Frequently Asked Questions—Officiating High School Basketball

Updated January 2010

Question: I want to become a certified official. How do I accomplish that?

Answer: Go to www.chsaa.org. This is the Colorado High School Activities Association, which oversees high school athletics in the state of Colorado. Click on officials and basketball. Once there, click on "How do I become an official?"

To become a certified high-school official in Colorado, **you must:**

-pass an IAABO exam. IAABO stands for International Association of Approved Basketball Officials. All certified officials in Colorado are members of this association. IABBO is in fact a national and international organization. Underneath the umbrella of IAABO, the whole state of Colorado is represented by a board, *Board 4*. The state of Colorado, then, is sub-divided into 18 areas. The Denver-metro area is considered Area 8.

The IAABO exam is traditionally given the first week of November. To become a fully certified official, each person must pass the 50-question, true-or-false exam with an 86 percent. To assist each person in passing this exam, classes are offered annually. Classes are held weekly for 10 weeks, covering each of the 10 major rules in basketball. Classes usually begin near the end of August and are held on a weeknight so that traditionally-employed people may attend. While these classes are not required, there appears to be a direct correlation with attendance and exam scores. Generally speaking, those who do not attend the classes do not pass the exam.

-Answer questions. At some point in the process of becoming an official, you will be asked and will need to answer the following questions**:**

1) Have you ever been convicted of a felony and/or misdemeanor other than traffic offenses? If you answer "Yes," a full explanation must be sent to trobinson@chsaa.org. with the following items: (A) Documents delineating final disposition attached to the email or faxed to 303-367-4101, attention Tom Robinson; (B) The date this information was first reported to CHSAA.
2) Have you ever had a teaching license revoked for any reason? If you answer "Yes," email or fax Tom Robinson the disposition of your revocation.

Question: What if I have transferred from another state?

Answer: If you come from a state where you have maintained active IAABO certification and membership, this will be a simple transfer. Provide your information to an Area 8 director and they will verify your status with IAABO.

If you are coming from a non-IABBO state, we will need a transfer letter from your association sent to Tom Robinson of the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA). This letter needs to indicate that you are a certified member, currently in good standing with your state association. Upon receipt and verification of your letter, you will be granted reciprocity for one year (one basketball season). This letter may be mailed or faxed to:

CHSAA
c/o Tom Robinson
14855 E. 2nd Avenue
Aurora, CO 80011
303-344-5050
303-367-4101 fax

During this year of reciprocity, you will have the same status as our provisional officials, able to work all levels of basketball, but will not be eligible for the post-season.

During this year of reciprocity, you will have two opportunities to take the closed-book IAABO exam. The exam will be given both in the fall and in the spring. Please check with an area director for the dates of these exams; tests are given on specific dates. To become fully certified, you must score at least an 86 percent on this exam.

Question: What costs are associated with becoming an official?

Answer: There are a number of costs associated with becoming an official, but they are offset by the pay you receive while working as an official. For employment purposes, all officials are considered independent contractors.

Costs include:

$75 **Class** (includes instruction, rule book, case book and all class materials).
$60 **Exam fee.** Cash or money order only.
$77 **Annual Dues.** Dues may vary from year to year. As of the printing of this document, annual dues for Area 8 are $77. You will not pay this your first year as it is already covered by your exam fee.
$167 **Uniform.** Costs vary depending on where you purchase your items, but a very specific uniform is required.

The following uniform is mandatory (with approximate costs):
$15-$25 -A black and white, vertical-striped quarter-sleeved knit shirt with v-neck opening (no collars!). The mesh shirt is an approved shirt.
$6-$10 - The IAABO patch is to be worn by IAABO members. The patch should be sewn on the upper left breast of the shirt.
$6-$10 - The American Flag patch is to be worn by IAABO members. The patch should be sewn on the left arm of the shirt, two inches from the cuff.
$25-$50 - Black trousers **without** belt loops. Pleated slacks are preferred. Belts should not be worn!
$40-$100 -All black shoes with black shoestrings. No other colors are allowed on the shoes. Patent leather or shiny black leather is optimum.
$5 – Socks must be black.
$5 – Whistle. Must be black and pea-less. Recommend a Fox 40 or Mini Fox 40.
$5 – Lanyard. Must be black, can either be noose or double end clip for holding the whistle.

OPTIONAL ITEMS:
$30-$45 - As an optional part of the basketball uniform, a black jacket designed for officiating may be worn. It shall belong-sleeved and solid black in color. If jackets are worn at a game site, both officials should wear them for the sake of uniformity.
$15-$50 – Black gym bag or rolling carry-on for transporting uniforms to the game sites.
$20-$50 – Compression undergarments. Black highly recommended if used.

Question: After I have taken the test, how will I know my score?

Answer: Area 8 has a regional director and three area directors. These directors will administer the test, score the test and then inform you of your score within 48 hours after you have taken the exam. Please note the following with regard to your score:

> **PASS** – 86-100 percent, eligible to officiate all levels of high-school basketball and become a member of IAABO.
> **PROVISIONAL** – 76-84 percent, eligible to officiate all levels of high-school basketball and **eligible** to re-test again in March.
> **TRAINEE** – 60-74 percent, eligible to officiate **ONLY** lower levels of high-school basketball and will **NOT be** eligible to re-test in March. Must wait until the following fall.

***Note: ANY OFFICIAL WHO HAS NOT PASSED THE IAABO EXAM WITH AN 86 PERCENT OR HIGHER MUST CONTINUE TO TAKE THE TEST EACH YEAR UNTIL HE/SHE ACHIEVES SUCH SCORE. NOT TAKING THE TEST WILL MEAN THE OFFICIAL IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO OFFICIATE HIGH SCHOOL GAMES.**

Question: Once I have taken the test, how do I get games?

Answer: Even before taking the exam, prospective officials are encouraged to talk with assigners about their intent to take the test. To find assigners you can use the www.denverbasketballofficials.com website and under "Assigner Links" on the right hand side, select the "A State Wide List of Assigners" document to find which schools you are interested in working at. OR Go to the Colorado High School Activities Association website, www.chsaa.org, click on Officials and choose basketball from the drop-down menu. Once there, click: 2009-2010 BASKETBALL HANDBOOK. On Page 15, you will find a list of the Denver Metro area assignors only.

Contact these assignors and inform them you have passed the test. Then ask them if they have games available for you for this upcoming season. Also, if you need additional help, you may contact the current area directors. They are also listed in this online handbook.

At the beginning of each season, the assigners will have lower level "sign-up nights" where they have a listing of all games available in their league and you can visit each schools sheet and put your name on games you are qualified for. This typically happens the first week of November.

Past that date, you will be able to request open games from their websites which are available on the www.denverbasketballofficials.com website under "assigner links".

Question: Once I have passed the IABBO exam as a "patched" official (scored 86 percent or better), how do I maintain my IABBO membership, remaining a member in good standing?

Answer: To remain an active IAABO member in good standing, you must:
-pay your annual dues by March 1
-complete a floor-mechanics examination during your first three years of officiating
-attend a Master Clinic at least every other year; attending every year is strongly encouraged
-attend either the master clinic or the first general meeting in any given year
-attend either a general and/or an area meeting at least once a month
-complete an annual open-book test (in the fall, the test will be mailed to current, active members along with a host of other materials).

Question: Who is eligible for the playoffs?

Answer: IABBO certified officials, who have met the requirements listed in the previous question **and** who also:
-passed the annual open-book exam with at least a 90 percent
-have worked at least two sub-varsity games
-have worked at least six girl's games or 20 percent of your schedule
-have been a certified ("patched") IAABO official for two full seasons
-apply for the post-season through their CHSAA account on www.arbitersports.com website, indicating in the system that all requirements have been met

Question: Now that I have passed the test with at least an 86 percent, should I be expecting a packet with an IABBO patch, American flag and rules book?

No, this first year after you pass the test, you have in your possession what you need, the case book and the mechanics manual you received for the class. In the future, as long as you are an IABBO member in good standing, you will receive (through the mail) these books as a single-bound book. The books you received in the class contain the same information as the single-bound book.

You are responsible to purchase the IABBO patch and an American flag for your uniform. Please check the book for proper placement of both of these items on your jersey. You can purchase your officiating jersey or shirt with these patches already on it or you can buy the patches and attach them yourself. For a list of uniform vendors, once again check out the current-year Basketball Handbook.

All officials (other than those who have just passed the test) are listed in the2009-2010 MEMBERSHIP LIST which is also posted on the Denver and CHSAA website. You will be listed on the "New Officials List" that all assignors receive.

Question: How do I get set up with the mentor program?

Answer: We have a mentoring program and a mentoring committee dedicated to helping our officials improve. For a list of rules and expectations, please refer to the www.denverbasketballofficials.com website and look on the right side under Mentor Program. If you would like to be mentored, please contact the chairperson of that committee by filling out the request form or contact any Regional or Area Director.

Question: What is the purpose of The ArbiterSports program for a first-year official?

Answer: The Arbiter program, which you can find at www.arbitersports.com, allows assignors to assign games using online technology. Currently, assigners assign only regular-season varsity games through the Arbiter. Post-season varsity assignments are made via the Arbiter by CHSAA.

Therefore, until you begin receiving a varsity schedule, the Arbiter will be of little value to you unless you are having Area 8 evaluations performed and submitted. If you have them done, you will be sent an email asking you to activate your account and then will be able to view online all evaluations that have been submitted.

The ArbiterSports program e-mails you with new assignments that you either accept or decline online. It e-mails you reminders that you have an upcoming game. It shows time, date, location of the contest; it also indicates who your partners are. You can e-mail the school and your partners directly from the system. Having all this information and capability all in one place can make communicating with the school, the assignors and your partners an easier process. The ArbiterSports program can make managing your schedule easier as well.