

# FIRST® TECH CHALLENGE OHIO EVENT PARTICIPATION POLICY



## **OHIO FIRST TECH CHALLENGE EVENTS**

### Applicability

This Policy applies to all Ohio events branded as *FIRST*® Tech Challenge (FTC) and sanctioned by the Program Delivery Partner (PDP) within the Wright Patterson Airforce Base Educational Outreach Office (also referred to as Ohio FTC). These events include the Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge Regional Championship, Ohio Qualifying Tournaments, League Tournaments and League Meets as well as PDP endorsed events such as season kick-off gatherings or unofficial scrimmages. All Ohio events promoted on [www.firstinspires.org](http://www.firstinspires.org) and <http://wpafbstem.com/FTC/FTC.html> websites are governed by this policy.

Many of Ohio's events are hosted and managed by organizations who are affiliated with educational establishments, such as High Schools and Universities. For these events, local policies may also apply. Please contact the Event Coordinator for full details.

### Conflicting Statements

In the event of any conflicting statement between this Policy and other webpages or forms on the WPAFB Educational Outreach Office Website, this Event Participation Policy applies. Certain events may have additional participation criteria which augment this policy.

Please contact the Ohio FTC Program Delivery Partner [bholt@firstpartners.org](mailto:bholt@firstpartners.org) if there are any questions regarding this Ohio Participation policy.

## **YOUTH PROTECTION**

### *FIRST* Youth Protection Program

The *FIRST* Youth Protection Program is an important part of the protection of our youth. Coaches, Mentors and other Adults affiliated with a team participating in Ohio FTC managed events are required to follow the requirements outlined in [FIRST Youth Protection Program](#).

### Consent and Release

Every student, coach, mentor, or volunteer participating in *FIRST* Tech Challenge must have an electronically signed consent and release form for the current season. This applies to traditional, hybrid and remote events. For anyone under the age of 18, Consent & Release Forms will need to be electronically signed by a parent or guardian.

Click the [link](#) to follow the instructions to complete the Consent and Release Form.

A printed *FIRST* Team Roster showing that each student's parent or guardian has electronically filled out the Consent and Release form online **MUST** be presented during check-in at traditional or hybrid events.

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## EVENT ELIGIBILITY

### Team Participation

Before registering to compete in any official Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge event, teams must be in good standing with *FIRST*, including:

- Registration and payment of annual fees to *FIRST*.
- The team must have two adults who have passed the Youth Protection screening process.

[Registering a \*FIRST\* Tech Challenge team](#) each season does not guarantee participation in any official *FIRST* Tech Challenge event in Ohio. However, Ohio FTC will seek to offer (at additional cost) *FIRST* Tech Challenge teams at least two opportunities to compete in an Ohio Qualifying Tournament OR one Ohio Qualifying Tournament and One League Tournament (if this is offered).

Teams must comply with Ohio tournament registration procedures that include, but are not limited to:

- Registration request deadlines.
- Tournament registration fee deadlines.

Official events will be held in accordance with the procedures and rules published *FIRST* Tech Challenge [Competition Manual](#)

Teams that register with *FIRST* in their Home Region of Ohio are only eligible to advance to the next level of competition from Official events held in Ohio.

A team may participate in more than one Qualifying Tournament within their Home Region but are not eligible for consideration for awards nor are they eligible for advancement at tournaments beyond their third. Teams can only compete in one league, and therefore only one League Tournament.

In Ohio, teams may not register for more than 3 Qualifying Tournaments OR 2 Qualification Tournaments and a League Tournament. In either case, there is no guarantee that 100% of team registration applications will be fulfilled as tournament slots are limited. A lottery system may be used to assign teams to tournaments if demand exceeds availability. Teams not selected from a lottery will be placed on waitlists in case any a team withdraws from an event.

Ohio teams are welcome to compete outside their home region, however, they may not advance from those events or be considered for the Inspire Award.

The decision to participate outside Ohio will not affect the team's eligibility to participate in their Home Region of Ohio.

All official Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge tournaments are currently closed to out-of-state teams.

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## Ohio Championship Tournament and Advancement Criteria

Participation in the Ohio *FIRST*Tech Challenge Championship Tournament is based on the successful advancement from an official Ohio FTC Qualifying Tournament or League Tournament. The percentage of Ohio Registered teams that advance to the Ohio Championship in any season is in the range of 32%-42%.

Each Ohio Qualification Tournament and League Tournament is allocated a fixed number of advancement slots for the Ohio Championship. This number may vary from tournament to tournament. Advancement allocations will be communicated and published before the date of the first official Ohio tournament. The advancement criteria and order of advancement is described in Section 4 of the [Competition Manual](#).

## Ohio Championship Waitlist

If an eligible team withdraws or declines to participate in the Ohio Championship, the next team in the order of advancement from the same Qualifying Tournament or League Tournament as the team that withdraws will be offered the advancement slot. Eligibility is based on Next Order of Advancement criteria in Section 4 of the Competition Manual.

## Ohio Championship Wild Card Teams (Optional)

The number of slots at the Ohio Championship may be increased after tournament season is underway. To assure equitable allocation of these new slots, each team that was next in order of advancement from their respective Ohio Qualifying Tournament League Tournament will form a wild card pool. After all the Qualifiers and League Tournaments are over, this pool of teams will be used to fill any additional openings at the Ohio Championship. A team may appear more than once for the pool.

Any wild card teams that later advance from another Qualifier will be removed from the Wild Card Pool and not replaced until all next-in-order Wild Cards have advanced.

At the end of the season, if there are more teams in the wild card pool than additional advancement slots available, priority order will be set by the highest average ALLIANCE AUTO points that each wild card team achieved in the Qualification rounds from the event that they were selected as a wild card team. This prioritization method is consistent with how the 2<sup>nd</sup> sort order Qualification Rankings are determined during official events.

If there are still openings at the Championship after all Wild Card and Waitlisted teams have advanced, a new pool of second alternates will be created and follow the same process described above.

## Participation Exceptions

In rare cases, Ohio FTC may invite teams to register for open slots at official Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge events even if the team is not eligible (such as exceeding the 3 Qualifying Tournament limit). This may occur if surrogates were needed to satisfy tournament minimums. These teams would play for fun and not be eligible for awards or advancements.



## **TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION PROCEDURES**

Advanced registration is required for all official Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge events in accordance with stated. Subject to availability, Ohio FTC may accept late registration requests. Registration for unofficial events such as season kick-off events, scrimmages and workshops may be requested, however, the registration process will be the responsibility of the local event organizer.

### **Qualifying Tournament Registration Process Overview**

The Ohio Qualifying Tournament registration process will be based on a phased preference system. Registration for any Ohio League will be through invitation.

During specified period(s), teams will be able to register their Qualification Tournament preferences. Teams will initially register for up to 2 Qualifying Tournaments. A second window will open later for eligible teams wishing to participate in a 3<sup>rd</sup> Qualifying Tournament (subject to availability).

If more teams apply for a tournament than capacity, a lottery system will be used to assign teams. Teams not assigned to their first preference will then be assigned to a 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> preference, (also using a lottery system if needed). If none of the tournaments on a team's preference list has open capacity, the team will be waitlisted for the first tournament on their list.

Details on the annual Ohio tournament registration process and timeline will be sent via email to the lead coaches of Ohio teams registered with *FIRST* for the season They will also be published on the [Ohio FTC Tournament Registration Web Page](#).

Ohio Championship registration will be automatic based on the teams that advance from the Qualifying Tournaments. If a team is unable to participate in the Championship, they shall notify the Ohio FTC Program Delivery Partner immediately.

### **Timeline for the Qualifying Tournament registration period**

Registration for Ohio tournaments typically opens in early October; however, this may vary from season to season depending on local conditions.

### **Out-of-State Teams**

All official Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge tournaments are currently closed to out-of-state teams.



## **TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION FEES, DUE DATES**

### Season Tournament Fees

Teams will be charged a fee to participate in Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge tournaments. This fee is an addition to the annual team registration fee paid to *FIRST* at the start of each season.

The fee structure may be found on the WPAFB Educational Outreach [Ohio FTC Tournament Registration Web Page](#).

### Due Dates

The Ohio Program Delivery Partner will communicate due dates for payment once tournament registration is confirmed. If the tournament registration fee is not received by the due date, the team may be removed from the registered list and the open slot will be offered to the next eligible team. Teams will not be allowed to participate in an official event unless paid in full.

## **TEAM NO-SHOWS, WITHDRAWALS AND RESCHEDULING**

### Team No-Shows

No-shows at an official tournament are not in the spirit of Gracious Professionalism. If a team cannot participate, they must notify the Ohio FTC Program Delivery Partner [bholt@firstpartners.org](mailto:bholt@firstpartners.org) and the local Tournament Director before the start date of the scheduled event.

A no-show team will be treated as if the team had participated in that event. The team will forfeit their Tournament Registration Fee (if applicable). Other consequences may include loss of eligibility to attend the Ohio FTC Championship Tournament, even if they have previously advanced.

### Team Withdrawals

Teams that withdraw for strategic purposes are not operating in the spirit of Gracious Professionalism. Your original decision to register may have impacted the ability for other teams to participate.

If a team Withdraws from a tournament for any reason **less than 3 weeks** prior to the start date of the tournament, they will forfeit their tournament Registration Fee unless another team can fill the slot.

If a team withdraws from a tournament **more than 3 weeks** prior to the start date of the tournament, they will be refunded their tournament Registration Fee.

Teams can ask to be removed from waitlists without any penalty.

### Team Rescheduling

If a registered team withdraws from a tournament and can re-schedule to a future date, there will be no penalty or additional fees.

The Ohio FTC Program Delivery Partner reserves the right to review and approve/deny withdrawal requests.

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## **EVENT CANCELATION OR RESCHEDULING**

The decision to cancel or reschedule a tournament is not undertaken lightly. The situations most likely to cause this include, but are not limited to:

- Severe weather conditions.
- Exceptional circumstances including extended power outage, loss of heating/air conditioning, loss of water, fire, natural disaster, etc.
- Significant illness or other Health and Safety Concerns (such as Flu or COVID-19) that might involve the closing of a facility prior to a tournament.

The local Tournament Director and Ohio PDP will work together to determine if there will be a delay, early dismissal, rescheduling, or cancelation of the event. Cancelation will be a last resort, but the ability to re-schedule an event is highly dependent on the future availability venues, volunteers, and teams. There may be an option to change a tournament from Traditional to Remote format.

Notification of a schedule change or event cancelation will be sent by an email to the team's main and alternate contacts as designated in the team's registration with *FIRST*.

Registration fees will not be returned to teams affected by an event cancelation; however, teams will not be charged if they are able to register for a re-scheduled or alternate equivalent event. Teams that advance to the Ohio Championship from a canceled Qualification Tournament or League Tournament will be counted as if they had participated in the tournament.

Advancements allocated to a canceled Qualifying Tournament or League Tournament will be decided by a lottery of teams who were registered for the tournament and intended to participate at the time of cancelation.

If the Ohio Regional Championship Tournament is canceled, Ohio FTC will seek direction from *FIRST* HQ on advancement criteria. Based on precedent, it is likely that any advancement to the World Championship will favor Teams who have simultaneously won the Inspire Award AND Winning Alliance Captain at a previous official event.

Ohio FTC has the right to change the Cancelation Policy at any time depending on the situation or as directed by *FIRST*. Any change to these criteria will also be communicated to the team's primary contacts and updated in this document as soon as possible following the change.

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## OHIO TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE

### Official *FIRST* Tech Challenge Tournaments

Ohio offers Qualifying Tournaments (aka. Qualifiers) and League Tournaments. Both systems advance teams to the Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge Regional Championship.

Qualifiers are sized for 16-28 teams (depending on the venue capacity and available volunteers) and a League Structure for 12-16 teams. With consent from the event host organization, the Ohio PDP may increase the initial number of teams permitted to register for a tournament if conditions warrant.

All official Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge Qualifiers and League Meets/Tournament are operated by volunteer host organizations sanctioned by Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge Program Delivery Partner organization. The Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge Regional Championship is managed directly by the Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge Program Delivery Partner.

The Ohio FTC PDP is responsible for setting up the Ohio Tournament Structure, Tournament Registration Process and assigning the number of advancements slots for each event. All event related communications, such as events logistics are managed by the host organization.

Team participation in the Ohio League Structure is by Invitation only based on proximity to the assigned region(s). Teams that agree to participate are expected to attend at least 2 Official League Meets as well as the associated League Tournament.

All official Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge events adhere to *FIRST* standards in format, judging, robot game rules and awards in accordance with [Competition Manual](#).

Ohio *FIRST* Tech Challenge Events will be Traditional or Hybrid Format (see below for the definitions). The event format and logistics for Ohio events will be communicated by the event host and also flagged on the *FIRST* events website as hybrid at <https://ftc-events.firstinspires.org/>

Any change to the format of an event will be communicated to the team's main and alternate contacts as designated in the team's registration with *FIRST*.

### Traditional format Qualifying Tournaments

These competitions are typically one-day events that include judging, robot inspection, robot competition and awards. At the discretion of the local Tournament Director, robot inspection may be offered the evening prior to the event to ensure teams have adequate time to correct any significant issues found during the inspection process.

### Hybrid format Qualifying Tournaments

At hybrid events, robot inspection, robot competition and the awards ceremony are conducted in the traditional format, but all judging is held remotely via video conference. An allowed variation is to conduct the initial judge interviews remotely and follow-up with in-person team interviews during the day of the robot competition. Judging may be held up to six days prior to the robot competition.

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The event host is responsible for setting up the video conference schedule and hosting the meeting. Teams are responsible for ensuring the technical capability to participate in the video meeting. Team members may join the meeting as a group or individually.

## League Meets and League Tournaments

Participation in a League structure provides teams multiple opportunities to compete in multiple abbreviated robot competitions without judging and awards. Each League culminates in a League Tournament that is similar to a traditional Qualifier, with robot competition, judged awards, and advancement opportunities. The only difference is that teams are pre-ranked in the robot competition based on their performance in the preceding League Meets.

Since leagues are built around a local pool of teams, the League Meets may occur on weekday evenings or weekends at multiple venues.

Further details of League Play can be found in Section 14 of the [Competition Manual](#) .

## Full Remote Tournaments

Remote events with remote gameplay and remote judging are currently supported by *FIRST*.

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