

TO: Association Assigners and Charter Clinicians
FROM: Kevin Merkle, Associate Director
DATE: August 10, 2011
RE: **Concussion Training Requirement – IMPORTANT!!**



You may or not be aware that the State of Minnesota recently passed legislation that **requires all coaches and officials** who work with student-athletes who are 18 years of age and younger, to be trained in concussion management. This is not a MSHSL policy – it is state law. Initial training must be completed prior to working any event this year and training will need to be renewed every three years.

Before **any** official can officiate any event in Minnesota – at any level (18 years and younger), they must complete a 20 minute, on-line training course. As an assignor it will be absolutely essential to make sure that every official that you assign has met this requirement. Please note the following:

Varsity Officials: must be fully registered and listed in the Officials Directory. Beginning today, August 10, our Directory will only include officials who have completed this training. Do not assign any officials to varsity events who are not listed in the directory as of today!

Lower Level Officials: if you assign officials to events below the varsity level you have two options.

- 1) Require all of your officials to be fully registered with the MSHSL. Once that occurs their name will be included in the official's directory.
- 2) Make sure all lower level officials have completed training. Non-registered officials may access the training by going to the MSHSL web site, selecting "Officials and Judges;" then selecting "General Information;" and then clicking on the link the shaded box which highlights the Concussion Management program. Once the course has been completed and the official completes the sign-in process, they will then be listed in a data base of officials who have completed the training.
 - a. You will then have to make sure that any non-MSHSL Registered officials that you assign or in this directory.
 - b. Access the Directory is through a link that is in the same shaded box as mentioned above: Officials and Judges/General Information. Use the search feature to find names – when you start to type in the person's last name the search function will take you to that name.

While schools are also responsible to check on all officials to make sure that they are properly registered and/or have completed the concussion training, it is imperative that you only assign officials who have met this requirement. The law requires that **all** of the officials on an event have been trained in concussion management.

If you assign official's to an event who have not met this training requirement you will be exposing yourself to liability risk if a student suffered some type of head injury. Since this is a state law there are no exceptions. Officials who work events without training will be immediately suspended. Assignors who knowingly assign officials without this training will also be subject to disciplinary action.

This change in law has certainly created challenges for you, our schools and MSHSL staff. However, concussions are a serious issue which can cause permanent cognitive damage or even death. Whatever we can do to protect the health and safety of our student athletes is well worth the effort.

Thanks again for all of the service that you provide to our schools and their student athletes. You play a pivotal role in the education of Minnesota Student Athletes.