

Questions and Answers on Changes to the 2020 OHSAA Football Season & Playoffs

Below are frequently asked questions in relation to the announcement of the modified 2020 OHSAA football season.

August 7, 2020

Q. How do these changes affect my current region?

A. The regions previously approved during the May 2020 OHSAA Board of Directors meetings will not be used. Due to mass changes in participation in the sport from our member schools since May, regions will be re-drawn. We need to know which schools have decided to not to enter the playoffs by September 24 in order for the coaches to complete a newly devised (for football) voting and seeding process by September 30.

Q. Will the Harbin Rating System be used this year?

A. No, the Harbin Rating System will not be used this year, which gives schools maximum flexibility when re-scheduling games since all schools will have the opportunity to enter the playoffs.

Q. Why is the commitment date on September 17 but the withdraw without penalty date is September 24?

A. We need commitments by schools to enter the playoffs by September 17 so that regions can be drawn on September 18. Once regions are drawn, that information will be given to the coaches in that region.

Q. Why is the withdraw date September 24?

A. In order for the seeding process to begin three days later on September 27.

Q. What seeding criteria will be used to seed teams?

A. The OHSAA football administrator and the state football coaches association will discuss criteria within the next week. Once finalized, the criteria will be shared with all football schools.

Q. What about schools who aren't permitted to begin athletics until October 1? Can they participate?

A. Yes. We anticipate that there will be many teams that have very few, if any, regular season contests prior to beginning the playoffs. Keep in mind that schools will have the ability to resume regular season contests after elimination from the playoffs.

Q. How does this affect my current game contracts?

A. At this time, all regular season contracts are voidable for football. Bylaw 7-1-7 indicates that acts of God, force majeure, or similar circumstances gives both the schools and the OHSAA the ability make game contracts voidable.

Q. Can I play regular season games after we are eliminated from the playoffs?

A. Yes, teams may play regular season contests through November 14.

Q. Do we have to participate in the playoffs?

A. No, schools can decline to participate in the playoffs. Should that be the case, they can continue to play regular season contests through November 14. Schools may not exceed 10 regular season contests (meaning contests not including playoff contests).

Q. How many regular season contests can we play in total?

A. The number of regular season contests remains at a total of 10 regular season games.

Q. Is there going to be a tournament (playoffs) entry fee for football?

A. No, there is no tournament (playoffs) entry fee in the sport of football this year.

Q. Have regulations changed for 7th-8th-grade football as it relates to the length of the season?

A. Nothing has changed, and the 7th-8th-grade season ends on October 31.

Q. How does this schedule affect sub-varsity contests (freshman and junior varsity)?

A. By regulation, sub-varsity contests may be competed until the school's regular season concludes.

Q. When will we know what team we will be playing in the first round of the playoffs?

A. The seed voting will conclude on September 30, and we plan to post the brackets by 12:00 noon on Thursday, October 1.

Q. Will there be a pre-determined number of rounds for the playoffs in each division?

A. No, the number of rounds will be based on the number of teams that enter in each division. Divisions with 32 to 64 teams will have six rounds. Divisions with 65 teams or more will have seven rounds.

Q. Will playoff contests be played at neutral sites?

A. Playoff contests through the regional semifinals, or round of 16, (at least) will be played at the higher-seeded school. State semifinals will be held at neutral sites. Regional final sites are to be determined.

Q. May the higher-seeded team secure a site to host their playoff game other than their home facility?

A. Yes.

Q. If the higher seed does not wish to host the game, where will the game be played?

A. The first opportunity will be for the opponent to host. The next opportunity will be selected by the OHSAA Office in conjunction with the participating schools to determine a neutral site.

Q. Where will the state championship games be held?

A. There will not be a single site for all seven divisions. Availability of sites and proximity to participating schools will be taken into consideration during site selection.

Q. If my school has a bye in the first round of the playoffs, will we be able to play a regular season contest during playoff week 1?

A. Yes.

Q. If my team cannot play on its assigned playoff date due to COVID-19, can we re-schedule the contest?

A. No, if a team cannot compete on its assigned date, its game will be forfeited and the team's opponent will advance.

Q. If both teams cannot play a playoff contest, will a different team advance to the next round?

A. No, if both teams cannot play on their assigned playoff date, no team shall advance from that contest. The line will be vacated, and the opponent of the next round will automatically advance.