

MEDIA POLICY & PROCEDURES

of the Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association



Partners in Media Supporting the Mission of DIAA

- to preserve and promote the educational significance of interscholastic athletics
- to ensure that interscholastic athletics remain compatible with the educational mission of the member schools;
- to provide for fair and equitable competition between the member schools;
- to promote sportsmanship and ethical behavior;
- to establish and enforce standards of conduct for athletes, coaches, administrators, officials, and spectators;
- to protect the physical well-being of the athletes; and
- to promote healthy adolescent lifestyles.



DIAA Media Credential Policy

DIAA Press Credentials / Press Releases: Contact Caitlin Finkley
302.857.3368 / Caitlin.Finkley@doe.k12.de.us

CHANGES FOR 2024-2025

The DIAA welcomes media members to high school sporting events throughout the year. We appreciate the tremendous resource journalism and event coverage provides to our member schools, communities, and student-athletes.

DIAA does not issue annual media credentials for regular season games. For DIAA State Tournament events, media personnel must complete the online form to request a credential for a sport specific tournament or event.

Media credentials for DIAA State Tournament games must be requested by the deadline dates. Applicants will receive an email either approving or denying their request.

- **Fall State Tournaments - October 1st**
- **Winter State Tournaments - February 1st**
- **Spring Tournaments - April 1st**

Approved members of the media will be required to check in at the event and show proof of identification. Please be advised that any prior year DIAA credentials are not valid and will not permit access to the designated games and/or press areas.

Media Credentialing Approval Requests

The DIAA will issue credentials to bona fide media outlets for entry and access to state tournament events.

Only accredited professionals representing bona fide organizations will be considered. Approved requests will provide the individual free entry to the requested DIAA event only, as well as access to the sideline or pre-determined media area. Spouses, co-workers, friends, or other individuals associated with the credentialed individual will not be permitted free entry to the event nor access to sidelines or media areas.

The DIAA reserves the right to set policies and regulate the number of credentials issued based on facility-imposed restrictions and/or any public health related restrictions. By accepting and using this credential, the bearer and their outlet agrees to abide by DIAA policies and regulations. The DIAA reserves the right to refuse credential requests from any entity whose coverage or conduct is deemed unprofessional or not in the best interest of our student-athletes. The credential may be revoked or removed at any time at the sole discretion of the DIAA.

DIAA's definition of a bona fide media organization is as follows:

- Organization must have an established, longstanding history of coverage;
- Organization must have credibility as a news-gathering organization;
- Organization must have editorial oversight;
- Organization must create original content which can only be generated by being onsite at an event;
- Organization's coverage must go beyond the distribution of in-game scoring updates.

Please note:

- The DIAA does NOT credential freelance individuals or social media-exclusive outlets.
- Weblog-based (blog) websites are not considered bona fide media organizations.
- Organizations that are scouting, ranking or recruiting services, college coaches, private clubs or specialty websites are not considered bona fide media organizations

DIAA will provide media credentials to representatives of an accredited media organization recognized by DIAA for the sole purpose of providing access to cover a DIAA tournament event. The DIAA prohibits the sale of photographs or visual material taken at a DIAA event. The DIAA will not credential any photographers whose photos will be used for any purpose other than media coverage. The DIAA does not issue media credentials to commercial or freelance photographers. Media outlets may not use the DIAA logo without written consent from the DIAA Executive Director.

State Tournament **School Media Credentials**

The DIAA welcomes members of school media organizations to state tournament events. School media organizations include, but are not limited to: newspaper, yearbook, broadcasting, marketing, or website. Individuals must be representing a participating school.

- For DIAA State Tournament events, each participating member school will receive two school media passes to be used at their discretion.
- A school media representative may be a student and/or an adult working on behalf of the school.
- The name of the individual receiving the school media pass must be emailed to the DIAA office at least 48 hours before the start of the tournament game.
- School representatives that are issued a DIAA media credential will only be permitted to use the credential for events their respective school is a participant. Using the credentials for any other DIAA event will result in the credential being confiscated and a report to the head of the school and the athletic director.

State Tournament Media Access & Coverage

- The DIAA approved media credential list will be distributed to all schools/facilities hosting a state tournament event.
- Credentialed and/or approved media members will be required to check in upon arrival at state tournament events, and show proof of identification.
- Credentials must be visible when attending state tournament events. The sale or unauthorized transfer of credentials is strictly prohibited. Each media credential is issued to one individual and cannot be used to bring an associate, friend, or any additional person.
- Access to press boxes, sidelines, and interview areas may vary depending on the venue and sport. Upon arrival at each tournament game or event, media members will be informed about the approved media areas and any specific guidelines.
- Media members photographing, videotaping, or web casting (video streaming) a state tournament event shall not interfere with the visibility and comfort of spectators, shall not present a safety hazard to spectators, and shall not disrupt, disturb, or interfere with the competition or officials. Contests may not be filmed in their entirety and footage should be used for highlight purposes only.
- In the interest of public safety, the use of unmanned aircraft systems (drones) for broadcast, videotaping or photographic purposes is prohibited during all regular season and state tournament games. Unmanned aircraft systems may not operate in airspace over host school grounds or facilities conducting DIAA events.
- Media members are never allowed to provide coverage inside locker rooms at DIAA state tournament events. Positioning on team benches and inside in-game huddles are also prohibited. The most common areas of concern by sport include, but are not limited to:
 - Football: Media are restricted to the areas outside the team boxes and must always be behind the sideline and endline restraining lines.
 - Wrestling: Media must stay out of team warm-up areas and avoid sitting on or between mats. Be considerate of not blocking spectators' views.
 - Swimming: Media are not allowed on the bulkhead or directly behind the starting blocks except to pass from one side of the pool to the other. There are to be no pictures taken from behind the starting blocks.
 - Basketball/Volleyball: Media must remain within designated areas when filming or taking pictures. Media must remain standing and remain a minimum of six (6) feet behind endlines. Media personnel are never permitted to interfere with players or officials.
 - Track & Field: At race starts, do not block the line of sight of the starter or officials.
 - Baseball/Softball: Media are not allowed in team dugouts or on the playing field.
 - Soccer/Field Hockey/Lacrosse: Media are not permitted behind endlines or on the team bench side of the field. Media cannot set up or photograph near or directly behind the goalposts. All media must remain at least 10 feet from the sidelines on the spectator side.
 - Golf: Media may photograph on the practice range and practice green (prior to the round beginning). During tournament play, photographers should remain close to the cart path and away from the participants on the green.

State Tournament Broadcasting Rights

The DIAA retains exclusive rights to broadcast all tournament games and no party may do so without the consent of the DIAA Executive Director. The NFHS Network is the exclusive broadcast rights holder of DIAA postseason events. Any individual streaming of a contest is strictly prohibited and is in direct violation of DIAA's contract with the NFHS Network. Any violation of the NFHS Network's exclusive rights may result in legal action by the NFHS Network.

Regular Season Hosting Schools Media Policy

DIAA will no longer issue annual press credentials to be used at regular season games.

- It is the responsibility of hosting schools to determine and enforce their own media policies for regular season games, e.g.: photography areas, media entrances, interview locations, etc.
- Professional media organizations should give host schools and administrators notice of their attendance prior to events, whenever possible.
- It is the responsibility of host schools and administrators to coordinate work space for media members and ensure the safety of that work space for all participants, and spectators.
- The DIAA is available to answer questions or serve as a mediator for school and media relations.

Request for Media Credentials Form

https://education.delaware.gov/diaa/diaa_for/media/

Submitting a request form does not guarantee your credential. You must receive approval and confirmation from the DIAA office for your request. A confirmation approval or denial e-mail will follow within 48 hours. If a response has not been received, it is the requester's responsibility to follow up.

Having been credentialed at previous DIAA state tournament events does not guarantee approval. Credential requests must be made in advance of the event. Walk-up requests will not be considered.

Media requests, data requests, and marketing inquiries to the DIAA should be submitted to:
Caitlin Finkley, Marketing & Communications Specialist Caitlin.Finkley@doe.k12.de.us