

2020 Football Rules Considerations

Return to Competition

1. FOOTBALL RULES CONSIDERATIONS

- o TEAM BOX (Rule 1-2-3g)
 - The team box may be extended on both sides of the field to the 10-yard lines (**for players only**) in order for more social-distancing space for the teams.
 - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times while in the team box while not actively participating in a team, unit or position activity. Sideline adjustments and coaching is considered a team, unit or position activity.
 - Do not share uniforms, towels and other apparel and equipment.
- o BALL (Rule 1-3-2)
 - The ball should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the contest as recommended by the ball manufacturer.
 - The ball holders should maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times during the contest.
- o FACE MASKS [Rules 1-5-1a, 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.
- o TOOTH AND MOUTH PROTECTORS [Rule 1-5-1d(5)]
 - **Still being determined at this time on how to best handle the tooth and mouth protector during the contest. The NFHS SMAC will update the membership as soon as guidance is developed for all sports that require a tooth and mouth protector.
- o GLOVES (Rule 1-5-2b)
 - Gloves are permissible but still must comply with Rule 1-5-2b by meeting either the NOCSAE Standard or the SFIA Specification.
- o CHARGED TIME-OUTS AND AUTHORIZED CONFERENCES (Rules 2-6-2, 3-5-3, 3-5-8)
 - A single charged time-out may be extended to a maximum of two minutes in length.
 - The authorized conference for the charged time-out should 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.
- o INTERMISSION BETWEEN PERIODS AND AFTER SCORING (Rule 3-5-7I)

- 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. FOOTBALL GAME OFFICIALS MANUAL CONSIDERATIONS

o PREGAME CONFERENCE, COIN TOSS AND OVERTIME PROCEDURES

- For the 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 maintaining social distancing of 6 feet.
- No handshakes prior to and following the coin toss.
- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet 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. PRE AND POST GAME CONSIDERATIONS

- Suspend pregame protocol of shaking hands during introductions.
- Suspend postgame protocol of shaking hands.

4. FINAL 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 of 6 feet 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~~ *required* 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.