

# **GULF COAST FOOTBALL OFFICIALS** **CONSTITUTION**

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**Revised 2010**

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME**

This organization shall have as its official name the Gulf Coast Football Officials' Association, hereinafter referred to as "GCFOA".

**ARTICLE II**

**OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the GCFOA shall be to:

- A. Provide the area served by GCFOA with the highest quality of football officiating.
- B. Foster and enforce the highest standard of ethics among the members of GCFOA.
- C. Achieve uniformity and excellence in the interpretation and administration of football rules.
- D. Promote and enforce the highest principles of honesty, sportsmanship, and fair play in the game of football.
- E. Cooperate with the Florida High School Activities Association in all endeavors that will best serve the interests of football at all levels supervised by the FHSAA.

**ARTICLE III**

**MEMBERSHIP**

- A. Prospective new members of GCFOA may qualify for admission to the organization upon the following conditions:
  - 1. Membership dues, which shall be determined annually by the Executive Board of GCFOA, must be paid each year by a member before he/she will be assigned to a game for which the official would receive a fee.
  - 2. The individual must be duly registered with the FHSAA and present proof of such registration to the Secretary of GCFOA.
- B. Once the conditions set forth in Section A of this article have been met, the individual shall be admitted to active membership in GCFOA with the same duties and rights as other members.
- C. Inactive membership in GCFOA may be maintained by a member who petitions for, and is granted by the Executive Board, a leave of absence for a period of one year. Payment of dues will make the individual a voting member.

- D. Membership in GCFOA shall be based on qualifications previously stated herein and in no way shall factors of race, creed, color, national origin, or sex be considered in such qualification.

#### **ARTICLE IV**

##### **DUTIES OF THE MEMBERSHIP**

- A. All members of GCFOA are expected to become familiar with and observe this Constitution, and to keep it and all amendments to it as part of their personal records.
- B. Each member of GCFOA is expected to adhere to the cardinal principles of officiating as set forth in the FHSAA Official's Handbook as well as in the following list:
1. Know the rules and administer them impartially, without fear or favor to anyone.
  2. Be on time to game assignments. For tardiness, the Executive Board may assess proper fine, which the individual may appeal to the Grievance Committee.
  3. Wear the proper game uniform and accessories. Maintain a neat appearance, including wearing a net and clean uniform, having a conservative haircut, and being clean-shaven. (A neatly trimmed moustache is permissible.)
  4. Be in good physical and mental condition for a game assignment and refrain from consuming any alcoholic beverages or impairing drugs prior to or during a game to which assigned.
  5. Do not solicit games from coaches or other school officials in position to influence the assignment of games.
  6. Do not fraternize with coaches, players, or spectators prior to or during a game. Officials may converse with coaches to impart necessary information within the context of the rules.
  7. Do not give information, which a team may use against an opponent.
  8. Maintain a professional relationship with fellow officials in the presence of coaches, players, and spectators.
  9. Adhere to all policies as set forth by the Executive Board and approved by the active membership.
  10. Shall assist the GCFOA Board and the Education/Training/Recruitment Committee in the active recruitment of new members and minorities.

**VIOLATION OF ANY OF THE FOREGOING MAY CONSTITUTE IMPROPER CONDUCT AND  
SUBJECT A MEMBER TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

- C. Every member of GCFOA is required to attend all pre-test meeting as set forth by the Executive Board. Failure to meet this requirement shall result in a \$5.00 fine per meeting missed unless excused by the Executive Board for unusual circumstances.
- D. Subsequent to the FHSAA football examination, a member may not use his excused absences equal to his/her FHSAA ranking. Failure to meet this requirement shall result in a \$5.00 fine per meeting missed.
- E. Each member who officiates games assigned by GCFOA does so as an INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR, AND NOT AS AN EMPLOYEE OF GCFOA OR THE SCHOOLS INVOLVED.
- F. Any member who fails to fulfill a confirmed assignment will be fined the amount of his/her game fee(s) for the game(s) assigned. A second missed assignment may bring about disciplinary action from the Executive Board. An official may cancel games as set forth by the current Commissioner's policy. After that time, a cancellation shall result in a \$5.00 administration fine. The Executive Board, at its discretion, may excuse failure to fulfill a game assignment upon presentation of a written petition setting forth just cause for the failure.

## ARTICLE V

### OFFICERS

- A. The Executive Board, also known as officers, has the dual responsibility of insuring, in so far as its practical, the assignment of the best qualified officials available for each game, and that each official has the opportunity to improve his/her proficiency and state ranking.
- B. The elected officers of GCFOA, who shall be members of the Executive Board as hereinafter provided, shall be:
  - 1. President
  - 2. Vice-President
  - 3. Secretary
  - 4. Treasurer
  - 5. Commissioner
- C. The term of office shall be two years, with the President and Secretary being elected in that order in the even years, and the Commissioner, Vice-President, and Treasurer in that order in odd years.
- D. To be eligible for any office, a member must hold an FHSAA football ranking of "2" or higher at the time of the election.
- E. There shall be no limitations on the number of terms an officer may serve.
- F. The Commissioner and Treasurer shall be paid an annual salary established by the Executive Board, subject to approval by the active membership. All officers shall be

reimbursed or pre-paid for legitimate expenses incurred on behalf of GCFOA, upon approval of the Executive Board.

- G. An officer of GCFOA may be removed from office under the following conditions:
1. A written petition for removal of an office shall be filed with the Secretary by any member or group of members of GCFOA alleging improper conduct, malfeasance, misfeasance, dishonesty, gross neglect of duty, or gross incompetence in connection with the performance of the officer's duties.
  2. The Executive Board shall conduct a due process hearing on the petition. The Executive Board, by a majority vote, shall make a written recommendation to the membership of GCFOA as to whether the removal shall be upheld or denied with the reasons set forth. At the next meeting of GCFOA at which there is a special quorum of two-thirds of the active membership present, a three-fourths vote of the active members present will effectuate the Executive Board's recommendation to remove, or, by the same vote, will override the Board's recommendations to deny the petition, thus resulting in the removal of said officer.
- H. The Executive Board will appoint all committees of the GCFOA as set forth in FHSAA Officials handbooks, as well as additional committees when deemed necessary with majority rule.

**Committees and their Responsibilities:**

1. **EVALUATION COMMITTEE:** The evaluation committee is responsible for setting up the process and selecting those individuals who will assist with the evaluation of member officials within the local association. Each official with two or more years experience should be evaluated at least once during the season. First year officials should be evaluated periodically throughout the season.
2. **ASSIGNMENT COMMITTEE:** The assignment committee is responsible for overseeing the entire contest assignment procedure within the local officials associations. This includes ensuring compliance with requirements on the composition of officiating crews, reviewing and approving each member official's schedule of assigned contests, and making the assigning officer aware of any corrections that need to be made before the assignment schedule is submitted to the membership. It is not implied that the assignment committee is to make the assignments.
3. **RECOMMENDATIONS COMMITTEE:** The recommendations committee is responsible for reviewing the evaluations of each member official during the regular season. This committee is also responsible for preparing and submitting to the FHSAA Office a list of member officials who deserve consideration for assignment to the STATE SERIES contests. The assignment officer should act on the recommendations of this committee.

4. **GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE:** The grievance committee is responsible for hearing complaints and appeals made or brought by one or more of its member officials. Member officials who have grievances because of penalties may appeal under the provision of the local officials associations' Constitution and By-Laws.
  
5. **EDUCATION/TRAINING/RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE:** The Education/Training/Recruitment Committee is responsible for the planning, content and implementation of training sessions, including on-the-field (court) training. This also includes educating local officials on FHSAA policies and procedures, NFHS rules and mechanics, and developing a curriculum that is current and effective in both content and methodology. Additionally the committee will be responsible to recruit new members and minorities.

## ARTICLE VI

### DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- A. The duties of the President shall be:
  1. To preside at all meetings of GCFOA and the Executive Board.
  2. To call such special meetings of GCFOA or the Executive Board as he/she shall deem necessary.
  3. To appoint committees of the GCFOA as set forth in the FHSAA Officials' Handbook, as well as additional committees when deemed necessary.
  4. To represent GCFOA in all dealings with the outside agencies or persons, except for those powers specifically delegated to the Commissioner.
  5. To assist the Commissioner, upon request, in dealing with outside agencies or persons.
  6. To conduct, with outside agencies or persons, such correspondence that is in the best interests of GCFOA, or to assign same to the Secretary.
  7. To assign a Rules Interpreter(s).
  8. To perform such other duties as are provided, or shall be provided, elsewhere in this Constitution.
  
- B. The duties of the Vice-President shall be:
  1. To preside at meetings of GCFOA and the Executive Board in the absence of the President.
  2. To be in charge of training, and to supervise the pre-season clinics.

3. To perform the functions of the office of President, as set forth in Section A of this Article, whenever the President is unable to do so.
  4. To perform the duties of the office of Commissioner, as set forth in Section E of this Article, whenever the Commissioner is unable to do so. The Vice-President is to be compensated proportionately for the time the Commissioner's duties are performed.
  5. To perform such other duties as are provided, or shall be provided, elsewhere in this Constitution.
- C. The duties of the Secretary shall be:
1. To preside at the meetings of GCFOA and the Executive Board in the absence of both the President and Vice-President.
  2. To maintain official records of GCFOA, including copies of the Constitution and amendments thereto.
  3. To give notice to all regular and special meetings of GCFOA.
  4. To record and keep minutes of all meetings of GCFOA and the Executive Board, and to present same for appropriate approval.
  5. To correspond with the members of GCFOA, and outside agencies and persons, as directed by the President.
  6. To keep an accurate attendance record for all meetings and clinics.
  7. To perform such other duties as are provided, or shall be provided, elsewhere in this Constitution.
- D. The duties of the Treasurer shall be:
1. To preside at the meetings of GCFOA in the absence of the President, Vice-President, and Secretary.
  2. To collect all dues, fines, and other monies due GCFOA.
  3. To deposit all monies of GCFOA in a bank account as directed by the Executive Board.
  4. To keep faithfully a true record of all financial transactions of GCFOA and to report same as required by the Executive Board.
  5. To present a report of GCFOA's financial condition at each regular meeting.
  6. To pay all obligations of GCFOA as directed by the Executive Board.

7. To provide, at the first regular meeting of the season, a complete financial statement for the previous season, including the beginning and ending balances, and all income and expenditures.
  8. To perform such other duties as are provided, or shall be provide, elsewhere in this Constitution.
- E. The duties of the Commissioner shall be:
1. To preside at meetings of GCFOA in the absence of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
  2. To assign all games contracted by the GCFOA.
  3. To develop a schedule of game assignments that will be as fair and equitable as humanly possible, not only to the members of GCFOA, but also to the coaches and players of schools served by GCFOA.
  4. To cooperate with the FHSAA Commissioner and his duly authorized representatives in assigning officials to post-season tournaments, and to give said Commissioner/representative, upon request, unbiased information concerning the capabilities of GCFOA officials for post-season games.
  5. To assist the Executive Board in negotiations with coaches and other school officials on matters concerning game fees, scheduling of games, contracts, scratch lists, and other appropriate issues.
  6. To perform such other duties as are provided, or shall be provided, elsewhere in this Constitution.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **MEETINGS**

- A. All meetings of GCFOA shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, except when such rules conflict with specific provisions of this Constitution. A copy of Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall be held in the custody of the Vice-President and shall be available at each meeting.
- B. Except as provided elsewhere in this Constitution, the members present shall constitute a quorum, with a majority vote of the active members present being required to pass a motion.
- C. The order of business meetings of GCFOA shall be as follows, except that in the pre-test rules meetings as provided hereinafter, rules study shall be the first order of business and roll call shall be the last order:

1. Roll call
2. Reading of the minutes
3. Report of the Treasurer
4. Report of the Executive Board
5. Report of the committees
6. Old business
7. New business
8. Game reviews
9. Rule study
10. Report of the Commissioner
11. Adjournment

A MEMBER MUST BE IN ATTENDANCE FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE MEETING TO RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THAT MEETING. CREDIT FOR ATTENDANCE SHALL ALSO BE GIVEN IF A MEMBER IS OFFICIATING A GAME ASSIGNED BY GCFOA. AN EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER MUST BE NOTIFIED IN ADVANCE AND THE REASON APPROVED BY THE BOARD, IN ORDER FOR ANY OTHER ABSENCE TO BE EXCUSED.

- D. The annual organizational meeting of GCFOA will be held at a date, time, and site to be determined by the Executive Board.
- E. The President is authorized to call a special meeting of GCFOA when he/she determines it to be advisable. Notice of such a meeting shall be given to all members at least ten days in advance by the Secretary.
- F. Voting by proxy shall not be allowed at any meeting of GCFOA.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

- A. Officers of GCFOA shall be elected at the annual election meeting. Nominations for all offices shall occur at the next to last regular season meeting. Nominations shall close at that time and may not be reopened, except that they may be reopened at the election meeting if, due to withdrawals, there is no nominee for a particular office. Vacancies in an office shall be filled as provided in Section E of this Article. All officers shall be elected individually by a majority of the total of the active members present plus the valid absentee ballots.
- B. The date for this election shall be the last regularly scheduled meeting of the year. The officers shall assume their respective duties on the day following the Boys' High School State Finals.
- C. There shall be a minimum ten-day written notice of the election, said notice to be given by the Secretary stating the date, time, and site for the election, as well as the nominees.

- D. The procedure shall be:
1. The Secretary shall prepare separate ballots for each office.
  2. The vote shall be by secret ballot.
  3. If no candidate for a specific office receives a simple majority on the first ballot, there shall be a run-off election between the two top finishers. The voting shall then continue until one candidate receives a simple majority of the votes cast.
  4. An active member may vote by absentee ballot for all offices if he/she cannot attend the election meeting. To exercise an absentee ballot for officers of GCFOA in the annual election, such member shall obtain a copy of the official ballot from the Secretary. Said ballot shall then be sealed in an envelope, returned personally to the Secretary, and kept sealed in his/her custody until the election, at which time the envelope shall be opened and the absentee ballot counted with the ballots of those present at the meeting. The absentee ballot may be counted in a run-off election only if the ballot names one of the remaining candidates.
- E. In the event of a vacancy on the Executive Board, the President shall notify the members of the vacancy at the next meeting. An election shall be held at the following regular meeting, with nominations to be made from the floor. If the vacancy is in the office of President, the notification shall be made by the Vice-President.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- A. An amendment to the Constitution may be proposed by any member or group of members of GCFOA.
- B. A proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be submitted in clearly legible writing to the Secretary of GCFOA at any duly called meeting of the GCFOA.
- C. A proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be read to the membership when submitted.
- D. A proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be voted on at the next meeting held not less than 14 days after such amendment is first read to the membership.
- E. No proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be adopted except by a two-thirds vote of the active members present at a duly called meeting of GCFOA. For this purpose, a quorum shall be a majority of the active membership.

**ARTICLE X**

**THE FHSAA**

- A. The Florida High School Activities Association is hereby recognized as the governing body for all officials in the state of Florida, including those in GCFOA.
- B. GCFOA shall follow all state guidelines handed down by the FHSAA Executive Board and the FHSAA Commissioner.