CONSTITUTION

of the

NORTH ALABAMA FOOTBALL OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION

(Revised on 03 Aug 2017)

ARTICLE I NAME

The organization shall be known as the North Alabama Football Officials Association (hereafter referred to as “The Association” or “NAFOA”), organized under the jurisdiction of the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA).

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

The purpose of the Association shall be:

A. To educate and train officials for the sport of football, and to offer the services of these officials to schools and other community organizations who sponsor football programs.

B. To foster and perpetuate the continuing improvement of football officiating through the clarification and interpretation of the rules of the game, and the practice of proper officiating mechanics.

C. To foster high standards of ethics, fair play, and sportsmanship among, and to encourage closer cooperation and better understanding between officials, athletic directors, coaches, players, media personnel, and spectators.

ARTICLE III ORGANIZATION

A. The Association shall be organized and shall conduct business under the general principles of democratic rule. Each member is guaranteed a voice in Association affairs, but the will of the majority shall be honored by all members. (Hereafter, the term “majority vote of the general membership” shall be interpreted as a simple majority vote of a quorum of those Association members eligible to vote on Association business, those being Regular members. A quorum of eligible voters is defined as 50% or more of the total number of Association members eligible to vote.)

B. The leadership and management of the Association shall be vested in a Board of Directors consisting of nine (9) members, four (4) Officers – a President; a first Vice-President (Evaluations); a Second Vice-President (Training); and a Secretary/Treasurer – and five (5) At-Large Board Members, all elected from the Regular membership.

C. To the greatest extent feasible, NAFOA organization and committee structure shall approximate those of AHSAA. The Association shall not adopt rules or regulations that conflict with those of AHSAA. This Constitution and its association By-Laws shall be the basis from which all other Association rules, regulations, and policies shall be derived.

ARTICLE IV

MEMBERSHIP

A. General

Membership in NAFOA shall be offered to those men and women who show particular interest in the game of football, who are willing to make a thorough study of the rules and officiating mechanics of the game, who prove themselves capable of officiating the sport, and who will attend all business and training meetings of the Association. NAFOA is an equal opportunity organization which shall not discriminate in the selection of its members on the basis of race, color, creed, sex political affiliation, or religious preference. No official who is a member of NAFOA and/or who is registered with AHSAA shall be registered with or have a membership in a high school football officials/athletic association that is not a member of the Nation Federation of State High Schools Associations (NFHS).

B. Membership Categories.

There shall be three categories of membership in NAFOA: Regular, Applicant, and Honorary. In general, the category of membership appropriate for each member shall be determined by his/her personal conduct and longevity in the Association; not upon his/her officiating abilities.

1. Regular Membership.

Regular members of NAFOA have full privileges of discussion and vote in Association affairs and are eligible to hold elective office in the Association. A regular member is one who meets the following requirements:

a. Meets the current AHSAA age requirement.

b. Fulfills, as a minimum, all requirements set forth by the AHSAA for Registered football officials.

c. Has met all of his/her financial obligations to the

Association.

d. Is available to officiate a regular schedule of football games during the season.

e. Has served at least one season as a NAFOA Applicant member.

f. Has been recommended by the Board of Directors and elected by majority vote of the general membership to be a Regular member.

Once elected, a Regular member remains as such indefinitely until/unless he/she personally requests, in writing, a change in membership; his/her membership is dropped, for cause, from the rolls of the Association; or his/her personal misconduct forces Association action to suspend/revoke such membership.

2. Applicant Membership.

Applicant members of the NAFOA have the privilege of discussion in Association affairs, but shall not have a vote in them. They are not eligible to hold elective office in the Association. An Applicant member is one who meets the following requirements:

a. Regular membership requirements above.

b. Has expressed an interest in becoming a football

official, and has applied in writing for membership in NAFOA; or has applied for membership in NAFOA, transferring without references from another football officials organization.

c. Has been recommended by the Board of Directors and elected by majority vote of the general membership to be an Applicant member.

The Board of Directors will review and evaluate the conduct of each Applicant member near the end of each football season, and render a recommendation to the general membership to either retain him/her as an Applicant member, advance him/her to Associate membership, or discontinue his/her membership in the Association.

3. Honorary Membership.

Honorary members are those who are held in high esteem by the Association for their contributions to the Association and/or the game of football. Honorary members of NAFOA have the privilege of discussion in Association affairs, but shall not have a vote in them. They are not eligible to hold elective office in the association. An Honorary member is one who meets the following requirements:

a. Has been a Regular member of NAFOA.

b. Has been nominated and seconded by NAFOA Regular members to be an Honorary member of the Association.

c. Has been recommended by the Board of Directors and elected by three-fourths majority vote of the general membership to be an Honorary member.

Honorary membership is a lifetime membership, to be carried as such on Association records for as long as the Association exists.

C. Membership Candidacy and Acceptance.

Any person, who applies in writing to join NAFOA, will be reviewed by the Board of Directors, who will evaluate the individual’s personal history, references, character, and motivations. The Board of Directors will then present the candidate to the general membership who shall accept/reject the Board’s recommendations by majority vote of those present.

D. Membership Advancement.

The Board of Directors will, no later than one week prior to the night of each year’s Association elections, review and evaluate the conduct, behavior, character, and motivation of each Applicant member. On the evening of Association elections, prior to the start of the balloting process, the Board shall present its recommendations on each Applicant member to the general membership who shall accept/reject any or all of the Board’s recommendations on each individual by majority vote of those present.

E. Standards of Conduct for Association Members.

An official, by definition, position, and inherent responsibilities, is considered a figure of authority and should be respected by not only those directly involved in a sporting event, but also the community at-large. Such respect is not summarily given, but rather must be earned by each individual through his/her words, demeanor, and actions. Without such respect, an official can be only marginally effective in controlling a sporting event, and will be totally ineffective in controlling its participants. An official is a professional, and as such, must conduct him/herself in a manner befitting a professional. For this reason, NAFOA has high expectations of its members, and has set commensurately high, but not unachievable, standards for member conduct. Each member of NAFOA shall:

a. Be considered and treated as a responsible adult, and therefore shall behave in a gentlemanly/lady-like manner, and conduct him/herself so as not to bring discredit upon him/herself, the Association, or any Association member.

b. Honor all commitments to the Association. Specifically, each member shall pay all Association-levied dues and fines (discussed in Article IV.E.b.1), attend all required meetings, make all game assignments, and in season, give high priority to the Association in its affairs. Any member, who cannot, for legitimate reasons, honor a commitment made to the Association, shall notify a member of the Board of Directors prior to the affectivity of that commitment.

 1. On direction of the Board of Directors, the Conduct and Ethics Committee shall review, and if necessary investigate all allegations of member misconduct and/or failure to comply with the Association’s Standards of Conduct. Following an investigation, the Conduct and Ethics Committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the Board of Directors. The Conduct and Ethics Committee shall include in the report a recommendation for punishment or fines for infractions. The Conduct and Ethics Committee may recommend any punishment or fine for an infraction. However, the following table should be used a guideline.

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| **Infraction** | **Occurrence Number** | **Punishment or Fine** |
| Late to Pre-Game w/o Notification | 1 | Memo to Official’s Personnel File |
| Late to Pre-Game w/o Notification | 2 | Written Counseling to Official |
| Late to Pre-Game w/o Notification | 3 | Fine ½ Game Fee |
| Late to Pre-Game w/o Notification | 4 | Fine Game Fee |
| Late to Pre-Game w/o Notification | 5 or More | 1 Week Suspension |
| Arriving After Game Begins | 1 | Fine ½ Game Fee |
| Arriving After Game Begins | 2 or More | Fine Game Fee |
| Missing Game | 1 or More | 1 Week Suspension |
| Improper Uniform | 1 | Memo to Official’s Personnel File |
| Improper Uniform | 2 | Written Counseling to Official |
| Improper Uniform | 3 or More | 1 Week Suspension |
| Drinking Alcohol on Game Day | 1 | 2 Week Suspension |
| Drinking Alcohol on Game Day | 2 | 1 Year Suspension |

c. Learn and apply, to the best of his/her ability, the rules and officiating mechanics of the game of football as published by NFHS, and demonstrate a commitment to continuing self-improvement in the same.

d. Fulfill, at least, all minimum requirements for football officials set forth by AHSAA.

e. Keep him/herself physically fit.

f. Own and properly wear/maintain complete football officials uniforms, as prescribed by the AHSAA and/or the Association, and shall present a neat appearance when reporting for all game assignments.

g. Not indulge in the use/abuse of illegal, illicit, or mind-altering drugs. A member for whom a qualified physician has prescribed medication which could impair his/her judgment and/or ability in a game situation, shall voluntarily disqualify him/herself from active officiating until the need for and use of that medication has ended.

h. Not consume alcoholic beverages on the same day as, and prior to a game assignment, or at any time in public while in uniform of a football official.

i. Not participate, in any manner, in activities associated with gambling on football games, at all levels up to and including high school varsity.

j. Not use profanity or act in an otherwise unsportsmanlike manner while officiating.

k. Remain unbiased and impartial at all times while officiating

l. Read, understand, and abide by the provisions of this Constitution and its By-Laws, in all manners concerning his/her interaction with the Association.

F. Membership Resignation and Dropping-From-The-Rolls. a. Resignation.

Any Member may offer his/her resignation from membership in the Association by submitting such, in writing, to the Secretary/Treasurer. Upon certification by the Secretary/Treasurer that the member has met all of his/her financial obligations to the Association, and certification by the President that no disciplinary actions are pending against the member, the Board of Directors shall accept the member’s resignation offer. The Secretary/Treasurer will thereafter record the action as a member resigning in good standing with the Association. Requests for references from such former members will be summarily honored.

b. Dropping-From-The-Rolls.

Any Member:

Who has, without prior notification to a Board Member, failed to attend any three Association business meetings in one season/year.

Or

Whose membership the Board of Directors has recommended be discontinued, will be dropped from the rolls of the Association by the Secretary/Treasurer. One week prior to such action being taken, the Secretary/Treasurer will give notice of and the reasons for the impending action to both the affected member, if contactable, and the Board of Directors, if not already a Board recommendation. The member, if he/she requests, will be granted the opportunity of a hearing before the Board prior to such action becoming final. The member may also offer his/her resignation from membership in the Association prior to such action becoming final. Members whose names are dropped-from-the-rolls will not be considered to have resigned in good standing from the Association.

Requests for references from such former members will be honored only if approved by the Board of Directors.

G. Membership Probation, Suspension, and Revocation.

Failure of any member to comply with the Association’s Standards of Conduct may result in probation, suspension, and/or revocation of that individual’s membership in the Association. The Association Conduct and Ethics Committee will review, and if necessary investigate, all allegations of member misconduct and/or failure to so comply, and render a report, to the Board of Directors, of their findings and recommendations(s) for appropriate disposition. Based on the severity and nature of the violation, the member’s past record, and the committee’s findings/recommendation(s), the Board of Directors will dispose of the case by choosing, as appropriate, to take no action or to invoke one of the following courses of action:

1. Membership Probation.

Membership probation indicates that the Board of Directors has found the member’s breech of Association standards of conduct to be non-recurring and of relatively minor severity. The member will be urged to correct, as appropriate, the misconduct which brought about the probation, and will be subject to increased Board scrutiny for a specified period of time, not to exceed 4 weeks. The member loses neither membership privileges nor game assignments while

under probation. No further Board action is required at the end of the probation period if the member’s misconduct has been corrected and there has been no recurrence of the breech.

2. Membership Suspension.

Membership suspension indicates that the Board of Directors has found the member’s breech of Association standards of conduct to be of a relatively severe and/or recurring nature. Depending on the degree of severity and/or nature of the violation, the Board may suspend any or all levels of game assignments to be allowed the individual, and/or all of the individual’s membership privileges, for a period of time not to exceed eight (8) weeks. The board may vacate any or all of an individual’s suspended privileges/assignments provided the individual can show proof of (demonstrate) correction of the misconduct which brought about the suspension. The Board will review the individual’s conduct at the end of the suspension period to determine what further action, if any, is required.

3. Membership Revocation.

Membership revocation indicates that the board of directors has found the members breach of association standards of conduct to be of a serious, damaging, often recurring, and/or irreconcilable nature. Revocation of an individual’s membership requires concurrence of

2/3 (nominally 6 members) of the Board of Directors. All game assignments for the individual will be withdrawn, and all membership privileges terminated. Notice of such membership revocations will be sent to the AHSAA for final review and disposition, unless an individual’s appeal Board of Directors of the board’s action is favorably considered by the general membership.

4. Notification, Hearings, and Appeals.

a. Any member, whose game assignments and/or membership privileges are to be put in jeopardy through Board disciplinary action, shall be notified immediately of this

fact by the Secretary/treasurer. The individual may demand a hearing before the conduct an ethics committee and/or the board of directors, as applicable, wherein he/she may confront his/her accusers and/or present evidence and/or witnesses in his/her behalf.

b. All disciplinary actions taken by the board of directors become effective immediately. Once a board decision has been made and actions taken, an individual may initiate an

appeal, in writing, to the general membership, within fifteen days of the board’s decision, to have board’s decision overturned and all probation/suspension/revocation actions vacated. If so appealed, a hearing before the general membership will be scheduled to take place no later than fifteen days following the filing of the appeal. At such a hearing, the individuals appeal shall be heard, and a vote of the voting general membership taken. A 2/3 majority of voting members is required to overturn the board’s decision/actions. An individual’s privilege of appeal to the general membership is the only membership privilege the board of directors cannot suspend/revoke.

ARTICLE V OFFICERS

The officers of the association shall be the president, the first Vice-President (evaluations), the second vice president (training), and the Secretary/treasurer. Each officer shall be elected from the regular membership for a two-year term, in the manner described in the By-Laws. The President and Secretary/Treasurer shall be elected in an even year and the two vice-presidents shall be elected in odd years. The number of consecutive terms of office to which an officer may be elected shall not be limited. The board of directors shall appoint a regular member fill, until the next election, any officer position which becomes vacant during the year. The duties of the officers are described in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE VI

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The management of the association shall be vested in a nine (9) person board of directors four of whom shall be the association officers as delineated in Article V. Five other at large board members said the elected from the regular membership for two year term in the manner described in the By-Laws the number of consecutive terms of office to which an At-Large board member may be elected shall not be limited. The Board of Directors shall appoint a Regular member to fill, until the next election, any Board position which becomes vacant during the year. The duties of the Board are as described in the By- Laws.

ARTICLE VII DUES & FEES

A. The amount to be assessed each Association member in the form of Membership Dues shall be established by the Board of Directors prior to the first Association Regular meeting of each football officiating season. The amount of these dues will be announced at the first Association Regular meeting of the season, and become payable at that time. Members are obligated to pay these dues, or to make arrangements with the Secretary/Treasurer for late payment, no later than the fourth regular meeting of the season. Failure of a member to have paid, or to have arranged to pay, his/her dues by the fourth regular meeting, can be considered a breach of Association Standards of Conduct and therefore subject to consideration of disciplinary action by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a 2/3 majority vote of a quorum of the general membership, provided notice of such proposed amendment is give in writing to the membership at least one calendar week prior to the meeting at which the amendment will be entertained. The Association By-Laws may be amended by the same procedure.