



April 8, 2026

NFHS Track and Field Weekly Rule Interpretations

Under NFHS rules, every entered athlete starts the meet as a contestant. That status changes the moment they report to the clerk of the course for a running event, or to the field event judge for a field event. Once the athlete reports they become a competitor. It's a simple transition, but it carries real consequences. Contestants who do not report shall not be allowed to participate in that event. State Associations may make these rules more strict so make sure you check your state's rules.

Rule 4 – 1

ART. 1 . . . A contestant is any athlete entered in the meet. The contestant becomes an entry at the time the games committee has established as the deadline for accepting entries.

ART. 2 . . . Contestants officially become competitors when they report to the clerk of the course or field-event judge for an event in which the contestants are entered.

ART. 3 . . . *Contestants who fail to report prior to the clerk of the course closing the entries in the running events or after the judge starts competition in the field events shall not be allowed to participate in that event.*

FAILURE TO REPORT OR LATE REPORT

SITUATION: A1 fails to report to the clerk of the course for the prelims in the 100-meter high hurdles. Because of a false start, the race is recalled, at which time A1 appears at the starting line and asks to be placed in the heat. **RULING:** The request will be denied. **COMMENT:** Entries were closed when the clerk turned the runners over to the starter. [4-1-3]

SITUATION: A1 has been assigned to the third flight of the long jump. A1 reports to the long-jump event judge: (a) after flight No. 2 has completed preliminary trials, but prior to the start of competition in flight No. 3; or (b) after competition has started in the third flight, but prior to A1's being called to the order of trials. **RULING:** Deny participation in (a) and (b). **COMMENT:** The contestant must report to the field-event judge prior to the start of the event. [4-1-3]

SITUATION: Following the final call for the 4x200-meter relay, only one member of Team A reports to the clerk of the course. **RULING:** Team A shall not be allowed participate. This shall count as an event for those four listed to participate. [4-1-3]