



MCPS ATHLETICS

REGULAR SEASON MEDIA PROTOCOLS

[Application Link](#)

Following are media protocols for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) regular season athletic events. Postseason events are governed by Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) [media protocols](#).

REQUIREMENT FOR CREDENTIALS

All media, multimedia, journalists, reporters, bloggers, vloggers, social media channels, athletic promoters or individuals, or companies seeking access to an MCPS event for the purposes of recording, photography, videography, reporting, etc. must have applied for and received a central system media credential. Each individual must present (and wear) this badge and lanyard while working at an MCPS athletic event. Credentialed individuals are also required to inform high school athletics specialists of their intention to attend an event by email contact. Each local school athletics specialist's email can be found [here](#).

WHO MAY APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE CREDENTIALS

1. **Tier one** —Journalists who use information, photos, and video to tell a story online, on TV, on the radio, or in print.
2. **Tier two** —Individuals taking pictures or videos at the request of a participating school. (i.e., school newspapers, yearbooks, video programs, or parent photographers).
3. **Tier three** —For-profit, athlete profile promoters or video or still photography professionals working for recruiters. Any work that can be considered “for profit” or “pay for service” is not considered traditional media who is providing coverage of an event for the purposes of informing the general or school-specific audiences. Importantly, this tier must submit, in advance, “consent and release” forms for their clients. Although members of the public may attend an MCPS event, these are not public events (those that occur on MCPS property), and due to student privacy concerns governed by law (FERPA), this tier must refrain from taking and selling video or pictures of fans, spectators or other athletes not identified in a signed “consent and release” form.

General Considerations Guiding Athletics Credentialing

1. These credentialing rules are administered and amended as deemed appropriate by MCPS in its sole and absolute discretion.
2. MCPS reserves the right to grant, issue, deny and revoke credentials to any individual or outlet based on the interpretation and intent of these policies and rules as determined by MCPS in its sole and absolute discretion.
3. Credential requests from internet sites, specialty publications, recruiting services, scouts, and college coaches will be considered individually and in alignment with the tiered definitions above.
4. Credential requests must be made annually by July 1 for review in advance of the fall season beginning in late August. Applications may be submitted by completing the [application form](#).
5. MCPS retains the right to administer and/or amend the rules and regulations concerning media credentialing at its sole and absolute discretion.

APPLY FOR CREDENTIALS

Use [this form to request](#) MCPS Athletic Event Credentials

EXPECTATIONS FOR WORKING MEDIA AT MCPS ATHLETIC EVENTS

- Promote the [R.A.I.S.E. core values](#) of the MCPS Athletics program.
- Being respectful to all around you, including fans, officials, coaches, student-athletes, support staff, administrators and fellow members of the media.
- Not distracting those around you, including fans, officials, coaches, student-athletes, support staff, administrators and fellow media members.
- Refraining from cheering while attending an event in an official media capacity.
- Not blocking the view of fans.
- Be mindful of the workspaces, including taking care of food and beverage containers and not spreading out to take up too much space.
- Not bringing 'guests' who are not credentialed media to the event with the expectation that they will receive free admission or privileges accorded to the media.

Specific to Still and Video Photographers.

Photographers from accredited media and MCPS-approved photographers must possess central system media passes at the ticket gate and have media credentials to present upon request or have previously arranged for photo credentials from the MCPS Office of Communications.

- Photographers are not allowed in the line of play and may not be in the way of officials, coaches, or student-athletes.
- The use of flash photography is not allowed.
- Drones are not allowed anywhere on MCPS school property.

NOTE: Violation of any of these guidelines may result in removal from the field or the property at the discretion of the school athletics specialist and school principal.

SPORT-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- **CROSS COUNTRY:** Photographers may not be in the way of timing equipment, officials, coaches or student-athletes.
- **BASEBALL:** Photographers are not allowed on the field of play and must be outside the fence and field of play.
- **BASKETBALL:** Photographers are not allowed on the court (including the painted baseline area and behind the basket/lane) and cannot shoot in front of or behind team benches and the scorer's table. Photographers should not affect the view of fans.
- **FOOTBALL:** Photographers are not permitted on the sidelines between the 20-yard lines and must remain outside the restraining lines surrounding the field.
- **GOLF:** Photographers are not allowed in any areas in which they are in the line of play or could interfere with officials, coaches, or student-athletes.
- **LACROSSE:** Photographers are not permitted in the team bench areas and must remain outside the field's restraining lines.
- **SOCCER:** Photographers are permitted on the sideline but not in front of the bleachers. Photographers should avoid the endline areas.
- **SOFTBALL:** Photographers are not allowed on the field of play and must be outside the fence.
- **SWIMMING:** Photographers are allowed on the pool deck but may not be in the way of the timing equipment, officials, coaches, or student-athletes. No photography is allowed behind the starting blocks.
- **TENNIS:** Photographers must be outside of the fence and may not be in the way of coaches. Photographers should not obstruct the view of fans.
- **TRACK:** Photographers are not allowed in any areas in which they would interfere with the running of an event, and must be out of the way of timing equipment, officials, coaches, and student-athletes.
- **VOLLEYBALL:** Photographers are not allowed on the court (including the painted baseline area) and are not allowed to shoot in front of or behind team benches or the scorer's table. Photographers should not affect the view of fans.
- **WRESTLING:** Photographers are not allowed on the mat and are not allowed to be in the way of officials, coaches, or student-athletes. Photographers should not affect the view of fans.