



**Idaho High School Activities
Association
2026
Softball Officials Packet**

unbottled.

2026 Softball

Classification — based on grades 9-12

6A	1,400 and over	3A	349-175
5A	1,399-700	2A	174 and under
4A	699-350		

2026 Softball Season

First day of practice	February 27
First game	March 11
District completion date	May 9
State Play-ins	May 9
State Tournament	May 14-16

*All teams will be required to enter rosters, schedules and scores on MaxPreps.

Game Limitations for Each Team

A team is limited to 22 games or 20 games plus one tournament, not to exceed 24 games. If a school loses a scheduled tournament game or a school is unable to attend a tournament due to reasons beyond their control, the school can reschedule lost games.

Game Limitations for Individuals

During the regular season, athletes are permitted to play in no more than 154 innings in a 22 game schedule, or 168 in a 24 game schedule. For a game in which the score is tied at the end of seven innings, the extra innings shall be considered as an extension of the seventh inning. A contestant who exceeds the limitations of regular season participation will become ineligible for district, state or any other additional IHSAA sponsored competition of that sport.

Rules

All Idaho contests will be played under National Federation (NFHS) Softball Rules. Rules books and case books will be distributed to school representatives at the district rules clinics.

Idaho Rules Modifications

NFHS rules shall be followed, except as modified by the IHSAA Board of Directors. IHSAA modifications:

1. **Length of game:** All varsity games shall be seven innings with the exception of the 10-run rule. A game shall end any time after the fifth inning when a team is 10 or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat. This rule is in effect for all games at the state tournament. During the regular season, games may also be terminated by mutual agreement of both coaches prior to the start of the contest and acknowledged by the umpire-in-chief under the following conditions:
 - a. When a team is ahead by 15 runs after three innings of play.
 - b. When a game exceeds the time limit of 1 ½ hours.
2. **Called game:** If weather or darkness causes a tied game to be called, such game shall be considered a suspended game and shall be continued from the point of suspension at a later time.
 - a. If a game is called before five full innings have been played and the score is not tied, such game shall also be considered a suspended game, unless the home team has scored a 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, in which case it is a regulation game.
3. **Baseline:** The baseline shall be 60 feet.
4. **Ball:** A 12" ball shall be used. The yellow optic ball may be used for league play and district tournaments, and the official

ball – **Baden 2BSFPY Perfection** – will be used at all play-in and state tournament competition.

5. **Tie-Break procedure:** Each half-inning begins by placing a runner on second base. That runner is the player in the batting order who precedes the lead-off batter in the inning. The game then proceeds a full inning or until a winner is determined in that inning. This procedure shall start at the beginning of the eighth inning or at the game time limit previously agreed upon by both coaches.
6. **Double First Base:** Idaho permits the use of a double first base in all levels of play and when in use, will be governed by NFHS rules.

Umpires

IHSAA certified umpires must be used for all interscholastic contests. Two umpires should be used at all games.

2026 State Tournament

Dates:	May	14-16
Sites:	6A	Coeur d'Alene HS/Lake City HS
	5A	Post Falls HS
	4A	Filer HS
	3A	Timberlake HS/Lakeland HS (Kellogg HS host)
	2A	Genesee HS

Number of Participants

At play-in and state tournament games, a maximum of seventeen players may be in uniform at the start of the contest. Violation of this rule will result in the school being assessed a maximum fine for dressing more than the approved number of players at a state play-in or tournament game with forfeiture of the game if excess numbers play. All classifications will be allowed four coaches and three support personnel to be admitted without an IHSAA card or tournament pass. Any coaches or support personnel exceeding that number must have either an IHSAA card or purchase a tournament pass.

Determining Home Team

At state play-in games, the home team shall be determined by the flip of a coin. At the state tournament, the highest seeded team shall be the home team (with exceptions for Game #15 if necessary). The home team dugout shall be determined by the site manager.

Home Run Fence

When state fast pitch tournaments are held at fields that do not meet NFHS standard distance for the home run fence, a fence shall be installed at 210', if possible.

Inclement Weather Procedure for State

In the event the state tournament cannot take place in its scheduled format, the following procedure will be used:

1. All modifications will be handled in accordance with IHSAA Rule 20.
2. All games will use Idaho Rules Modifications 1a and 1b.
3. Alternate sites, if available, must be within reasonable distance to the original site so as not to incur additional travel/lodging costs for teams that have traveled.
4. Games will be shortened to 5 innings until the original game schedule can be resumed.
5. All games on the consolation side of the bracket will be cancelled. Championship semifinal games will be 5 innings.
6. The length of championship games will be determined by the host site manager and the IHSAA.
7. If more than 4 teams remain in the tournament, and it is not possible to get the games in, the tournament may be cancelled.

NOTE: It is very possible that not all classifications will make the same decisions at each step of the protocol above.

2026 Softball Representation

6A		5A		4A			
I	1.5	I-II	1	I	.5		
III	4.5	III	2	III	2.5		
V-VI	2	IV	2	IV	1.5		
		V	1	V	2		
		VI	2	VI	1.5		
3A		2A					
I-II	2	II	2*				
III	2	III-IV	2*	*plus next two best MaxPreps seeds			
IV-V	1.5						
VI	2.5						

State Play-ins

6A Play-in
1B McCall-Donnelly HS
3E 1:00 p.m. (MT)
Sat., May 9

4A Play-in
1A Moscow HS
3C 1:00 p.m. (PT)
Sat., May 9

4A Play-in
4B Blackfoot HS
6B 1:00 p.m.
Sat., May 9

3A Play-in
4-5B Blackfoot HS
6C 1:00 p.m.
Sat., May 9

2026 Bracketing
Qualifying teams will be seeded into the state bracket according to the final rankings through and including all regular season and district tournament games. The high seed is considered the home team for all games in the tournament (with exceptions for Game #15 if necessary).

6A-3A:

#1 Seed
#8 Seed

#4 Seed
#5 Seed

#3 Seed
#6 Seed

#2 Seed
#7 Seed

2A:

#1 Seed
(first round bye) #4 Seed
#5 Seed

#2 Seed
(first round bye) #3 Seed
#6 Seed

Softball Rules Changes - 2026

Wed Jul 09 2025

1-9-6: No player shall transmit or record audio or video from the playing surface. New language further clarifies the use of electronic devices and what is not permitted.

Rationale: This change clearly defines the types of electronic devices prohibited by the rule.

Rule 8: Rule 8 has been reformatted for clarity. Changes have separated longer articles, and organized exceptions, penalties, and effects into outline format for improved comprehension.

Rationale: Added article references to PENALTIES and EFFECTS, and Section 4 was separated into two sections addressing runners entitled to advance with and without liability to be put out to delineate differences.

10-4-2: Umpires have the option of wearing heather gray, charcoal gray, or navy blue slacks. Effective January 1, 2027, heather gray slacks will no longer be permitted as part of the umpire's uniform.

Rationale: Manufacturers have discontinued producing heather gray umpire pants. This change will assist umpires in the purchase of pants that are currently being manufactured.

2026 SOFTBALL EDITORIAL CHANGES

1-6, 2-25-3, 3-2-3a &b, 4-3-2, 7-1-1, 7-2-2, 8-2-4 EXCEPTION, 8-2-12 PENALTY 2, 8-5-2 PENALTIES 1 & 2, 8-7-14 PENALTY 2, 8-7-16 PENALTY 2, 8-9-15c, 8-9-15 PENALTIES

2026 SOFTBALL POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Obstruction
2. Maintaining an Unobstructed View



Required Concussion Course

Online Instructions

Idaho Concussion Training: When In Doubt – Sit Them Out

- ✓ Go to the IHSAA website - www.idhsaa.org
- ✓ Click on **OFFICIALS** on the tab
- ✓ Select **Concussion Course**
- ✓ Enter required information
- ✓ Click **BEGIN CERTIFICATION**
- ✓ Take the 15 question **Pre-Test**
- ✓ Watch the 20-minute **Training Video**
- ✓ Take the 15 question **Post-Test**
- ✓ Once passed, click **Congratulations! Redeem Your Certificate**
- ✓ **PRINT or DOWNLOAD** the Certificate of Completion

YOU MUST

submit your Certificate of Completion
to your district commissioner / interpreter.



Required Sudden Cardiac Arrest Course

Online Instructions

Follow these instructions to access the free,

NFHS Online Sudden Cardiac Arrest Course

- ✓ Go to the IHSAA website - www.idhsaa.org
- ✓ Click on the **OFFICIALS** tab
- ✓ Select **SCA COURSE**
- ✓ Select state and click on **ORDER COURSE**
- ✓ Fill in required information to sign-in or create account
- ✓ Follow instructions to start course
- ✓ At the conclusion of the course, **PRINT / SAVE CERTIFICATE.**

YOU MUST

Submit your Certificate of Completion to your district commissioner or interpreter.



If experiencing technical difficulties, contact the

Help Desk at **(317) 565-2023**



Completing an Ejection Report in Dragonfly

1. In the “Assignments” screen, select the game where your ejection report took place.
2. At the bottom of the page, select the “Add Document”, “IHSAA Ejection Report”

A screenshot of the Dragonfly software interface. The top section has two rows: "Officials" with "No Officials found" and "Workers" with "No Workers found". Below this is a "Key People" section featuring a profile icon and the name "Clint Sanders" with his title "Athletic Director | ID Test School 1" and email "clint.idtest1@dragonflyathletics.com". The bottom section is titled "Game Documents" and contains an "Add Document" button. A dropdown menu is open from this button, showing three options: "IHSAA Ejection Report", "Incident Report", and "Yellow Card Report". To the right of the dropdown, the text "0 game documents to show." is visible.

3. Complete all fields (all required). **Be aware that once you have submitted, it cannot be edited. It will also be viewable to all ADs and Commissioners at that time.**

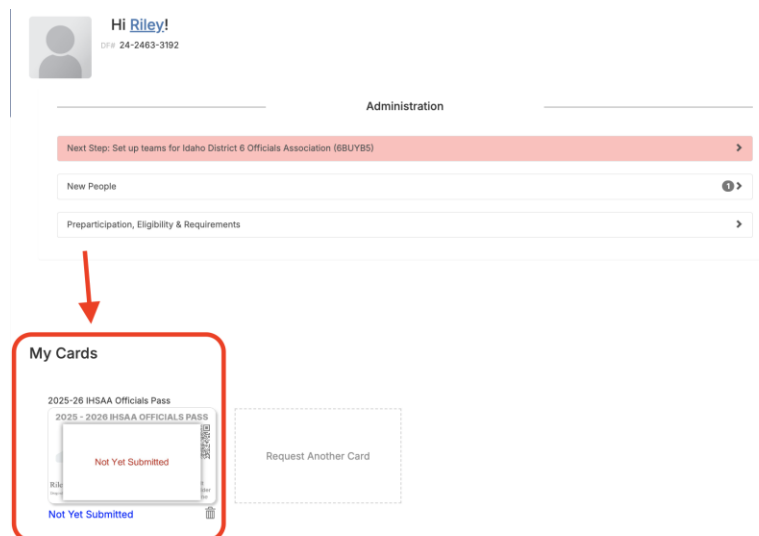
Please ensure when completing the report please do the following:

- **Use language from the rule book in your sport that constitutes an ejection.**
- Be clear and concise and only report information relevant to the ejection.
- Do not include editorial comments or opinions, just facts.
- If the ejection is for language, please use the language that the player/coach used without paraphrasing or characters to replace letters.



Applying for a IHSAA Officials Pass in Dragonfly

1. Before the pass will show up as an option for you to apply for, you must first register with IHSAA as an official in one sport + pay the \$35 fee for the pass.
2. Once the above is completed, you will be able to apply for the pass. To begin this process, on your “Today” page, you will see the following under “My Cards”, select the “2025-26 IHSAA Officials Pass”:



3. Complete the questions in part 1 (much of which will be auto-filled using your information already in Dragonfly).
4. Upload a headshot or use your Dragonfly photo ensuring it meets all the requirements listed.
5. You will then be able to submit your request for the card. Cards will be reviewed at least once a week. Once your card is approved, you will receive a email.
6. To retrieve your card in the app, select “Cards” in the bottom right corner of the “Officials” app. This will what you use to gain access for yourself and one guest to contests. There will be no paper/ laminated cards printed.



ATHLETIC OFFICIALS CODE OF ETHICS

Believing that mine is an important part in the nationwide school athletic program, I pledge to act in accordance with these principles:

- I will honor contracts regardless of possible inconvenience or financial loss
- I will study the rules of the game, observe the work of other officials and will, at all times, attempt to improve myself and the game
- I will conduct myself in such a manner that attention is drawn not to me, but to the young people playing the game
- I will maintain my appearance in a manner benefiting the dignity and importance of the game
- I will cooperate with the news media in the interpretation and clarification of rules and/or other areas related to good sportsmanship but I will not make statements concerning "calls" after a game
- I will uphold and abide by all rules of the IHSAA and the National Federation (NFHS)
- I will shape my character and conduct so as to be a worthy example to the young people who play under my jurisdiction
- I will give my complete cooperation to the school that I serve and to the IHSAA which I represent
- I will cooperate and be professional in my association with coaches and other officials and will do nothing to cause them public embarrassment
- I will keep in mind that the game is more important than the wishes of any individual



GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING CONTESTS DURING **LIGHTNING DISTURBANCES**

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a default policy to those responsible for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of contests based on the presence of lightning.

Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during events.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby shelters.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - a. When thunder is heard, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play and take shelter immediately.
 - b. Thirty-minute rule: Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
 - c. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
4. Hold periodic reviews for appropriate personnel.

For more detailed information, refer to the *Guidelines for Lightning Safety* section contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook www.nfhs.org.