promptly leave game sites following the conclusion of all games and duties and at all times avoid even the appearance of impropriety.

- e. Publicly criticize or censure the ability, performance, or assignment of other officials.
- f. Communicate directly or indirectly with a coach, athletic director, assigning authority, or athletic governing body to promote assignment opportunities for the members of their chapter in regularly scheduled, post-district, or playoff games or series other than a general promotion of the Chapter conducted between successive seasons.
- g. Promote the services of the Chapter, in accordance with the above policies, other than by letter signed by the President or Secretary on behalf of the Chapter which may only:
 - (1) State the number of members in each classification level;
 - (2) Describe the assignment procedures of the Chapter;
 - (3) State the availability of members for assignment to varsity programs;
 - (4) State the availability of members for assignment to subvarsity programs;
 - (5) Include a roster of Chapter members, copies of which shall be sent to the District Director and the Executive Secretary of TASO – Baseball.
- h. Offer any gift, favor, or object of value to a coach, athletic director, assigning authority, or athletic governing body in exchange for the assignment of members of the Chapter to officiate a game or series.

2. No member shall accept an assignment, other than an approved assignment from the President or Assignment Director(s), to work a game or in a league which the Chapter has assigned during that season. No member shall work a regular season, post-district, or playoff game or series for which the Chapter has been contacted or whose assignments have been solicited by the Chapter and where the Chapter has been rejected, without first receiving approval by the President. No member shall be the assignment director of another Chapter or officiating group that is in direct competition with this Chapter.
3. Members must be careful to avoid even the appearance of impropriety. While members are encouraged to attend games, they must be aware that their position is unlike other spectators. As well as observing the ethical principles in Part I of this section, Chapter members attending games as spectators or observers shall neither seek out nor socialize with coaches or athletic directors prior to, during, or after games, unless it is their official duty to do so.

V. GAME FEES AND EXPENSES

1. The fee schedule for high school varsity and subvarsity games is set according to Section 1204 of the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules or the corresponding section in the rules adopted by the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (“TAPPS”) or other school regulating body.
2. Expenses, including mileage, shall be paid to umpires in accordance with amounts specified in the then-current version of Section 1204 of the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules or the corresponding section in the rules adopted by the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (“TAPPS”) or other school regulating body. In all situations which would involve round-trip travel of more than 120 miles one way and games on consecutive days at the same site or another one farther away for the crew, the Chapter will negotiate with the host school at the first site to provide payment of costs of lodging. All expenses shall be in accord with UIL Section 1204.

VI. FINES AND PENALTIES

1. If a complaint is received against any Chapter member, the President shall notify the Executive Board of the substance of the complaint, and the Board shall decide whether to call the member before the Board at a regular or special called meeting of the Executive Board or to refer the member to the Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee.
2. At the discretion of the President, a member may be temporarily suspended from officiating assignments pending an appearance before the Executive Board. By a majority vote, the Executive Board may approve a suspension of a member from officiating assignments pending an appearance before the Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee.
3. Any decision made by the Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee may be appealed to the Executive Board. Board decisions on appeals may be appealed to TASO – Baseball according to guidelines available on the TASO – Baseball website. The Board may, at its sole discretion, decide whether to suspend imposition of an appealed punishment during an appeal to TASO – Baseball.
4. The following guidelines shall be used in determining fines for members:
 - a. Previously accepted game assignments shall not be canceled within forty-eight (48) hours of game time without proper reason or excuse. Games canceled within forty-eight (48) hours of game time without proper reason or excuse shall be fined in an amount not to exceed the game fee which would be paid in that assignment.
 - b. Failure to report to an assigned game shall result in a fine up to the amount of the game fee. If the umpire who appeared works the game alone and has complied with the contact requirements of Article 1, Section 12 of these Official Policies and Procedures, he shall be entitled to receive the all of the fine actually collected by the Chapter. Umpires who are found to have failed to contact their partners are not entitled to any additional compensation for work performed.

- c. Solicitation of game assignments shall result in a fine of up to the game fee, plus possible suspension pending a decision by the Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee for repeated violations.
 - d. Members who fail to attend mandatory or regular meetings as required in the Bylaws Article VI, Section 2.0,, without cause, may be fined in an amount not to exceed ten dollars (\$10.00) for each missed meeting.
 - e. Members may be referred to the Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee for disciplinary action for repeated failure to attend mandatory or regular meetings without excuse.
 - f. Members who request Chapter assistance in recovery of game fees, travel fees and other allowed expenses, when these amounts are found to have already been paid, may be fined or referred to the Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee. For possible disciplinary action. Members who request Chapter assistance in collecting payments shall notify the Treasurer if and when any Chapter-requested unpaid fees are received. A collection fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) may be assessed if the Chapter pursues collection of unpaid fees and finds that they have been paid to the member, and the member has not notified the Chapter.
5. Additional or alternate penalties, including fines, reprimands, probation, and suspension may be imposed for violations of the Chapter's Bylaws or Operating Policies and Procedures. All penalties may be appealed in accordance with the TSAO – Baseball grievance procedure guidelines.
6. Such fines as may be imposed shall be paid within fifteen (15) days of their imposition. If appealed successfully, the amount of the fine shall be refunded to the member. If not paid timely, past-due fines shall cause the member to lose his status as a member in good standing until they are paid in full.

VII. ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES FOR THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

1. There shall be four (4) members of the Executive Board eligible to sign checks on behalf of the Chapter: the President, Vice-President Secretary, and Treasurer.
2. There shall always be two (2) authorized signatures required on checks.
3. No person may sign a check in which he is the payee of the check.
4. No authorized person shall sign a check in which that person is in control of a business or fund which is receiving the funds paid.
5. The check register shall be properly filled out to include the name of the payee, the amount of the check, the reason for which the check was issued, and the month, day, and year on which the check was issued.
6. No check shall be made out to cash.
7. No check r page of checks shall be removed from the checkbook and then signed by an authorized officer and then given to another officer otherwise authorized to sign checks to be used by that person at a later date. Should the need arise to make a purchase or payment by check when the checkbook is not actually present, the check shall be made out to the designated payee with a time limit that designates specifically when the check shall be voided if not negotiated. Said time limit shall not ordinarily exceed ten (10) working days from the day of issue. No additional check shall be issued to any party for that party's use before a complete determination is made on the earlier check.
8. All requests for payment of expenses and/or reimbursements shall be accompanied by proper documentation.
9. Budget and expense categories shall be set up and reconciled monthly to track the distribution of funds.

10. No outgoing officer may authorize a purchase or reimbursement after the last day of his term of office. Any business which is pending at the end of a previous Board's term shall be turned over to the succeeding officer to resolve.
11. All income shall be accounted for by sources and amounts.
12. As a not-for-profit corporation, sales tax should not be paid for services and/or goods purchased by the Chapter. The Chapter Federal Tax ID number should be used for vendors who require a tax-exempt number for sales tax-exempt purposes.
13. An informal audit or review of Chapter financial records by a third party designated by the President with the approval of a majority of the Executive Board shall be conducted each year on or about August 1 to coincide with the Chapter's fiscal year and the closing of the books for that year. A report on said review shall be made to the new Executive Board by the first scheduled Executive Board meeting in October.

VIII. MENTORING PROGRAM

1. To assist in member development, the Chapter may develop and supervise a mentoring program that matches experienced umpires with new umpires.
2. The purpose of the mentoring program shall be to aid in member development and training by providing less experienced umpires with suggestions on how to improve their skills by receiving relatively immediate feedback and systematic evaluation by more experienced umpires.
3. The goals of the mentoring program include, but are not necessarily limited to, increase retention of new umpires as Chapter members, providing newer officials with increased opportunities to become integrated into the Chapter, and providing the Executive Board with feedback useable to strengthen and improve the overall quality of officiating in the Chapter.

4. The program shall be administered by one (1) person who shall be selected and approved by the Executive Board. The program administrator shall work closely with the Vice-President and the Assignment Director(s) to facilitate the operation of the program. To be considered for the position of program administrator, applicants must be members in good standing and have been a TASO – Baseball member for at least five (5) years, of which at least two (2) years must have been as a member of the San Antonio Chapter.

IX. EVALUATION PROGRAM

1. The Chapter shall establish and maintain an evaluation program using experienced umpires.
2. The purpose of the evaluation program is to provide information based on third party evaluations of Chapter members' performance and abilities as exhibited on the field in game situations and to provide that information to the chapter for possible use in deciding what level of games may be appropriate for specific members.
3. The program shall have one evaluation director, who is under the supervision of the Vice-President, in charge of the observations and written evaluations of individual members. The director of the program shall be appointed by the President and approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board. The director may at his option select other evaluators, subject to Executive Board approval, to assist in the conduct of the evaluations.
4. Umpires who participate in the evaluation program to observe and assess the performance of Chapter members on the field in game situations should have at least ten (10) years of experience in umpiring high school baseball. A demonstrated knowledge of the mechanics of TASO – Baseball is required. Retired and/or inactive umpires and/or umpires working a limited schedule and who meet the criteria are preferred, since they will be more likely to have more time available to devote to the task.

5. Evaluations shall be made on the basis of a standard form which ranks abilities on the basis of specified criteria as exhibited under game conditions.
6. In order to get a realistic observation of umpires' conduct and proficiency, umpires will not be advised ahead of time when they are scheduled to be evaluated. Evaluators are to watch games from start to finish; however, they are encouraged to talk to the umpires to provide immediate feedback on their observations, including both strong points and areas which may need work.
7. Evaluators shall not evaluate the same two umpires in more than one game in one day.
8. A major purpose of the program is to train and promote development of appropriate mechanics and skills for all Chapter umpires. Depending upon the availability of evaluators, it would be ideal for all members to be seen at both positions each year. Realistically, the goal of the program shall be to evaluate all registered umpires at least twice per year, preferably once on each position. Approved umpires should be seen at least once per year. Certified umpires should be evaluated at least every other year.
9. Evaluators shall be compensated for their time and effort based on the number of evaluations conducted and written reports submitted. The fee for evaluations shall be one half of a regular game fee. It is expected that out of town travel will be kept to a minimum. Out of town travel will be paid at one half of the approved UIL travel fee. No evaluator shall be expected to perform more than two evaluations per day.
10. Upon completion of an evaluation report, evaluators shall submit a written copy of each evaluation to the director, who shall see to it that the umpires involved are provided with a copy in a timely manner.

X. RATIFICATION AND AMENDMENT

1. These Operating Policies and Procedures shall become effective upon their approval by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the active members present at the first meeting after their initial proposal.
2. Additions or amendments to the Operating Policies and Procedures require a majority vote of the active members present at the first meeting after the one at which they are proposed or the addition or amendment has been disseminated to the Chapter membership.
3. These Operating Policies and Procedures should be reviewed by the Executive Board or one or more members designated for the purpose every four (4) years.

Approved and adopted on January 13, 2020.