

## CLERK OF THE COURSE

NNTOA v.6Jan2021

Clerks work closely with the starter and the fully automatic timing (FAT) operator to keep the meet on schedule. They check uniforms; collect relay cards; inform athletes when their races will begin and where to leave their gear (sweats, etc.); gather, hold, escort, assign and place competitors in lanes; and remain calm. Ideally, there are several clerks: a head clerk of the course, a check-in clerk, a start-line clerk, and one or more finish-line clerks/judges.

Clerks should have a positive attitude and be proactive. Conversations with the athletes will include reminding them when their race begins, their heat number, and lane assignments.

For dual or double dual meets, the clerking area will be near the start area, with easy access and with signage as "CHECK-IN." Schools are typically assigned lanes for their athletes.

The clerks should walk the track before the meet to be familiar with the starting areas and relay exchanges.

**Standard colors for starting lines, break line, relay exchange zones, and finish line** (check to see if the venue has posted track markings and what they represent; colors may vary on different tracks.)

### **STARTING LINES** (*Check the lines in Lane 2 to confirm the colors.*)

100 meters, 110-meter-high hurdles (straight line)	WHITE
200 meters, 300 meters, 400 meters (staggered in lanes)	WHITE
800 meters (staggered in lanes or alleys)	<b>GREEN</b> or WHITE with <b>GREEN</b>
1600 meters, 3200 meters (curved line)	WHITE
4 x 100-meter relay (staggered in lanes)	WHITE
4 x 200-meter relay (staggered in lanes)	<b>RED</b> or WHITE with <b>RED</b>
4 x 400-meter relay (staggered in lanes)	<b>BLUE</b> or WHITE with <b>BLUE</b>
4 x 800-meter relay (staggered in lanes)	<b>GREEN</b> or WHITE with <b>GREEN</b>

### **BREAK LINE** (curved)

### **RELAY EXCHANGE ZONES** (*Double check these before the first race.*)

4 x 100-meter (400-m) relay	<b>YELLOW TRIANGLES</b> (staggered)
4 x 200-meter (800-m) relay	<b>RED TRIANGLES</b> for 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> exchanges (staggered) ( <b>RED/YELLOW</b> in Lane 1)
	<b>YELLOW TRIANGLES</b> for 3 <sup>rd</sup> exchange zone (same as 4 x 100)
4 x 400-meter (1600-m) relay	<b>BLUE TRIANGLES</b> (staggered for 1 <sup>st</sup> exchange)
4 x 800-meter (3200-m) relay	<b>GREEN</b> or <b>BLUE</b>

### **FINISH LINE** (straight)

WHITE

As athletes check in, they should receive bib numbers (if used), heat and lane assignments, and hip numbers. **Check uniforms** (especially of relay teams) **and spikes**. For **field-event athletes who will be checking out for running events**, indicate the events and times on the flight sheets; this informs the field-event Head Officials that athletes will need to be excused to run their races.

Start-line clerks receive **heat/lane-assignment sheets** from the check-in clerk or FAT personnel. (See NFHS Officials Manual section on Clerk of the Course for suggested approaches.) The 1<sup>st</sup> call for athletes is 15 minutes prior to the start of a scheduled race or field event. The 2<sup>nd</sup> call is 10 minutes prior to the start of the event, and the last call is made 5 minutes prior to the beginning of the event. Recheck athletes' names and hip numbers to ensure that athletes are in the correct heats and lanes.

In the 800-meter race, up to 12 runners may run in lanes, with Runners 9 through 12 doubling up in lanes 8, 6, 4, and 2 (preferably the same for each heat: Runner 9 in lane 8, Runner 10 in lane 6, Runner 11 in lane 4, and Runner 12 in lane 2). Inform the Chief Umpire if runners are doubled up in any lanes.

The 1500-, 1600-, 3000- and 3200-meter races use a waterfall start. Line up runners in order of their hip numbers (1 closest to the curb).

**Alley** lanes waterfall from lane one to outer lanes. If there are more than 16 (suggested) runners on the first waterfall line, utilize a second waterfall start line, which is located from lane five to outer lanes. Two-thirds of the runners begin in the lane-one waterfall, and one-third begin in the lane-five waterfall. Athletes starting in the lane-five waterfall must not step from lane 5 line into lane 4 until crossing the **break line** used for the 800-meter run. Use small, 4" orange cones, spaced approximately 9' apart, along the outside of lane 4 to give runners a visual reminder to remain in the outside lanes until crossing the break line.

For **relays**, **verify** uniforms (same for team members per Rule 4.3.2; no gloves per Rule 5.10.5), check or hand out batons (see Rule 5.4.3), brief the athletes on the exchange zones (including length and number of pieces of tape on the track as determined by the games committee), and assist in placing the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> runners in proper order on the track (per Rule 5.10.10).

**Rule 5.4.3** The **baton** shall **not exceed 11.81 inches** (30 centimeters) **in length**. Its circumference shall be at least 4 inches and no more than 5 inches (102-127 millimeters). It shall be a smooth, hollow tube, made in one piece of wood, metal, or other rigid material. It shall weigh at least 1.766 ounces (50 grams). **Tape shall not be used** to wrap the baton.

**Rule 5.10.10** In relays of 800 meters or longer and which are not run in lanes, the games committee shall determine the method of exchanging batons at each station. At each station, competitors shall line up in the same relative lane position as that of their teammate who started the race, but there may be movement to a position better suited to meeting the passer of the baton. Each passer shall keep a straight course to the exchange zone. The responsibility for taking a position which corresponds to that which the passer is entitled to is on the outgoing competitor.

**Rule 3.7.1** The clerk of the course shall be responsible for recording the name and number of each competitor and shall **assign each runner to the proper heat and starting position**, as approved by the **games committee** or meet director. (See Rule 5.6 and the NFHS Officials Manual section on Principles of Heat Drawing.)

**Rule 3.7.2** The clerk of the course is responsible for giving all **necessary instructions** concerning the rules governing the race, and either the clerk of the course or the assistant starter shall **be at the starting mark before each race and announce the lane assignments** and hold each competitor responsible for reporting promptly to the starting line when the race is announced. Also, the clerk of the course should **check and enforce uniform and shoe regulations**. (Rule 4.3.1; also see NFHS Case Book for examples.)

**Rule 3.7.3 Adjustments** to heat or lane assignments or in the number of heat qualifiers may be made by the clerk of the course **with the approval of the referee** when unusual conditions make the original lanes or number of qualifiers unfair to any competitor. The clerk of the course shall **provide the head finish judge (or FAT operator) with a listing of changes** (in writing, if possible).

**Rule 3.7.4** In a race run in lanes, each competitor shall run in the lane drawn, unless the clerk of the course moves the competitor to avoid use of a lane which, because of unusual conditions, would unfairly handicap a competitor.

**Rule 4.3.1** The **competitor's uniform** shall be school-issued or school-approved, worn as intended by the manufacturer, and meet the following requirements and restrictions:

NOTE: The wearing of medical alert with the alert visible is encouraged for risk minimization. The ultimate responsibility to have each competitor compliant with uniform rules and other reasonable and legal items is with the coach.

- a. Each competitor shall wear shoes on both feet.
    1. The shoes shall have an upper and recognizable sole and heel.
    2. The (shoe) upper must be designed so that it can be fastened securely to the foot.
    3. In cross country, the sole and heel may contain grooves, ridges or track spikes which are no longer than 1 inch.
- NOTE: The **games committee** may also determine the **length of spikes** allowed on all-weather surfaces (3.2.4a)
4. The use of slippers or socks does not meet the requirements of the rule.
  - b. Each competitor shall wear a **school-issued or school-approved full-length track top and track bottom or one-piece uniform**. Any outer garment (e.g., t-shirts, sweatpants, tights) that is school-issued or school-approved becomes the official uniform, when worn.
    1. When numbers are used, each competitor shall wear his/her assigned, unaltered contestant number.
    2. The top and/or bottom or one-piece uniform may have a school name, school logo, school nickname and/or competitor's name.
    3. The top shall not be knotted or have a knot-like protrusion. Bare midriff tops are not permitted. **The top must hang below or be tucked into the waistband of the uniform bottom when the competitor is standing upright.**
    4. Loose-fitting boxer-type bottoms or compression-style bottoms are permitted for boys and girls. Closed-leg briefs are acceptable for girls. French or high-cut apparel shall not be worn in lieu of the uniform bottom. The waistband of a competitor's bottom shall be worn above the hips.
    5. A single manufacturer's logo/trademark/reference, no more than 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> square inches with no dimension more than 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches, is permitted on the top and bottom or one-piece uniform.
    6. One American flag, not to exceed 2 inches by 3 inches, may be worn or occupy space on each item of uniform apparel. By state association adoption, to allow for special occasions, commemorative, or memorial patches, not to exceed 4 square inches, may be worn on the uniform without compromising its integrity
    7. Any visible garment(s) worn underneath the uniform top and/or bottom is considered a foundation garment. Foundation garments are not subject to logo/trademark/reference or color restrictions.

Rule 4.3.2 Additional restrictions for **relay teams and cross-country teams**.

- a. All relay and cross-country team members must wear uniforms clearly indicating, through predominant color, school logo and color combination of all outer garments worn as a uniform, that members are from the same team. NOTE: **The official should be able to observe that all members are from the same team.**

PENALTY: For wearing an illegal uniform, when a violation is observed and noted by an official, the competitor shall be required to make the uniform legal before becoming eligible for further competition and shall be issued a warning that a subsequent violation shall result in a disqualification from the event. The referee shall be notified of the violation by the observing meet official, and the referee shall then notify or cause to be notified the head coach of the offending school of the competitor's violation and warning.

Rule 4.3.3 Removing any part of the team uniform, excluding shoes, while in the area of competition, as defined by the games committee, is illegal.

PENALTY: This shall lead to a warning and if repeated, to disqualification from the event. If the incident recurs, the competitor will be disqualified from further competition in the meet.

**PERSONAL EQUIPMENT:** Rule book, whistle, clipboards, pens, pencils, magic markers, highlighter, rubber bands, plastic page protectors, vinyl folders, chalk, large plastic bags (in case of rain), adhesive tape, safety pins, large paper clips, adhesive tape, extra hip numbers, extra blank competitor's numbers, small cones, clerk information sheets.