



MSHSL Substance Use Policy

Policy Statement

The Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) is committed to ensuring a safe and fair competitive environment for student-athletes, coaches, spectators, and officials. To uphold the integrity of high school sports, all MSHSL officials must remain free from the influence of alcohol, drugs, and marijuana before, during, and immediately after contests.

Prohibited Conduct

MSHSL officials are prohibited from:

- Consuming alcohol, drugs, marijuana or any other substance that may impair judgement before officiating a contest.
- Officiating while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, marijuana, or any substance that affects judgment, coordination, or reaction time.
- Possessing alcohol, illegal drugs, or marijuana at a contest site.
- Using prescription or over-the-counter medications in a manner that impairs their ability to officiate.

Reporting and Investigation Process

If an official suspects that their partner or crewmate may be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or another judgment impairing substance before or during a contest, the following steps are recommended:

1. Immediate Private Discussion – The observing official should discreetly speak with the suspected official to assess the situation. If the official admits to using a prohibited substance or exhibits clear signs of impairment, they must immediately remove themselves from officiating duties.
2. Contact Contest Assigning Authority – If the suspected official refuses to step aside or denies impairment but continues to exhibit concerning behavior, the observing official must contact the contest assigning authority for guidance and next steps.
3. Notify Game Administration – If the contest assigning authority is unavailable, or if the suspected official remains on site, the observing official must notify the game administrator (e.g., athletic director, school official) to intervene.
4. Escalation to Local Authorities (If Necessary) – If the suspected official exhibits dangerous behavior, refuses to cooperate, or presents a risk to participants, game administration should contact local law enforcement for further action.
5. Completion of Contest Report – Any incident must be documented in writing and submitted to the officials' contest assigning authority within 24 hours of the occurrence. The contest assigning authority must report the case to MSHSL within 7 days for review.

Consequences for Non-Adherence

Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include:

- First Offense – Local officials' association may adjudicate, with disciplinary action ranging from a written warning to a one-month suspension from officiating duties. The case must still be reported to MSHSL within 7 days for official record-keeping.
- Second Offense – Automatic forfeiture of all future MSHSL contest assignments for the current season and mandatory substance use assessment before reinstatement.
- Third Offense – Permanent suspension from officiating MSHSL contests.

In cases of severe impairment or endangerment of participants, MSHSL reserves the right to immediately suspend or expel an official, regardless of prior offenses.

Delegation of Authority

MSHSL may delegate first-offense adjudication to local officials' associations. However, all cases—regardless of severity—must be reported to MSHSL within 7 days for monitoring and record-keeping.