

2025-26 TSSAA Handbook

BASEBALL REGULATIONS

I. CLASSIFICATION PLANS

- A. In Division I, TSSAA schools shall be divided into four classes for baseball.
- B. In Division II, there shall be two classifications for baseball.

II. GENERAL REGULATIONS

- A. After a team has played their first game, there may not be any more practice games or scrimmages.
- B. Players that are registered with TSSAA as members of a high school baseball squad shall not participate in independent play until the season has closed. For teams not entering the tournament series, the season closes with the completion of the last scheduled game. For teams participating in the tournament series, the season closes when the team has been eliminated from the tournament series or has won the state championship. After their school term has closed, players on teams that are still in tournament series may participate as independents on amateur teams without endangering their eligibility.
- C. Pitching Policy – All TSSAA member schools are required to comply with the 2022–23 TSSAA Pitch Count Policy at every level of competition. This policy applies to all regular-season games and all tournaments without exception.

In accordance with TSSAA procedure, pitch counts must be accurately recorded during each contest and verified at the conclusion of the game. Before leaving the facility, a designated representative from each participating school must review the official pitch count record and provide a signature indicating agreement on the totals for both teams. This postgame verification process is a required safeguard to ensure accuracy, transparency, and the protection of student-athletes.

Any violation of the pitch count policy, including failure to properly document and verify pitch counts or the use of a pitcher who exceeds allowable limits, will result in forfeiture of the contest for participation of an ineligible athlete.

- D. In case it becomes necessary to postpone a regular season game after the umpires have arrived, but before any play takes place, the umpires shall be entitled to collect only half of the fee.

School officials shall be responsible for making certain that game umpires are registered. Schools failing to use registered umpires shall be subject to a \$15.00 fine for each non-registered umpire used.
- E. No explosive devices shall be allowed during regular-season or tournament games.
- F. Participation in county, conference or invitational tournaments shall count as three games. **NOTE:** Schools hosting invitational tournaments involving out-of-state teams must have the tournament sanctioned by the TSSAA Office (<https://portal.tssaa.org/common/sanctioning/>).
- G. The allowance of videotaping, filming, or streaming of regular season contests is left to the discretion of the administration of the host school (or the game administrator if there is no host school). Videotaping, filming, or streaming of postseason contests must be in accordance with the TSSAA Media Regulations and must be approved by the Tournament Director.
- H. In divisions where schools are classified into districts, a school that fails to schedule a district opponent or refuses to play a district opponent during the regular season without just cause as determined by the state office shall forfeit the contest and shall not be eligible to compete for a championship in that sport during that year. The same shall apply in divisions where schools are classified into regions.
- I. Under NFHS Rule 3-3-1f, no bench personnel may engage in unsportsmanlike conduct, including distracting chants, artificial noise, or comments directed at opponents. All coordinated chanting must stop when the pitch is imminent and during pitch delivery. Spectators near the dugout are held to the same standard, and the head coach is responsible for all bench-area behavior. Violations will result in a warning and progressive discipline up to ejection, with immediate ejection for severe conduct.

III. GAME ENDING PROCEDURES

- A. By mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the umpire-in-chief, any remaining play may be shortened at any time, or the game terminated.

2025-26 TSSAA Handbook

- B.** In regular-season play, a suspended game shall be considered as no game and may be replayed unless the coaches of both teams mutually agree to continue the game from the point of suspension. In tournament play, a suspended game shall be continued from the point of suspension.
- C.** NFHS Baseball Rule 4-2-3...If weather or darkness interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game:
- if five full innings have been played, or if the home team has scored an equal or greater number of runs in four or four and a fraction turns at bat than the visiting team has scored in five turns at bat; or
 - if play has gone beyond five full innings.

If the game is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed turns at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; except that if the home team in its half of the incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.

IV. TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS (Division I)

- A.** Tournament play shall begin at the district level provided both districts in the region have three or more teams. If this criterion is met, then each district shall determine the district winner and runner-up in any manner they choose.

It is the responsibility of each district to select a site, tournament director, and determine dates for its respective tournament. This decision shall be made or approved by the Principals and/or Athletic Directors of the schools in the district. This meeting shall be called by the district coordinator.

In selecting the site of the district tournament, consideration should be given to the facility that is in the best interest of the schools involved, the participants, and spectators.

Adequate baseball facilities may include but are not limited to:

- Ability to charge admission.
- The use of turf fields is permissible.
- Availability of tarp.
- Availability of lights.

The district champion and runner-up as determined above shall advance to the regional tournament. The odd-numbered district champion (1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15) will host the region tournament in odd-numbered years. The even-numbered district champion will host the region tournament in even-numbered years.

On Friday of NFHS Week #45, the region semifinals shall be played as follows:

- Game 1:** Odd District #1 vs. Even District #2
Game 2: Even District #1 vs. Odd District #2

On Saturday of NFHS Week #45, the following schedule shall be used:

- Game 3:** Region Championship: Game 1 Winner vs. Game 2 Winner (12:00 p.m. local time)
Game 4: Game 1 Loser vs. Game 2 Loser (3:00 p.m. local time)
Game 5: Region Runner-Up: Game 3 Loser vs. Game 4 Winner (6:00 p.m. local time)

- B.** Tournament play shall begin at the region level if one or both districts in the region have less than three teams in each district. If this criterion is met, then the teams within the region shall determine the region winner and runner-up in any manner they choose.

District coaches shall select their regional tournament site on a rotation basis. In odd-numbered years, the odd-numbered districts in baseball (1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15) shall select the regional tournament site. In even-numbered years, the even-numbered district shall select the regional tournament site.

2025-26 TSSAA Handbook

- C. In all four classes the first and second place teams in each regional tournament shall be eligible to participate in the sectional round.

The sectional round shall be as follows:

Site 1: Region 1 Champion vs. Region 2 Runner-Up
Site 2: Region 2 Champion vs. Region 1 Runner-Up
Site 3: Region 3 Champion vs. Region 4 Runner-Up
Site 4: Region 4 Champion vs. Region 3 Runner-Up
Site 5: Region 5 Champion vs. Region 6 Runner-Up
Site 6: Region 6 Champion vs. Region 5 Runner-Up
Site 7: Region 7 Champion vs. Region 8 Runner-Up
Site 8: Region 8 Champion vs. Region 7 Runner-Up

- D. The Executive Director of TSSAA shall set the sectional sites in the area of the regional winner. In order to obtain adequate facilities, the games may be set at the regional winner's field. The sectional round is a best-of-three series to be played Wednesday through Saturday following the completion of the region tournament.
- E. The eight winners of the sectional round shall advance to the central tournament site. The tournament will consist of two pools of four teams that will play a double elimination tournament within each pool. The winner of each pool will then play a single game for the state championship. The draw shall be made so that if two teams from the same region reach the central tournament site, they will be drawn to opposite brackets. The draw shall be made by the Board of Control.
- F. If the host school's facilities are not acceptable for a play-off game, then it shall be the responsibility of the host school to secure adequate facilities. Facilities other than home facilities must be approved by the state office.
- G. The principal of the host school shall be the Game Director provided the game is played at his or her field. If additional facilities are secured other than those of the host team, the Game Director must be approved by the TSSAA state office. It shall be the duty of the Game Director to handle all financial arrangements for the game and to make a financial report to the state office and participating teams.
- H. When the established starting time of a playoff contest between two schools conflicts with the previously scheduled Commencement Exercises of one of the schools, and that school has Senior roster player(s), then at the request of the affected school, the contest will be rescheduled for a mutually agreed upon time and site that falls within the playoff timeline established by TSSAA. In the event the two schools do not agree on a rescheduled time and site, the TSSAA office will designate a starting game time and site.

This applies to regional semifinals, regional finals, and sectional contests only.

V. TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS (Division II: Class A and Class AA)

- A. In Class A, if a district tournament is played, it is the responsibility of each district to select a site and tournament director and determine dates for its respective tournament. This decision shall be made or approved by the Principals and/or Athletic Directors of the schools in the district. This meeting shall be called by the district coordinator.

In selecting the site of the district tournament, consideration should be given to the facility that is in the best interest of the schools involved, the participants, and spectators.

Adequate baseball facilities may include but are not limited to:

1. Ability to charge admission.
2. The use of turf fields is permitted.
3. Availability of tarp.
4. Availability of lights.

- B. In Class A, it is the responsibility of each region to select a site and tournament director and determine dates for its respective tournament. This decision shall be made or approved by the Principals and/or Athletic Directors of the schools in the region. This meeting shall be called by the region coordinator.

In selecting the site of the region tournament, consideration should be given to the facility that is in the best interest of the schools involved, the participants, and spectators.

2025-26 TSSAA Handbook

Adequate baseball facilities may include but are not limited to:

1. Ability to charge admission.
2. The use of turf fields is permitted.
3. Availability of tarp.
4. Availability of lights.

C. In Class A, the top four teams from the East Region, the top four teams from the Middle Region, and the top four teams from the West Region shall qualify for the first round. The First Round sites shall be as follows.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Site 1:	#3 East @ #2 Middle	#4 Middle @ #2 East	#4 Middle @ #3 West	#3 East @ #2 Middle
Site 2:	#4 Middle @ #2 West	#4 East vs. #3 West (H)	#3 East vs. #2 West (H)	#4 Middle @ #2 West
Site 3:	#4 East vs. #3 West (H)	#4 West @ #2 Middle	#4 West vs. #2 East (H)	#4 East vs. #3 West (H)
Site 4	#3 Middle @ #4 West	#3 Middle @ #3 East	#3 Middle @ #4 East	#3 Middle @ #4 West

In 2025-26, #1 Middle will host the #4 East vs. #3 West First Round game. The participating teams have the option of finding and playing at a mutually agreed upon neutral site.

In 2026-27, #1 Middle will host the #4 East vs. #3 West First Round game. The participating teams have the option of finding and playing at a mutually agreed upon neutral site.

In 2027-28, #1 Middle will host the #4 West vs. #2 East First Round game and #2 Middle will host the #3 East vs. #2 West game. The participating teams have the option of finding and playing at a mutually agreed upon neutral site.

In 2028-29, #1 Middle will host the #4 East vs. #3 West First Round Game. The participating teams have the option of finding and playing at a mutually agreed upon neutral site.

The Quarterfinal Round sites shall be as follows:

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Site 1:	FR Site 1 Winner @ #1 West	FR Site 1 W @ #2 W	FR Site 1 W @ #1 E	FR Site 1 W @ #1 W
Site 2:	FR Site 2 Winner @ #2 East	FR Site 2 W @ #1 M	FR Site 2 W @ #2 M	FR Site 2 W @ #2 E
Site 3:	FR Site 3 Winner @ #1 Middle	FR Site 3 W @ #1 E	FR Site 3 W @ #1 M	FR Site 3 W @ #1 M
Site 4:	FR Site 4 Winner @ #1 East	FR Site 4 W @ #1 W	FR Site 4 W @ #1 W	FR Site 4 W @ #1 E

The Executive Director has the authority to select another site if the host's facilities are not adequate to host the games.

The winners of the quarterfinal round games shall advance to the central tournament site.

The State Tournament shall be a four team double elimination tournament. If all three #1 Seeds advance to the central tournament site, the first matches of the state tournament shall be as follows:

Semifinals: Quarterfinal Site 1 Winner vs. Quarterfinal Site 2 Winner
Semifinals: Quarterfinal Site 3 Winner vs. Quarterfinal Site 4 Winner

If all three #1 Seeds do not advance to the central tournament site, the bracket shall be set by the Executive Director upon completion of the quarterfinal round matches.

D. In Class AA, there will be an East Region, Middle, and West Region. The twelve teams that qualify for the post-season tournament shall be as follows: the top four teams from the East Region, the top five teams from the Middle Region, and the top three teams from the West Region. Seeding will be based on regular season records. The First Round sites shall be as follows:

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Site 1:	#4 Middle @ #3 East	#4 East @ #2 Middle	#5 Middle @ #2 East	#4 Middle @ #3 East
Site 2:	#5 Middle @ #2 West	#3 East @ #3 Middle	#3 West @ #3 East	#5 Middle @ #2 West
Site 3:	#4 East @ #3 Middle	#5 Middle @ #3 West	#4 East @ #3 Middle	#4 East @ #3 Middle
Site 4	#3 West @ #2 East	#4 Middle @ #2 West	#4 Middle @ #2 West	#3 West @ #2 East

2025-26 TSSAA Handbook

The Quarterfinal Round sites shall be as follows:

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Site 1:	FR Site 1 W @ #1 M	FR Site 1 W @ #1 E	FR Site 1 W @ #1 W	FR Site 1 W @ #1 M
Site 2:	FR Site 2 W @ #1 E	FR Site 2 W @ #2 W	FR Site 2 W @ #1 M	FR Site 2 W @ #1 E
Site 3:	FR Site 3 W @ #1 W	FR Site 3 W @ #1M	FR Site 3 W @ #1 E	FR Site 3 W @ #1 W
Site 4:	FR Site 4 W @ #2 M	FR Site 4 W @ #2 E	FR Site 4 W @ #2 M	FR Site 4 W @ #2 M

The Executive Director has the authority to select another site if the host's facilities are not adequate to host the game.

The winners of the quarterfinal round games shall advance to the central tournament site for a four team double elimination tournament. The first games of the state tournament shall be as follows:

Semifinals: Quarterfinal Site 1 Winner vs. Quarterfinal Site 2 Winner

Semifinals: Quarterfinal Site 3 Winner vs. Quarterfinal Site 4 Winner

- E. When the established starting time of a playoff contest between two schools conflicts with the previously scheduled Commencement Exercises of one of the schools, and that school has Senior roster player(s), then at the request of the affected school, the contest will be rescheduled for a mutually agreed upon time and site that falls within the playoff timeline established by TSSAA. In the event the two schools do not agree on a rescheduled time and site, the TSSAA Office will designate a starting game time and site. This applies to region tournament games and the quarterfinal round of the State Tournament.

V. TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS

- A. In the Division I and Division II district tournaments, the coaches of the schools in the tournament shall select an umpire association recognized by TSSAA to work the tournament. The entire group must have an opportunity to vote on the association to be used.
- B. In Division I regional and sectional games, umpires shall be provided by the local association that services the host school.
- C. In Division II regional, first round, and quarterfinal games, umpires shall be provided by the local association that services the host school.
- D. In the Division I and Division II state tournaments, the umpires shall be assigned by the state office.