



Ohio High School Athletic Association

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Doug Ute, Executive Director

October 15, 2020

TO: Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators
FR: Doug Ute, OHSAA Executive Director
RE: Revision to Tournament Cancellation/Postponement Policy

With the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic ongoing, we have utilized OHSAA Constitution Article 6-1-9 to make some immediate modifications to General Sports Regulations 16.4, 16.4.1 and 16.4.2 in regards to *Failure to Appear and School Closures for OHSAA Tournament Contests*, with the number one priority being the safety of the participants followed closely by fairness to a school's opponent and/or future opponent. Here are the revised regulations (Gray screen indicates new or modified text):

16.4) Failure to Appear and School Closures/Teams/Individual(s) Under Quarantine – OHSAA Tournament Contests

Teams and competitors shall be expected to play tournament contests at the scheduled time, date and location.

"Closure," "closed" or "school closing" shall mean that a local school or school district's board of education/governing board or superintendent/head of school has canceled all high school classes and/or school-sponsored extracurricular activities due to inclement weather; a strike; a natural or technological/man-made disaster; an issue deemed catastrophic or an emergency*, or the local or state health department or Governor's Office have canceled all high school classes and school-sponsored extracurricular activities or quarantined a specific team or individual(s) due to a specific public health/safety concern.

***Note:** A local school or school district may be open but a local school or school district's board of education/governing board or superintendent/head of school may also determine that it is unsafe for its school's team to travel to the site of the tournament contest.

The following tournament regulations apply to team (16.4.1) and individual (16.4.2) sports unless national playing rules address "failure to appear" or school "closures."

16.4.1) Baseball, Basketball, Field Hockey, Football, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball, Dual Team Wrestling

If a team "fails to appear" without notifying the opposing team, officials and/or site management or is not ready to play within 30 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the tournament contest, the space on the bracket may be declared vacant. A "forfeit" shall be declared, and the opposing team shall advance to the next round of competition.

In the event of a school "closure" as defined in 16.4 above and the school is scheduled to participate in an OHSAA tournament contest, the Executive Director's Office and/or District Athletic Board#, in collaboration with the participating schools, contest officials and tournament personnel if at a neutral site, shall make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the competing school with rescheduling the contest (time, date and/or location), provided:

- a.) Both teams mutually agree to reschedule the contest;
- b.) Contest officials are available to officiate the contest;
- c.) The rescheduled date does not adversely affect the next round of the tournament competition/ tournament schedule; and
- d.) The rescheduled contest shall be completed a minimum of 48 hours prior to the next round of the tournament%.

If a contest cannot be rescheduled for the school that has been closed or has been quarantined, due to both teams not mutually agreeing to reschedule or any other aforementioned reason, a "no contest" shall be declared and the opposing team shall advance to the next round of competition. In addition, no ticket refunds shall be given for a rescheduled event.

In the event of a "closure" at the site of the tournament (e.g. neutral site) or said site is unable to host a tournament contest(s) in which schools are scheduled to participate, the Executive Director's Office and/or District Athletic Board, in collaboration with the participating schools, contest officials and tournament personnel, shall reschedule (time, date and/or location) the tournament contest(s) for the schools thus affected.

Note: In the event a school is not closed but unforeseen or extenuating circumstances arise in which the school is scheduled to participate, the Executive Director's Office and/or District Athletic Board, in collaboration with the participating schools, contest officials and tournament personnel if at a neutral site, shall make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the competing school with rescheduling the contest (time, date and/or location), provided:

- a.) Both teams mutually agree to reschedule the contest;
- b.) Contest officials are available to officiate the contest;
- c.) The rescheduled date does not adversely affect the next round of the tournament competition/ tournament schedule; and
- d.) The rescheduled contest shall be completed a minimum of 48 hours prior to the next round of the tournament%.

If a contest cannot be rescheduled for the school that has unforeseen or extenuating circumstances, due to both teams not mutually agreeing to reschedule or any other aforementioned reason, a “no contest” shall be declared and the opposing team shall advance to the next round of competition. In addition, no ticket refunds shall be given for a rescheduled event.

#Indicates that home sites hosting tournament contests are to work with OHSAA District Athletic Boards in matters pertaining to sectional and district tournament contests and the OHSAA Executive Director’s Office in matters pertaining to regional and state tournament contests.

%Indicates that in the sport of football, the rescheduled contest shall occur on either Friday or Saturday (meaning a Friday contest may move to a Saturday and vice versa, irrespective of the state finals) due to the unique nature of football, with the number one priority being the safety of the participants followed closely by fairness to a school’s opponent and/or future opponent .

16.4.2) Bowling, Cross Country, Golf, Gymnastics, Swimming and Diving, Tennis, Track and Field, Individual Wrestling

If a team or individual participant “fails to appear” or is not ready to compete at the time of their scheduled competition, the team or individual participant shall be disqualified and removed from the event or tournament competition.

In the event of a school “closure” as defined in 16.4 above and the school and/or individuals are scheduled to participate in a tournament, the tournament shall proceed as scheduled.*

***Note:** The Executive Director’s Office, in collaboration with the respective District Athletic Board (if a sectional or district event) and tournament personnel, reserves the right to delay or reschedule a tournament competition when all factors related to the severity of the situation are considered and provided it is practical to delay or reschedule such competitions.

In the event of a “closure” at the site of the tournament (e.g. neutral site) or said site is unable to host a tournament contest(s) in which schools are scheduled to participate, the Executive Director’s Office and/or District Athletic Board, in collaboration with the participating schools, contest officials and tournament personnel, shall reschedule (time, date and/or location) the tournament competition for the schools thus affected.

Thank you for your attention to this matter!