



2026 Bowling Terms & Conditions

In accordance with Article 1.400 of the IESA Constitution, the IESA Board of Directors has approved the Terms and Conditions governing IESA Bowling. Some items from last year to this year have been renumbered and significant changes are highlighted/shaded.

I. SCHOOL CLASSIFICATION

The competition in IESA Bowling sectionals and state finals will be one class for boys and one class for girls.

II. SEASON CALENDAR

Entry Deadline	January 28, 2026
Final Entry Deadline	February 13, 2026
Cooperative Agreements Due	February 11, 2026
Online Roster Deadline	April 3, 2026
Rosters Closed	April 10, 2026
Sectionals - various locations	April 11, 2026
State Finals - Town and Country Lanes, Joliet	April 17-18, 2026

III. ENTRY FEES, DEADLINES AND ONLINE ROSTER (ENTRY FORM)

A. IESA Entry Fees

- All registration information (number of students competing) must be completed and submitted online in the IESA Member Login Center located on the IESA website at www.iesa.org.
- A school must create an invoice and have their payment of \$22 per bowler postmarked by the initial entry deadline. Schools have up until the final entry deadline to create an invoice and have payment postmarked, but doing so after the initial entry deadline may result in additional fees.
 - A team is defined as four bowlers competing from one school and a school registering a team may list up to six students on the online roster.
 - It is understood that only four students will bowl at any given time in the boys' and/or girls' division(s) and the remaining two students are substitutes.
 - If a school does not have four bowlers, the school is permitted to register up to three individuals to compete as individuals and no substitutes are permitted.
 - Entry fees will be refunded only upon request prior to the initial entry deadline.
 - Late entry fees may be waived for schools designated as new members or for current member schools entering this activity for the first time.
- Coops are permitted and schools wishing to form a coop with another school(s) must follow the guidelines as outlined in IESA By-Law 2.140. Likewise, schools choosing to use students from a feeder school must follow the requirements of IESA By-Law 2.033.

B. Sectionals and State Finals Fees for Bowlers

- Each school is responsible for paying each participating student's lane fees at sectionals.
 - If payment is not made to the bowling center upon arrival at the sectionals site, the student(s) will not be permitted to participate in sectional competition.
 - The sectionals lineage fees (cost per game bowled) are determined by the host and shall include the cost of shoes and bowling balls. The host determines the acceptable form(s) of payment - cash, school-issued check, money order or credit card. Debit cards and/or

personal checks are not acceptable forms of payment. In addition, purchase orders and/or season passes to the bowling center are not considered acceptable forms of payment.

- c. A school paying for four bowlers in a division does not need to pay for the substitute(s) listed on the online roster. Substitutes are permitted in the pit area.
2. The IESA will pay the lineage fees for all bowlers who advance to the state finals.

C. Online Roster

1. The online roster shall list the students bowling and coaches representing the school during the state series (sectionals and state finals) and must be completed by the deadline. Only the students and coaches listed on the online roster are permitted in the pit area.
2. The expectation is that students listed on the online roster are available to bowl at sectionals and both days at the state finals should they advance from sectionals. Schools are discouraged from registering students to bowl at sectionals who know in advance their schedule does not permit them to attend one or both days of the state finals as this may take away the opportunity for other students to earn awards/advance.
3. Failure to submit the form by the deadline will cause students from the school to be ineligible to compete in the state series.
4. It is the ultimate responsibility of all schools with entries to ensure that each bowler representing the school is eligible.

D. Roster Changes

1. After the online roster deadline, any change to the lineup must be submitted to the IESA by 12:00 noon on Friday of Week 40 (see Section II Season Calendar of these Terms and Conditions for the specific date).
2. After this deadline, the only accepted changes will include scratches from competition and changes to the starting lineup.
 - a. An example of a starting lineup change is when a listed substitute is moved into the starting lineup - making a lineup change before the first ball is bowled in a game is not considered a substitution for that game.

IV. SECTIONALS AND STATE FINALS FORMAT

- A. Bowlers will be assigned to blocks of lanes and will rotate within the block; lane rotations may change.
- B. Scoring will be the actual pin fall for each bowler and the standard ten-pin scoring format will be used.
- C. None of the lanes within the sectional or state final bowling centers shall be used for practice on days of competition however, a scheduled ten-minute warm-up will be allowed (five minutes on each lane). The penalty for bowling prior to the warm-up time is disqualification.
- D. If there are an odd number of teams competing, the first bowler of a team cannot begin their next frame until the last bowler has completed their first ball of the previous frame and pacer teams are not allowed.
- E. In the event of a lane breakdown, the bowlers shall move to the next open pair of lanes available. In the event of a hard break, pins should be re-set at the time of the break on the new lanes. One practice ball on each new lane will be allowed for each bowler as a warm-up. The round must be finished on the new lanes regardless of the original pair being repaired.
- F. Sectionals
 1. Assignments will be determined so that the number of schools registered as of the final entry deadline is as equal as possible and geographically reasonable at each sectional site.
 2. Format and Advancers
 - a. Bowlers will bowl four games and follow USBC bowling rules (with any exceptions noted throughout these IESA Bowling Terms and Conditions).

- b. If a sectional site needs to bowl in two shifts, a minimum of eight lanes will be used in the first shift. The eight lanes are composed of four schools which each have a competing boys and girls team.
 - c. The intent is to advance 24 boys teams, 24 girls teams, 48 individual boys and 48 individual girls (not associated with one of the advancing teams) from sectionals to state finals. The number of advancing teams and individuals from each individual sectional site will be based on the number of schools entering the activity.
 - d. If a site does not have the minimum number of advancing teams registered, the following process will be used to fill the state finals field:
 - i. The IESA shall review all remaining sectionals and determine the number of teams (boys and/or girls) that are needed to fill the state finals field. The IESA will determine which team(s) has the least number of pins behind the last qualifying spot in the sectionals.
 - ii. In the case of a tie, the tiebreaker will be broken by the team with the highest series. If the tie still is not broken, then the team with the best 4th game shall advance to the state finals. Consequently, should a tie still exist the next tiebreakers will be the team with the best 2nd game and then the best 1st game.
 - e. If a team advances from sectionals to state and has a player that is no longer able to participate, another student who has been listed as a substitute on the online roster can be used. If the school did not list a substitute, the team will still compete as a team but will only compete with the students listed on the online roster.
 - f. If an individual bowler from a given sectional has qualified but can no longer participate in the state finals, the next eligible bowler from that sectional may advance. First, the principal or athletic director from the school of the bowler withdrawing from the competition must notify the IESA in writing by 2:00 pm on the Tuesday prior to the state finals; the IESA will notify the new advancing individual.
 - i. After the stated deadline has passed, no open positions will be replaced.
3. The IESA will have until 3:00 pm on Monday after sectionals to make corrections to the advancers in the event a clerical error was made in calculating sectionals results.

G. State Finals

1. The state finals will be held at Town and Country Lanes in Joliet and will consist of 3 rounds.

PRELIMINARY ROUND	Friday	Round 1	Games 1, 2, 3, and 4
FINALS	Saturday	Round 2	Games 5, 6, and 7
FINALS	Saturday	Round 3	Games 8, 9 and 10
2. All bowlers will bowl in the Friday preliminary round which will consist of four games. In each division, the top 10 teams and the top 32 individuals not associated with a qualifying team will advance and compete in the remaining two rounds on Saturday.
 - a. Girls will bowl in the morning shift at the Friday state finals.
 - b. In all rounds, there will be no more than four bowlers per lane.
 - c. Of the top 32 individuals, the bowlers with the top four scores from Round 1 will be placed on a lane together. Then, every four bowlers will be grouped together on a lane according to scoring from Round 1 until the field for the finals is completed. The top 40 individuals associated with a team will remain together throughout the duration of the state finals.
3. Lanes will be oiled before Round 1 of the AM shift, before Round 1 of the PM shift on Friday and before Round 2 on Saturday. Before Round 3 on Saturday, lanes will not be oiled.

Friday - Round 1 (Prelims)	
Coaches and Bowlers Report	7:45 am
Coaches Check In Girls Bowlers	7:45 - 8:15 am
Coaches Check In Boys Bowlers	7:45 am - 12:45 pm
General Admission Doors Open	8:00 am
Girls and Boys Coaches' Meeting School Check-in Room	8:15 am
Girls Opening Ceremony	8:35 am
Girls Warm-Up 10 Minutes	8:45 am
Girls Round 1 - 4 Games	9:00 am
Boys Coaches' Meeting Tournament Headquarters	12:45 pm for those who didn't attend morning meeting
Boys Opening Ceremony	1:15 pm
Boys Warm-Up 10 Minutes	1:25 pm
Boys Round 1 - 4 Games	1:40 pm

Saturday - Round 2 and 3 (Finals)	
Coaches and Bowlers Report	8:15 am
Coaches Check In Bowlers	8:15 - 9:00 am
General Admission Doors Open	8:30 am
Round 2 Warm-up 10 Minutes	9:00 am
Round 2 Boys & Girls - 3 Games	9:15 am
Round 3 Warm-up 10 Minutes	30 minutes after completion of Round 2
Round 3 Boys & Girls - 3 Games	Begins after warm-up
Awards (Approximately)	3:00 p.m.

Optional coaches check available on Thursday night. Time-5-7pm

V. STUDENT AND COACH ELIGIBILITY

- A. A student must be eligible under all of the eligibility rules and conditions of competition of the IESA. These rules and conditions are outlined in Sections 2-5 of the IESA Handbook and include but are not limited to:
1. Scholastic Standing - IESA By-Law 2.040
 2. Residence and Transfer - IESA By-Laws 2.050 and 2.060
 3. Participation Limitations - IESA By-Law 3.040
 4. Age Qualifications - IESA By-Law 3.050
 5. Physical Examination - IESA By-Law 3.060
 6. Amateurism - IESA By-Law 3.070
 7. Participating Under an Assumed Name - IESA By-Law 3.080
 8. All-Star Participation - IESA By-Law 3.100
 9. Penalty for Violating Rules – IESA By-Law 5.100
- B. To serve as a head coach, assistant coach, unpaid volunteer coach, or in any coaching capacity, the individual must meet the IESA requirements outlined in IESA By-Law 2.110.
1. A maximum of one head coach and one assistant coach per division may be listed on the online roster by the deadline. Each coach listed must meet the IESA coaching certification requirements to receive a wristband and pit pass for the state finals.

VI. IESA POLICIES AND BOWLING COMPETITION RULES

- A. Ethics of Competition and Sportsmanship
1. Unethical and unsportsmanlike conduct by bowlers, coaches and spectators will be punishable under the provisions of By-Laws 2.090, 2.100 and 5.100.
 2. If a bowler or people from any school are found guilty of carelessness or maliciously breaking, damaging or destroying property or equipment belonging to the host center, such school shall be held responsible for costs incurred in replacing or repairing such property or equipment.
 3. All noise-making devices, signs, banners, placards, or balloons are prohibited.
 4. Sportsmanship
 - a. Bowlers
 - i. A bowler ejected from sectionals will not be permitted to return to any interscholastic contest that day and will be ineligible for the next two contests (Rounds 1 and 2 of the state finals if advancing from sectionals) and complete the

- NFHS Sportsmanship course. Both requirements must be met for eligibility to be reinstated.
 - ii. A bowler ejected from the state finals will no longer be permitted to compete in the state finals.
 - iii. A bowler who earns a second ejection will be removed from the state finals and the school must pay a \$100 penalty.
 - iv. Cheering: Recommended that bowlers not participate in any chanting, cheering, or noisemaking while on the approach.
- b. Coaches
 - i. A coach ejected from sectionals is not permitted to coach the remainder of the day of the ejection and is ineligible to coach the next two interscholastic contests (Rounds 1 and 2 of the state finals), complete the NFHS Sportsmanship course and the school must pay a \$100 penalty fee. All three requirements must be met for eligibility to be reinstated.
 - ii. A coach ejected from the state finals will no longer be permitted to coach at the state finals and must complete the penalty requirements as outlined above.
 - iii. A coach who earns a second ejection will no longer be permitted to coach at the state finals and the school must pay a \$250 penalty fee.
- c. Spectators
 - i. A spectator ejected from sectionals must complete the NFHS Sportsmanship course.
 - ii. A spectator ejected from the state finals is not permitted to return to the state finals.

B. Appropriate Appearance and Attire

1. Bowlers not in compliance with the dress code will not be eligible for competition. All bowlers and coaches shall conform to the acceptable dress code and provisions:
 - a. Bowlers from the same school competing in the same division shall appear in matching tops and appropriate bottoms. The matching tops shall be identical and must bear the school/district name, logo and/or mascot.
 - i. Matching tops may include polos, t-shirts or jerseys.
 - ii. Appropriate bottoms may vary amongst members of the team and include slacks, jeans without holes, skirts, skorts or golf shorts.
 - b. Unacceptable apparel includes, but is not limited to, tank tops, cut-offs, t-shirts that advertise alcohol, drugs, or explicit material, jeans with holes or patches, hats or headgear, athletic shorts, spandex, and/or yoga pants.
 - c. Contestants and coaches with painted faces or bodies, as well as any costumes, will not be permitted to compete or coach.
 - d. Bowlers and coaches are prohibited from wearing spray glitter.

C. Team Personnel Credentials - Bowlers and Coaches

1. One wristband will be issued to each bowler and one wristband and pit pass will be issued to the listed coach(es) for the division(s) in which a given school has advancers from the sectionals to the state finals. If a coach is not listed as the head coach or assistant coach of a division advancing to the state finals, he/she will not be issued coaching credentials.
 - a. These individuals should only enter through the specified entry doors and must be wearing these items to enter.
 - b. It is the responsibility of the bowler and coach to wear the wristband on their wrist at all times during the state finals. Coaches must wear a pit pass to be in the pit.
 - c. Pit passes are not transferrable as they are only issued to the coach(es) on the school's online roster. Individuals in the pit area without a coach pit pass and coach wristband are subject to removal from the competition facility as they are not permitted in the competition area.
2. Coaches and bowlers who do not qualify for Saturday of the state finals will be allowed into the bowling center for free on Saturday but must display their Friday wristband and remain in the spectator seating area.

D. Ticket Gate Admission

1. For sectionals, admission price will be \$5 for spectators.
2. For state, admission prices:
GO FAN: K-Adult \$8
Cash: K-Adult \$10
3. Spectators will be given a wristband on Friday and a different wristband for Saturday of the state finals that must be worn at all times. The wristband allows for access to the bowling center throughout the day.
4. The IESA pass cards are intended for use by the school administration (superintendent, principal, assistant principal, athletic director). School administrators who wish to have a guest accompany them must present the IESA pass card at the ticket gate to allow the guest free entry.

E. Photographer Access

1. During the state finals warm-up period, photographers from authorized news media outlets will be allowed to take pictures from the lanes and a flash camera may be used at that time.
2. Once the competition begins, no flash cameras may be used and no photographers will be allowed in the competition area.

F. Tobacco Products and Alcoholic Beverages

1. Any bowler, coach or other person connected with a school shall not be permitted to use tobacco products in the bowling center either during practice or while the competition is in progress.
2. The possession, distribution, sale and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages to or by contestants, coaches and spectators is prohibited in the area where competition is taking place. This includes the parking lots, fan accommodation areas, and other bowling center property that cannot be isolated from bowlers, coaches and spectators.
3. Patrons determined to be in violation of this policy will be removed from the premises and law enforcement officials will be called as warranted. No ticket refunds will be granted in such cases.

G. Electronic Devices

1. Bowlers are prohibited from playing music with or without headphones, using cell phones, electronic devices or any unusual equipment that might be distracting or assist a bowler in receiving outside coaching or instruction at any time during the competition, including during warm-ups, in the competition area. Coaches are allowed to have electronic devices.

H. General Competition Rules

1. Unless otherwise specified by the IESA, the USBC Bowling Rules and the IESA Bowling Terms and Conditions shall govern equipment and competition in all rounds.
2. A Games Committee will be appointed for the state finals. The Games Committee shall be comprised of the Tournament Manager or Co-Managers, bowling alley manager, and the IESA administrator. Additionally, two alternates shall also be appointed. The Games Committee shall conduct itself within IESA and US Bowling Congress Rules.
3. All bowling balls must meet USBC specifications. Any bowling ball that does not meet the specifications will be removed until the ball meets the legal specifications.
 - a. In accordance with USBC Bowling Rules, bowlers are allowed to alter the surface of the ball during warm-ups and between rounds by using abrasives such as sandpaper, Scotch Brite pads, liquid abrasive, and polishing machines. Only a dry towel may be used to wipe off a bowling ball during competition. The list of approved cleaning agents is available on the IESA Bowling webpage.
4. Team Substitutions
 - a. A substitute's total pin fall will contribute to the total team score.

- b. A school may make up to two substitutions in any one game.
 - i. If the use of the substitute is reported after the first ball has been rolled in the first frame of any game, this will be considered a substitution.
 - ii. A school may substitute a roster position within a game provided the frame is complete.
 - iii. A bowler that has been replaced is not permitted to re-enter that same game; however, a replaced bowler may enter a subsequent game on the same day.
 - iv. If an injury takes place and the team has exhausted the two substitutions permitted, the school must proceed without replacement of the injured bowler; a score of zero will be entered for any remaining frames in which the injured bowler cannot compete.
 - d. The replaced bowler for an in-game substitution and the substitute are no longer eligible for individual awards or advancing as an individual.
 - e. All bowlers listed on the online roster (starters and substitutes) will be allowed to participate in the warm-up prior to the start of competition each day.
5. Bowlers are not permitted to leave the pit area to receive coaching instruction from spectators. If a bowler needs to leave the pit area for a personal reason (use the restroom, exchange equipment), there can be no communication between the bowlers and spectators that could be deemed coaching advice of any nature for the duration of the ten frames each game. If a bowler is found in violation by a tournament manager during sectionals and/or the state finals, the penalties are as follows:
- a. 1st offense - verbal warning
 - b. 2nd offense - 50-pin deduction for the individual in the game in which the violation occurred
 - c. 3rd offense - disqualification from the remainder of the state series

VII. FORFEITS AND TIEBREAKERS

A. Team and Individual Forfeits

- 1. If an individual or an entire team representing a school forfeits the competition by failing to show for sectionals or any round for the state finals, the competition will move forward without replacement. The school that forfeited will be subject to penalties outlined in IESA By-Law 5.029.

B. Sectionals Tiebreakers

- 1. Ties in team competition will only be broken for 1st place and the last qualifying spot. The following tiebreaker procedure must be followed:
 - a. The team with the highest **fourth** game advances.
 - b. In the event a tie still exists after reviewing the score of the third game, the tie will be broken by looking at which team has the highest second game score and, if needed, the highest first game score.
- 2. Ties in individual competition will only be broken for 1st place and the last qualifying spot. The following tiebreaker procedure must be followed:
 - a. The individual with the highest **fourth** game advances.
 - b. In the event a tie still exists after reviewing the score of the third game, the tie will be broken by looking at which individual has the highest second game score and, if needed, the highest first game score.

C. State Finals Tiebreakers

- 1. If there is a tie within team competition for 10th place following play on Friday or a tie for 1st place following play on Saturday, a two-frame roll off will take place between those teams beginning with the ninth frame and concluding with the tenth frame. Teams are allowed one practice ball per lane with a coin-toss deciding which team bowls first. A pair of lanes not previously used in tournament play that day will be implemented during the roll off for both teams. If the score is still tied after the first tiebreaker, a second tiebreaker will be conducted using the same format. The best score shall advance.

2. If there is a tie within individual competition for 32nd place following play on Friday or a tie for 1st place following play on Saturday, a two-frame roll off will take place beginning with the ninth frame and concluding with the tenth frame. Individuals are allowed one practice ball per lane with a coin-toss deciding who bowls first. A pair of lanes not previously used in tournament play that day will be implemented during the roll off for each bowler. If the score is still tied after the first tiebreaker, a second tiebreaker will be conducted using the same format. The best score shall advance.
3. In the case of a tie for any place that does not involve a qualifying position or 1st place, it will not be broken.

VIII. AWARDS

A. Sectionals

1. There will be no official award ceremony at sectionals. Hosts are encouraged to read off team winners, individual winners and state qualifiers once results are finalized
2. The host shall share the complete team and individual results. Final results/advancers will be posted on the IESA website after submission and review by the IESA.
3. The top boys team and the top girls team shall be awarded the championship plaque at State check-in.
4. The top 10 individual boys bowlers and top 10 individual girls bowlers in each sectional will receive medallions at State check-in.

B. State Finals

1. The cumulative pin fall count of each individual bowler from both Friday and Saturday determines team placement.
2. The top three boys' and girls' teams will receive trophies and medallions. Seven medallions will be presented to the first, second, and third place team winners.
3. Medallions will be awarded to the top 15 bowlers in each the boys' individual and girls' individual competition who score the highest total pin fall count through all rounds.