

OHSAA

Ohio High School Athletic Association



2022

**Soccer Coaches
Pre-Season Manual**

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A Message from the OHSAA



Coaches and Administrators,

Congratulations on your role as coach or administrator with oversight of the soccer program at your school. This manual is designed as a quick reference for pertinent information regarding the sport of soccer in the OHSAA. Due to the high volume of requests that come to our office, you are strongly encouraged to do three (3) things prior to sending an email or calling the OHSAA office:

1. Consult the subject areas in this manual.
2. Consult with your school's Athletic Administrator. He or she most likely knows the answer or has the resource to answer your questions.
3. Go to the Soccer webpage at <https://www.ohsaa.org/sports/soccer>. Various items are located on this site to assist you. In addition, I ask that you take note of the coach memos that will be sent out and posted to the main soccer page.

This is a reminder that our State Rules Meetings remain mandatory for Varsity head coaches, which can be accessed on your myOHSAA profile. This is addressed in the early pages of this manual. All rules governing OHSAA Soccer stem from the National Federation (NFHS) and the OHSAA. The NFHS Rules are specific to the playing rules while OHSAA Sports Regulations (and Bylaws) govern administrative rules specific to Ohio. No coach, administrator, or official has the authority to modify or set aside these rules.

Thank you for your professionalism, mentorship and service to the student-athletes at your schools. I wish you all the best this soccer season!



Kate Barnett
OHSAA Soccer Sport Administrator

OHSAA Mission Statement

The Ohio High School Athletic Association's mission is to serve our member schools and enrich interscholastic opportunities for students

Important Soccer Dates

August 1	Coaching Begins
August 2	Scrimmages/Previews Permitted
August 12	First Contest
September 5	Non-interscholastic Date
October 3	Deadline for OHSAA Tournament Entry
October 9	Tournament Seed/Draw Boys: 2:00 p.m. Girls: 3:00 p.m.
October 17 – 22	Sectional Tournaments
October 24 – 29	District Tournaments
November 1 – 5	Regional Tournaments
November 8 – 12	State Semi-Finals & Finals
November 12	End of the Season

OHSAA Soccer Contact Information

Kate Barnett	Sport Administrator, kbarnett@ohsaa.org <i>Administrates the sport of Soccer and oversees tournament, writes Soccer Sports' Regulations, Soccer Tournament Regulations</i>
Don Muenz	Director of Officials' Development, butsir@columbus.rr.com <i>Responsible for overseeing Soccer officials in Ohio. Serves as liaison with NFHS and oversees the education and recruitment of soccer officials in Ohio.</i>

Rules Interpretation Meetings

Rules Interpretation Meetings are required for all coaches. The online rules meeting can be accessed through myOHSAA and becomes available Thursday July 21, 2022. If you have any issues, please contact [Membership Services](#).

College ID Camp Update

A student-athlete may use a one-time waiver to attend an identification camp after the student-athlete has participated in an interscholastic scrimmage, preview or contest. The definition of an identification camp refers to an individual workout or individual camp being offered by a college or university and not any other type of team showcase or non-school competition or practice.

The waiver may be used for any events that take place from August 1, 2022 through the non-interscholastic date of September 5, 2022.

The waiver form may be accessed [HERE](#).

FOR EXAMPLE: A student-athlete would like to attend a College ID camp on August 7th. The school team has a scrimmage scheduled for August 4th. He or she may start practicing August 1st with his or her school team and per the waiver request, may participate in the scrimmage on August 4th and still be eligible to participate in the College ID camp on August 7th. Participation on August 4th would trigger member of a team status, but the waiver would permit participation in the College ID Camp without jeopardizing eligibility.

Communicating with the OHSAA

It is understandable with 832 high schools in Ohio and the number of teams in Ohio from 7-8th grade to High School, communication to our office is in large volume. Most questions can and should be answered by the Athletic Administrator at your school.

Additionally, every effort is being made to provide useful information via our website. We encourage you to check the website (both the main page and Soccer specific page), and additional information is provided in this manual regarding weekly informational item

Mandatory Rules Interpretation Meeting

Rules Interpretation Meeting is MANDATORY for all Head Coaches.

The mandatory rules interpretation meeting is available online and accessed through each individual myOHSAA account. Assistant coaches and volunteer coaches are encouraged to view this meeting as they will be held to the same regulation standard as head coaches. The online meeting is geared exclusively for coaches; officials have their own meeting with the content exclusively directed to them. For those of you who coach and serve as an official, you will be required to complete both meetings, one specific for coaches and one specific for officials. Therefore, you would be required to view two separate rules meetings if you coach and officiate.

NFHS rule and editorial changes and NFHS points of emphasis are covered in detail, along with OHSAA Soccer Sports Regulations, General Sport Regulations and Bylaws as they pertain to coaches and players. Though the main purpose is to provide knowledge and advice on the various NFHS and OHSAA regulations, this is the educational mechanism to ensure compliance with the various rules and regulations.

How to Complete the Rules Interpretation Meeting Online

All Coaches and Officials will access the state rules meetings through their myOHSAA accounts.

Coaches should contact their athletic administrator if they do not have an account. The athletic administrator will need to add the coach to the school's staff management in myOHSAA. This will generate an email invitation from info@myOHSAA.org to the coach. Coaches should look for this email in their inbox, junk or spam folders. Once the email is received, coaches should open the email and click the link inside and use the "Register" portion of the screen to create an account. Follow all prompts to create login credentials, verify your email address and complete your contact information. Once the account is created and all dashboard items completed, a blue button for the school will be added to your account. Click the button and use the State Rules Meeting link in the left column to access the list of meetings.

**Please do NOT use a Google Chrome tablet—these devices will not record attendance.
You must use a desktop or laptop computer.**

The ONLINE Rules Meeting link will be live on Thursday, July 21, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

Failure to complete the rules meeting by Friday August 12 at 11:59pm will result in a late fee. Failure to complete the rules meeting at all will result in your school being ineligible for post season competition.

AFTER COMPLETION:

1. Check your myOHSAA profile to verify your attendance has been recorded.
2. Attendance will be reflected in the profile. Please do not call the OHSAA office for verification.

Mandatory Parent Pre-Season Meeting

OHSAA Bylaws mandate that schools conduct a pre-season meeting with parents and student-athletes. The meeting is determined by each school's Athletic Administrator and must be held no later than 2 weeks after the start of the season. This is the time to cover such things as eligibility requirements, individual school policies, individual sport policies, sportsmanship issues and expectations, travel plans for away contests, etc. I encourage coaches to use this time to their advantage and provide as much education as possible to parents. To access some sample meeting template information's check out the OHSAA webpage [here](#).

Coaches' Toolchest

The OHSAA has partnered with Coaches' Toolchest as a one stop shop for coaches to obtain certifications. The program helps ensure that coaches have the knowledge they need to best serve their student athletes and to position those athletes for success in sport, and in life. For administrators, it provides an efficient, simple method of ensuring all of the school coaches are compliant with their PAP requirements. More than just meeting the legally mandated minimum requirements the program adds in a professional development piece as well. For more information, please check out the link [HERE](#).



Pupil Activity Permits & Concussion Legislation

As outlined in Ohio Administrative Code, all Coaches of Middle School/Jr. High and High School teams **MUST** possess a "Pupil Activity Validation Certificate" to coach in Ohio. This includes paid coaches AND volunteer coaches. School administrators are responsible for maintaining records on compliance and most schools provide opportunities for their coaches to obtain the necessary coursework. The actual regulations AND the certificate can be downloaded from the OHSAA's Sports' Medicine page or directly at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/medicine> . To obtain the required certificate through the ODE, one must:



- **Have completed a Sports' First Aid Course**
- **Possess a valid CPR Card**
- **Have been approved by their local Board of Education or similar governing body**
- **Complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course**
- **Complete one of two approved Concussion Recognition courses**
- **Complete the Sudden Cardiac Arrest video course offered by the Ohio Dept. of Health**

For more information regarding the requirements, click [here](#).

Concussion Legislation as it relates to Coaching Requirements

Though the entire law is explained later, all coaches today **MUST** complete one of two (2) approved Concussion Education programs online upon renewal of their Pupil Activity Permit anytime **after April 26, 2013**. Individual student-athletes removed from contests with a suspected concussion are no longer permitted to return to play on the same day of the contest – regardless of the diagnoses. If they are removed by one of the individuals given this authority, they simply cannot return to play the same day. Written authorization IS required to return anytime thereafter and must be kept on file with the school Athletic Administrator.

Lindsay's Law- Sudden Cardiac Arrest

ODE Website: <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/landing/Lindsays-Law.aspx>

Lindsay's Law, Ohio Revised Code [3313.5310](#), [3707.58](#) and [3707.59](#) became effective on August 1, 2017. In accordance with this law, the Ohio Department of Health, the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio High School Athletic Association, the Ohio Chapter of

the American College of Cardiology and other stakeholders jointly developed guidelines and other relevant materials to inform and educate students and youth athletes participating in or desiring to participate in an athletic activity, their parents, and their coaches about the nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest. The following resources were developed to implement Lindsay's Law:

For parents/guardians and student- athletes in grades 7-12 in Ohio schools

- [Required video](#)
- [Required SCA Informational Handout](#)
- [Required Signature Form](#)

For coaches:

If you are a coach for an interscholastic sport and are licensed by the Ohio Department of Education (all paid and volunteer coaches in Ohio), please visit their website for information about their training requirements around Lindsay's Law

<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/landing/Lindsays-Law.aspx>. The required video, informational handout and a post assessment test will be available shortly through the ODE's website. We will inform you when that component is available. If, however, you want to have your coaches view the video and review the information immediately, you may access those items below. Please be advised that as a school district, your superintendent must be able to verify that coaches have seen this video and read the informational handout if you choose to implement this requirement before it is available through ODE's LMS.

- [Required video](#)
- [Required SCA Informational Handout](#)

2022-23 NFHS RULES CHANGES



4-2-2: The change clarifies that hair adornments, such as beads, may be worn in the hair if they are secured to the head and do not present a risk of injury to the player, teammates or opponents.

Rationale: Clarifies that hair adornments can be worn in the hair if they do not endanger other players as well as being more inclusive of participants' cultural and religious beliefs.

7-1-3: State association may adopt procedures to require the game be played in its entirety.

Rationale: This allows states that may require the game to be played in its entirety (for post-season or regular season seeding play), to do so without a conflict with the current rule.

10-1-2f, 10-1-1, 10-1-3h (NEW): Clarifies that a player cannot score by throwing the ball into the goal.

Rationale: Defined the outcomes on a goalkeeper's throw when throwing the ball directly or own goal.

12-2, 11-1-1. 18-1-1s (NEW): Clarifies the upper boundary of the arm is in line with the bottom of the armpit.

Rationale: Defines the arm for the purposes of determining handling and offside.

14-1 Penalty: Defines that an indirect free kick is awarded the defending team for an improper penalty kick.

Rationale: Penalizes the kicking team for not kicking the ball forward on penalty kick.

17-1-2: Defines proper distance for the opposing team from a corner kick restart.

Rationale: Clarifies the proper distance for the opposing team on a corner kick.

Soccer Points of Emphasis (by NFHS)

Correct Field Markings and Appropriate Uniform. It is important that matches are played on fields marked in a consistent manner, and players wear uniforms according to NFHS rules. If a field is improperly marked and/or if a team wears an illegal uniform the referee shall contact the state association, who will work with school administrators to make appropriate changes. In addition, during pre-match communication with school administration, match officials are also encouraged to communicate these corrective actions directly to administrators.

Understanding the Difference Between Fair, Hard Play and a Foul. Soccer is a contact sport and understanding the differences between fair and hard play and a foul that is either reckless or serious is important to ensuring fair play and the safety of the players. When a player acts with disregard of the danger to, or consequences for, the opponent, he/she should be cautioned for reckless play. When a player uses disproportionate and unnecessary force against an opponent, he/she could be disqualified for serious foul play. It is critical coaches teach players about their own safety and the safety of their opponents, and officials recognize the differences between reckless and serious and the corresponding penalties. Safety, fair play and sportsmanship should be emphasized in the pre-match meeting. Communication between officials, coaches and captains should continue throughout a match, especially as the intensity increases. And when reckless or serious foul play occurs, officials should deal with the situation immediately – this kind of play should not be tolerated.

Education-Based Soccer. High school athletics is education-based, and some mechanics of our match are intentionally different from other levels of soccer. The pre-match meeting, for example, is a time for officials to communicate expectations to both coaches and captains. This REQUIRED meeting for both head coaches and captains should cover pertinent rules, sportsmanship, the coin toss, and properly and legally equipped players. This meeting is a purposeful start to an education-based interscholastic match.

Penalty Kick. The player taking the penalty kick is permitted to use a stutter step or a hesitation move provided they do not stop their approach to the ball and there is a continuous movement toward the ball. To be in play, the ball must be kicked forward. If the ball is not kicked forward the penalty shall be an Indirect Free Kick awarded to the defending team from the penalty mark. Infractions by either team are covered by the chart on page 70 of the rule book.

Dissent. RULE 12-8-1c states that objecting by word of mouth or action to any decision given by an official is dissent. However, simply disagreeing with an official's decision isn't always dissent and/or sanctioned by a yellow card. There are several factors to consider in each situation. Referees should evaluate potential dissent by asking if the display is public, personal, or provocative. Expressions of frustration or disappointment or private dissatisfaction not directed at anyone can usually be handled by a verbal warning or private discussion with the player. Continual public complaining, prolonged and repeated actions, or personally directed comments towards the referee of their decision must be dealt with and should be cautioned. Beyond dissent gestures or language that are inappropriate, foul and abuse directed at an opponent, teammate or official, threaten physical harm, and/or taunting must be dealt with immediately and result in a disqualification to that player. These same considerations should be considered when dealing with coaches or any other individuals in the team area.

OHSAA National Adoptions

The National Federation identifies certain rules that may or may not be adopted by each state's Athletic Association. These state adoptions are identified below and the Ohio High School Athletic Association's adoption is indicated for each.

1. **Commemorative or memorial patches may be worn on the jersey for special occasions, not to exceed 4 square inches [4.1.1(f)].—Adopted in Ohio.** Schools must apply, using form at end of this manual.
2. **Players may wear caps in inclement weather** (NFHS 4-2-1h Exception 2) – **Adopted in Ohio** Players may wear soft and yielding caps in inclement weather. Caps must be the same color.

3. **Artificial limbs** (NFHS 4-2-5) – **Adopted in Ohio** The coach or athletic administrator must request permission in writing from the OHSAA in order to secure permission for the prosthesis to be worn during play. Photos of the prosthesis in place on the individual must accompany the written request. Once it has been determined that the prosthesis meets the guidelines in NFHS 4-2-5, written permission will be provided. No student may play with an artificial limb until such permission has been granted.
4. **Systems of Officiating** (NFHS 5-1-1) – **Adopted in Ohio** The match officials shall be a head referee and a referee (dual system of officiating), a head referee and two assistant referees (diagonal system of officiating), or a center referee and two side referees (double dual system of officiating) assisted by a timer, scorer and at least two ball holders. An additional fourth official can also be used for the three referee systems (see fourth official sample guidelines). Note: Schools may choose a system by prior agreement.
5. **Officials' Shirt Color** (NFHS 5-1-3) – **Adopted in Ohio** The officiating uniform for soccer officials is provided in the OHSAA Handbook for Officials, on our website (www.ohsaa.org) and within this manual. The uniform indicated shall be worn in all OHSAA matches, preseason, regular season and the entire post-season tournament.
6. **Time kept on field** (NFHS 6-2-1) – **Adopted in Ohio** (in part)
The home school timer shall be the official timer. However, the head referee is permitted, at his/her discretion, to take the clock onto the field when the timer has failed in his/her duty so many times as to imperil match control.
7. **Score kept by referee** (NFHS 6-3-1) – **NOT Adopted in Ohio**
8. **Fourth Official as scorer** (NFHS 6-3-3) – **NOT Adopted in Ohio**
Refer to OHSAA tournament regulations for additional information regarding use of fourth officials during tournament play.
9. **Four equal quarters rather than halves** (NFHS 7-1-1) – **NOT adopted in Ohio**
10. **Shortened periods** (NFHS 7-1-2) – **NOT Adopted in Ohio**
11. **Suspended matches** (NFHS 7-1-3) – **Adopted in Ohio** In the event a match must be suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue play, the head referee shall declare it an official match if one complete half or more of the match has been played. **Per OHSAA Board adopted policy**, if less than one half has been completed, the match may be restarted from the point of suspension of play.

Tournament matches interrupted because of events beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority shall be continued from the point of suspension. Any ejected player or coach cannot participate in the resumed match. Teams playing short will continue to play short. NFHS 7-1-3 is not in effect for tournament matches. Where a full half has been completed, teams are not permitted to complete the game. League or conference rules to the contrary do not take precedence over this national playing rule and the OHSAA has not chosen to allow completion where a complete half has been played.
12. **Goal differential** (NFHS 7-1-5) – **Adopted in Ohio, OHSAA Soccer Reg. 12(A)(1.7):** Goal Differential/Running Clock – During any regular season or tournament contest, any time the score differential reaches 6 goals or more after the first half of the contest, a running clock shall be used. After the 6-goal differential has been met but the score drops below 6 goals, the clock reverts to regular timing. The clock shall be stopped only for an injured player on the field or when there is any unusual delay deemed necessary by the officials.
13. **Regular Season Overtime procedure** (NFHS 7-3-1) – **NOT adopted in Ohio** NFHS 7-3-1 refers to overtime procedures during regular season play. No overtime procedures will be conducted during regular season play in Ohio. However, schools may request use of approved tournament overtime procedures for league / conference tournaments only. All requests must be made to the OHSAA soccer administrator and are subject to approval.
14. **Disqualified player barred from competition** (NFHS 12-8-3 Note) – **Adopted in Ohio** Refer to OHSAA Soccer Regulations for specific penalties for disqualified or ejected players and / or coaches.
15. **Sample Tie-Breaking Procedure** – **Adopted in Ohio, in part**
Please refer to "Match Procedures: Tournament Overtime Procedures",
16. **Incidental Use of Vulgar or Profane Language** (12.8.1(d) NOTE) – **Not adopted in Ohio**

Wilson & Match Ball Information

Wilson is the official match ball for the OHSAA and is used at all Regional and State matches. Other National Federation (NFHS) approved balls are permitted for regular season and Sectional and District competition. The approved Wilson ball is the Vivido. **Please note that commemorative or other colored balls are not permitted.** For more information, click [HERE](#).



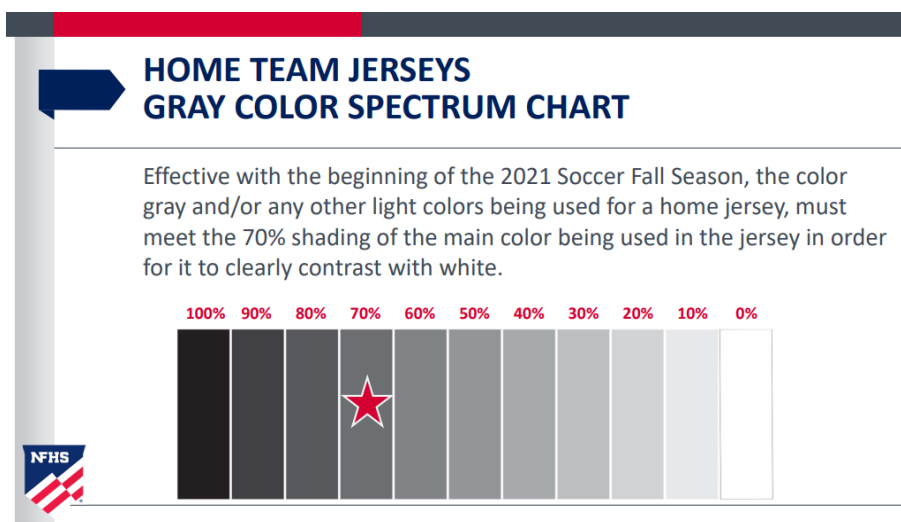
The Uniform Rules for Soccer

EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1, 2024 - In accordance with NFHS Rule 4.1, teams who are found to be in violation of the uniform requirements shall be subject to a \$100 fine per occurrence. Failure to have NFHS complaint uniforms by the start of the OHSAA post season shall result in removal from the OHSAA Tournament.

ART. 1 . . . The required player equipment includes a jersey, shorts, socks, suitable shoes and shinguards. With the exception of socks, equipment shall not be modified from its original manufactured state and shall be worn in the manner the manufacturer intended it to be worn. It is also recommended that male players wear a supporter and protective cup. Requirements for uniforms:

a. The shinguards shall provide adequate and reasonable protection, be professionally manufactured, age and size-appropriate, not altered to decrease protection, worn under the socks, and worn with the bottom edge no higher than 2 inches above the ankle (see illustrations regarding shinguards). Shinguards must meet the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) standards at the time of manufacture. The NOCSAE seal and height range shall be permanently marked on the front of the shinguard.

b. **The visiting team shall wear solid white jerseys and solid white socks, and the home team shall wear dark jerseys and socks** (dark is defined as any color which contrasts with white).



- c. Both socks shall be the same color, with the visiting team wearing solid white socks and the home team wearing socks of a single dominant color, but not necessarily the color of the jersey. If tape or a similar material (stays/straps) is applied externally to the socks, it must be of similar color as that part of the sock to which it is applied.
- d. A manufacturer's logo/trademark appearing on both sides of the socks is legal.
- e. If visible apparel is worn under the jersey and/or shorts, it shall be of a similar length for an individual and a solid-like color for the team.
- f. One manufacturer's logo/trademark or reference is permitted on the outside of each item which may not exceed 2¼ square inches and may not exceed 2¼ inches in any dimension. (Subject to the provisions in 4-1-1d)
- g. One American flag, not to exceed 2 inches by 3 inches, may be worn or occupy space on each item of uniform apparel. By state association adoption, to allow for special occasions, commemorative or memorial patches, not to exceed 4 square inches, may be worn on the jersey without compromising its integrity.
- h. When an illegally uniformed team is unable to correct the situation or cannot verify state association approval of the uniform, the game shall be played. The referee must, however, notify the state association following the game.
- i. Except for the uniform of the goalkeeper, jerseys, shorts and socks of teammates shall be of similar color, design and pattern.
- All jerseys, including the goalkeeper's jersey, shall be numbered on the back with a different Arabic number at least 6 inches in height and on the front (jersey or shorts) with the same number, which shall be at least 4 inches in height. Numbers shall be of a solid contrasting color to the jersey (or shorts) and clearly visible.
 - Only those names, patches, emblems, logos or insignias referencing the school are permitted on the team jersey and/or shorts, as well as on visible undergarments and goalkeeper pants, except as in 4-1-1e. The player's name may also appear on the team uniform.
 - The jersey of the goalkeeper shall distinctly differ in color from that of any teammate or opposing field player. The shorts or pants of the goalkeeper are not required to be the same color as his/her teammates, but must comply with Rule 4-1-1h(1). The socks of the goalkeeper are not required to be the same color as his/her teammates but shall differ in color from the opposing field players.
- j. Shoes must be worn by all participants in a game. Shoes with soles containing metal (aluminum, magnesium, titanium, etc.), leather, rubber, nylon, or plastic cleats, studs, or bars, whether molded as part of the sole or detachable, are allowed as long as the referee does not consider them dangerous.

Sample Illegal Visiting Team Uniforms:



In the event a team's uniforms do not comply, officials in Ohio are instructed to:

1. **PLAY THE MATCH.** Matches should never be cancelled because the officials deem the uniforms unacceptable or noncompliant.
2. Submit a report to the OHSAA via the normal reporting system. The OHSAA will follow-up with the report and inquire as to the school's uniform rotation, etc.
3. Officials should understand that the solid white jersey and socks apply only at the varsity level.

Special Event Team Uniform Waiver

The OHSAA is supportive of the many special events coaches and teams assist with for local charities. A few important notes for those participating in those events:

Schools may host one (1) special event each season that supports a specific cause (i.e. Kick for a Cure). In conjunction with the event, schools may request a waiver for NFHS Rule 4-1-1 which would permit teams to wear an alternate-colored jersey and/or socks in support of the specific cause. The Special Event Team Uniform Waiver application can be accessed [HERE](#).

Upon submitting the waiver, please inform officials and visiting teams of the event prior to the match.

Equipment/Safety Information

1. Protective Facemasks

RULE 4.2.8: A protective face mask may be worn by a player with a facial injury. The mask may be made of a hard material, but must be worn molded to the face with no protrusions. A medical release for the injured player signed by an appropriate health care professional shall be available at the match site.

2. Headgear

RULE 4.2.9: "Soft-padded headgear is permitted."

3. Shinguards

All players are required to wear shinguards with the NOCSAE seal and height range permanently marked on the front of each shinguard. Shinguards do not need the NFHS seal on them.

a.) When thunder is heard or lightning is seen*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safer location immediately.

b.) 30-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or 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.

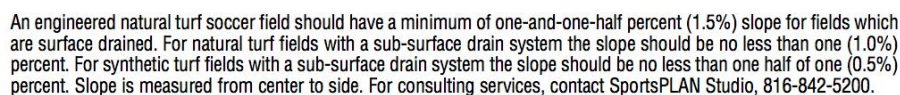
d.) When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in making a decision to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices and, thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning* should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning-detection device.

**At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm*

4. Review the lightning safety policy annually with all administrators, coaches and match personnel and train all personnel.
5. Inform student-athletes and their parents of the lightning policy at the start of the season.

By rule, a soccer field shall be between 100 to 120 yards long and 55 to 80 yards wide. The following dimensions are **recommended**:

Junior High Fields (7-8): 100 yards long by 55 yards wide



Lightning & Inclement Weather Preventative Planning

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

Proactive Planning:

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safer areas, and determine the amount of time needed to get everyone to the designated safer area:
 - a.) designated safer place is a substantial building with plumbing and wiring where people live or work, such as a school, gymnasium or library. An alternate safer place from the threat of lightning is a fully enclosed (not convertible or soft top) metal car or school bus.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:

The full lightning policy can be found later in this manual.

Suspended Matches

NFHS 7.1.3 states:

...In the event a match must be suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue play, the head referee shall declare it an official match if one complete half or more of the match has been played. If less than one-half of the match has been played, the match may be rescheduled from the start or restarted from the suspension of play according to state association adoption [18.1.1(pp)].

Important Notes Regarding Rule 7.1.3:

- Weather and lack of sufficient lighting are conditions that *normally* make it impossible to continue play.
- Any time a complete half is played, and conditions make it impossible to continue play, **the match is considered complete and the score is FINAL.**
- Matches that are unable to be completed and a complete half has been played, the match shall not be completed later.
- Matches that are unable to be completed and a complete half has NOT been played: the match shall resume from the exact point of suspension. Coaches/match personnel should make note of time on clock, position of ball, etc. The match shall begin immediately from the point it was suspended.

The NFHS does not allow state association adaptations, therefore, League or Conference Rules shall not override this NFHS Rule.

Band, Cheer, Artificial Noisemakers

Pep Bands and cheerleaders are permitted to perform at regular season soccer matches. Horns that pep band members have are not considered compressed air horns. Leagues and Conferences have discretion to allow or prohibit the use of artificial noisemakers. Compressed air horns and horns connected to outside power sources are not permitted at contests.

OHSAA Regulations

General Sport Regulations and Tournament Regulations will be available at <https://www.ohsaa.org/sports/soccer> (after approval at the fall Board meeting). On the website, under “Sports & Tournaments” select Soccer. They are listed under Tournament Information on the left side of the Soccer page.

Goal Differential – Running Clock

During any regular season or tournament contest, any time the score differential reaches 6 goals or more after the first half of the contest, a running clock shall be used. After the 6-goal differential has been met but the score drops below 6 goals, the clock reverts to regular timing. The clock shall be stopped only for an injured player on the field or when there is any unusual delay deemed necessary by the officials.

PA Announcement when Point Differential has Been Reached:

Fans, this match will now be played with a running clock per the OHSAA goal differential rule. The clock will still be stopped should there be an injured player on the field or by any unusual delay deemed necessary by the officials. If the goal differential should fall beneath six goals, normal clock operations will resume.

Out of Season Coaching

All coaches may coach players in grades 7-12 in team play outside the season. Keep in mind, the limitation (six (6) in soccer) is still in effect outside the season for players. Although a coach may coach players in team play from his/her own school, there may still only be six (6) players from the school team on the non-school team.

Example: During April, a travel/club team consists of six (6) returning players from your school. Any school approved coach may now coach that travel team during that time.

Indoor Soccer; Re-Defined

Indoor soccer shall be defined as a game played by two teams, each consisting of no more than 6 players, one of whom must be the goalkeeper, and played indoors between the end of the school’s soccer season and the day before the first day of coaching for the interscholastic season. There is no limit of players from the same school that may be on an indoor soccer team. Interscholastic coaches are permitted to coach their own interscholastic players on an indoor soccer team.

Futsal

The sport of Futsal is considered a different sport than soccer. Therefore, the OHSAA regulations do not apply to any participation with this sport.

Non-Interscholastic Competition

During the Regular Season

Members of an interscholastic soccer team shall not participate in non-interscholastic programs (i.e. AAU, club, church, recreational, etc. teams), anytime during the school season. This includes tryout opportunities, practices or matches.

Member of an interscholastic team is defined below per the OHSAA Bylaw 4-1-3.

4-1-3 A student is a member of an interscholastic squad when the student participates in an interscholastic contest. Such status as a squad member continues until the start of the next school season in that sport. An athletic contest involving participants from another school or any non-interscholastic or any organized adult team is a game, preview or a scrimmage.

Therefore, once a student-athlete participates with the school team in a scrimmage, preview or contest, he or she triggers member of a team status.

Colleges and universities may solicit opportunities for your student-athletes to train or practice with the college team, but these opportunities would be considered non-interscholastic events. Student-athletes who have triggered member of a team status shall not participate or he or she will become immediately ineligible for post season competition.

****However**, a student-athlete may use a one-time waiver to attend an college identification camp after the student-athlete has participated in an interscholastic scrimmage, preview or contest. The definition of an identification camp refers to an individual workout or individual camp being offered by a college or university and not any other type of team showcase or non-school competition or practice.

The waiver may be used for any events that take place from August 1, 2022 through the non-interscholastic date of September 5, 2022.

The waiver form may be accessed [HERE](#).

Before or After the Regular Season

A member of an interscholastic soccer team may participate in non-interscholastic soccer programs (i.e. AAU, club, church, recreational, etc. teams), **PRIOR TO** and **AFTER** the school season under the following conditions:

- The number of interscholastic soccer players from the same school on a non-interscholastic team is limited to **SIX** on the roster of that non-interscholastic team. This number includes all players that played on the school team. Graduating seniors do not count toward the maximum limitation.
- A player may continue to play with a non-interscholastic squad in a national qualifying tournament only in excess of the six-player limit until the squad is eliminated but no later than the established non-interscholastic deadline. Permission for this circumstance must be requested through the OHSAA in advance.

OHSAA's General Sports Regulations

Regulations governing the sport of soccer are divided into two basic categories: **General Sports' Regulations** and **Soccer Regulations (sport specific)**. These are reviewed annually and approved by the OHSAA's Board of Directors.

The OHSAA General Sports' Regulations

These regulations can be accessed and address regulations that affect all sports governed by the OHSAA. They include, but are not limited to, such things as Instructional Programs outside the window of the season, Physical Fitness (Conditioning) Programs, Open

Gym/Field Regulations, No Contact Periods, Player and Coach Ejection Policies. These are important and *most* areas of concern can be addressed simply by reading through these Regulations or contacting your school Athletic Administrator. They are easily accessed via the web by navigating to the Soccer webpage. You are strongly encouraged to review and familiarize yourself with the various rules approved by our Board of Directors that govern all sports.

The OHSAA Soccer Specific Regulations

Each spring, regulations for the upcoming school year are approved by the Board of Directors. These address areas such as (but not limited to) non-Interscholastic competition, number of contests (match, scrimmage or preview) that are permitted, season start and end dates, out of state travel, etc. All coaches should familiarize themselves with these regulations. Coaches should familiarize their entire staff with the importance of these Regulations as they directly affect the eligibility of student-athletes. Upon approval, they are submitted for printing to the annual OHSAA Handbook (which every administrator has been provided).

A few of the Soccer Regulation highlights are listed below.

Specific Regulations – Grades 9-12

- **Maximum number of contests permitted:** 17 Matches
- **Scrimmages/Previews:** Maximum of four (4) scrimmages and one (1) Preview.
 - **Scrimmage Note:** Scrimmages count as dates of competition and may be held at any time during pre-season, post-season or during the season, but must count as the same for both competing teams.
- **Alumni matches:** Counted as a scrimmage.
- **Practicing with Other Schools:** An event like this shall be counted as a scrimmage.
 - **Note Regarding Individual Participation:** Though there is no limitation on the number of halves an individual may participate in for scrimmages, but overall no individual may participate in more than four (4) scrimmages and one (1) preview in a season. (Players may not play in a JV Preview and also a Varsity Preview).
- **Halves Permitted:** No individual may participate in more than three (3) halves in any one day OR forty-two (42) halves in the season.
-

Specific Regulations – Grades 7-8

- **Maximum number of matches permitted:** Fourteen (14) and one (1) post-season tournament not to exceed four (4) matches.
- **Scrimmages:** Maximum of one (1) scrimmages OR one (1) Preview.
 - **Scrimmage Note:** Scrimmages count as dates of competition and may be held at any time during pre-season, post-season or during the season, but must count as the same for both competing teams.
- **Note Regarding Individual Participation:** Though there is no limitation on the number of halves an individual may participate in for scrimmages, but overall no individual may participate in more than one (1) scrimmages or one (1) preview in a season.
- **Halves Permitted:** No individual may participate in more than 3 halves in any one day OR 28 halves on the season (any post season tournament would be permitted up to 8 halves)

Previews

Previews may only consist of one-half the length of a regular season contest. Admission may be charged for Previews.

No Contact Period (“Dead Period”)

Any coach, paid or volunteer, is prohibited from athletic or athletic-related contact with squad members in the same sport for the period of time starting with the **first day after the school’s last interscholastic contest and ending 28 days later.** This includes any contact in tryouts in or out of school, physical fitness, weight training, open gyms, etc. It also includes verbal contact which encourages discusses or promotes any activity related to soccer. Exceptions to this are all-star contests, awards ceremonies, contact

with seniors to facilitate college recruiting and contact as a faculty member assigned to teach in the regular curriculum, pick up school-issued equipment and attendance at OHSAA tournaments.

Out of State Travel

A Soccer team may travel out of state to compete in contests, scrimmages, previews and matches in states or provinces in Canada that are contiguous to Ohio regardless of distance. This would include the states of Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania and West Virginia and the province of Ontario in Canada. A team may travel out of state once to a state or province not contiguous to Ohio. Teams planning to travel to an area not contiguous to Ohio must fill out a form requesting permission from the OHSAA to travel. The form can be found [here](#). Teams may not travel out of state only to practice.

Comments to News Media

Each year unpleasant situations arise as a result of comments made to the news media by coaches. The OHSAA Constitution and Bylaws reads in part "Great care shall be exercised in the selection of officials, well in advance of the contest and agreed upon by schools involved." Public criticism of officials is a direct reflection upon those who were responsible for assigning the officials to the match. Officials are trained and expected to make no derogatory comments regarding the players, coaches, or schools. Coaches are expected to follow the same procedure in regard to the officials. Coaches violating this rule may be asked to discuss the problem personally with the Executive Director. (See Sports Regulations "Media Regulations")

Scoreboard-Video Replay Board Regulations

As more and more schools erect video replay boards at their shared facilities with football, there has been much concern about their use. First, replays on scoreboards are NOT considered any form of coaching device and therefore are permissible for use. It is cautioned however...replays of CONTROVERSIAL plays are NOT to be run on replay boards. This is consistent with football regulations and discussion should take place with those individuals operating those boards.

Officials

Varsity: Minimum of TWO OHSAA Class 1 or Class 2 officials are required. Regardless of how many are officiating the match, ALL must be OHSAA Class 1 or Class 2.

Junior Varsity: Minimum of TWO OHSAA Class 1 or Class 2 officials are required.

Freshmen: OHSAA Class 1, 2, or 3 *recommended*.

Note: If only one OHSAA official is present to officiate a contest, the match may be played if participating coaches agree.

Ejections from Scrimmages

Any ejection that takes place during a scrimmage will be reported on the Officials' Report and will require all players to be suspended in accordance with the OHSAA's Ejection Policy.

Important Note on Ejections: Any ejection that takes place out of state or when not followed by the required paperwork that is to be submitted by the official must still follow all ejection protocol. Consequences of an ejection are required to be followed whether appropriate paperwork is filed by the official or not.

Match Management

In cooperation with Officials, the Information below is also provided to Athletic Administrators and Coaches relative to match management.

Officials to Leave Immediately at End of Match: All contest officials are to leave the field immediately at the conclusion of the match. Supervision of all post-match activities of any nature is not the responsibility of the match officials. Supervision of all post-match activities is the responsibility of the authorized institutional representatives of the participating schools.

Administrator at Varsity Matches: OHSSA Bylaw 3 strongly recommends that a school administrator be present at home and away varsity boys' and girls' soccer matches. Further, the host school is required to have a point of contact at all home matches.

Rating and Voting for Officials

Make certain your contests and officials' names are entered into the *Arbiter* data management system!

"The tournament officials have been selected by a process approved by the Board of Directors". That 'process' is an important one for both coaches AND officials and is the basis for officials' assignments to OHSAA Tournaments.

General Sports Regulation 3 requires head coaches and Athletic Directors to vote for officials. Failure to participate in the voting process results in a fine. **Head Coaches are also strongly encouraged to rate officials on a game by game basis through myOHSAA.**

To make this process work it requires Coaches and Athletic Directors to do their part. Officials take this process seriously and it is in everyone's best interest to have the correct input for the assignment of officials. A few important things to note:

1. Coaches **RATE** Officials, 3 other categories of approved individuals **VOTE** for Officials. Those categories are: athletic administrators, each local Officials' Association and a group considered Leaders of Officiating.
2. District Athletic Boards utilize the various pools to assign officials to **sectional and district tournaments** in their respective Athletic Districts. The process of assignment from approved pools is at the discretion of each District Athletic Board.
3. The OHSAA Office utilizes the pools to assign officials to the **Regional and State Tournament**.

Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association (OSSCA)

Mission Statement

Formed by High School Soccer Coaches early in the development of the game in Ohio, the Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association promotes High School Soccer in Ohio. Our members are soccer coaches at Ohio High Schools.

The OSSCA has worked hard to improve soccer regulation in Ohio. We have developed a close relationship with the Ohio High School Athletic Association. For example we have lobbied for and got improvements in tournament site selection.

Yearly we honor All-State players and coaches submitted from member coaches from their districts.

The Ohio State University under the direction of Men's Soccer Coach John Bluem offers members of the OSSCA an annual clinic for coaches, traditionally held the last weekend in April.

Joining the OSSCA and Member Benefits

Joining: Membership with the OSSCA is voluntary. Those interested in becoming a member of the OSSCA may reach out to your appropriate district representative or go to the website [here](#).

Membership Benefits:

- Works to improve Soccer Regulations in Ohio
- Develops and fosters relationship with the OHSA
- Works to improve soccer tournament sites
- Maintains, updates and manages the OSSCA website at www.ossca.org
- Conducts the State Coaches' Poll
- Selects All-State Teams in each Division
- Provides Scholarships to graduating sons/daughters of member coaches
- Selects All-Academic awards
- Honors coaches with Service and Victory Awards
- Honors Assistant Coaches through the "Assistant Coach of the Year" honor
- Works closely with Ohio State's Men's Soccer Coach to offer the annual OSSCA Soccer Clinic

Districts

2. [Akron](#)
3. [Central](#)
4. [Cleveland](#)
5. [East](#)
6. [Miami Valley](#)
7. [North Central](#)
8. [Northwest](#)
9. [Southeast](#)
10. [Southwest](#)
11. [Youngstown](#)



Coaches' Code of Ethics

From the NFHS Soccer Rules Book

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student should be treated with the utmost respect and his or her welfare should be considered in decisions by the coach at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The Coach shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

The Coach shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with students, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

The Coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse.

The Coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct the program in harmony with the total school program.

The Coach shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

The Coach shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.

The Coach shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

The Coach should meet and exchange cordial greetings with the opposing coach to set the correct tone for the event before and after the contest.

The Coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give students special consideration.

The Coach shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic association.

Soccer Player and Coach Ejection Protocol

No later than noon of the first day following an ejection, the official **files a report online in the myOHSAA system with the OHSAA**. Since the procedures listed below are all triggered by the submission of the Officials' Report online, officials are penalized in accordance with OHSAA adopted policies in the event they do not submit the report. After this written report that includes narrative is submitted:

- **The report is automatically sent electronically to the OHSAA and copies to the school's Athletic Director.**
- **The school's Athletic Director is required to submit a reply that includes the school and coach/player side of the events/ejection**
- **In the submitted reply from the school's Athletic Director, he/she is required to submit the coach's email address**
- **Upon the Athletic Director's submission of the "Response Form", an email is sent to the ejected coach explaining the consequences (below) of the ejection:**
 - An ejected coach is suspended from ALL MATCHES for the remainder of the day of the ejection PLUS ALL MATCHES UNTIL 2 AT THE LEVEL OF THE EJECTION ARE COMPLETED. Thus, a JV coach ejected from a JV contest cannot coach a JV OR Varsity contest until 2 JV contests have been played.
 - Ejected coaches must also pay a \$100.00 fine and complete the National Federation of State High School Association's (NFHS) "Teaching and Modeling Behavior" course within 30 days of the ejection. The payment of the fine is completed with an online payment per the instructions provided to the coach on the email he/she receives that is triggered by submission of the School Response Form.
 - Consequences of ejections are to be enforced by the school administration and served by coaches/players even if the above protocol is not completed.

ALL PLAYER and COACH EJECTIONS ARE FINAL AND NOT PERMITTED TO BE APPEALED

- Per OHSAA Bylaw 4.5.4, any student ejected or disqualified from a match must immediately be placed under direct supervision of a school official or coach. This may be on the bench or in the team area but the player is NOT to be removed from the site. Coaches ARE required to leave the facility immediately upon ejection. In the event there is no coach remaining to coach/supervise the team, the match is completed at that point.
- Other pertinent Ejection Information:
 - During the suspension period, the player MAY practice with the team
 - During the suspension period, the player MAY be in the bench area and in the locker room before during and after the contest
 - During the suspension period, the player MAY travel with the team to an away contest

- During the suspension period, the player **is not permitted in uniform at any time before during or after the contest and may not be on the field for warm-up or to assist with warm-ups**

Card Explanation

Double Yellow: Any player or coach who receives two yellow cards in one match is disqualified and shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the player or coach shall be ineligible for the next contest of the same level.

General Sport Regulation 14: Any student or coach ejected from a contest for fighting will now be ineligible for four (4) matches. Fighting is defined by the NFHS as any attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage an opponent in a combative manner unrelated to soccer. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s) or foot (feet).

General Sport Regulation 14 Interpretation: Two (2) double yellow penalties in the season do not count toward the maximum of two (2) ejections required for a student-athlete to become ineligible the remainder of the season.

General

	Day of penalty	Matches missed AFTER day of event
Yellow	May still play	0
Double Yellow	Ineligible for remainder	1
Red	Ineligible for remainder	2
Red-Violent Conduct (fighting)	Ineligible for remainder	4

Sportsmanship

NFHS Sportsmanship Mission Statement

Good sportsmanship is viewed by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) as a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. The ideals of sportsmanship apply equally to all activity disciplines. Individuals, regardless of their role in activities, are expected to be aware of their influence on the behavior of others and model good sportsmanship.

The OSSCA & Sportsmanship

The Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association (OSSCA) stands tall in its commitment to good sportsmanship. The school-based experience is one that affords tremendous opportunities to student-athletes that they will remember for a lifetime. Those experiences are dependent on the role model the head coach provides. The OSSCA encourages all coaches to exhibit behavior that serves as a role model for the student-athletes we serve. In conjunction with the OHSA's Sportsmanship, Ethics and Integrity (SEI) Committee, the OHSCA annually selects a recipient of the SEI Award.

Special Soccer Coaches' Note on Sportsmanship

Expectations need to be placed on team members relative to sporting behavior. High School soccer continues to grow and improve each and every year. I urge coaches to be at the forefront of setting examples of behavior and translating that into expectations for their student-athletes. It is good for the game and will allow the continued growth of soccer.

During my years administrating sports, I have 'heard it all' and the most common response from ejected coaches is *"I was only sticking up for my players"*. I can assure you that NO official has ever set out to degrade or disrespect the game of soccer and we ALL need to remember that the game is 'for the players'. I continue to urge you to keep that at the forefront of the leadership and guidance you are entrusted with. Two areas of concern that have arisen in the past few years that coaches can assist:

Warm Up at Conclusion of JV Game

During the first game of a 'doubleheader' night (JV game or the boys/girls' playing prior to the second game), teams will often begin their warm-up prior to the conclusion of the first game. This often leads to a team 'circling the field' prior to the first game ending. We are discouraging this as nearly 30 minutes are provided as ample time for warm-up when the game concludes. Additionally, there are growing sportsmanship issues with players unsupervised as they cross paths with opponents' team areas. This is an area that COACHES can assist with.

Running over to Fans at the Conclusion of a Game

Yes, it may be an 'accepted' thing...a 'soccer thing'; a team runs across the field together to the opposite touch line at the conclusion of a game to share the joy of victory with other students. But...we are encountering more and more acts of unsporting behavior that occurs when fans of the OTHER team are in that same area. Please utilize your leadership role and prevent issues before they occur. Address this frequently with team members.

ADMINISTRATORS

Athletic departments are comprehensive, pre-eminent teaching departments with a subject matter all their own: self-confidence, leadership, teamwork, discipline, perseverance, respect for others, strategic thinking, dedication, the importance of rules, and sportsmanship. These are true life lessons and participation in athletics provides another forum for learning. Coaches and Officials are responsible for promoting sportsmanship and positive behavior on the field. Administrators, we need your continued assistance in promoting sportsmanship and controlling fan behavior in the stands! Let the parents and fans know what you expect!

COACHES

Your athletes will demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors they have learned from you, either through direct instruction or through observation of your actions. ***Never underestimate the influence you have on your players!*** You must:

- Abide by and teach the rules of the game in letter and in spirit.
- Set a good example for players and spectators to follow.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will serve to create a positive impression of you and your team.
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
- Develop a program that rewards participants and spectators for displaying proper sportsmanship and enforces penalties on those who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.

It is difficult to develop a great finisher, a great centerback or a great goalkeeper. That is true. However, your greatest challenge is to develop mature young adults who will become great citizens and role models in your community.

OFFICIALS

Your job is not an easy one, but the official must be aware that they are an important component in the educational development of students. To carry out this responsibility, you must:

- Know the rules and mechanics of our sport and the philosophy behind them.
- Get fit and stay fit. An official with all of the rules and mechanics knowledge and people skills in the world does no good if he or she cannot physically keep up with play.
- Maintain professional and ethical relationships with athletic administrators, especially in the area of fulfilling game contracts.
- Work cooperatively with fellow officials during games and within the referees' association to improve members' performances.
- Maintain at all times and when interacting with all participants, an attitude of civility and professionalism.

- Practice effective preventive officiating as much as possible before, during, and after a match. The quiet word, proper signals, timely verbal instructions, a simple thank-you to a player for avoiding an unsporting act, and well-thought-out pre-game conferences with the teams and other game officials will result in an improvement of sportsmanship by eliminating the chance for things to go wrong.

STUDENT-ATHLETES

You serve as a role model for your younger siblings, young fans in the stands, your teammates, and your classmates. Set high expectations for everyone and help them follow-through! You must:

- Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of representing your school and the community.
- Live up to the standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff.
- Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with others. This will assist everyone in the achievement of a better understanding and appreciation of the game.
- Treat opponents as you would like to be treated.....with respect.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will serve to create a positive impression of you and your team.

CONCLUSION

Good sportsmanship is everyone's responsibility. It is the essence of interscholastic athletics. Remember...some may question an official's call or a coach's substitution, but no one can question the value of good sportsmanship.

Sportsmanship Online Resources

On the OHSAA's [Respect the Game page](#) you will find **Fair Play Codes** for athletes, coaches, and fans, as well as additional information regarding **parents' role in interscholastic athletics**. The sportsmanship page also includes information about the Harold A. Meyer Sportsmanship Award and the Archie Griffin Sportsmanship Award. Please feel free to contact us with any additional questions. Please take time to visit this from the OHSAA's website along with many helpful items previously mentioned on the NFHSlearn website at www.nfhslearn.com.

Important Sports Medical Information

The safety of our student-athletes is always of utmost concern. Information regarding the following important topics can be found at the OHSAA's "Healthy Lifestyles and Sports Medicine" webpage at <http://www.ohsaa.org/medicine>. Additional information relative to various equipment and rules relative to medical issues can be found throughout this manual as well.

- Heat Stress and Athletic Participation
- Recommendations for Hydration to Prevent Heat Illness
- Suggested Guidelines for Management of Head Trauma in Sports
- Communicable Disease Procedures (can also be found on at the end of the NFHS 2013-14 Rules Book)
- Links to the following sites:
 - Joint Advisory Committee on Sports Medicine
 - Ohio Athletic Trainers Association
 - American Medical Society for Sports Medicine
 - Ohio Parents for Drug Free Youth
 - National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA)
 - Gatorade Sports Science Institute News

Concussion Management

Implementation of State Law and NFHS Playing Rules Related to Concussion and Concussed Athletes and Return to Play Protocol

It is important for all individuals involved in interscholastic athletics to recognize the potential for catastrophic injury and even death from concussions. Thus, it is extremely important that each coach, administrator, contest official and medical support personnel review their responsibilities in protecting students. Further both students and parents have responsibilities in this area as well.

Note: It has always been the ultimate responsibility of the coaching staff, in all sports, to ensure that students are only put into practice or contests if they are physically capable of performing. However, all individuals involved in the conduct of interscholastic competition have responsibilities in this endeavor.

In January 2011, the OHSAA Board of Directors adopted a sports regulation which incorporated the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) playing rules related to concussion recognition and management. On April 26, 2013, legislation adopted by Ohio's General Assembly on concussion and head injuries in youth sports became effective. On February 14, 2013, the OHSAA Board of Directors mandated that these regulations become effective on April 26, 2013, for the remainder of the spring sports season and thereafter. This OHSAA regulation, as amended to incorporate this recent legislation, now reads:

Any student, while practicing for or competing in an interscholastic contest, who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest by either of the following:

- 1) **The individual who is serving as the student's coach during that practice or competition.**
- 2) **An individual who is serving as a contest official or referee during that practice or competition.**

RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

If a student is removed from practice or competition due to a suspected concussion or head injury, the coach or referee who removes the student shall not permit the student, **ON THE SAME DAY THE STUDENT IS REMOVED**, to return to that practice or competition or to participate in any other practice or competition for which the coach or contest official is responsible. Thereafter, which means no earlier than the next day, the coach or contest officials shall not permit the student to return to practice or competition until both of the following conditions are satisfied:

- 1) The student's condition is assessed by either of the following:
 - a. A physician, who is a person authorized under Chapter 4731 of the Ohio Revised Code (OCR) to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine or surgery (M.D. or D.O.)
 - b. Any other licensed health care provider that the school district board of education or other governing authority of a chartered or non-chartered nonpublic school, authorizes to assess the student who has been removed from practice or competition.
- 2) The student receives **written authorization** that it is safe for the student to return to practice or competition from a physician or other licensed health care provider authorized to grant the clearance. Click here <http://www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Sports-Medicine/AuthorizationToReenter.pdf> to retrieve the OHSAA's Medical Authorization to Return To Play (RTP) form.

A school district board of education or governing authority of a chartered or non-chartered nonpublic school may authorize a licensed health care provider who is NOT a PHYSICIAN to make an assessment and grant authorization for a student to return to participation ONLY if the provider is acting in accordance with one of the following as applicable to the provider's authority to practice in Ohio:

- 1) In consultation with a physician;
- 2) Pursuant to the referral of a physician;
- 3) In collaboration with a physician, or
- 4) Under the supervision of a physician.

Note: A physician or other licensed health care provider who makes an assessment or grants clearance for a student to return to participation may be a volunteer.

COACHES REQUIREMENTS

All coaches, paid and volunteer, must possess a current Department of Education-issued Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit. When renewing this permit, the coach will be required to complete an online concussion education course as stipulated in the section entitled **Approved Online Concussion Education Course**. This course is valid for three years and expires at the time the Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit expires.

CONTEST OFFICIALS REQUIREMENTS

New legislation signed into law by the Governor provides that no school “shall permit” an individual to referee interscholastic athletic contests unless the individual holds a Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or has successfully completed within the last three years a training program in concussion recognition. Therefore, all OHSAA licensed officials shall possess either a current Department of Education-issued Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or **show evidence of completing an approved online concussion education course** as stipulated in the section entitled **Approved Online Concussion Education Courses**. This course is valid for three years from the date of completion.

STUDENT AND PARENT REQUIREMENTS

All students and their parents or legal guardians shall review and sign the “Concussion Information Sheet” which has been developed by the Ohio Department of Health and which shall be distributed by OHSAA member schools to all students and their parents prior to each sports season. Students and parents shall review and sign this form each year and should keep a copy of the form. In addition, parents and students are encouraged to complete an approved concussion education course.

NFHS SUGGESTED MEDICAL CLEARANCE RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

1. No exertional activity until asymptomatic.
2. When the athlete appears clear, begin low-impact activity such as walking, stationary bike, etc.
3. Initiate aerobic activity fundamental to specific sport such as running or skating and may also begin progressive strength training activities.
4. Begin non-contact skill drills specific to sport such as dribbling, fielding, batting, etc.
5. Full contact in practice setting.
6. Match play/competition.
 - Athlete must remain asymptomatic to progress to the next level. (It is often suggested that an athlete not be allowed to progress more than one level per day.)
 - If symptoms recur, athlete must return to previous level and should be reevaluated by an appropriate health care professional.
 - Medical check should occur before contact. (Final written clearance from the medical professional shall be obtained before the athlete engages in any unrestricted or full contact activity.)

QUICK LINKS FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Ohio Department of Health Concussion Information Sheet

<http://www.healthyohioprogram.org/~media/HealthyOhio/ASSETS/Files/injury%20prevention/concussion/Interscholastic%20Concussion%20Form%20-%20ODH%20Revised%202.ashx>

Online Concussion Management Training

<http://www.healthyohioprogram.org/concussion.aspx#Training>

Ohio’s Return to Play Law: Frequently Asked Questions

<http://www.healthyohioprogram.org/~media/HealthyOhio/ASSETS/Files/injury%20prevention/concussion/Frequently%20Asked%20Questions%20Updated%202513.ashx>

Ohio’s Return to Play Law: What Coaches and Referees Need to Know

<http://www.healthyohioprogram.org/~media/HealthyOhio/ASSETS/Files/injury%20prevention/concussion/Return%20to%20Play%20-%20What%20Coaches%20Need%20to%20Know%20-%20School%20Sports%20-%20Final.ashx>

Ohio’s Return to Play Law: What Parent/Guardians Need to Know

<http://www.healthyohioprogram.org/~media/HealthyOhio/ASSETS/Files/injury%20prevention/concussion/Return%20to%20Play%20-%20What%20Parents-Guardians%20Need%20to%20Know%20-%20School%20Sports%20-%20Final.ashxx>

ADDITIONAL CONCUSSION RESOURCES

Ohio Department of Health, Violence and Injury Prevention Program - Sports/Recreation Traumatic Brain Injuries

<http://www.healthyohioprogam.org/vipp/child/tbi.aspx>

CDC Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports

Nationwide Children's Hospital – Concussion Information Toolkit <http://www.nationwidechildrens.org/concussion-toolkit>

CDC Materials on Returning to School for Parents, School Nurses and Educators

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/schools/index.html>

Ohio Legislative Service Commissioner HB 143 Bill Analysis

<http://www.lsc.state.oh.us/analyses129/12-hb143-129.pdf>

Brain Injury Association of Ohio

www.biaoh.org

Communicable Disease Procedures

Though most schools have a Certified Athletic Trainer present at Varsity contests and all coaches are required to maintain a valid Pupil Activity Certificate through the Ohio Department of Education that includes a Sports' First Aid component, it is important to keep up to date on the remote risk that blood borne infectious diseases can be transmitted during basketball practice and contests. For example, Hepatitis B can be present in blood as well as other bodily fluids. Procedures for reducing the potential transmission of these infectious diseases should include, but should not be limited to the following:

1. The bleeding must be stopped, the open wound covered and if there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform, it must be changed before the athlete may participate.
2. Routine use of gloves or other precautions to prevent skin and mucous-membrane exposure when contact with blood and other body fluids is anticipated.
3. Immediately wash hands and other skin surfaces if contaminated (in contact) with blood or other body fluids. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.
4. Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with an appropriate disinfectant before competition resumes.
5. Practice proper disposal procedures to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels and other sharp instruments or devices.
6. Although saliva has not been implicated in HIV transmission, to minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, or other ventilation devices should be available for use.
7. Athletic trainers/coaches with bleeding or oozing skin conditions should refrain from all direct athletic care until the condition resolves.
8. Contaminated towels should be properly disposed of/disinfected.
9. Follow acceptable guidelines in the immediate control of bleeding and when handling dressings, mouthguards and other articles containing body fluids.

You are encouraged to log on to the OHSAA's website at www.ohsaa.org and refer to the Sports' Medicine dropdown menu for additional information.

Lightning and Inclement Weather

OHSAA Lightning and Inclement Weather Regulations (Approved By the OHSAA Board of Directors 6-3-19)

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

Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safer areas, and determine the amount of time needed to get everyone to the designated safer area:
 - a. A designated safer place is a substantial building with plumbing and wiring where people live or work, such as a school, gymnasium or library. An alternate safer place from the threat of lightning is a fully enclosed (not convertible or soft top) metal car or school bus.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - a. When thunder is heard or lightning is seen*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safer location immediately.
 - b. 30-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or 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.
 - d. When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in making a decision to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices and, thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning* should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning-detection device.

* At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.
4. Review the lightning safety policy annually with all administrators, coaches and match personnel and train all personnel.
5. Inform student-athletes and their parents of the lightning policy at the start of the season.

Acclimatization and Exertional Heat Illness Precautions

All coaching and medical staff personnel shall observe the following precautions for **all sports competed outdoors and/or in a hot, humid environment.**

- **Stress to participants the importance of properly hydrating** during the day leading up to the contest/training, and to drink 8-to-12 ounces of water or sport drinks 20 minutes prior to the contest or any training session. This procedure can help prevent problems during practice and contests.
- **Schools shall have unlimited amounts of water** and sport drinks on hand during practices and contests, and coaches in team sports should be prepared to play a lot of players rather than just the starters.
- **Contest officials are permitted to establish predetermined breaks** during contests, such as halfway through each period. At that time, players can drink water and remove their equipment, which should also take place at halftime (the more skin that is exposed, the more cooling that can take place). **This provision also applies to all sports.**
- **NFHS football playing rules allow the referee to shorten periods** per mutual agreement by the opposing coaches. In addition, by mutual agreement a match may be terminated at any time.
- **Contest managers are advised to monitor conditions** for others affiliated with the contest, like cheerleaders, band members, coaches, officials and especially spectators.
- **In football, if schools decide NOT to play a contest, it becomes an open date for both.** If one school desires to play but the other does not, there are no forfeits involved. Again, it would become an open date for both schools. However, schools do have the option to reschedule contests, and OHSAA regulations do permit schools to play more than one contest per week. There also are no OHSAA regulations that prohibit matches from being played on Sundays. The same concepts apply to all other OHSAA sports.
- **Please review the OHSAA policy on inclement weather and lightning.** In short, upon the first indication that thunderstorm development is within 15 miles of the match site, the activity shall be suspended until 30 minutes after the storm has left this 15-mile zone. Individuals should move to a safe area until the storm has moved away.
- **Know both the Temperature and Humidity.** The greater the humidity, the more difficult it is for the body to cool itself. Test the air prior to practice or a game using a wet bulb, globe, temperature index (WBGT index) which is based on the combined effects of air temperature, relative humidity, radiant heat and air movement. The following precautions are recommended by the Korey Stringer Institute when using the WBGT Index (ACSM's Guidelines for the Team Physician, 1991):

Below 64F	Unlimited activities
65-72F	Moderate risk
74-82F	High Risk
82F+	Very high risk

WBGT	Recommendation (KSM P&P, Korey Stringer Institute)
<79.7°F	Normal activities Three separate 3 minute breaks per hour
79.8-84.6°F	Three separate 4 minute breaks per hour Helmets and other equipment should be removed when the athlete is not directly involved with the competition, drill or practice and it is not otherwise required
84.7-87.6°F	Maximum practice time of 2 hours Four separate 4 minute breaks per hour FB: Limit to helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts during practice Considering postponing practice to later in the day Allow athletes to change to dry shirts and shorts at defined intervals
87.8-89.7°F	Maximum of 1 hour of training with four separate 5 minute breaks in that hour No additional conditioning allowed FB/LAX: No helmets, should pads, or other equipment is permitted Consider postponing practice to later in the day Allow athletes to change to dry shirts and shorts at defined intervals
>89.8°F	No outdoor workouts No indoor workouts unless air conditioned

The OHSAA advises careful monitoring of the weather and plans to modify training and competition including:

- 1) Modification of equipment, if applicable to the sport
- 2) Allowance for more frequent rest breaks and the use of shaded areas for those breaks
- 3) Modification of practice time
- 4) Availability of water always
- 5) Availability of cold water immersion tubs for onsite cooling
- 6) If exertional heat stroke is suspected, immediate onsite cooling using cold water immersion before transport by EMS
- 7) Review and practice of the OHSAA's recommended Emergency Action Plan, *"Anyone Can a Save A Life,"* or similar plan for all sports teams with special emphasis on the heat illness section.

Miscellaneous Information

- **Professionalism**

Your professionalism is of the utmost importance. Your athletes and fans will follow your lead. If you are respectful of the match and the officials, your athletes and fans are more likely to do the same. If you are disrespectful of the match and the officials, it will be reflected in the words and actions of your athletes and fans. Officials aren't perfect and mistakes will be made, but it is all part of the learning process for our young student-athletes. So please take those disappointments and turn them into positive learning experiences. What you permit, you promote.

- **Pre-Season Preparations**

*Pre-season meetings are **required**. As part of your pre-season preparations, you are encouraged invite a local official(s) to meet with your team during pre-season workouts. It allows the officials to meet your athletes and discuss new rules. It gives your athletes an opportunity to ask questions and have a discussion prior to match days. We would also recommend inviting an official to a pre-season meeting with your parents. Again, it provides a forum for healthy discussions and an opportunity for your parents to learn more about the match. For resource materials, you can find more information on our website [here](#).*

- **Scheduling**

PLEASE COORDINATE WITH YOUR ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATOR TO ENSURE THAT OFFICIALS ARE NOTIFIED IN ADVANCE OF ANY CHANGES. *When dates, times, and / or locations are changed it not only affects the officials scheduled for that match, but also other matches they are scheduled to work. They will appreciate your help in this area.*

- **Importance of Coaches Rating System**

*The Rating/Voting procedures have changed in recent years, however the coaches' vote is an important part of the officials' tournament selection process. Ratings are done at the conclusion of each match, allowing you to rate each official you have. Voting is now done at the conclusion of the season by your athletic administrator online with information being sent to him/her electronically. **Please vote conscientiously in your rating.** Your involvement is critical to ensuring that we can provide the best officials for our tournament.*

- **Inquiries**

Our website (www.ohsaa.org) includes a great deal of information that covers many of the inquiries we often receive. The website provides soccer regulations, general sport regulations, tournament regulations, uniform regulations, etc.

- **Coaches' Comments to the News Media**

OHSAA Bylaw 8, Section 2, reads in part, "Great care shall be exercised in the selection of officials, well in advance of the contest and agreed upon by schools involved. When the contest begins each school waives all of its rights so far as objecting to the officials." Public criticism of officials is a direct reflection upon those who were responsible for assigning the officials to the match. Officials are trained and expected to make no derogatory comments regarding the players, coaches, or schools. Coaches are expected to follow the same procedure. Failure to follow this request will result in disciplinary action.