

# OFFICIAL 2026 SPARK TOURNAMENT BASKETBALL RULES

## I. PURPOSE

The SPARK Midwest Tournament is organized first and foremost as a means of bringing Muslim communities together for fun and recreation, to encourage physical activity and to promote healthy competition for Muslim youth, all of which are part of our Sunnah. The tournament is for players of all skill levels and games are meant to be played to the best of everyone's ability.

## II. PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible to participate, in addition to being Muslim and meeting grade requirements and paying registration fees, each participant must meet one of the following criteria:

- i. Be enrolled in a full-time Islamic school.
- ii. Be enrolled in a weekend Islamic school program.
- iii. Regularly participate in youth programs with his/her respective Masjid.

### Grade Requirements

- Elementary (Grades 1-5)
- Middle School (Grades 6-8)
- High School (Grades 9-12)\*

\*High School seniors must be enrolled and attending high school on a full-time basis.

1. A player graduates early but is under 18 before the date of the tournament.
2. A player is attending "prep school" and NOT BEING PAID and is under 18 before the date of the tournament.

NOTE: A player that is being paid for playing the sport of basketball is INELIGIBLE regardless of age.

- Men's Open

Any questions regarding an opposing team player's eligibility should be brought to the attention of the officials and/or organizers immediately. The organizers will investigate and make a decision on the matter. The tournament organizers' decisions are final and are to be respected.

### III. COACHING REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Each team must have at least 1 coach.
2. Coaches are responsible for all of the following:
  - i. Ensuring his/her team members meet all eligibility requirements.
  - ii. Registering all his/her players, including each player's age, at the beginning of the tournament.

*Once a team has registered, no additional players may be added to the roster. Any misrepresentation regarding eligibility will result in the team's disqualification from the tournament.*
  - iii. Ensuring that each team member signs a waiver before participating in his/her first game. (Play will not be permitted without a signed waiver.)
  - iv. Ensuring that each member of a team wears the same or similar colors with numbers, during a game.
  - v. Ensuring that a participant plays for only one team and in only one division.
  - vi. Communicating game times, location, etc. to his/her team.
  - vii. Representing the team and communicating with the officials.
  - viii. Ensuring proper conduct of his/her team at all times.
  - ix. Ensuring clean play and good team sportsmanship.
  - x. Cleaning up all trash, bottles, etc. on and around the bench area after each game.

### IV. EQUIPMENT

1. Jewelry is not allowed during play. No earrings, no chains.
2. A head sweatband (or head scarf for girls) is permitted; however, hats are not permitted.
3. Rubber, cloth, or elastic bands may be used to control hair. Hard items such as beads, barrettes, and bobby pins are not permitted.
4. A guard, cast, or brace made of hard and unyielding leather, plaster, pliable plastic, metal, or any other hard substance, even though covered with foam padding, is not permitted on the finger, hand, wrist, forearm, or elbow.
5. Knee and ankle braces that are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production shall be permitted and do not require additional padding.

6. Knee and ankle braces that are altered from the manufacturer's original design/production shall be permitted as long as they are soft and yielding or all exposed metal and other hard parts are padded with at least 1/2-inch foam rubber (or 1/4 inch closed cell, slow recovery foam rubber).
7. Shorts must extend below the knees for boys (i.e. knees should be covered). Girls' legs should be completely covered.
8. Either basketball or white-soled athletic shoes must be worn while playing. No street shoes are allowed during play.
9. All teams must wear matching jerseys with clearly visible numbers on the back. Teams without proper uniforms may be assessed a technical foul before the game begins.
10. No tank tops allowed.

## V. TOURNAMENT RULES

Except as modified by these rules, Official IHSA basketball rules shall govern play.

### **9a. Pool Play Format (Elementary, Middle School, High School Recreational)**

Teams will be divided into pools within each division.

Each team is guaranteed a minimum of 3 games.

Advancement rules:

- More than 8 teams: Top 8 overall advance to the knockout stage.
- Exactly 8 teams: Top 4 overall advance.
- Fewer than 8 teams (but more than 3): Top 4 overall advance.

Special cases:

- If there are only 3 teams in a division: The #1 seed advances directly to the final; the #2 and #3 seeds play a semifinal, with the winner advancing to the final.
- If there are only 2 teams in a division: Both teams advance to play a single championship game.

### **9b. Men's Open Divisions**

This division will follow a double elimination bracket format.

10. Teams must register a full roster; the maximum number of players per team is 10. All games are full court, 5-on-5.
11. Youth games will consist of two 15-minute halves with a 2-minute halftime, while Men's Open will consist of two 18-minute halves with a 2-minute halftime. A running clock will

occur for the entirety of the whole game, with the last 2 minutes of the second half stop and go if the lead is under 20. A lead of 20 and up will be a running clock.

12. Each team will be given 2 one-minute timeouts per half and timeouts will not carry over in regulation or overtime. For an overtime game, each team will get 1 additional timeout per overtime period.

13. In the event of a tie, a 2-minute (stop and go clock) overtime will occur. This will continue until one team wins.

14. Pressing Rule:

- Elementary: no pressing once a team leads by 10 points.
- Middle School Division and High School Division: no pressing once a team leads by 20 points.

15. The floor referee(s) will make all final calls and decisions. Their decisions are to be respected. No arguing with the referees is permitted and referees shall not be approached by players, fans or coaches after games. Only coaches may speak directly to the referees during or after the game.

16. For each half, bonus starts at the 7th team foul; double bonus starts at the 10th team foul.

17. A technical foul will result in 2 free throws and possession to the offended team. Two technical fouls in the tournament and a player will be ejected from the tournament.

18. Players must check in at the scorer's table prior to entering the game. The officials will call the players onto the court to substitute.

19. Coaches must remain in their designated areas during the game. **ONLY ONE COACH MAY BE STANDING AT A TIME. MORE THAN ONE COACH WILL RESULT IN A TECHNICAL FOUL.**

#### **19a. Bench Area Restriction**

- Only rostered substitutes, one head coach, and one assistant coach are permitted in the bench area.
- Spectators including parents, family, and friends must remain in designated viewing areas at all times.
- Failure to comply after a referee or tournament staff request will result in a technical foul assessed to the team.

20. A player is only allowed to play in 1 division and on 1 team UNLESS PARTICIPATING IN HIGH SCHOOL AND MEN'S OPEN DIVISION. Violation of this rule will result in a forfeit for both teams at the director's discretion.
21. Prior to their games, coaches should check in at the scorer's table and teams should be ready to play at their designated court and time. If a team is not present to play at its designated court and time, the officials shall give that team 10 minutes after which the game shall be forfeited.
22. Organizers/officials reserve the right, in their sole discretion, to modify these rules on a case-by-case basis, in order to ensure fairness and efficiency. All decisions made by organizers/officials are final.
23. For preliminary rounds (Elementary/Middle School divisions), teams will be seeded to enter the playoff round based on EXPOSURE APP STANDINGS, WHICH ARE FINAL.

Points are calculated as follows:

- Win = 3 points
- Draw = 1 point
- Loss = 0 points
- Technical fouls applied are at the director's discretion:
  - Un-uniformed teams (1 point)
  - Trading players (1 point)
  - Fighting, abusive and racist language to other players, attendees or officials (1 point)

#### **24. Score Table Rule**

- Each team must provide one fan or family member (not a player/coach currently in the game) to work the score table.
- This ensures two scorekeepers per game (one from each team).
- Failure to provide a score table volunteer will result in immediate team disqualification from that game.

## **VI. CODE OF CONDUCT**

Each participant must observe Islamic behavior and etiquette at all times. Accordingly:

- a. Play a team game and involve all of your teammates.
- b. Support and encourage your teammates.
- c. Always play your best. Your team is depending on you.

- d. Maintain a positive attitude. Keep yourself and your team motivated.
- e. Show respect for all participants, coaches, officials and spectators. You represent your team and your community.
- f. Respect all calls made by the officials.
- g. Demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times.
- h. Have fun!

## VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Fighting, swearing, flagrant fouls, taunting, or trash talk are not permitted. Violation of this code of conduct, or any other rule, or otherwise engaging in any act that the organizer(s) consider inappropriate or that may harm or actually harms another person, or causes any damage to the premises or any property, may result in actions including but not limited to the following: a warning, a technical foul, ejection from the game or the tournament. If a participant causes damage to property he/she is responsible for paying for the damage. The decision of the officials/organizer(s) as to play and participation is final.