



2020 Football Rules Considerations

In support of the NFHS Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities, the NFHS Football Editorial Committee offers the document for state associations to consider whether any possible rules could be altered for the 2020 football season. The considerations outlined in this document are meant to decrease potential exposure to respiratory droplets by encouraging social distancing, limiting participation in administrative tasks to essential personnel and allowing for appropriate protective equipment.

Return to Competition

1. FOOTBALL RULES CONSIDERATIONS

•TEAM BOX (Rules 1-2-3g)

- The team box may be extended on both sides of the field to the 10-yard lines in order for more social-distancing space for the teams.
- Maintain social distancing while in the team box.
- Do not share uniforms, towels and other apparel and equipment.

•BALL (Rule 1-3-2)

- The ball should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the contest.
- The ball holders should maintain social distancing during the contest.

•FACE MASKS (Rule 1-5-a, 1-5-3c {4})

- Cloth face coverings are permissible.
- Plastic shields covering the entire face (unless integrated into the face mask and attached to the helmet and clear without the presence of any tint) shall not be allowed during the contest.

•GLOVES (Rule 1-5-2b)

- Gloves are permissible but still must comply with Rules 1-5-2b by meeting either the NOCSAE Standard or the SFIA Specification.

•STATE ASSOCIATION ADOPTIONS (Rule 1-7)

- Each state association may adopt other playing/administrative rules for football for the 2020 season that would decrease exposure to respiratory droplets and COVID-19.

•CHARGE TIME-OUTS AND AUTHORIZED CONFERENCES (Rules 2-6-2, 3-5-3, 3-5-8)

- Any charged time-out may be extended to a maximum of two minutes in length.

- The authorized conference for the charged time-out may take place between the 9-yard marks and not at the sideline for social-distancing purposes. (It would be permissible for more than one coach to be involved in this conference and for technology to be used.)
- Each game official and player should have their own beverage container brought out to them on the field.

•**INTERMISSION BETWEEN PERIODS AND AFTER SCORING**

- The intermission may be extended to a maximum of two minutes between the first and second and the third and fourth periods and following a try, successful field goal or safety, and prior to the succeeding free kick.

2. PRE AND POST GAME CONSIDERATIONS

- Suspend pregame protocol of shaking hands during introductions.
- Suspend postgame protocol of shaking hands.
- For any coin toss, limit attendees to the referee, umpire and one designated representative from each team.
- Coin toss should take place in the center of the field with designated individuals maintain social distancing.
- No handshakes prior to and following the coin toss.
- Maintain social distancing while performing all pregame responsibilities with all officiating crew members, game administration staff, line-to-gain crew, clock operators, individuals handling the balls during the game and team personnel.
- For the overtime procedure, please use the same procedure as used at the start of the contest for the coin toss.

3. OTHER ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FOOTBALL

- Before, during and after the contest, players, coaches, game officials, team personnel and game administration officials should wash and sanitize their hands as often as possible.
- Maintain social distancing at all times while on the sidelines and on the field of play when possible.
- Everyone should have their own beverage container that is not shared.
- Cloth face coverings are permissible for all coaches and team staff and for all game administration officials.
- Gloves are permissible for all coaches and team staff and for all game administration officials.
- Try and limit the number of non-essential personnel who are on the field level throughout the contest.
- If available, dressing facilities for game officials and teams should be large enough for them to use social-distancing protocols and should be properly cleaned and sanitized prior to their arrival.
-