

2026 Northland LOA Operating Policies

Adopted November 16, 2020. Last revised November 19, 2025.

I. Annual dues

The dues for 2026 (January 1 through December 31) are

- \$60 per returning Northland official, if paid on or before December 1, 2025
- \$80 per returning Northland official, if paid after December 1, 2025
- \$60 per official for all officials new to Northland regardless of date joined

The dues for 2027 will be \$70 (for officials new to Northland or for returning officials if paid by December 1, 2026) or \$90 (for returning officials after December 1, 2026). The first \$5 per official increase is to account for inflation and the remaining \$5 is earmarked to fund observations for Northland officials; if the observation funds are not all used in 2027, the remaining amount will revert to the general operating fund.

To vote at the annual general meeting for 2026, members must have their dues paid for 2026. Officials will not be eligible for 2026 game assignments until dues are paid.

The executive committee may, by majority vote, decide to lower the fees for individual members in some circumstances (e.g., to help with recruiting and developing officials in areas outside the Twin Cities metro area). The executive committee may also offer reduced dues in some situations, such as for officials who intend to work a limited range of games with Northland (e.g., only sixes or only box).

The executive committee may waive the 2026 dues or issue a credit toward 2026 dues for any member who paid full dues in 2025 but who did not work any games for Northland LOA.

2. Use of funds

The primary uses for funds generated by dues are:

- website hosting
- domain registration
- email account
- Arbiter fees
- certification cards for MSHSL games

- online training development
- instructor payments
- official observations
- other training events

The executive board can authorize other expenditures as listed in the Northland LOA Bylaws and in these Operating Policies.

The executive board can vote to reimburse officers, assigners, or other officials for travel in support of Northland (e.g., for travel to meetings for negotiations) such as parking, mileage, hotel, and per diem. Receipts must be submitted to the treasurer for parking and hotel. Mileage, hotel, and per diem will be paid in accordance with the Northland LOA travel policy in the fee document.

3. Membership requirements

Per the bylaws, to be eligible to vote, a member must

- complete at least Level 0.5 officials training (or have completed equivalent officials training prior to the creation of the training program or through another organization, as determined by an assigner or the training coordinator)
- have paid dues for the upcoming year (e.g., to vote in elections, the member must have paid dues for the year corresponding to the term of the executive committee members)
- have worked at least 20 boys lacrosse games representing Northland LOA
- not be currently under any Northland LOA disciplinary action that states that the member may not vote

In addition, the bylaws state that to be eligible to vote, a member must “meet any other requirements set forth in the operating policies for members in good standing.” Those requirements are that a person must:

- be at least 14 years of age
- be up to date in assigning fees
- have signed the most recent Northland LOA Independent Contractor/Membership Agreement, either via a Google Form or as part of the game acceptance process in ArbiterSports.com.

To be able to be assigned games and keep assignments through Northland LOA, a person must:

- be a member in good standing
- complete required annual training for their levels of officiating, as determined by the training committee
- complete a rule tests or rules tests for their levels of officiating, as specified by the training committee (this may be satisfied by completing the quizzes in any assigned training units)
- have the required uniform and equipment
- be a current member of MSHSL or USA Lacrosse for insurance purposes (and provide evidence of such)
- be in physical condition to handle the demands of the game for ~~his or her~~ their levels of officiating
- not be under any performance-review related follow-up that prevents them from working games
- meet additional league-specific requirements as applicable (e.g., MSHSL varsity, box lacrosse leagues, sixes lacrosse leagues).

4. Training requirements for officials who have not previously completed training and worked games

The training committee will determine the format and requirements for officials who have not previously completed training and worked games. Training guides will be provided detailing all requirements. The training committee will set deadlines for training, keep records on each official's training, and inform the assigner if there are people who do not complete training by the deadlines.

New officials will begin by completing Level 0.5 Training, the key components of which are online training, concussion training, a rules test, purchasing uniform and equipment, and an on-field training session. They can then move on to Level 1 by completing additional online training, attending a Zoom meeting, and working at least 20 games. These requirements will be detailed in a Level 0.5/1.0 Training Guide.

5. Annual training requirement for returning officials who have completed training and officiated games in a prior year

The training requirements for returning officials depend on the level of play for which the official will be eligible:

- Returning Level 0.5 officials remain at that level until completing the Level 1.0 Recert Training Guide requirements. These officials can work youth games.
- Returning Level 1.0 officials drop down to Level 0.5 until completing Level 1.0, 1.5, or 2.0 training for the year. These officials can work youth games.
- Returning Level 1.0 and 1.5 officials who wish to start working high-school level games and who will be 18 by May 31 (or who will be 17 during the spring and who are invited) should complete Level 2.0 Training. These officials can work youth, off-season high school, and regular-season high school JV and B-level games.
- Returning Level 2.0 officials can complete the Level 2.0 Training Guide. These officials can work youth, off-season high school, and regular-season high school JV and B-level games. Alternately, they can complete the Level 3.0 Training Guide to also be eligible to work high school varsity.
- Returning Level 3.0 (high-school varsity) officials should complete the Level 3.0 Training Guide.
- Returning Level 4.0 officials should complete the Level 3.0 and 4.0 Training guides; there is an application process for new Level 4.0 officials depending on need. These officials can work post-secondary club and men's league games.

The Board will approve all training guides before they are released.

Additional training may be required to work box lacrosse and sixes lacrosse.

Note that completing a certain level of training makes you *eligible* to work games at that level of play; it does not guarantee that you will get games at that level, as the assigner needs to be confident you are capable of handling games at that level of play.

Officials who completed training in a prior year may receive assignments before their current year's training is completed, even if they miss the deadline, but officials who have training completed by the deadline generally receive the majority of assignments.

Officials *may* be given credit for training completed outside of Northland (e.g., USA Lacrosse regional events) at the discretion of the board, but all officials must complete some Northland-specific training each year to get full pay (e.g., update and POE modules, Northland policy module).

6. Transfer officials

Officials who have completed officials training outside of Northland LOA may work games or become members of Northland without repeating training. However, they may be required to complete some or all of the following:

- work an unpaid game as a trainee to demonstrate their abilities
- provide records of games worked for other associations
- complete some amount of Northland LOA training or testing
- supply information allowing verification of USA Lacrosse requirements
- provide insurance verification
- pay a full or partial membership fee

The training committee and assigner will determine of the official's initial Northland level based on the officials prior training and experience; that may change to a lower or higher level based on Northland training completed by the official as well as on-field evaluations.

If, after beginning to work paid games, it appears that the transfer official needs to complete additional training, that may be required before the official receives additional assignments.

7. Training instructor payments

Instructors will be assigned using Arbiter and paid via ArbiterPay, check, online bill pay, or electronic payment (e.g., PayPal). For 2026, payments will include a per-hour fee for classroom/online instruction time of \$50 (and may also include travel fees and development time for presentations, subject to board approval).

The Northland executive board will determine appropriate payments for the development of online training materials.

8. Assigning and Assigning Fees for MSHSL games

There are no assigning fees paid by officials for any games other than MSHSL games and scrimmages. There is a flat fee of \$6 per 12-minute stop-time quarts game, \$5 per 10-minute stop-time quarters game, and \$4 per 12-minute running time quarters game.

Officials are expected to keep their blocks updated to avoid declines. Each official gets 1 free "no questions asked" decline or turnback (for one game or set of linked games on the same date); additional turnbacks or declines without a good excuse (e.g., an injury, a funeral) may be charged the assigning fee for the games that are turned back or declined. These fees are often not assessed if there is a good reason, especially if there is a change in an officials schedule more than 3 weeks before the game, but in cases where there are an unreasonable number of declines or turnbacks, the assigner will seek approval from the board with documentation of the issue before billing the official for those excessive declines and turnbacks.

The assigner will confirm availability with officials before assigning games for the next day or the same day even if officials are unblocked.

The assigner will bill officials for assigning fees via email shortly after the MSHSL section tournaments end in early June; payments are due within 2 weeks of the bill being sent; payments received more than 30 days after the bill is sent will be assessed a late fee of \$20.

Northland LOA will pursue officials who are late paying their final assigning fee billing.

Officials who have not been paid by schools for MSHSL games should contact the assigner after first following up with the schools and the assigner will attempt to help resolve the situation. However, not having received payment from one or more schools does not remove the obligation for paying assigning fees by the deadlines.

9. Assigning fees for non-MSHSL leagues, games, and tournaments

Generally, other leagues and tournaments pay the assigner directly, although there are occasional exceptions where officials are responsible for assigning fees. In those situations, the assigning fees will be communicated to the officials when the assignments are published.

10. Non-payment of assigning fees

If a league, tournament, or official does not pay assigning fees in a timely manner, the executive board may, on a case-by-case basis, vote to pay the delinquent assigning fees to the assigner and then follow up to collect those fees (plus interest and a service charge) from the responsible party. They may also initiate disciplinary action against the delinquent party.

11. Game Fees

The executive committee will negotiate and approve, and Northland LOA will publish, a schedule of minimum game fees and travel fees that includes provisions for how payments for canceled, suspended, and terminated games will be handled. The fee schedule will also cover per diem amounts for long-distance travel.

In some situations, different fees than those listed in the schedule may be negotiated with leagues, tournaments, or schools.

Officials who are late to a game or who miss a game are obligated to report to the assigner which games or portions of games that they missed; fees will generally be voided or pro-rated in these situations. Accepting payments for games or portions of games not actually worked is a serious ethical violation that will generally trigger the Northland LOA disciplinary procedure. Similarly, it is an ethical violation to mislead teams, leagues, or tournaments about travel fees.

Game fees may be tied to completion of training requirements for the year. An official who was certified in a prior year and who has paid dues for the current year and who has current insurance may be assigned games if no officials who have completed training are available, but they may be given the pay rate for someone with a lower level of training for any games worked prior to completing the current year's training requirements.

12. Observations and on-field training sessions

The default fee for an observer is the game fee for that level of play (in some cases, that may involve travel fees as well) and for the official's current level. If officials are receiving partial payment for their time, such as when they are working as a site manager/backup official while doing an observation, Northland will pay the difference between that partial payment and the game fee.

For Level 1.5 on-field training sessions set up on two youth games, where the instructors are being paid game fees by the league for those two games, Northland will pay the lead instructor one additional game fee (provided written reports are sent to all participants) and will pay the assistant instructor an additional half game fee.

Observers must have completed USA Lacrosse Observer Training for the current year in order to be eligible to work as an observer, and they must provide the official or officials being observed with a written report within one week of the observation.

13. Uniforms

Uniform requirements for each level will be posted on the Northland LOA website.

For all spring MSHSL games (varsity, JV, B), officials will wear the standard uniform with a striped shirt. All officials working MSHSL games should have short- and long-sleeved striped shirts, black shorts, and black nylon rain pants. All MSHSL officials working section games must have short-sleeved 2" stripes with the MSHSL logo in 2026. All MSHSL officials working games at any level must have short- and long-sleeved 2" stripes with the MSHSL logo by 2027. Additional uniform information will be posted on the Northland LOA website.

For youth games and off-season games, officials may wear:

- 1" striped shirts or black T-shirts (no 2" stripes for youth games)
- white hats or black hats with white piping.

In all games, all officials in the crew should be identically attired (no mixing of short and long, stripes and black shirts, etc.). If both officials have stripes, both officials should wear stripes. All returning officials ~~must~~ have at least a short-sleeved striped shirt.

14. Video review

When video is submitted to the Executive Board or to an assigner by a coach, athletic director, or association director, Northland LOA will review the film provided, respond accordingly, and pass along the clip with additional feedback to the crew. This will be done in the following manner:

- **Submission:** The concerned party shall submit video for review via email, text, or other digital manner and include questions and/or concerns. The submission shall be sent to the assigner of the game, the Northland LOA President, and/or the Northland LOA Vice President (collectively, “individuals”). These individuals will confirm receipt of the submission to the concerned party.
- **Review team selection:** The review team shall consist of two individuals. If one of the individuals was on the crew assigned to the game in question, the other two individuals will form the two-person review team. If two individuals were on the crew assigned to the game in question, the remaining individual select another Northland official qualified to work games at that level to complete the two- person review team. If all three individuals were on the crew assigned to the game in question, the remaining Northland LOA Board members will select two neutral people to form the review team.
- **Review process:** The two-person review team will conduct the review by observing the video independently and taking notes while considering the questions and concerns of the submitting party. The review team will then meet to compare notes and will use their professional judgement to reach a consensus ruling. During the meeting, the review team may utilize league resources, consult rules interpreters (e.g., the MSHSL Rules Interpreter for MSHSL contests), and inquire of crew chief or other members on the crew of the game included in the submission to obtain further context or perspective.
- **Ruling communication to submitting party:** Upon completion of the review process, one of the review team members will provide the consensus ruling to the concerned party. The content of the consensus ruling shall be in the format as outlined in Appendix A. At no time will this response discuss officials’ positioning, personal judgment, fitness, effort, or demeanor. The ruling communication should generally occur within 2 business days from the date of submission; if this is not possible, Northland LOA will notify the concerned party of the expected ruling communication date.
- **Subsequent communication to officials:** Following the ruling communication, the review team will send feedback to the crew of the game included in the submission within 24 hours of the ruling communication. This feedback shall include the clip in question and a copy of the ruling communication. This feedback may include additional relevant rules or interpretations, praise or correction of the official’s

positioning, personal judgement, effort, communication, leadership, or demeanor, and potential assignment of training modules.

Note: If video is submitted to Northland LOA board members or assigners that depicts a game that was not assigned by Northland LOA or includes officials that are not members of Northland LOA, they shall politely decline to comment and point the submitting party to the appropriate channel. Specific rules questions and interpretations can be answered, but it is preferred to direct those to the official interpreter of the league or tournament the contest at hand took place in/during. At no point will a Northland LOA board member or assigner publicly comment on the officiating of members of another LOA.

15. Usage of Submitted Video by Northland LOA

Some submitted film may contain unusual situations that would be of good use in training materials. For Northland LOA to use any film submitted in these training materials, they must first get permission from:

- the submitting party
- any officials visibly present in the film or whose judgment is shown in the film

At no time will film be used without the explicit consent of the officials depicted in said film. Northland LOA will also never use film to deride, harass, embarrass, or otherwise imply negative connotations towards an official.

16. Complaint form

A complaint form will be created online and will be the formal report form for complaints. Any person wishing to complain about a Northland LOA member will be directed to that form, and that will initiate the discipline procedures as outlined in the bylaws.

17. Communication

There will be occasional announcements posted on the announcements page in the Northland LOA ArbiterSports.com group. Other avenues Northland LOA may use to communicate with members are email and texting (contact information for Northland LOA assigners and executive committee members will be posted in ArbiterSports.com and the www.northlandloa.org website).

Northland LOA may use the following social media platforms to communicate with the lacrosse community at large:

- Twitter @NorthlandLOA
- Facebook Northland LOA

- Instagram @northlandloa

The executive board may elect to create an unpaid volunteer position for handling marketing and social media. If they do so, the position will be announced to members in good standing and applications will be accepted from any interested parties. The executive board will then select an applicant to fill the position. The person filling this position serves at the will of the executive board, and the position can be eliminated at any time.

Appendix A: Video Review Format

The following format will be used for responding to requests for video review, as described in Section 14:

- Observations: The observations section shall include what the review team observes in the film included in the submission, and relevant context where necessary.
- Relevant rule citations: The relevant rules citations section shall include direct quotes from the related rulebook (e.g., NFHS, NLL, GNLL, tournament rules). Where there are no relevant rule citations, this section may be marked “N/A” with an explanation.
- Application of rules: The application of rules section shall include the review team’s application of the above citations within the context of the observations.
- Findings: The findings section shall present the conclusion based on the fact pattern presented above.