

DVUA Professional Development Program & Observation/Evaluation Process

The DVUA Professional Development Program consists of the first two years of service to DVUA when an official is ranked at levels 500 and 400 (see below). The program includes two classes (cadet class and second year class) and the practicum of observations and evaluations that take place during those years. An official must satisfactorily complete the entire program to be eligible to be ranked at level 300.

Varsity transfer officials are not required to complete the program unless requiring so is determined by the organization.

Cadets do have the option to bypass the cadet class under certain circumstances (see below).

DVUA Ranking Classifications

Levels 100-300: Varsity Officials (self-explanatory)

*Varsity transfer officials from other organizations servicing NFHS baseball and softball will enter at level 300 unless otherwise noted by a special circumstance (ex. recommendation by other chapter along with our observation).

Level 400

Second-year officials who have passed the annual varsity certification test and are eligible to do varsity games (although they are only used in an emergency). Officials in their first year at level 400 must successfully complete the professional development program to be eligible to be moved to level 300. An official who is varsity certified but has not passed our professional development program cannot advance past level 400. (Level 400 is considered transitory.)

Level 500

All officials who do not fall into the categories of levels 100 through 400 are listed at level 500. This includes cadets, anyone who does not wish to be varsity certified, anyone who hasn't passed our professional development program and isn't currently a level 400 official, etc. Level 500 officials are not eligible to do varsity games.

An official must spend at least one year at each level before he/she is eligible to advance to the next applicable level.

Observation and Evaluation Process

DVUA uses the following protocols to observe and evaluate its officials for the purpose of advancement in rank:

-Cadets in the cadet course are evaluated in “cadet scrimmages,” where cadets rotate in and out of scrimmages under the supervision of advanced officials for the purposes of learning on the field in game action. Reports are filed using online forms and are sent to the assignor and other necessary parties.

-Level 500 officials (except for those who request to be listed at this level) and level 400 officials are evaluated on every assignment where they work with an official of higher rank. The assignor will discuss progress with the evaluator.

-Officials who request advancement in rank beyond level 300 are observed and evaluated by officials of higher rank (see below). Said evaluations are filed using online forms and are sent to the assignor and other necessary parties.

-Officials have the option of requesting a general observation at any point that has no bearing on ranking. These evaluations are filed using an online form and sent to the evaluated official.

How an official can advance in rank:

-The advancement from 500 to 400 to 300 is dependent upon the status of the education and classification of the official. Cadets are defined as officials who have never been part of DVUA prior (and are not varsity transfers); they can enter DVUA one of two ways:

1. If a cadet has no experience officiating, the cadet must successfully pass the cadet course.
2. If a cadet has been officiating at other levels of baseball and/or softball (both higher and lower levels), the cadet may bypass the cadet course upon petition to the Executive Board. Depending on the level of experience of the cadet, the cadet must meet certain requirements as set forth by either the Executive Board, the applicable Professional Development chair(s), and/or the applicable Interpreter(s) to ensure the cadet can satisfactorily officiate NFHS contests.

Regardless of the method of entry, a cadet is noted as such and, per DVUA policy, is unable to officiate varsity contests. The cadet is listed at level 500.

Cadets are evaluated on each game they officiate where their partner is level 400 or higher.

-It should be noted that an official who wishes to only work sub-varsity games is still considered to be “varsity certified” and receives no discount on dues. The official is listed at level 500 so long as he or she chooses not to work varsity games. These officials are not subject to the cadet observations.

-Any official who does not fall into any other category described herein shall be listed at level 500.

-To reach level 400, an official must:

1. Successfully complete his or her cadet year,
2. Register with the state as an active varsity certified official, and,
3. Successfully pass the annual refresher test with a score of 80% or better.

Typically, a level 400 official is in his or her second year of officiating in DVUA. The official is certified to work varsity games, but the official will only be used for varsity games in the event of an emergency.

While at level 400, the official must complete the professional development program to be eligible to advance to level 300.

Officials at level 400 are evaluated on each game they officiate where their partner is level 300 or higher.

-To reach level 300, an official must:

1. Successfully complete his or her cadet year (level 500),
2. Successfully complete his or her second year (level 400),
3. Pass the professional development program,
4. Register with the state as an active varsity certified official, and
5. Successfully pass the annual refresher test with a score of 80% or better.

Typically, a level 300 official is at least in his or her third year with DVUA. The official is certified to work varsity games, and there is no restriction like that of officials at level 400. Assignment to varsity games is now at the sole discretion of the assignor.

-To be eligible for advancement in rank beyond level 300, an official must:

1. Have spent at least one full year at each of the previous levels (500, 400, and 300) and thus at least be in his or her fourth year with DVUA.
2. Request advancement in rank to both the assignor and the chairperson of the ranking committee of the applicable sport prior to December 31 (for the next upcoming season).

If an official is a varsity transfer from another chapter (meaning they have been working high school games for at least two prior seasons and are not a cadet in the eyes of the state), the official enters at level 300 unless otherwise noted. Said officials must then spend at least one year at level 300 before being eligible to request advancement.

Officials who request to advance shall be assigned observations by higher ranking officials. An official must receive a minimum of four observations (two plate, two bases) before a ruling will be adjudicated regarding advancement; thus, if circumstances dictate that those observations cannot be completed during a season, the official's advancement is put on hold until the next season when those observations can be completed, and the adjudication shall take place in the following offseason.

Adjudication is done by the ranking committee of the applicable sport.

An official cannot request advancement in consecutive years and must spend at least one full year at his or her current level before a request can be made for advancement in rank. Thus, if an official were to spend the minimum amount of time at each level before reaching level 100, the advancement would be as follows:

- One year at level 500 (cadet year)
- One year at level 400 (second year)
- Two years at level 300 (the first year is the minimum requirement; the official would request advancement in rank following that first year at level 300 and would be observed during the second year at level 300)
- Two years at level 200 (the first year is the minimum requirement, etc.)

As such, an official's seventh year with DVUA is the earliest he or she can begin a season at level 100.

Collegiate/Professional Exception:

Apart from the potential requirement by the state for cadets, an official who is an active member in good standing of another officiating group that services professional, semi-professional, or NCAA Division I, II, or III schools for the applicable sport and who has completed at least one year with said group, working a minimum of ten games at the appropriate level, is eligible to bypass all rankings and be listed at level 100. The official shall submit proof of this achievement if needed.

If an official is not an active member of one of these groups but has had a modicum of experience at such a level, the official may petition the Executive Board to be considered for the exemption to be listed at level 100 (ex. an official who worked three seasons in Minor League Baseball and has since retired may be appropriately considered).

Three-Official Certification

DVUA shall hold clinics at least once every three years to re-affirm certification of three-official mechanics per state requirements. The clinics are run by the respective mechanics interpreters.

Benefits of advancement in rank:

-Although it is at the sole discretion of the assignor how he or she assigns games, officials at level 100 tend to be assigned first, followed by officials at level 200, then level 300, and so on. The number of varsity assignments each official receives is predicated on a combination of factors, including the schedule of games, the availability of officials, and the rank of officials. Estimates as to what percentage of each schedule will be varsity assignments cannot be accurately provided due to these factors. Rather, the trend of having one's schedule increase in varsity assignments can correlate to how high in rank the official is.

-The assignor no longer has sole discretion of postseason assignments in state and county tournaments. Thus, where the assignor does have influence and/or control over assignments, the assignor may use the rank of an official to assist in assigning where applicable. Although no trend can be guaranteed, an official with a higher rank has a higher chance of receiving a postseason assignment.

Above all, DVUA will not assign anyone to any contest who has not:

- Properly registered with the state (and paid the appropriate dues),**
- Completed the background check with no flags,**
- Completed the concussion course,**
- Completed the refresher test, and**
- Completed any other legally required items as set forth by the state or DVUA.**