

**WEST VIRGINIA**  
**SECRETARY OF STATE**  
**KEN HECHLER**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW DIVISION**

Form #5

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SECRETARY OF STATE

**NOTICE OF AGENCY ADOPTION OF A PROCEDURAL OR INTERPRETIVE RULE  
OR A LEGISLATIVE RULE EXEMPT FROM LEGISLATIVE REVIEW**

AGENCY: Secondary Schools Activities Commission TITLE NUMBER: 127

CITE AUTHORITY: WV Code 18-2-25

RULE TYPE: PROCEDURAL \_\_\_\_\_ INTERPRETIVE \_\_\_\_\_

EXEMPT LEGISLATIVE RULE XXX

CITE STATUTE(S) GRANTING EXEMPTION FROM LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

WV Code 29A-1-3(c)

AMENDMENT TO AN EXISTING RULE: YES XXX NO \_\_\_\_\_

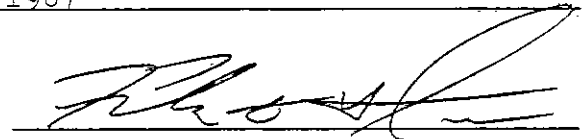
IF YES, SERIES NUMBER OF RULE BEING AMENDED: Series 46

TITLE OF RULE BEING AMENDED: Provisions Governing Conduct

IF NO, SERIES NUMBER OF NEW RULE BEING ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE OF RULE BEING ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_

THE ABOVE RULE IS HEREBY ADOPTED AND FILED WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE. THE  
EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS RULE IS July 14, 1987



PROVISIONS GOVERNING CONDUCT

\*09 Section 127-4-1 GENERAL

1.1 Scope -- These rules govern conduct for active and spectator participants, coaches and all other school personnel at interscholastic athletic events.

1.2 Authority -- W. Va. Code Section 18-2-5

1.3 Filing Date --

1.4 Effective Date -- *July 14*  
July 1, 1987

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\*09 Section 127-4-2 - Sportsmanship

2.1 - Member schools are required to conduct all relations with other schools in a spirit of good sportsmanship. Acts which are prima facie evidence of failure to abide by this rule are those which are noted below and others of similar nature which violate the accepted code of good sportsmanship.

2.2 - It shall be the responsibility of the home schools to take proper steps and precautions to insure that crowd and spectator control is handled reasonably at all interscholastic athletic contests. In addition to the spectators, attention must be directed to the safety, comfort and security of the coaches, officials, and players. Their seating accommodations should protect them from spectator interference.

2.3 - It shall be the responsibility of any team, player, coach, or attendant to remain in or a part of a contest until its normal end as provided by the National Federation Rules of that particular sport. The exception to the above would be provided by the same National Federation Rules of that particular sport. The penalty for a violation by a coach, player, or team attendant will not only involve ejection during that particular contest, but shall also involve that player, coach, or team attendant not being a part of that school's team for the next regular scheduled contest at that level of competition. The coach, athlete, or team attendant may practice in the days prior to the contest but may not dress or participate on the day of the contest.

2.4 - It shall be the responsibility of a member school to use every means at its disposal to impress upon its faculty, student body, team members, coaching staff, and officials the values of sportsmanship in preparation for the conduct and management of interscholastic contests.

2.5 - It shall be the responsibility of an administrator, spectator, athlete, cheerleader, or coach to follow those directions provided for in the Code for Interscholastic Athletics:

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**\*09 Section 127-4-3 - Code for Interscholastic Athletics****3.1 - The School Administrator Shall:**

- (a) Encourage and promote friendly relationships and good sportsmanship throughout the school by requiring courtesy and proper decorum at all times, by acquainting students and others in the community with ideals of good sportsmanship and by so publicizing these concepts and attitudes that all members of the school and community will understand their meaning.
- (b) Insist upon implicit compliance with all rules and regulations of the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission, hereinafter referred to in this rule as the WVSSAC.
- (c) Secure qualified officials for all contests.
- (d) Insist upon adequate safety provisions for all activities, for both participants and spectators.
- (e) Approve only those activities and schedules which are educationally and physically sound for the school pupil.
- (f) Encourage all to judge the success of the athletic program on the basis of the education goals and the attitude of the participants and spectators, rather than on the basis of the number of games won or lost.
- (g) Insist that the school cheerleaders exemplify the highest standards of good sportsmanship as a means of inculcating desirable spectator attitudes.
- (h) Provide adequate hygienic, sanitary, and attractive facilities for the dressing and housing of visiting teams and officials.
- (i) Review with staff the Sportsmanship Rule.

**3.2 - The Coach Shall:**

- (a) Exemplify behavior that is representative of the educational staff of the school and a credit to the teaching profession.
- (b) Demonstrate high ideals, good habits, and desirable attitudes in personal behavior and demand the same standards of the players.
- (c) Recognize that the purpose of competition is to promote the physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of the individual players and that the most important values of competition are derived from playing the game fairly.
- (d) Be a modest winner and a gracious loser.
- (e) Maintain self-control at all times, accepting adverse decisions without public display of emotion or of dissatisfaction with the officials.

- (f) Cooperate with the school principal in the planning, scheduling, and conduct of sports activities.
- (g) Employ accepted educational methods in coaching, giving all players an opportunity to use and develop initiative, leadership, and judgment.
- (h) Pay close attention to the physical condition and well-being of the players, refusing to jeopardize the health of an individual for the sake of improving his team's chances to win.
- (i) Teach athletes that it is better to lose fairly than win unfairly.
- (j) Prohibit gambling, profanity, abusive language, and similar violations of the true sportsman's code.
- (k) Refuse to disparage an opponent, an official, or others associated with sports activities and discourage gossip and questionable rumors concerning them.
- (l) Properly supervise student athletes under his immediate care and specifically observe a coach's responsibilities in conjunction with state sponsored contests.

### 3.3 - The Spectator Shall:

- (a) Realize that he represents the school just as definitely as does the member of a team, and, therefore, has an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through this behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others.
- (b) Recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory by approving and applauding good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team.
- (c) Recognize that, since the primary purpose of interscholastic athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well-being of the players through the medium of contests, victory or defeat is in reality of secondary importance.
- (d) Treat visiting teams and officials as guests, extending to them every courtesy.
- (e) Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- (g) Respect the judgement and integrity of officials, realizing that their decisions are based upon game conditions as they observe them.

### 3.4 - The Athlete Shall:

- (a) Be courteous to visiting teams and officials.
- (b) Play hard and to the limit of his ability. The true athlete does not give up, nor does he quarrel, cheat, bet, or grandstand.

- (c) Be modest when successful and be gracious in defeat. A true sportsman does not offer excuses for failures.
- (d) Maintain a high degree of physical fitness by observing team and training rules conscientiously.
- (e) Demonstrate loyalty to the school by maintaining a satisfactory scholastic standing and by participating in and supporting other school activities.
- (f) Play for the love of the game.
- (g) Understand and observe the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
- (h) Set a high standard of personal cleanliness.
- (i) Respect the integrity and judgment of officials and accept their decisions without questions.
- (j) Respect the facilities of host schools and the trust entailed in being a guest.

**3.5 - The Cheerleader shall:**

- (a) Be a positive influence on spectators.
- (b) Always cheer positively - for their team - not negatively against the opponents.
- (c) Know the game rules and officials signals.
- (d) Set a good example for fellow students and spectators.
- (e) Impress the importance of accepting the decision of officials and discourage disagreement with them by the crowd.
- (f) Station themselves where they are not distracting the players. (Not directly behind the basket)
- (g) Be out of the way of officials and players.
- (h) Be neat, clean and well groomed.

**3.6 - The Official Shall:**

- (a) Place the welfare of the individual athlete above all other considerations.
- (b) Know the game rules thoroughly and give intelligent interpretations.
- (c) Maintain confidence and control from start to finish.

- (d) Work cooperatively with fellow officials and game administrators.
- (e) Refrain from exhibiting emotions or arguing with a player or coach. Maintain self-control under all conditions.
- (f) Be fair, impartial and professional.
- (g) Maintain a high level of mental competency.
- (h) Be neat and dress in the appropriate uniform.
- (i) Be in adequate physical condition for the demands of the particular sport.
- (j) Refrain from commenting upon or discussing a team, play, game situation, or fellow official.
- (k) So conduct the game as to enlist the cooperation of players, coaches, and spectators in the interest of good sportsmanship.

**3.7 - Protection, Facilities, and Assistance** - The home team is expected to furnish adequate police protection. Outdoor facilities or playing facilities should be separated from the spectators by a restraining barrier (fence, wire, rope, etc.). Officials should be provided with a parking space, private dressing facilities not accessible to unauthorized personnel, and should be paid no later than half-time of game. The use of trained, competent, adult "assistant officials", i.e. scorers, timers, chain and down marker crews, etc. is strongly recommended.

**3.8 - Statement of Policy** - Insofar as unsportsmanlike actions by players, cheerleaders, students, school administrators, officials, coaches, faculty members, and spectators are concerned, the identical items under the Sportsmanship Rule along with the following guides will be referred to by the WVSSAC:

- (a) The school whose coach behaves in a manner likely to have adverse influence on the attitudes of players or spectators may be provided with the choice of taking disciplinary action against that coach or have the entire school disciplined by the WVSSAC.
- (b) Any athlete who in protest lays hands or attempts to lay hands upon an official may be declared ineligible by his principal or by the WVSSAC for up to one year. Any athlete who strikes an opponent, coach, or a spectator during or following an athletic event may be declared ineligible by the principal or the WVSSAC for a specified period of time up to one year, depending on the seriousness of the act. A coach, player, or team attendant ejected from a game, match, meet, or contest for unsportsmanlike action(s) shall be ineligible to participate in the next regularly scheduled contest at that level of competition. The basis of this policy statement is that a member school shall not be represented by any student or coach whose conduct reflects discredit upon his school.

- (c) In case of spectators physically molesting an official, coach, or player, the school may be given one of two options: 1) take action against the offender(s) or (2) accept discipline from the WVSSAC.
- (d) The school that does not lend complete cooperation in the host school's effort to promote the spirit of good sportsmanship may be disciplined by the WVSSAC.
- (e) A coach may be considered as committing unsportsmanlike actions if he makes degrading remarks about officials during or after a game either on the field of play, from the bench, or through any public news media, argues with officials, or goes through motions indicating his dislike for a decision, protests the decision and actions of officials pertaining to the game during and after the contest, or detains the official on the field of play following a game to request a ruling or explanation of some phase of the game. If a coach feels he has a legitimate criticism of a penalty call or a request for a rule interpretation, such criticism or request should be made in the privacy of the coach's office or the official's quarters and should be made in a courteous manner.

**3.9 - Procedure -** Unsportsmanship action must be reported in detail to the WVSSAC. A copy of the complaint must also be filed with the principal of the school involved. Each principal involved shall report such information or answers to the report as they deem appropriate. Upon receipt of all reports the Executive Secretary and/or the Board of Appeals of the WVSSAC shall investigate and adjudicate such reports in accordance with the powers afforded in **Section 127-1-8.6 and 8.7 and Section 127-1-12.2 and 12.3** of the Constitution. Penalties up to and including suspension of member schools may be made in accordance with **Section 127-4**.

**3.10 -** The following defines the different types of disciplinary action which may be assessed for violation of the Sportsmanship Rule:

- (a) **WARNING** A warning may be given by the Executive Secretary or Assistant Executive Secretary. It is official notice that an unexcusable, unethical, or unsportsmanship action has occurred, is a matter of record, and that such an occurrence must not be repeated.
- (b) **PROBATION** Probation is a much more severe type of warning and may be expressed two ways. A school, coach, player, or team attendant on probation is being told that further violations will lead to a fine or suspension. A school on probation is on conditional WVSSAC membership but may engage in its regular schedule, sanctioned events, and all WVSSAC sponsored tournament play, providing a program is filed with the Executive Secretary of the WVSSAC indicating measures to be taken to alleviate this problem which caused the school to be placed on probation. A stronger form of probation could provide that a school may not enter any competition toward sectional, regional, or state championship nor may the school enter any sanctioned events.

- (c) **FINE** A fine may be levied by the Executive Secretary. It may be levied in addition to a warning, probation, or suspension.
- (d) **SUSPENSION** A school suspended from the WVSSAC may not meet in interscholastic competition of any kind with a WVSSAC member school or a school that is a member of another state associated with the National Federation of State High School Associations.

**3.11 - APPEALS** All cases involving disciplinary action against member schools, coaches, players, team attendants, or officials may be protested in accordance with Section 127-6.