

SAN DIEGO COUNTY  
TRACK STARTERS ASSOCIATION

*Starter Assignments;  
Policies and Procedures*

---

**Statement of Purpose**

To provide competent, professional track starters to serve High School, College and University Track & Field meets for the schools and leagues in the service area of the San Diego County Track Starters Association.

A. Schools served:

1. San Diego County High Schools
2. San Diego County Colleges and Universities

B. Geographic Area:

1. San Diego County

**General Statement**

The San Diego County Track Starters Association is in full compliance with the California Interscholastic Federation San Diego Section *Green Book*. No person shall be denied membership or access due to gender, race, color, creed, religion or national origin. None of the aforementioned shall be criteria for receiving assignments, level of assignments, holding office nor shall it be a factor in any portion of the operational and governance of the San Diego County Track Starters Association.

**Members Availability to Start Track Meets**

**Conflicts of Interest:**

*Prior to the beginning of the track season, each member must notify the Assignment Secretary of any possible conflicts of interest that the member may have with any particular starting assignment(s). A conflict of interest is a factor that may be real or perceived by others, as a bias or partiality to one team over another which would affect the official's judgment. Conflicts of interest include but are not limited to: having a relative who is a player or coach of a team; being employed by a school; having administrative capabilities of a school or school district; or having an experience with a*

team or coach that may cloud judgment. If a member is unsure of a potential conflict of interest, he/she should seek the opinion of the Assignment Secretary or the Board.

**Prior time, day or date commitments:**

Prior to the beginning of the track season, each member shall notify the Assignment Secretary of any prior time, day or date commitments that he/she has during the track season which would preclude the member from starting a track meet using The Arbiter system. Each member shall enter blocked days/times in The Arbiter as soon as such prior commitments are known.

Conflicts of interest and prior time/day/date commitments shall be noted on the members' registration card or otherwise communicated to the Assignment Secretary *prior to the registration deadline date.*

After the registration deadline, the availability of the member to start a track meet is assumed, according to the information previously communicated to the Assignment Secretary. Members cannot arbitrarily decide which level of track meets they choose to start. Members must be willing to accept any meet at any level he/she is qualified to start. Starter assignments must be accepted or declined in The Arbiter as soon as possible but no later than 72 hours prior to the scheduled meet.

**Examples of accepted excuses for turning back a starter assignment include, but are not limited to:**

1. An acute injury or illness occurring after the start of the track season, on or off the track, which actually prevents or substantially hinders the member's on-track physical requirements.
2. Injury or illness of a family member that requires the presence of the member.
3. Last minute employment commitment changes where the member would significantly suffer financially.

**Generally unacceptable excuses include but are not limited to:**

1. Lack of transportation
2. Social engagements
3. Distance to the track meet
4. Level of the track meet
5. Lack of desire to do the track meet
6. Adverse weather conditions
7. Starting a track meet for another association
8. Officiating another sport
9. Attending a son or daughters athletic event
10. A minor injury or illness

## **Assignment Turn-Back Assessment:**

Assignments turned back require significant extra work by the Assignment Secretary. If a starter turns back an assignment anytime during or after the pre-established dates that assignment contracts are distributed, he or she will be assessed ten dollars (\$10) for each assignment returned.

The Assignment Secretary, at his/her discretion, may waive the assessment for an acceptable excuse as described in the section above. Unacceptable excuses will always be assessed. Decisions of the Assignment Secretary may be appealed to the Board however, until such an appeal is heard, all provisions of this policy remain in effect.

All assessments must be paid to the Assignment Secretary on or before the next pre-established assignment contract distribution date. If the assessment(s) are not paid on or before this date, the member's assignment contracts for the next assignment period will be withheld and re-distributed to other qualified members. If the turn-back occurs after the last contract distribution date, the assessment must be paid during registration for the next season.

## **Starter Classification**

### **Probationary Starter**

Probationary Starter status shall remain in effect for a minimum of two (2) years. A Probationary Starter may be reclassified to Certified Starter status upon three-fourths vote of the Board of Directors. A Probationary Starter, to be eligible for Certified status, must:

1. Pass the written requirements as outlined by the Instruction and Ratings Committee.
2. Fulfill meeting attendance requirements as specified by the Board of Directors.
3. Act as an assistant to an assigned Certified Starter no less than two (2) meets.

### **Transfer Starter**

All Transfer Starters shall be classified as Probationary Starters for at least one (1) year. After which time, with Board approval, they will be assigned Certified status.

### **Certified Starter**

Certified Starter status is determined each year by the Board of Directors prior to the first regular meeting. This status shall be determined from ratings developed by the Rating Committee based upon the member's work of the previous year. Certified Starters shall receive priority in receiving assignments.

## **NCAA Starter**

NCAA Starter status is determined each year by the Board of Directors prior to the first regular meeting. This status shall be determined from ratings developed by the Rating Committee based upon the member's work the previous year.

Certified members shall submit a written request for NCAA certification. Certification may be granted by three-fourths vote of the Board of Directors provided that he/she meets the following requirements:

A. NCAA Starter shall have:

1. Five (5) years membership and starting experience in San Diego County Track Starters Association sanctioned track meets;
2. Attained a passing grade of not less than eighty percent (80%) on the Association administered NCAA qualification examination;
3. Received a minimum of Satisfactory evaluation marks during the previous competition year;
4. Submitted written recommendations from two (2) NCAA certified Association members who have officiated an Association sanctioned meet with the candidate;
5. Submitted a written request for NCAA certification;
6. Received final approval for NCAA certification upon three-fourths vote of the Board of Directors.

B. Candidates meeting the above requirements will be granted NCAA certification the following competition year.

C. Members failing to receive NCAA certification must resubmit their certification request the following year.

## **Attendance**

Attendance at all meetings and clinics is required.

## **Starter Responsibilities**

When possible, Starters shall be responsible for notifying the Assignment Secretary at least 72 hours prior to the meet if unable to fulfill an assignment.

No Starter will be assigned to a second meet until he/she has paid their dues.

No Starter shall contact the Assignment Secretary or coaches for the purpose of soliciting assignments.

It is suggested that the Starter, after receiving a Starting assignment, contact the host coach a few days prior to the meet to confirm the assignment.

Starters shall report problems encountered at meets as soon as possible to the President and Assignment Secretary by phone and provide a follow-up report in writing.

All Starters shall be neat, clean and well groomed in their personal appearance and shall act in a manner becoming a professional person.

If working with another starter at a meet, each Certified starter shall complete a ratings evaluation of the other starter within 24 hours of the completion of the meet and give to the Vice President at the next scheduled association meeting.

## **Starters Code of Ethics**

Schools have entrusted us to assist them in the educational development of their youth through athletics. Therefore, the San Diego County Track Starters Association has adopted the Officials Code of Ethics of the National Federation of State High School Associations.

### **Uniforms**

All Starters shall wear the prescribed Association uniform listed below:

- Hat (optional)
  - Red baseball-style cap or White/Red golf, floppy brim hat
- Red coat, blazer style
- White dress shirt
- Black or dark blue tie
- Black or dark blue trousers
- Black shoes
- Black or dark blue hose

#### **Notes:**

- Red short sleeve shirt (summer polo) with a red sleeve or white shirt with a red sleeve on pistol arm may be substituted for the coat and tie when temperature requires.
- When two or more Starters are assigned to a meet, they shall be dressed uniformly.
- Red blazer, white dress shirt and black or dark blue tie are required to be worn by all starters at the following meets:
  - CIF Finals
  - CIF Prelims
  - Invitational Meets

## **Starter Liability & Medical Insurance**

All Starters, as independent contractors, are encouraged to obtain their own personal Liability and Medical Insurance either through their own agent or through a sports officiating association such as the National Federation Interscholastic Officials Association or the National Association of Sports Officials.

## **Methodology & Mechanics of Starter Assignments**

Starter assignments shall be prepared by the Assignment Secretary and then will be distributed at pre-established dates using The Arbiter system. All members should check-the Arbiter frequently for his/her starter assignments.. Starter assignments not accepted in The Arbiter in a timely manner may be reassigned to another starter.

Postponed meets are still the responsibility of the assigned starter. If there is a conflict of dates, the Assignment Secretary shall be notified immediately.

All Association sanctioned starter assignments will exclusively be initiated by the Assignment Secretary. All assignment cancellations or assignment trades or transfers shall be made or approved by the Assignment Secretary. A member may propose a replacement of a cancelled track meet or may propose another member for starter exchange however all such proposals shall be communicated to, coordinated with, and approved by the Assignment Secretary. Such a replacement or trade, without applicable Assignment Secretary coordination and approval, may cause the member initiating replacement or transfer to relinquish his/her remaining starting assignments with action reported to the Board for their approval.

No Starter shall contact the Assignment Secretary or coaches for the purpose of soliciting a starting assignment.

A member who is also a member of another starter organization or independently assigns starters to track meets at any level shall not solicit the current membership to affect this activity without the express permission and authorization of the Board. Such action may cause the member to relinquish his/her remaining starting assignments with action reported to the Board for possible disciplinary action.

## **Starter Assignment Priorities**

If a time conflict should occur between events, clinics or track meets, the Assignment Secretary shall be immediately notified for correction of the conflict. The following priorities shall prevail:

1. Probationary members' clinic participation shall take precedence over track meets of any level;
2. NCAA or Professional track meets take precedence over all other levels of meets. Members working an NCAA or Professional track meet shall not start any other meets that day;
3. High School and Freshmen track meets take precedence over youth meets.

### **Starters – Independent Contractors**

Track Starters are considered independent contractors and therefore are individually responsible for complying with the California State and Federal law. Independent contractors are not employees of the school nor of the district and therefore members must sign a waiver of liability and disclaimer with the Association acknowledging their position.

School districts may require that a Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Form W-9 be filed with the school district financial office by a track starter anticipating assignment within the district, prior to contracting individuals as track starters.

### **Process for Leave of Absence/Resignation**

A member may request a leave of absence by submitting a request in writing to the Board. If accepted, this leave will be honored for the subsequent track & field season. The member may return with all previous benefits during this period, unless limited by other reasons.

A member may voluntarily resign at any time. If a resigned member should re-apply, his/her application would be treated as that of a probationary member.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Disciplinary action could result in the following:

- (a) Counseling
- (b) Reprimand
- (c) Probation
- (d) Suspension or Expulsion

### **Process for Suspension/Expulsion**

A hearing must be conducted by the Board prior to any action of expulsion. The member must be provided in writing with the reasons for expulsion and have reasonable time to respond. This response shall be in writing. After the foregoing criteria are met, the Board will vote on the issue of expulsion. A simple majority will be sufficient to render a

decision. Any appeal will be governed by the By Laws. Any and all proceedings regarding expulsion will be confidential.

### **Due Process & Grievance**

**Member Grievance:** Any grievance may be directed to the Board. If the grieving member wishes to appeal the Board's decision, he/she may do so to the general membership. In order to proceed with this level of appeal, the grieving member must obtain at least five (5) signatures of Certified Starters supporting this appeal.

**Discipline Procedure:** The Board will be responsible for disciplining members. The member shall have an opportunity to reply to the Board in writing, prior to the discipline being imposed.

### **Recruitment of Track Starters**

The recruitment of good track starters is a principle goal of the Association. The necessity to maintain viability and to strengthen current membership requires the Association to seek individuals that can meet membership needs through announcements and presentations at field clinics.

### **Training Program**

All Starters in the Association are required to attend classroom training sessions and clinics. The Instructional Chairperson is responsible for the Association Instructional and Rating Programs.

### **Classroom Training Sessions**

The meeting schedule is promulgated each season by the Secretary/Treasurer and is mailed to each member during the month of December. This schedule will list place, time and date of each meeting. Meetings normally begin at 6:00 pm.

### **Training Outline**

#### **A. Training Material**

1. The following publications will be used as reference material:
  - a. National Federation of State High School Associations, Track & Field Rules Book
  - b. National Federation of State High School Associations, Track & Field Case Book.

- c. National Federation of State High School Associations, Track & Field and Cross Country Officials Manual.
  - d. California Interscholastic Federation San Diego Section Green Book.
2. The following locally prepared training handouts will be used:
    - a. Mechanics handout.
    - b. Various handouts covering situational rules applications
  3. Video/Slide programs

**B. Clinics**

1. A clinic is an on-track training session for track starters. Starters will participate in full uniform. The clinics are held in cooperation with the High Schools, Colleges and Universities around the County.
2. A number of Certified Starters, under the direction of the Instructional Chairperson, will guide the Probationary Starters through the mechanics of starting a race.

**C. Assistant Starter Training**

1. All Probationary Starters shall have acted as an assistant to an assigned Certified Starter at not less than two (2) meets prior to being assigned a track meet.
2. The assistant starter will be guided in his/her duties by the regular assigned Certified Starter.

**D. Examinations**

1. All Starters will complete a pre-season, take-home study examination prior to the first regularly scheduled meeting.
2. Weekly quizzes as directed by the Instructional Chairperson will be administered to the membership.
3. All Starters will take the annual Track Starters Qualification Examination

**E. Evaluations:**

All Track Starters will be rated by their peers and observers. Coaches' ratings will also be used. Each Track Starter will be evaluated throughout the season. Each Certified Starter is required to complete a Rating/Evaluation Form, evaluating each Starter they work with in each meet. These forms are to be submitted to the Vice President at the next regular association meeting. Ratings are used to determine a starter's eligibility for advancement to Certified status and NCAA Certification.

*Revised: April, 2008*