

The NMAA is very excited that the return of high school athletics is right around the corner. As our member schools prepare for this very unique fall sports season, our office wanted to pass on some important information regarding media and new guidelines that have been implemented due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The new guidelines are attached to this message and can also be found in Section 11 of the NMAA's Multimedia Policy Manual. Please remember that these have been created to ensure safe competition and coverage of NMAA events and their participants. Although media representatives will be limited as we begin our first sports season, the NMAA will continue to work with the Governor's office and NM Public Education Department in an attempt to increase access to our various events as the year progresses. The full NMAA Multimedia Policy Manual can be accessed from the below link:

https://www.nmact.org/file/media_policy.pdf

We value the support of our state's various media outlets and look forward to the amazing coverage that each provides for the students of New Mexico.

Feel free to contact our office with any questions.

Thank you,

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Additional NMAA Media Guidelines During COVID-19

These guidelines are for media personnel to ensure safe competition and coverage of NMAA events and their participants. All other media policies as listed in the NMAA Multimedia Regulations Manual also apply. Note that information listed in this document supersedes that listed in the Multimedia Regulations Manual.

For further guidance, please refer to information from the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH), New Mexico Public Education Department (PED), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Site administrators are responsible for informing all media personnel of any local guidelines that may exist.

These guidelines must be followed at all NMAA sanctioned events. Each school/facility has the authority to implement stricter guidelines when hosting regular season and/or state contests.

General Guidelines:

1. Media personnel are required to wear face coverings/masks at all times (indoors or outdoors) and must practice social distancing. This includes play-by-play or broadcast personnel (tv and radio).
2. Media access to each contest will be limited to the following:
 - a. Video Streaming Personnel (one outlet designated by host school or NMAA)
 - b. Print Media (maximum four individuals)
 - i. One journalist and one photographer representing each school
 - c. Radio (maximum one station per school; maximum two individuals per station)
 - i. One play-by-play and one color per station
 - d. Television News
 - i. Limited access - may enter facility to obtain footage but cannot cover entire contest
 - e. School Media Personnel (maximum two individuals)
 - i. One individual from each school
 - ii. Must have an NMAA school media credential

****NOTE – For State Championship Events, the NMAA will work with the New Mexico Broadcasters Association and New Mexico Press Association to determine which outlets will be granted access per the above guidelines. For regular season events, the host school will make these determinations. Host school administration should work with visiting schools to determine which outlets should be able to cover the contest on behalf of the visiting school/community.**

3. Prior to the event, all media members must communicate with the host school administration to confirm attendance. Only those media members that have requested and been granted approval to cover the contest will be granted access to the facility.

4. Before arriving at an NMAA sanctioned event (regular season or state), media members should check their temperature and conduct a COVID-19 symptom screening. If an individual's temperature is at or above 100.4 degrees, has any additional symptoms of COVID-19, or has reason to believe they may have been exposed to COVID-19, the individual should not attend any NMAA event or any NMAA member school facility.

****NOTE – The host school/facility may require additional COVID-19 screening prior to allowing access to the event.**

5. Upon arrival, all media members must check in with event staff (schools should keep a log of all media personnel granted access for contact tracing purposes). Individuals should have an NMAA Media Credential or other approved pass per the host school. For State Championship Events, access will only be granted to individuals with an NMAA Media Credential. When checking in, media members and event staff should communicate to ensure all facility guidelines are understood.
6. Members of the media should keep a safe social distance from participants, team benches, coaches and spectators (minimum 6-feet).
7. Press box access and seating for media will be limited. Host sites should provide space for media game coverage that takes into consideration social distancing and other guidelines and restrictions that may be in place. Please check with event staff upon arrival to confirm approved media locations.
8. Post-event interviews must take place in designated areas only. Host sites should establish protocols and location for these interviews.
9. Media should limit their time in the facility, keeping pre-game and post-game activity to a minimum. (Example: Radio & TV broadcasts will be allowed a five-minute pre-game show and a 10-minute post-game show before and after the contest. Media members may arrive at the venue no earlier than 30 minutes prior to the start of the contest. In the event that contest will be streamed live or broadcast via a production team (i.e.: ProView Networks), those television companies will work with the NMAA or host school to determine an appropriate time for set up needs. Print media can arrive no earlier than 30 minutes prior to the contest and must leave the facility following post-game interviews)
10. Hospitality areas / complimentary refreshments for media will not be available.
11. It is the responsibility of each media outlet to ensure that their representatives understand and follow these guidelines.

****ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES LISTED ON THE NEXT PAGES**

Activity Specific Guidelines

Cross Country

- Media are not allowed on the course during races

Football

- On-field access on the sidelines for media is limited to the area from the 10-yard line to the end line at the back of the end zone in all four corners of the field (media are not allowed in the 80-yard area between the 10-yard lines on each side of the field)
- On-field access will also be granted behind each end line
- Locker rooms are not accessible for the media
- Access to the press box is not guaranteed; if so, social distancing must be practiced

Soccer

- Photographers must be at least five yards behind the sidelines for camera positions
- Photographers may not shoot from behind the goals

Volleyball

- The scorers' table and team benches are off limits to non-team personnel
- Media will not be allowed on the side of the court designated for the teams

****Guidelines specific to winter (basketball, swimming & diving, wrestling, spirit) and spring sports (baseball, softball, golf, tennis, track & field) coming soon.***