## 2017 Football Rules Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3-1h</td>
<td>Commercial advertising is not permitted on the ball.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-5-1b(3)</td>
<td>Further clarifies that the jersey of the home team shall be a dark color clearly contrasting to the white jersey required for the visiting team.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-5-1a(2) Note 1-5-4</td>
<td>Permits any of the game officials to accompany the referee to meet with the head coach for equipment verification.</td>
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<td>2-3-10 (NEW)</td>
<td>Defines a blindside block and specifies a penalty for illegal blindside block.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-4-3n (NEW)</td>
<td>9-4 PENALTY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-16-2h</td>
<td>Illegal participation fouls by the receiving team occurring during the kick are now enforced under post scrimmage kick fouls.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-24-10 (NEW)</td>
<td>Defines a pop-up kick and specifies a penalty for a pop-up kick.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-1-11 (NEW)</td>
<td>6-1 PENALTY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-32-16</td>
<td>Expands the definition of a defenseless player by incorporating specific examples.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-4-7 (NEW)</td>
<td>Gives the option to the offended team to start the clock on the snap for an accepted penalty inside the last two minutes of either half.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-2-21</td>
<td>Specifies that the ball is declared dead if a prosthetic limb come completely off of the runner.</td>
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<td>7-1-6</td>
<td>Stipulates that it is encroachment to strike the ball of the snapper’s hand/arm prior to the snapper releasing the ball.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-5-10</td>
<td>Removes non-contact face guarding from the pass interference restriction.</td>
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Commercial Advertising Prohibited On Ball (1-3-1h NEW): The ball cannot have commercial advertising added to the surface. The only permissible items on the ball are the ball manufacturer's name and/or logo; school name, logo and/or mascot; conference name and/or logo; state association name and/or logos; and NFHS name and/or logos.

Home Football Jersey Color Rule Further Clarified (1-5-1b(3)): Home game jersey specifications were further revised to provide schools and manufacturers additional clarification regarding the current trend of utilizing lighter gray shades. The implementation date of 2021 affords schools and manufacturers the opportunity to ensure that newer dark-colored jerseys will clearly contrast with white jerseys. The requirement for contrasting colors to white is not a new rule, and this clarification will allow changes to be made during normal replacement cycles.

Equipment Verification Process Revised (1-5-1a(2) NOTE, 1-5-4): Member state associations may determine the game official who is to accompany the referee during the required pre-game meeting with each head coach.

Blindside Block Defined and Foul Added (2-3-10 NEW, 9-4-3n NEW, 9-4 PENALTY): Continuing with the focus on risk minimization, the committee created a definition for a blindside block. This block involves contact by a blocker against an opponent who, because of physical positioning and focus on concentration, is vulnerable to injury. Unless initiated with open hands, it is a foul for excessive and unnecessary contact when the block is forceful and outside of the free-blocking zone.

Specific Fouls Now Post-Scrimmage Kick Fouls (2-16-2h): Illegal participation fouls by the receiving team occurring during the kick are now enforced under post-scrimmage kick fouls. Illegal substitution and illegal participation fouls by the receiving team occurring at the snap continue to be enforced from the previous spot.

Pop-Up Kicks Made Illegal (2-24-10 NEW, 6-1-11 NEW, 6-1 PENALTY): Continuing with the committee’s efforts to minimize risk, a pop-up kickoff has been defined. A pop-up kick is a free kick in which the kicker drives the ball immediately to the ground, the ball strikes the ground once and goes into the air in the manner of a ball kicked directly off the tee. Such kicks will be penalized as a dead-ball free-kick infraction.

Definition of Defenseless Player Expanded (7-1-6): The committee adopted specific examples of a defenseless player. By adding these examples, the committee continues to focus on risk minimization and responded to request on the annual NFHS football questionnaire from participating coaches, game officials and state association representatives.

Clock Options Added for Final Two Minutes of Each Half (3-4-7 NEW): The committee added an option for the offended team on an accepted penalty inside the last two minutes of either half. The referee continues to have the authority to start or stop the clock if a team attempts to conserve or consume time illegally.

Additional Protection for Athletes Participating with a Prosthetic Limb (4-2-2l NEW): With this change, the ball become dead when a prosthetic limb comes completely off of the runner.

Encroachment Foul Expanded (7-1-6): Defensive players are restricted from contacting the ball of the snappers hand(s) or arm(s) until the snapper has released the ball.

Forward Pass Interference Modified (7-5-10): This change eliminates the previous foul for non-contact face guarding forward-pass interference.
Responsibility on Players to Avoid Illegal Contact:

With a continued emphasis on minimizing risk in high school football, it is imperative for coaches to continue educating their student-athletes regarding the importance and responsibility of avoiding illegal contact. With the recent implementation of NFHS football rules prohibiting targeting, illegal contact on defenseless players, illegal blindside blocks, illegal pop-up kicks and other illegal personal contact fouls, the NFHS is reiterating it focus on player safety. Players are ultimately responsible for using legal blocking and tackling techniques, and coaches have a responsibility to emphasize the use of legal contact. Therefore, unnecessary hits are unsafe acts and the technique cannot be tolerated by those responsible for the game of football. Coaches need to exercise leadership in eliminating illegal contact and game officials must act decisively to penalize illegal contact to minimize the risk of injury to players.

Illegal Helmet Contact:

While wearing a football helmet can never guarantee the elimination of head and neck injuries, coaches at all levels of football have increased their focus on reducing these types of injuries as much as possible. One of the biggest efforts in this endeavor is to eliminate direct helmet-to-helmet contact and to minimize any other contact both with and to the helmet.

Coaches and game officials must continue to be diligent in promoting the elimination of direct contact to and with the helmet through consistent adherence to proper and legal coaching techniques and through strict enforcement of playing rules and game administration.

The No. 1 responsibility for game officials must be player safety. Any initiation of contact with the helmet is illegal; therefore, these fouls must be penalized consistently and without warning. Player safety is simply a matter of attitude, technique, attention and supervision. Proper coaching techniques and consistent enforcement of illegal helmet contact by game officials will be a positive step towards reinforcing player safety.

Sideline Management and Control, Professional Communication between Coaches and Game Officials:

Sideline management and consistent enforcement of the rules pertaining to the restricted area and the team box continue to be an issue in many areas of the country. The restricted area is the area extending two yards outside the perimeter of the entire field (i.e., outside both sidelines and end lines). This restricted area is designated by the restraining line. The team box is the area immediately outside the restricted area between the 25-yard lines on each side of the field. With limited exceptions, non-players are not permitted in the restricted area at any time during the game. Non-players include coaches, team personal, spectators, game administration and members of the media. During a dead-ball interval, no more than three coaches are permitted in the restricted area directly in front of the team box. No one may be in the restricted area when the ball is live.

The restricted area is designated to make the sidelines safer for everyone to allow game officials ample room to work. If the restricted area is not clearly delineated or not enforced by game administration, coaches or game officials, individuals in the restricted area are at risk for injury during or after a play.

Game administration is required to enforce the restricted area beyond the boundaries of the team boxes. No one should be in this area including media, photographers, statisticians, school boosters, cheer squad, pep bands, security personnel and medical staff.

Coaches are encouraged to instruct team personnel of the parameters and boundaries of the team box, and to effectively communicate the requirements to stay in the box at all times. Coaches are also required to remain outside the restricted area when the ball is live, and no more than three coaches are in the coaches’ area when the ball is dead.
Game officials must consistently enforce the rules pertaining to the coaches’ area and restricted area and other
sideline violations that occur during the game. Effective enforcement begins with respectfully communicating expecta-
tions to coaches and game administration prior to the start of the game. Violations of the restricted area should be imme-
diately result in the beginning of the progression of the penalties prescribed in Rule 9-8. Violations of the unsportsman-
like conduct rules should immediately result in a 15-yard penalty and disqualification of the offender if flagrant, or if it
is the offender’s second such foul. Examples of such conduct include the actions listed in Rule 9-8-1. A coach or a non-
player on the field of play is enforced as an unsportsmanlike conduct foul rather than a violation of the restricted area.

Coaches, game administration and game officials are reminded that the primary purpose of high school activi-
ties is to teach student-athletes how to become responsible adults. All adults involved in a contest should recognize they
are teacher-coaches and teacher-officials, and that their use of professional and courteous communication sets a positive
example for the student-athlete to follow, and is crucial in creating an optimal an meaningful learning environment.
Game officials and coaches should always work together in a professional manner to ensure all rules are communicated,
understood and enforced.

Proper Enforcement of Penalties for Violation of the Equipment Rules:

All players are required to wear properly fitted equipment and uniforms that are worn in the manner intended by
the manufacturer, as specified in the rules. The purpose of the equipment rules is to promote the safety and protection of
both the player wearing the equipment and his opponent. Players may not wear any equipment/adornments that are
deemed illegal. In addition, it is the responsibility of head coaches to ensure that players have been issued properly fitted
equipment and have been instructed in its proper use to verify this requirement to game officials prior to each contest.
Due to the potential for injury, game officials must strictly enforce equipment and uniform rules.

There are three types of fouls associated with improper equipment: (1) failure to properly wear required equip-
ment, (2) failure to wear or use legal and/or required equipment, and (3) wearing illegal equipment. The first foul occurs
when the required equipment is present, but not worn properly. The penalty for this foul is a 5-yard penalty, and it can
be either a dead-ball foul (if the foul occurs when the snap is imminent) or a live-ball foul (if a player is observed re-
moving or discarding required during a down). Examples of such fouls include, but are not limited to, unsnapped chin
straps, tooth and mouth protectors that are dangling, or jerseys that do not fully cover the shoulder pads. If game offi-
cials observe any improperly worn equipment during a dead-ball period, they should use preventive officiating and tell
the player to make a correction. However, if the snap is imminent and the equipment is not properly worn, the game of-
official should blow the whistle to prevent the snap from occurring and a dead-ball foul should be called. The second foul
occurs when a player is missing any required equipment. That foul is unsportsmanlike conduct foul charged to the head
coach (Rule 9-9). The third foul occurs when a player wears illegal equipment. Examples of this type of foul include,
but are not limited to, the wearing of cleats that exceed 1/2 inch, or the presence of sticky substance on a player’s uni-
form. If a player is detected wearing illegal equipment, his head coach is charged with an unsportsmanlike conduct foul
under Rule 9-9.

If any equipment becomes illegal or defective during the game, correction must be made before the player con-
tinues to participate. Examples include chin strap snaps which break off the helmet or a jersey that slides up over the top
of the shoulder pad. If the correction can be made within 25 seconds and without the assistance of a team attendant, an
official’s time-out may be called to perform such correction. Alternatively, a team may request a charged time-out to
perform the correction. However, if correction cannot be completed with 25 seconds, or during a charged time-out, the
player may not continue to participate until correction is made.
2017 PIAA ADOPTIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

- Adopt the 2017 NFHS Football Rules Book.

- Request that college and professional football Contest sites mark their fields in accordance with Rule 1-2-3e, inbounds lines. If that is not possible, it is permissible to use college or professional fields with inbounds lines marked at the distance specified by their respective codes.

- Adopt Rule 1-3-1 NOTE, specifications for the ball to be used in Contests involving only players below the 9th grade.

- Adopt Rule 1-3-7, authorizing the use of supplementary equipment to aid in Contest administration.

- Modify Rule 3-5-10b (Concussion Rule), to clarify that “an appropriate health-care professional” is a licensed physician of medicine or osteopathic medicine (MD or DO).

- Adopt Rule 3-1-1 NOTE, the Resolving Tied Games (10-Yard Line Overtime) Procedure for use during senior high school varsity football Regular Season and Postseason Contests, as set forth in the NFHS Football Rules Book.

- Adopt Rule 3-1-2, running clock, at all levels (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition, upon completion of the first half and one Team gains a 35-point differential over its opponent, the clock shall be stopped only when an official's time-out is taken, a charged time-out is granted, a period ends, or a score occurs.

NOTE: Sub-varsity games do not play overtime, only varsity contests.

POLICY REGARDING SPECTATOR DECORUM

The presence and/or the use of balloons, whistles, and/or portable listening devices (without earphones) are PROHIBITED! The Principal and Athletic Director of each school will be requested to confiscate these items from their cheerleaders and/or the spectators from their school and community. The use of pom-poms by cheerleaders and small portable listening devices with earphones is permitted. Spectators are prohibited from removing their shirts and/or using body paint while in attendance at District and Inter-District Championship Contests. Principals and Athletic Directors of competing schools shall announce and publicize these regulations.

The principal, athletic director, coaches, team physician, team trainer, players in uniform, managers, ball holders, and statisticians will be the only persons permitted in the team box.
NFHS Comments Regarding Targeting

“Targeting” Defined in High School Football in Effort to Reduce Risk of Injury

In an effort to reduce contact above the shoulders and lessen the risk of injury in high school football, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Football Rules Committee developed a definition for “targeting,” which will be penalized as illegal personal contact.

Effective with the 2014 high school season, new Rule 2-43 reads: “Targeting is an act of taking aim and initiating contact to an opponent above the shoulders with the helmet, forearm, hand, fist, elbow or shoulders.”

Bob Colgate, NFHS director of sports and sports medicine and liaison to the Football Rules Committee, said the committee determined – in its continued effort to minimize risk of injury in high school football – that it was important to separate and draw specific attention to this illegal act.

“Taking aim with the helmet, forearm, hand, fist, elbow or shoulders to initiate contact above the shoulders, which goes beyond making a legal tackle, a legal block or playing the ball, will be prohibited,” Colgate said.

A new definition for a “defenseless player” was also added to Rule 2 for risk-minimization purposes. Rule 2-32-16 will read as follows: “A defenseless player is a player who, because of his physical position and focus of concentration, is especially vulnerable to injury.”

In an effort to reduce the risk of injury on kickoffs, the rules committee approved two new requirements in Rule 6-1-3 for the kicking team. First, at least four members of the kicking team must be on each side of the kicker, and, second, other than the kicker, no members of the kicking team may be more than five yards behind the kicking team’s free-kick line.

Rule 6-1-3 also notes that if one player is more than five yards behind the restraining line and any other player kicks the ball, it is a foul. In addition to balancing the kicking team’s formation, the change limits the maximum distance of the run-up for the kicking team.

In other changes, new language was added to Rule 8-5-1 and states that “the accidental touching of a loose ball by a player who was blocked into the ball is ignored and does not constitute a new force.” In addition, roughing the passer fouls now include all illegal personal contact fouls listed in Rule 9-4-3, which result in automatic first down in addition to a 15-yard penalty.

Football is the No. 1 participatory sport for boys at the high school level with 1,115,208 participants in the 2012-13 school year, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS through its member state associations. In addition, the survey indicated there were 1,660 girls who played football in 2012-13.

Officials’ chapter officers should be aware of emergency exits, AED devices, and other emergency items in the event a chapter member needs medical assistance or emergency action needs to be taken during a chapter or mandatory rules meeting.
POLICY REGARDING THE USE OF EYE SHADE

The use of eye shade must be worn as a single, solid stroke under the eye. There shall be no numbers, words, logos, symbols or other detail located in the eye shade. The eye shade shall not extend below the cheek bone and extend no further than the width of the eye socket. Players having eye shade that does not meet the standard are to remove it or comply with the PIAA interpretation before participation in the game. If the players do not comply, the officials may impose unsportsmanlike conduct type penalties as determined by their respective rules code.

PIAA CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY FOR ALL SPORTS

PIAA has a written policy regarding conflict of interest. This policy is in all of our post regular season officiating contracts and is contained in the PIAA Athletic Officials’ Manual for all officials to view.

An official will remove themselves from a contest if they find that they have any personal association with any of the competitors or coaches on any team, with the competitors' school, or with the competitors' community, such as being a relative of a competitor, or being an employee or a relative of a competitor in the competitors school district, or a resident of the competitors' community.

COMMENT: Officials accepting assignments for contest at their local school where they live, or have a relative competing, place themselves in a compromising position in the performance of their duties as a registered official. Every decision and judgment is open to criticism and places the official in a compromising position where it brings into question the integrity and actions of the official. This is an indefensible position for the official and assignments of this nature are not to be taken or accepted by PIAA registered sports’ officials. Extreme cases of emergency and situations that may be completely unavoidable are the only exceptions to this policy.

2017 PIAA FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

First Practice Date: August 14
Minimum Length of Preseason Practice: 3 weeks
First Inter-School Practice or Scrimmage Date: August 19
Maximum Number of Regular Season Inter-School Practices or Scrimmages: 2
First Regular Season Contest Date: September 1
Maximum Length of Regular Season: 10 weeks
Maximum Number of Regular Season Contests: 10
Last Regular Season Contest Date: November 6
District Deadline: November 12
First Round: November 17 & 18
Quarterfinals: November 24 & 25
Semi-Finals: December 1 & 2
PIAA 4A Football Championships: December 7th HERSHEYYPARK Stadium, Hershey
PIAA 1A & 5A Football Championships: December 8th HERSHEYYPARK Stadium, Hershey
PIAA 2A & 3A & 6A Football Championships: December 9th HERSHEYYPARK Stadium, Hershey
**OFFICIALS’ UNIFORM**

1. The PIAA Official's Emblem must be worn on the upper left sleeve of the official's standard shirt when officiating in all PIAA sponsored games.

2. All PIAA-registered officials must wear identical uniforms during a contest.

3. Required uniform for football officials:
   - **Hat:** Black fitted baseball cap with white piping. The referee shall wear a solid white fitted baseball cap.
   - **Shirt:** Alternating black and white 1-inch vertically striped, long or short sleeved shirt with a black collar.
   - **Belt:** Black belt 1 1/4 to 2 inches wide.
   - **Pants:** Black - tailored black pant with white stripe on outside of leg.
   - **Stockings:** One-piece solid black stocking.
   - **Shoes:** SOLID BLACK with black laces (no white markings).
   - **Jacket:** Black and white vertically striped jacket (not to be worn during the game).
   - **Lanyard:** Black.
   - **Whistle:** Black finger style (recommended).
   - **Turtleneck:** Black or white (if needed).

The wearing of jewelry (except wedding bands and medical-alert bracelets) and wrist watches (except as a required timing device) is prohibited. Smoking and/or tobacco chewing is prohibited. (Minutes, Board of Control, PIAA Summer Workshop, July 17, 1989, p. 3).

PIAA sports' officials may display an American flag (maximum size 2 by 3 inches) on the right sleeve of their uniform shirt approximately three inches down from the shoulder seam. This will be the same position the PIAA official patch is displayed on the left sleeve.

**Please Note:** Shorts are not permitted as part of the PIAA required uniform policy (July 17, 1998 Board of Control meeting).

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**GUIDELINES ON HANDLING CONTESTS DURING LIGHTNING**

These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible or sharing duties for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

**Proactive Planning**

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during events.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safe areas.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play.
   - **A.** When thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for 30 minutes and take shelter immediately.
   - **B.** Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
   - **C.** Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
4. Review annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel.
5. Inform student-athletes of the lightning policy at start of season.

As copied from the NFHS 2016 Football Rules Book. Officials should confer with onsite staff and use all available resources when making a decision with regard to lightning. Officials are the sole
### OFFICIAL COIN TOSS

When the official coin toss is held prior to the game's ceremonial coin toss, it is recommended to have the official coin toss, in the home team end zone or mid-field, 30 minutes prior to contest with the Head Coaches and Captains' of each team. Officials are to read the PIAA Sportsmanship Message at this time and get legally equipped confirmation from each head coach.

Give the visiting speaking captain their option of taking heads or tails before the coin is tossed. Once you have the result of the toss, give the winner of the toss their options. After the winner of the toss selects their option, give the other team their options of which way they want to kick.

After Halftime – Eliminate ceremonial toss to press box and just go to each respective sideline and give instructions to line-up for kickoff based on your pre-game coin toss decisions.

### OVERTIME PROCEDURE

1. **3 Minute Intermission**
   - a. Communication vital.
   - b. One time-out per-overtime period.
   - c. Penalty carryover.
2. **Coin Toss**
   - a. Visitor's choice in 1st overtime. (rotate in subsequent OT).
   - 2. Choice of end of field to put ball in play only one end will be utilized during the two sets of downs to insure equal game condition and conserve time.
3. **10-yardline to begin series**
4. **NO CLOCK**
5. **Series ends when A scores --- OR with Team B possession.**
   - a. Try attempted by A.
   - b. Try attempted by B unless winner is determined.
   - c. If defense scores either safety or TD game is over.
6. **Line-to-gain.....is always the goal line.**

### 2017 DISTRICT RULES INTERPRETERS

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PROPER PENALTY ADMINISTRATION

1. PHILOSOPHY-
   A. First and foremost, officials need to adopt a philosophy regarding the calling of fouls. Something which has worked for countless officials is the axiom known as MIBT. **Make It Be There!** Excellence in officiating demands this type of thinking concerning fouls.
   B. In conjunction with #1 listed above, officials need to be certain a foul affects the play. Was an advantage gained or was player safety compromised? These question should precede throwing any flag.
   C. Officials need to call fouls (or not call them) consistently throughout a given contest. For example, an illegal motion foul called in the first quarter must be called the same way in the 4th quarter. A “close” non-call on pass interference in the 2nd quarter must be ruled a no-call on a “close” call in the 4th quarter.

2. MECHANICS-
   A. When any official detects a live ball foul, he must do three things:
      - Continue to officiate until the ball is dead.
      - Stop the clock when the ball becomes dead, and
      - Sound his whistle to get the attention of the Referee and the other officials
   B. When reporting to the Referee, it is sound officiating to do the following:
      - SLOW DOWN—there is no rush
      - Communicate—What, Who, When, and Where to the Referee
      - Know what the enforcement should be. (Do not put this solely on the Referee. If you called a foul, you are primarily responsible to see that it is properly enforced).
   C. When possible, throw your flag about shoulder height at the exact spot (if applicable). The only exception to this would be a dead ball late hit foul, which occurs on the sideline area. In these cases, the flag should be thrown high into the air so that everyone knows a foul has been observed.

3. REMINDERS-1) Take your time when making your decision as to whether a foul has been committed. 2) If you need to get together with the other officials-GET TOGETHER. 3) Review penalty administration in your pre-game conference.
1. Signaling Sequence for Penalties Enforced on Subsequent Kickoff.

Signaling Sequence for Penalties Enforced on the Subsequent Kickoff:

2. Coin toss:
   - 3-2-1: At the coin toss in the center of the field the visiting-team’s captain shall be given the privilege of choosing heads or tails before the coin is tossed.
   - The winner of the toss shall be given his choice of defense or offense first, or of designating the end of the field at which the ball will be put in play or this set of downs.
   - The loser will have his choice of the other options. The referee will indicate the winner of the toss by placing a hand on his shoulder.
   - To indicate which team will go on offense, the referee will have that captain face the goal toward which his team will advance and indicate this with the first-down signal.
   - The other team captain will face the offensive captain with his back toward the goal he will defend.

The NFHS Officials Manual Committee has approved a new procedure to be used on scoring plays involving a penalty by the opponent of the scoring team. The following is the procedure that is to be used by the referee:

- 1 and 2. Referee gives preliminary penalty signal and indicates offending team.
- The referee then obtains the captain’s choice.
- 1 and 2. Referee gives penalty signal and indicates offending team again.
- If penalty is accepted and is to be enforced on the subsequent kickoff, the Referee indicates that the score counts.
- If penalty will be enforced on the subsequent kickoff, the Referee should indicate by pointing to midfield.
- The Back Judge in 5-person and the umpire in 6-person, will repeat penalty signal and indicate offending team again by giving final signals, prior to stepping off penalty and prior to the subsequent kickoff.
Any coach and/or contestant who, while coaching or competing for a PIAA member school, is ejected from a Contest by a state high school association recognized and/or registered official in that sport for unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct shall be disqualified from coaching and/or participating for the remainder of the day and in all Contests on the next Contest day of the same level (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition. For a coach, participation in the next Contest includes any contact by the coach with members of the Team, including other coaches, between the time that the Team arrives at the Contest site and the conclusion of the last Contest of the day. The Principal shall direct the coach not to attend all of the Contest(s).

Any coach and/or contestant ejected from the last Contest in that sport in a sport season shall be disqualified from coaching and/or participating in the first Contest(s) in that sport in the subsequent sport season, at the same level (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition, at any PIAA member school or, if the student changes levels of competition, such as from junior varsity to varsity, the first Contest(s) in that sport.

The official shall file a report with the PIAA Office on the form prescribed for the sport involved, within twenty-four (24) hours following the completion of the Contest in which the ejection occurred. Failure to file such report shall not affect the validity or consequences of the ejection.

In football, the athletic director and principal must meet with the ejected coach/contestant and detail in a report what corrective action has been taken. This report then must be signed by all parties and sent to the district football chairperson. This form is located on the PIAA website on the football page.

When a coach or contestant is disqualified/ejected from a Regular or Post-Regular Season Contest a report must be filed by the official who disqualified/ejected the coach or contestant. When the report is received in the PIAA Office it is faxed to the concerned school Principal and Athletic Director and mailed to the respective District Chairmen, officials’ representatives and sportsmanship chair. A copy is also given to the Associate Executive Director and placed in the school’s file.

OFFICIALS ARE TO FILE A REPORT WITH THE PIAA OFFICE ON THE APPROPRIATE FORM WITHIN 24 HOURS OF THE EJECTION OR THEY MAY BE PLACED ON PROBATION.

Officials must complete the disqualification form online through the officials’ information area of the PIAA website. Officials who repeatedly do not file the proper form in the prescribed time period may be suspended.

If you are in need of updating your officiating supplies, please be reminded that Officially Sports is the official vendor of PIAA Sport Officials’ Uniforms. Please give them your consideration for any purchases regarding officials' supplies. If interested, you may provide them with your email address to send you their catalog, seasonal specials and discounted items that may be of interest and service to your avocation of sports’ officiating. Officially Sports may be contacted via email at sales@officiallysports.com, by calling 800-934-4555 or at www.officiallysports.com.
EXAMPLES OF DISQUALIFICATION PROVISION OF ARTICLE XIII, SECTION 8

The following examples are for players or coaches and are only examples and not a complete list. What this means is a player or coach ejected from a contest at any level must sit out the remainder of the day and the next day of the next contest at that level.

Example #1: Player/coach gets ejected from a junior varsity contest before a varsity contest. This player/coach gets disqualified for the remainder of the day and the next day of the next junior varsity contest. If this contest is followed by a varsity contest on the same day, the player/coach gets disqualified for the varsity contest also (the whole day).

Example #2: Player/coach gets ejected from a varsity contest on Friday, the team’s next varsity contest is Friday. Before the varsity contest is a scheduled junior varsity contest, player/coach cannot participate in any of Friday contests.

Example #3: Player/coach gets ejected from a varsity football game Saturday. The next varsity contest is a game on next Friday but the game gets postponed to Saturday. On Saturday, the junior varsity team is to play in another football game, is player and/or coach eligible to participate in the junior varsity game?

Ruling: No. Since the Friday contest was postponed the next varsity game is the same day as the junior varsity game and the player/coach are not eligible to participate the whole day.

SECTION 4 VIOLATION OR CANCELLATION OF SPORTS OFFICIAL’S CONTRACT BY A PIAA MEMBER SCHOOL

If a PIAA member school violates or cancels a contract with an official, the District Committee or the Board of Directors, in their respective jurisdictions, may require a school so violating or so canceling to pay to the offended official the fee or fees for the Contest or Contests which have been provided in the official contract. Failure of a PIAA member school to live up to the terms of the contract shall be considered a violation of the Constitution and By-Laws of PIAA.

Comment: It has been brought to our attention on numerous occasions that officials have lost assignments or games because a school or assignor has “double booked” the contest. Officials are reminded that unless there is a written contract executed between the parties, they have no claim to any type of reimbursement from the offending school(s). Many schools have made a “good faith” effort to the officials to get them an additional assignment in the future or offer a scrimmage to pick up the lost fees. However, officially, without a written, signed, properly executed contract between the official(s) and the school(s), there is no recourse for the officials. In this day of technology it is not very hard for assignors, or schools, to execute these contracts. This is part of an assignor’s responsibility. Officials should request contracts from their assignors or schools for both parties protection.

PIAA BY-LAWS, ARTICLE XV; SECTION 3

All PIAA member schools shall enter into either paper or electronic contracts on the official contract form entitled “Contract for Officials Under PIAA Rules” with all registered sports officials retained by the schools or assigned by an assignor. Registered sports officials are independent contractors and therefore, are NOT employees of PIAA, the school, or the assignor. Disputes arising from oral agreements will not be considered by PIAA.
PIAA OFFICIALS INSURANCE

For the 2017-2018 school year, American Specialty Insurance Services will provide the following benefits:

- One Million Dollars of Liability Coverage;
- $25,000 Excess Accident Medical Coverage (with a $250 deductible);
- $5,000 Accidental Death and Dismemberment (including a cardiac benefit).

This program is administered by American Specialty Insurance Services and underwritten by USF&G and Mutual of Omaha. Both carriers carry “A” ratings by A.M. Best. Again this year, as a new service for chapters, all regularly scheduled chapter meetings will be covered under PIAA’s basic liability coverage. This is a major change from the past when only the annual rules interpretation meetings have been covered. Chapters are requested to please submit their list of regularly scheduled chapter meetings to the PIAA Office to assist procedurally in the exchange of information to have all local associations’ meetings covered.

Contact information is as follows:
Drew Smith,
Vice-President for Client Services
Sara Douglass, Administrative Assistant
American Specialty Insurances Services, Inc.
142 N. Main Street,
P.O. Box 309
Roanoke, Indiana 46783-0309
Phone: 260-672-8800
Fax: 260-673-1295

www.amerspec.com

VISORS

Officials are reminded that visors being worn by players during competition are now legal by NFHS football rules provided they meet two criteria as detailed in Rule 1-5-3,c-4. An eye shield attached to the helmet that is (a) constructed of a molded rigid material or (b) is clear without the presence of any tint. This alleviates the paperwork from principals signing off on the use of these items for their players and the officials having to review them before the contest.

COMMON SENSE OFFICIATING

With all the dialogue of concussions and the prevention of injuries, officials are requested to use prudent judgment in the handling of players who appear injured during playing action. If a player exhibits any signs of a concussion, or is injured in any manner, officials should do their due diligence in requesting the team’s coaching staff or team medical personnel evaluate the player(s) involved. This is priority communication between the officials and the coaching staff. Please ensure that any player who appears injured must be evaluated by the team’s medical personnel. Safety of players is priority one and before we remove any player from a contest, make sure the team’s medical personnel are involved with the decision making.

FIFTH QUARTER

Officials are not authorized to remain on the field in an officiating capacity if schools agree to play extended quarters. This is contrary to authorized playing time for junior high and senior high competition. This type of action may place officials in liability jeopardy since these type of activities violate the standard of play for length of games/quarters in the NFHS football rules book and the PIAA By-laws.
PIAA SPORTSMANSHIP MESSAGE

**This message shall be read to the head coach and captains prior to each contest officiated by a registered PIAA official. This message shall be enforced by contest officials and its enforcement shall include a strict and swift enforcement when unsportsmanlike actions involve demeaning remarks or actions that may be related to the racial or ethnic background of any party.**

PIAA requires all registered sports' officials to enforce the sportsmanship rules for coaches and contestants. Actions meant to demean opposing contestants, team, spectators, and officials are not in the highest ideals of interscholastic education and will not be tolerated. Let today’s contest reflect mutual respect. Coaches please certify to the officials that your players are legally equipped and uniformed according to NFHS rules and PIAA adoptions. Good luck in today’s contest.

Chapter interpreters are requested to remind all officials to read this message at each contest they officiate.

There have been some concerns addressed by the schools that some of our officials are not reading the PIAA Sportmanship message prior to the contest. This is an improper procedure and this message MUST be read. Officials are not to paraphrase, modify, or develop their own Sportmanship Message to the captains and head coaches. The proper procedure is head coaches and captains MUST attend the pre-game reading of the sportmanship message. For distribution purposes, this message is printed on the back of all PIAA registered sports officials' 2017-2018 identification cards.

This message MUST BE READ VERBATIM by the contest officials. Coaches must certify to the contest officials their team is legally equipped and in compliance with NFHS Football Rules. The reading of this message will have the coaches verbally confirm aloud their teams' adherence to compliance with equipment and safety rules. This confirmation is not only the adherence to contest rules, but also assists in alleviating the legal liability concerns for the officials if the teams subsequently violate the proper equipment provisions of the contest rules.

UNIVERSAL HYGIENE PROTOCOL FOR ALL SPORTS

- Shower immediately after every competition and practice.
- Wash all workout clothing after each practice.
- Wash personal gear (knee pads and braces) weekly.
- Do not share towels or personal hygiene products (razors) with others.
- Refrain from full body (chest, arms, abdomen) cosmetic shaving.
Athletes who participate in the sport of football accept the risk of injuries. However, athletes also have the right to assume that those who are responsible for the conduct of the sport, i.e., administrators, coaches and athletic trainers, have taken reasonable precautions to minimize the risk of significant injury. Refinements in the playing rules, the development of risk minimization guidelines and the establishment of equipment standards have helped to reduce significant injuries. However, to legislate safety via the rules book and equipment standards are never a complete answer. All who are involved with participation in the sport of football share in the responsibility of minimizing the sport’s inherent risks?

The coach is responsible for pregame verification that in addition to other required equipment, all players have a helmet which met National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) standards when manufactured and each helmet has an exterior warning label. While important, the fact the athletes are wearing certified helmets is only the first step. The athletes involved must be aware of all the basic principles of head and neck injury prevention.

**Helmet Warning Statement**

Since 1985 the NOCSAE football helmet standard has required a warning label on the outside of the helmet to inform each player of these risks and responsibilities. The warning label must use language that conveys the following information:

**WARNING**

NO HELMET CAN PREVENT ALL HEAD OR ANY NECK INJURIES A PLAYER MIGHT RECEIVE WHILE PARTICIPATING IN FOOTBALL.

DO NOT USE THE HELMET TO BUTT, RAM OR SPEAR AN OPPOSING PLAYER. THIS IS IN VIOLATION OF THE FOOTBALL RULES AND SUCH USE CAN RESULT IN SEVERE HEAD OR NECK INJURIES, PARALYSIS OR DEATH TO YOU AND POSSIBLE INJURY TO YOUR OPPONENT.
### COMMUNICABLE DISEASE AND SKIN INFECTION PROCEDURES

Proper precautions are needed to minimize the potential risk of the spread of communicable disease and skin infections during athletic competition. These conditions include skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment. The transmission of infections such as Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and Herpes Gladiatorium, blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis B, and other infectious diseases such as Influenza can often be greatly reduced through proper hygiene. The NFHS SMAC has outlined and listed below some general guidelines for the prevention of the spread of these diseases.

### INFECTIOUS SKIN DISEASES

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these infectious agents include:

- Athletes must be told to notify a parent or guardian, athletic trainer and coach of any skin lesion prior to any competition or practice. An appropriate health-care professional should evaluate any skin lesion before returning to competition.

- If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, all team members should be evaluated to help prevent the potential spread of infection.

- Coaches, officials and appropriate health-care professionals must follow NFHS or state/local guidelines on “time until return to competition.” Participation with a covered lesion may be considered if in accordance with NFHS, state or local guidelines and the lesion is no longer contagious.

### BLOOD-BORNE INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these agents include following Universal Precautions such as:

- An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the activity (game or practice) until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to activity.

- Athletic trainers or other caregivers need to wear gloves and take other precautions to prevent blood or body fluid-splash from contaminating themselves or others.

- In the event of a blood or body fluid-splash, immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water.

- Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves when cleaning.

- Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and immediately evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.

### OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include:

- Appropriate vaccination of athletes, coaches and staff as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

- During time of outbreaks, follow the guidelines set forth by the CDC as well as State and local Health Departments.

For more detailed information, refer to the Infectious Disease and Blood-borne Pathogens” and “Skin Disorders” sections contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.
OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS

23. Failure to wear required equipment
24. Illegal helmet contact
25. Illegal horse-collar tackle
26. Unsportsmanlike conduct (non-contact foul)
27. Illegal participation

28. Sideline interference (face press box)
29. Running into or roughing tackler or holder (face press box)
30. Illegal batting/kicking (followed by pointing toward toe for kicking)
31. Invalid fair catch signal
32. Forward pass interference (kick catching interference)

33. Roughing passer
34. Intentional grounding
35. Ineligible downfield on pass
36. Personal foul

37. Illegal block in the back
38. Helping runner (interlocked blocking)
39. Grasping face mask or helmet opening
40. Chop block
41. Holding obstruction (illegal use of hands/arms)

42. Disqualification

PlayPics courtesy of Referee magazine. Note: Signal numbers 17 and 26 is for future expansion.
During the PIAA football Regular Season and Postseason, a disqualified football player, coach, and/or Team personnel shall not be permitted to participate for the remainder of the day and in all Contests on the next Contest day of the same level (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition from which the player, coach, and/or Team personnel was previously disqualified. For a coach, participation in the next Contest includes any contact by the coach with members of the Team, including other coaches, between the time that the Team arrives at the Contest site and the conclusion of the last Contest of the day. The Principal shall direct the coach not to attend all of the Contest(s), in accordance with Article XIII, Section 8 of the PIAA By-Laws and NFHS Football Rules 2-16-2c; 2-20-1 and 2; 2-32-6; 2-32-16; 9-4; 9-4-1; 2, 3, 8; 9-5; 9-6; 9-8; and 9-9. The referee must complete this form on-line, as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours following the completion of the Contest in which the disqualification took place.

| Name of Ejected Player, Coach or Bench Personnel | School Name |
| Date of Contest | Location of Contest | Time of Contest |
| Visiting Team | PIAA District | Visiting Team’s Final Score |
| Home Team | PIAA District | Home Team’s Final Score |

**REASON FOR DISQUALIFICATION**

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DATE OF REPORT OFFICIAL’S NAME (PERSON ISSUING DQ) PIAA DISTRICT