



Texas B.A.S.S. Nation Youth Tournament Rules 2025-2026

The Texas Bass Nation Youth, (here by known as TBNY), board and its advisors expect strict adherence to the following rules by all contestants.

In the event of an emergency, please call 911 first and then notify the tournament director.

- 1. INTERPRETATION & ENFORCEMENT:** These rules will remain unchanged during 2025-2026 series. **All local, state, and federal laws must be followed, including boating laws.** Interpretation and enforcement of these rules will be left exclusively to the tournament director. Decisions of the tournament director are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal. Each contestant and coach agree to report any self-rule violation or contestant rule violation to the tournament director immediately upon discovery of the violation. At the State Championship the State Director is the Tournament Director. Failure to report violations may be cause for disqualification. The violation of a tournament rule may result in weight loss (i.e. late penalty, dead-fish penalty and short-fish penalty), the loss of weight up to a particular time in the tournament day, the loss of weight for the entire day, disqualification from the entire tournament or, in an extreme circumstance, ineligibility to participate in future TBNY tournaments. If a Team is under review for a rule violation, the respective Club will also be reviewed and put on notice.
- 2. PARTICIPATION AND ELIGIBILITY:** Participation is open to 2nd – 12th grade school students providing that the 12th grade student does not turn 19 before September 1st of their senior year. Individual Membership to any region is \$70 per Angler, if an angler wishes to fish multiple regions, they must pay each region's membership dues. The entry fee for each tournament is \$60 per boat with no more than two team members and each team member must be a Bassmaster member, B.A.S.S. Nation member and Texas B.A.S.S. Nation member. Teams must reside in the same school/community and state. Contestants must have a valid fishing license for the waters they fish. Contestants are required to follow all applicable federal, state and local regulations and laws. Any violation of such regulations and laws may result in disqualification from the tournament. Each team will consist of two eligible contestants and one boat captain in one vessel on stated tournament waters. There is no limit to the number of teams accepted from each school or club. Any special circumstances must be approved by the tournament director prior to the tournament beginning. Tournament officials reserve the right to reject any application to fish for any reason whatsoever. An eligible angler is a student passing all classes and in good

standing with their respective school district. Grades will be reviewed, and eligibility awarded using the process the schools already have in place for sports and activities. Student anglers are required to fish for the school which they attend. In the event that their school does not offer a high school fishing team, they are permitted to fish with the closest geographically located school that offers a team and allows students outside of that school district to participate with their club. In the event that an angler switches schools during the tournament season, tournament officials shall be notified, and a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis as to which team the angler shall fish with.

3. **PURCHASING OF INFORMATION:** The **purchasing** of, or **bartering** for, information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters, including but not limited to GPS waypoints (other than through commercially available sources) and the **hiring of or fishing with a guide** or a coach is not permitted by contestants or coaches within **15 days** of any tournament on any tournament body of water. In addition, no fishing information may be purchased, bartered, solicited, or received from any person who entered tournament waters within 15 days of the tournament. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification. Social media sites, fishing blogs, public forums, fishing apps and other such sites are available to any participant and therefore are **NOT** considered off-limits. However, asking questions on such sites, receiving information privately from such sites, making in app purchases or intentionally participating in threads regarding any tournament related information during the “no information” period is considered intentionally soliciting/purchasing/bartering or receiving information and therefore is a violation of this rule. On tournament day and official practice, teams may not solicit information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters from anyone except student anglers and/or boat captains, confirmed in that tournament via face-to-face contact only, no electronic devices may be used for contact. On tournament day, teams may not follow a non-contestant’s boat or participate in the placing of marker by non-contestants or the practice of “hole sitting” by anyone.
4. **OFF-LIMITS, PRACTICE AND COMPETITION:** There are no off-limit periods prior to competition days ***unless noted by the Tournament Director***. If the Tournament Director designates an official practice period, those days and hours will be considered part of the tournament, and all tournament rules will apply during that time. Once competition is under way, contestants and coaches may not solicit and/or receive information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters from anyone or fish with anyone not registered in the tournament, except contestants and coaches confirmed in the tournament and through publicly available sources (quasi-public websites set up for the specific purpose of sharing information with individuals or a small group of individuals are not publicly available sources). On competition day, teams may not follow a non-contestant’s boat or participate in the placing of markers by non- contestants or the practice of “hole sitting” by anyone. Violation of this rule may result in a penalty or disqualification, pending the tournament director’s discretion. On or off the water during Safelight only. Boat Captains used during

Official Practice must also be the one during the tournament.

5. **REGISTRATION AND PRETOURNAMENT MEETING**: Registration will close at 12:00 pm noon CST two days before the tournament. At that time, **no more registrations will be accepted**. All registrations will be “time-stamped” by the computer and that timestamp will be the official registration time. **ANY** changes with **Anglers** and boat **Captains** after the team has registered **MUST** be approved by the tournament director. The Captain must be the Captain of record. What this means is that the Captain for the tournament must be the Captain that was registered at the time of tournament registration. If for any reason the Captain needs to be changed it must be approved and documented prior to the tournament start time. **If the Captain change is not communicated or approved prior to the tournament start time, any catches for that tournament day will be forfeited.**

6. **SAFETY**: Safe boating must be observed at all times. Each contestant and coach are required to wear a fastened U.S. Coast Guard-approved and state approved CHEST TYPE personal flotation device anytime the combustion engine is in operation from unloading boat, boat check until weigh-in each day of the tournament and loading of boat. All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition-shutoff device that must be securely attached to the driver’s body whenever the combustion engine is in operation. All persons in a tournament boat shall remain seated in a manufacturer-recommended on-plane seating location when the combustion engine is in operation. Sitting on pedestal seats, the front or back deck or moving about the boat while the combustion engine is in operation is not permitted.

Contestants are **NOT** permitted to drive the boat when the combustion engine is in operation (exceptions, unloading and loading the boat if contestant is Boater Safety Certified, must wear a PFD). Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by contestants and coaches. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification.

7. **SPORTSMANSHIP** • All contestants and boat captains are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy and conservation and to conduct themselves in a manner that will be a credit to themselves and B.A.S.S. in an effort to promote the sport. Conduct not complying with these standards includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a) Violation of or failure to comply with any of the rules for the 2025-26 Texas B.A.S.S. Nation Youth season.
 - b) Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or any kind of mind-altering substance during registration, the pre-tournament meeting or during tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedure, or abuse of, or addiction to, mind-altering substances.
 - c) Smoking, vaping or dipping of any kind of tobacco or nicotine products.
 - d) Conviction of a felony within the past 36 months.

- e) Suspension/disqualification, probation or ban from any tournament or fishing organization.
- f) Posting or re-posting of anything deemed to be detrimental to TBNY or any of its volunteers on any Social Media Site. This will strictly be enforced for all anglers, captains, advisors, parents and spectators.
- g) Any other words, conduct or actions reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules,

In the case of any conduct not complying with the standards outlined above, tournament officials have the right to refuse an application to compete, to deny a confirmed application to compete or to disqualify any contestant.

8. **CAPTAINS CRITERIA** –To serve as a boat Captain one must meet the follow criteria. **(1)** Immediate Family Member of either angler; Parent/Legal Guardian, Grandparent, Sibling, Uncle or Aunt **(2)** Official faculty member of the student’s institution. **(3)** TBNY Approved volunteer. **To be a TBNY Approved Volunteer, you must complete a TBNY Volunteer Application. Captains are required to complete a Captain’s Registration prior to captaining a team.** Each captain will have passed the school’s background check policy and signed waivers and rules understanding for TBNY. Captains are allowed to receive up to \$200 in Fuel and Oil compensation per event. The compensation must be duly noted with the respective club advisor. TBNY Board has the right to ask for an up-to-date ledger of these funds upon request. To captain a team in the Regional or State Championship, the boat captain must have captained that team in at least one of the regular seasons qualifying tournaments. Special circumstances will be decided upon by the TBNY board prior to the tournament. Captains must supply and drive boats for their teams. To qualify as a boat captain, the Captain must be at least 21 years old, have not guided on the tournament waters in past 30 days, fished a tournament with an entry fee of **more than \$500 (\$1,000 if team tournament)** or more within the last calendar year, may not be a current member of a college bass fishing team, and may not have a felony conviction within the past 36 months. Anyone wishing to be considered for a boat captain that falls into this criterion, must be approved by the Tournament Director. Boat Captains must be in the boat with the students, at all times during competition days and official practice if official practice has been declared. If a Boat Captain needs to use the bathroom, take a break for health reasons, or needs to be absent from the boat for any reason whatsoever, all fishing by the student anglers must cease. Student anglers are prohibited from fishing and/or running the trolling motor while the Boat Captain is not in the boat.

Note: Captains **shall not** be allowed to fish at any time during the tournament, doing so will result in disqualification for the team. If any official practice time has been declared, the Captain may fish during official practice only.

9. **BOAT OPERATION** • The contestants may operate the trolling motor. The Boat Captain must operate the boat anytime the outboard motor is underway.
- a) High School boat Captains **MAY NOT** assist in the fishing process (i.e. Netting fish, casting, helping land a fish, pulling out backlashes, getting lures unhung, etc.). High School Boat Captains are not allowed run the trolling motor directly or indirectly through a remote, unless in the case of an emergency in which the angler's would have to cease fishing. They may assist in culling only.
 - b) Junior Boat Captains may run the trolling motor, assist in landing or netting fish. Boat Captains are not permitted to cast or retrieve a lure for fishing purposes.

The use of mobile communication devices may only be used by the boat captains but not for the purposes of sharing fishing information during the tournament. Contestants may assist in unloading and loading boats as long as they have obtained their boater safety certificate, and must wear a PFD.

10. **BOAT AND HORSEPOWER REGULATION** • All boats must be propeller-driven and a minimum of 16 feet in length. Each boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment. Boats must contain a properly aerated live well space to maintain a live limit of bass. Maximum horsepower for all outboards is not to exceed 250 HP. Each boat must have a clearly legible "maximum capacities" (or comparably labeled) placard that includes a maximum horsepower rating affixed to the boat by the manufacturer. The maximum horsepower of the outboard engine must not exceed the maximum horsepower capacity specified on this placard or any horsepower limit set forth by TBNY. All boats used in TBNY tournaments must have a properly functioning kill switch that is attached to the driver while the combustion engine is running and a functioning fire extinguisher. By signing the entry form, contestants and coaches agree to submit their boat and/or motor to an inspection by tournament officials. Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower numbers on the motor or rating placard will be cause for disqualification from the tournament and may result in ineligibility to compete in future High School Fishing tournaments. Fishing platforms must be factory-installed equipment. No portable platforms may be used in tournament competitions. Fuel may be carried only in factory-installed (built-in) fuel tanks or auxiliary fuel tanks that are securely strapped or otherwise fastened to the boat. Any additional fuel used during the tournament day must be purchased from a retail facility open to the public and pumped through a hose with a nozzle.

11. **PERMITTED FISHING METHODS** • Fishing is defined as having a lure attached to a line and a rod and reel with the lure in the water. The student angler must initiate the cast and complete the retrieval or catching process for the catch to be considered legal. If a captain touches a rod at any time during a cast, the cast is dead, and any fish caught on that cast must be released and not count. All bass must be caught alive in a conventional sporting manner. Only artificial lures may be used, with

the exception of pork trailers and biodegradable soft baits. Only ONE fishing rod per contestant may be used at a time. Trolling as a method of fishing is strictly prohibited. All bass caught while sight-fishing must be hooked inside the mouth and immediately shown to your coach for verification. **If a Boat Captain is assisting with a hung lure or backlash, the angler he is assisting must cease fishing until the Boat Captain is finished.**

- 12. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS AND BOUNDARIES** • Teams may fish anywhere on tournament waters within the boundaries that is defined by the tournament director that is available to the public and accessible by boat, except areas designated as “off-limits,” “no boats,” “keep out,” “restricted,” “no trespassing” or “no fishing” (or similar language or markings intended to restrict public access) by tournament officials, local, state or federal officials, or within 50 yards of a contestant’s boat that was first anchored. An anchored boat is a boat held in a stable position by a line attached to a weight or by a Power-Pole or similar shallow water anchor with the trolling motor in the up position. All fishing must be conducted from the boat. At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. The use of cables, ropes, chains or any type of block and tackle system to maneuver a boat into fishing waters is strictly prohibited and will result in disqualification from the tournament. All restarts will be solely at the discretion of the tournament director. It is the sole responsibility of teams to locate the tournament director to request a restart. Teams must remain together at all times and within sight of their coach until check-in. The momentary condition of being out of sight of each other for restroom breaks is permitted. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification. Fishing is not permitted within a 200 yd radius of the boat ramp or the Tournament Director’s specified Off Limit Water/Area announcement.
- 13. CHECKPOINTS** • There will be a pre-determined boat check location, failure to go through boat check and or failure to check-in at the check-in point will result in **NO Points** awarded to that team. All fishing must cease upon check-in or stated time. For safety purposes, all teams must check-in even if they have zero (0) fish to weigh. Teams that do not check-in/weigh-in will receive a score of zero (0) for that particular tournament and may not be permitted to fish their next divisional tournament.
- 14. LATE PENALTY** • Teams that are not at the designated afternoon check-in point by the appointed time will be penalized 1 pound per minute, deducted from the total weight. Teams more than 15 minutes late will lose credit for that day’s weight. There will be a designated official with the official time at check-in, their time will be official. If the tournament is a trailering tournament, it is the responsibility of the Captain and Anglers to allow for enough time to check in at the determined location even if there is a line at check in.

- 15. LIVE FISH** • Every effort must be made to keep bass alive through the use of a properly aerated live well. Eight ounces (1/2 lb.) will be deducted from the total weight for each dead bass presented for weigh-in. No dead fish are to be culled at any time of the day (State Law). A dead fish shall not be allowed to be weighed in for big fish.
- 16. SCORING** • The official measuring stick will be a **Check-it-Stick**. Scoring is determined by the final weight of each team's catch during each tournament. Only largemouth, spotted, redeye or smallmouth bass are accepted species. The tournament limit is five bass per team unless the state or lake limit is less than five, in which case the state or lake limit prevails. A team's limit is equal to a single person limit. Any team possessing more than a legal limit of fish at weigh in will remove the fish of their choice from their bag to the legal number of fish and be assessed a 2 (two) pound penalty from their total weight for the day. The minimum length limit for bass is 14 inches (**all species of bass must be 14" to weigh in**) unless the state or lake limit is more than 14 inches, in which case, the state or lake limit prevails, and all species must meet the state or lake limit. Any team that presents a bass for weigh-in that fails to measure to the prescribed length limit will remove said fish from their bag and lose weight of short fish and be assessed a 1 (one) pound penalty from the total weight for the day. Each team's catch must be presented in an **official** weigh-in bag, not a personal weigh bag. The winning team is determined by the day's heaviest limit of fish. Anglers are not allowed to add any foreign weight to the fish or bag.
- NOTE:** There will be a pre-bump station at a predetermined location at each tournament. It will be the team's responsibility to check a fish at that station should they feel that they have a close fish. There will be NO tournament official at that location to assist you, it is the team's complete responsibility. However, once you bring the fish to the official bump station, it is considered turned in for weigh-in. Any team that presents a bass for weigh-in that fails to measure to the prescribed length limit will remove said fish from their bag and lose weight of short fish and be assessed a 1 (one) pound penalty from the total weight for the day.
- 17. MEASUREMENT METHOD** – The method will be the same method that B.A.S.S. Nation would use. **There will be no pinching of the tail, only a swipe.** Any team that presents a bass for weigh-in that fails to measure to the prescribed length limit will remove said fish from their bag and be assessed a 1 (one) pound penalty from the total weight for the day.
- 18. TIES** • A tie for first place will be broken first by a team with no penalties winning, next a total number of fish weighed in for the tournament, if a tie remains, it will be broken by a coin toss. All other ties will be split between that place and the next place's money.

19. LOGO DISPLAY AND TELEVISION COVERAGE: Contestants and coaches may wear their own shirts or jerseys during tournaments. Tournament officials reserve the right, in their sole discretion, to prohibit any contestant or coach's shirt or jersey found to be offensive. All decisions are in the TBNY administration's sole discretion. Anything that would not be school appropriate will not be allowed.

20. RELEASE OF VIDEO FOOTAGE AND PHOTOGRAPHS: By participating in Texas B.A.S.S. Nation Youth (TBNY) tournaments and events, all contestants, Boat Captains, and associated individuals grant TBNY and its authorized representatives the irrevocable right to capture, use, and distribute any video footage, photographs, and audio recordings taken during these events. This includes, but is not limited to, the use these materials for promotional purposes, advertising, educational materials, and media broadcasts across all platforms, including social media, websites, and print publications. By signing the tournament registration form, participants acknowledge and consent to the following terms:

- a) Consent to Recording: Participants agree to be photographed, filmed, or otherwise recorded during TBNY events.
- b) Use of Likeness: Participants consent to the use of their likeness, voice, and/or performance in promotional materials, advertisements, and other media by TBNY without any financial or other form of compensation.
- c) Rights Transfer: Participants transfer all rights, title, and interest in any photographs, video footage, and audio recordings to TBNY, including the rights to modify, edit, and use these materials at TBNY's discretion.
- d) No Approval Required: Participants waive any rights to inspect or approve the finished product, including written or electronic copy, wherein their likeness appears.
- e) Release from Liability: Participants release TBNY, its representatives, and any persons acting under its permission or authority, from any liability related to the use of the captured media.

This release is binding upon all participants, their heirs, legal representatives, and assigns, ensuring that TBNY has the perpetual right to utilize the captured media for promotional and educational purposes.

21. ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO: During all days of competition, any and all alcohol and tobacco logos are prohibited and may not be worn or displayed. Anglers and Boat Captains may not smoke, vape or use tobacco products during tournament hours, including weigh-in at any event. Any participants caught in violation of these rules will be disqualified immediately.

- 22. TRUTH VERIFICATION TEST:** Each contestant and boat captain agree to submit, by signature on the tournament entry form, to a polygraph or voice stress analysis examination and to abide by its conclusion. Failure to pass an examination will result in forfeiture of the fish and AOY points from the tournament. Truth verification tests will be used at the sole discretion of tournament officials, and the determination of the meaning of the results will be made solely by tournament officials. One team may be chosen at random per tournament, as well as the winning team(s).
- 23. INSURANCE:** Liability insurance with coverage in the amount of at least \$300,000 is required for all boats used in TBNY Fishing tournaments. Proof of insurance must be with the boat being used and must cover all passengers in the boat. Random checks will be conducted. Failure to provide proof of insurance when requested by the tournament director may result in disqualification.
- 24. TOURNAMENT AWARDS:** The number of places awarded will be 1 per every 8 entrants or better. Prizes awarded must be claimed at the conclusion of the day's tournament or arrangements should be made for someone to pick up your prizes on your behalf. Any prizes not claimed, or checks cashed within 30 days of the tournament date will be forfeited. Contact your tournament director if you need to make other plans. One Big Bass Award will be awarded for each division each tournament, unless otherwise dictated by the Tournament Director.
- 25. CUMULATIVE SEASON POINTS:** Points will be awarded to teams based on position of finish + stringer weight for that tournament.
Example:
1st place – 200 pts + 23.26 lbs. = 223.26 overall points
2nd place – 199 pts + 22.19 lbs. = 221.19 overall points
All points are subject to change based on the number of teams participating in the tournament. The above examples are based on a 200-boat field. Teams that fail to weigh-in fish in any given tournament will receive 50 points less than the last place team that weighs in fish. Teams that fail to check-in will be awarded zero (0) points for that tournament and may not be permitted to fish in their next tournament. AOY points will be published to Fishing Chaos within two weeks of each tournament. Once points have been posted to Fishing Chaos, teams or team advisors must notify the Regional Director of any inaccuracies. This must be done PRIOR TO THE NEXT SCHEDULE TOURNAMENT FOR THAT REGION. Once the next tournament has begun, all prior points are locked in place. **AOY (Anglers of the Year) Payout** will be based on available funds agreed upon by the TBNY Executive Board.
- 26. Regional and State Championship Eligibility & Qualification:** Texas B.A.S.S. Nation Youth is divided into 3 regions: Northeast, Northwest, and Southeast. Teams may fish any/all regions if they want to; however, a team or angler must participate in the mandatory fundraiser for their respective regions to be eligible for all Regional and State Championship consideration.

Eligible student angler teams can qualify by the following criteria:

a) **Regional Championship Tournaments:**

High School Division

- Top 65% or 50 boats, whichever is greater, of the High School Division in the Angler of the Year points will advance to their respective Regional Tournament
- Win one of the 5 qualifiers in your respective division during the year and fish at least three (3) events in your respective region and you will qualify for your respective Regional Championship.
- Must meet eligibility requirements above

Junior Division

- All Juniors that fish at least three (3) events in your respective region will qualify for your respective Regional Championship.
- Must meet eligibility requirements above

b) **State Championship Tournament:**

High School Division

- Top 65% or 30 boats, whichever is greater, of all teams that compete in their respective Regional Championship Tournament will advance to the State Championship Tournament.
- Must meet eligibility requirements above

Junior Division

- All Juniors that fish at least three (3) events in your respective region will qualify for the State Championship
- Must fish the Regional Championship
- Must meet eligibility requirements above

*In the event of a tie for the last place qualifiers, teams that are tied at the cutoff will be invited.

*In the event that the region is smaller than the allowed numbers above, all eligible teams will advance to the next level.

27. QUALIFYING TO B.A.S.S. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP will be based on B.A.S.S. rules.

28. RIGHT OF REFUSAL: The TBNY reserves the right to refuse entry into our tournaments to anyone. The Tournament Director has final say in all matters concerning rules interpretation or any extenuating or unforeseen circumstances which may arise during any tournament hosted by the TBNY.

- 29. CAPTIONS:** The bold captions at the beginning of each paragraph are intended to facilitate convenience in referring to the various rules. The captions are not part of the substance of the paragraph and should not be used in construction of any paragraph or used in the overall interpretation of this set of rules.
- 30. WEATHER/MOVING EVENTS:** Tournament directors will monitor weather forecasts leading up to tournament dates. The official forecast app that TBNY will use for this purpose is Weather Underground. Any weather deemed extreme will be grounds for cancellation or postponement of an event. The tournament directors reserve the right to cancel an event for other reasons. Boat captains are still responsible for keeping the safety of the student anglers and themselves at the forefront. For more information regarding our weather policy, please refer to our complete Texas B.A.S.S. Nation Youth Weather Policy.
- 31. Electronic Signature:** The execution of this document by electronic mail or by any other electronic or digital means shall be deemed to constitute effective execution of this document. Any signature transmitted by facsimile, email or other electronic or digital means shall be deemed an original signature for all purposes.