

Fellow Softball Umpires,

Hello. Many of you moved on to other endeavors after the end of the last high school season in May, but a large group continued to officiate softball through the summer and even well into the fall. My season just ended last weekend, and I'm glad to have a couple of months off before planning and training kicks in again. Each of you should do the same. But even in these out-of-season times, it's a good idea to keep the sport in mind. As we rest and take some well-deserved time off, here are some things to think of.

- Look back at the MPSSAA Softball site and review our communications from last year. Remember what was emphasized and know we would like to build on those things in the 2026 season.
- Also take some time to read the interpretations that were given to us last year from the NFHS. That would be a good way to keep in mind the way we were instructed to approach certain rules and procedures on the field.
- Consider investing in the purchase of a Softball Umpires Manual from NFHS. There is a new 2026-2027 edition coming out this year and it is a wealth of information about how we all can be better umpires. I plan on referring to it with you and with my local association. It should be available for purchase this month on the NFHS site under Publications. Possibly you might get together with a few of your colleagues and order together to save on shipping costs.

Enjoy your upcoming holiday season. And thanks for all you do to be a better umpire and to help the game of softball. I look forward to communicating with you as we get closer to the spring. Always feel free to contact me if I can help you in any way.

Rick