



Texas Association of Sports Officials

TASO POSITION CONCERNING THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

This message is for all TASO Members in regards to the recent trend of players kneeling or sitting during the national anthem.

As officials, you are there to officiate. It is not within the purview of officials to make judgments on the personal, social, or political opinions of any player or coach. It is neither proper nor warranted for officials to express their pleasure or displeasure with how players act during the national anthem.

Athletes and coaches have their expectations set by their school. These expectations set by the school are not within the official's purview.

As a TASO member assigned to a game or match by a TASO Chapter assigner, there are certain criteria that you are expected to follow during a rendition of our National Anthem. It is not our desire to disallow your freedom of free speech, when you are a spectator at a game or match, you should follow your heart when the Anthem is played. However, when you are officiating a game or match, you are a representative of your Chapter, TASO and the 14,500 TASO members, so certain conduct is expected. We are there to perform a professional service to ensure a fair and safe athletic contest for the student athletes, the coaches and the schools. We are not there to make a personal political or social statement.

Conduct during playing of the National Anthem: When the flag is displayed, you are expected to face the flag, stand at attention with your right hand over your heart. If you are wearing a hat, the hat should be removed, held in your right hand, and placed near your left shoulder so that your hand is over your heart. If the Flag is not displayed, you should face the music and act in the same manner as if the flag was displayed. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans may render the military salute in the manner provided as if they were in military uniform.