



Maryland Marching Band Association

Member Guide

Updated 2/23/2025

This document is to be used as a guide for members of MMBA. This will outline procedures, ranging from membership eligibility to show registration to show day expectations. MMBA is committed to working toward meeting the needs of all bands in Maryland, and we hope this document will clarify how the organization will accomplish that.

I. Goals of the Organization

- A. To offer a performance outlet to marching bands of all types, including a festival component (with or without ratings) as well as competition in various divisions.
- B. To provide meaningful feedback from highly qualified clinicians and adjudicators.
- C. To build an organization from the ground up using input from all Maryland band directors and hand off governance of the organization to an executive board and several committees.
- D. To provide all of this at a substantial cost savings to participating bands as well as show hosts.
- E. To run a true Maryland State Championship in a large college stadium in Maryland to close our season if possible.

II. Membership

- A. Membership in MMBA is open to any high school marching band, public or private, Maryland or other.
- B. There is no membership fee; however some events will have a registration fee.
- C. Bands from outside Maryland are granted the same rights and responsibilities as Maryland bands, with the exception that only bands from Maryland may compete in State Championships.
- D. Bands wishing to join should contact mdmarchingband@gmail.com.

III. Show Registration

- A. Registration will occur via the Competition Suite website/app during the registration window, which will open in the spring when the schedule is finalized. The exact date will be clearly marked in Competition Suite.
- B. Registration will close one month before each competition. After that date, any bands wishing to register for a show will need to contact MMBA directly, and addition will be at the discretion of the MMBA Executive Board and the show host.
- C. Contact Brendan Maltese (brendanmaltese@gmail.com) to get an account set up and for help with this process.
- D. Certain events (states, regionals, etc.) may require a registration fee. This fee will be visible at time of registration, and an invoice will be generated and sent through Competition Suite. Payment methods will be listed on the invoice. All event fees are due by October 1. Any band who is not paid by then will be dropped from the competition lineup.
 1. Regional events are \$100 per performing group.
 2. State Championships are \$500 per performing group.
- E. Directors will complete all requested surveys to allow MMBA to establish competition classes.

IV. Competition Class and Adjudication

- A. MMBA has 2 competition classes: Open and A.
 - 1. A Class is generally for less experienced and/or less competition focused bands.
 - 2. Open Class is for more experienced and/or more highly competitive bands.
- B. Each caption is divided into Composition and Excellence. In Open Class, these are weighted evenly. In A Class, Composition is weighted at 30% and Excellence is weighted at 70%.
- C. Judging sheets will be made available on the MMBA website.
- D. Each fall, band directors are given a choice as to which competition class they would like to have their band compete in. Throughout the season, the judging coordinator will contact directors regarding classification if judges determine groups must be asked to change classes to be in a more appropriate setting.
- E. Each class has divisions based on band size (includes all performing members). Size divisions are decided each season based on the sizing of all groups within MMBA in an attempt to foster competition in all divisions. Size divisions will be set two weeks prior to the first MMBA event in the fall. For the 2024 season, those divisions are:
 - 1. 1A: 1-39
 - 2. 2A: 40-49
 - 3. 3A: 50-59
 - 4. 4A: 60+
 - 5. Open Small: 1-59
 - 6. Open Large: 60+
- F. Performing groups may request to change class/division before October 1, subject to Executive Board approval.
- G. Scores for all competing classes will be announced at an award ceremony after the event. Exhibition scores will not be announced at the event. All scores, including exhibitions, will be posted on the MMBA website immediately following the ceremony.
- H. Critique: At all regular shows, staff members will have the opportunity to meet with judges to discuss their performance, immediately following the competition. This will typically be done in panels of two judges, with 3 minutes per panel. Critique will be offered first to bands traveling the furthest.
- I. Recaps will be made available to competing organizations via Competition Suite after critique. Recaps will not be posted publicly.

V. Band Information and Show Cancellation

- A. MMBA will ask directors to provide logistical information as well as membership numbers for bands during the summer. This information must be provided at least three weeks prior to the first MMBA event (generally by mid-August). Directors who do not submit band information may risk having early season events canceled for their group. Any changes to this information should be sent directly to the MMBA as soon as possible.
- B. Bands who need to cancel an event are required to do so at least 10 days prior to the event, except in case of extreme emergency. Notification of cancellation should be done directly through MMBA. MMBA will then notify local show hosts of cancellations. Late cancellations may result in a financial penalty to the band.

VI. Show Information

- A. MMBA will provide a preliminary schedule approximately three weeks prior to the show date (with the exception of States, which are seeded based on prior performance).

- B. Final show schedule and logistical information (director's packet) will be provided to bands the Tuesday prior to each event.

VII. Performance Rules

- A. All bands will be given a 15 minute time slot at all local events. There are no timing rules or penalties within that 15 minute time period. There are no minimum show length requirements. Time slots for Regional and State competitions may be adjusted as needed for logistical purposes.
- B. All performances should be limited to the football field and sideline area. Bands are welcome to use the sideline area, but should not be utilizing the track for performance.
- C. All performing groups should leave the performance area in the exact manner that they found it – no pit or props should damage the surface in any way and no materials should remain on the field after performance is completed. Groups found to be harming the performance surface may be penalized or charged for damages.
- D. Host schools manage all events, and rules and requirements set forth by those schools regarding the use of the facilities must be followed by all groups. This includes path of travel and field entry and exit requirements.
- E. Bands who experience an unexpected absence of a performing member and would like the judging panel to be aware must contact the show coordinator before the start of the show or as soon as the absence is known.
- F. Bands who experience an unexpected absence of a drum major may request approval from the Chief Judge to utilize a staff member as a replacement for that drum major. This request should be submitted to the Show Coordinator.
- G. Amplified metronomes may not be used in the warm up area.

VIII. Regular Competitions

- A. Regular competitions will be held weekly throughout the fall season.
- B. Bands may register for as many or as few competitions as desired. There are no circuit minimum requirements.
- C. At the time registration is closed, MMBA and host bands will begin planning around those registration numbers. If you do not intend to attend a competition, please cancel your registration prior to that deadline to avoid causing financial harm to hosts. If an unforeseen circumstance after the registration deadline prohibits a band from participating, directors are expected to notify MMBA and the host immediately.
- D. MMBA and the host director will work together to establish a competition schedule. A preliminary schedule will be released approximately two weeks in advance. A final schedule will be released Tuesday before the competition. No changes to performance times will happen once the schedule is finalized, unless all affected parties agree.
- E. A highly qualified panel of judges will adjudicate competitions.
- F. Performing groups will be seeded randomly within their competing class. If a band requires an earlier performance time to work around a conflict, that request should be communicated to MMBA as soon as the conflict is known. Requests to perform earlier will be granted. Requests to perform later will be granted at the discretion of the Executive Board.

IX. Regional Competitions

- A. A regional competition will function as a normal competition, with two differences:
 - 1. After the regular award ceremony, additional awards will be given to the top three overall scoring bands, regardless of competing class.

2. The host band may choose to compete in the regional competition, randomized in their competing class. They may also perform at the end of the competition in exhibition. Only the competition performance will be scored if they choose to do both.

X. State Championships

- A. State championships will be held as late in the season as is practical, with the preference being the first Saturday in November.
- B. Only Maryland bands may compete for a state championship. Any bands from other states must perform in exhibition, if space in the schedule allows. Priority is given to Maryland bands first.
- C. Performance order will be rotated each year:
 1. 2023: 1A, 2A, 3A, Break, 4A, OS, OL
 2. 2024: 3A, 4A, 1A, Break, 2A, OS, OL
 3. 2025: 4A, 1A, 2A, Break, 3A, OS, OL
 4. 2026: 2A, 3A, 1A, Break, 4A, OS, OL