

Guidance for MIAA wrestling weight certification

This document was created by a physician on the MIAA Sports Medicine Committee who has many years' experience with the MIAA weight certification process. Approved medical professionals should utilize this document as guidance to assist them with properly completing the MIAA Minimum Weight Control Certification ([click here](#)). Please be sure to carefully read MIAA Rule 84.4, 'Weight Control and Certification Procedures' in the [MIAA Handbook](#).

The MIAA minimum weight certification process is required to decrease the potential for unhealthy weight loss behaviors. Massachusetts does not utilize any weight management system or the weight descent plan. NFHS Wrestling Rule book notes that, "*Any wrestler's assessment that is below seven percent for males and 12 percent for females shall have a medical release to participate signed by an appropriate health-care professional.*"

You can utilize the BIA (Bio-Electrical Impedance Assessment) or skin fold assessment. If you do not feel comfortable with the skin fold measurements or calculations, you can utilize a BIA device. This process will require less time and the weight and percent body fat can be performed with one measurement.

There will always be debate about the performance and precision of the many methods that can be utilized to determine a student's body fat percentage. If you choose to utilize a BIA device, it is suggested that you become aware of the settings that are available on your device. There may be a setting for a student who is < 15 yrs. In addition, there is an athlete and non-athlete mode on many of these devices.

The vast majority of the minimum weight certifications are very simple. The coaching staff should have educated the parents about this process. You can anticipate answering a few questions about the 7% body fat weight for some of the larger athletes. The 7% body fat weight does not indicate the goal weight for competition.

Examples:

1. A wrestler's actual weight is 230 lbs. Body fat 30%. The minimum weight would be 173. They will most likely wrestle 215. You could choose 190 lbs. as the minimum weight. Choosing 175 lbs. would be confusing, unrealistic and would not be appropriate.
2. A wrestler's actual weight is 140 lbs., with 8% body fat. Their 7 % body fat weight would be 134lbs and would qualify for the 138 lb. weight class. Cannot compete in the 132 lb weight class.
3. Weight of 158lb qualifies for 144lb minimum weight class. They plan to wrestle 150 and there are four additional 144 lb wrestlers on the team. It is suggested that you certify the wrestler at 144 lbs. The wrestlers can become ill during the winter season and can experience significant weight loss due to an illness and cannot return to their weight at the start of the season.

The references below can be helpful if you are not familiar with this process. The second reference is a detailed description of the program used in Iowa. The last reference is a spreadsheet that was copied from the Minnesota State High School Wrestling League website. This allows you to enter an athlete's weight and estimated body fat and you will obtain the 7% /12 % body fat weight and the minimum weight (the formula contains an allowance for error in the body fat measurement).

1. <https://www.nfhs.org/articles/rules-in-place-to-guard-against-weight-cutting-in-wrestling?ArtId=748571>
2. <https://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/BODY-COMPOSITION-ASSESSMENT-PROGRAM-2023-24-SCHOOLS.pdf>
3. https://journals.lww.com/nsca-jscr/abstract/2021/03000/a_comparison_of_methods_used_to_determine_percent.7.aspx
4. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1421483/>
5. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16823357/>
6. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15705050/>
7. <https://www.mshsl.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/minimum-weight-permit-spreadsheet-7-19-11.xls> (open document by selecting the blue download file button)