

# OHSAA SPORTS REGULATIONS

## Introduction

Article 5-6-1 of the Constitution grants authority to the Board of Directors to determine the contest rules and regulations for each sport.

The Board of Directors has adopted the following contest rules and regulations effective August 1, 2015. The Commissioner is authorized to modify these regulations when it is deemed necessary by the Commissioner, subject to ratification by the Board of Directors.

These regulations apply to all interscholastic teams and contests, including but not limited to varsity, junior varsity, reserve, junior, sophomore, freshman and 7th & 8th grade teams. The regulations do not apply to intramural teams.

### GENERAL REGULATIONS

#### 1. Official Contest Rules

The official contest rules and rule books as published by the listed organization have been approved by the Board of Directors for all interscholastic athletic contests in the following sports. (Refer to Bylaw 1-4-3 which states “Interscholastic competition shall be conducted using contest rules adopted by the Board of Directors and modifications or changes in sport rules are not permitted except those provided in the rule book and approved by the Board of Directors.”)

CROSS COUNTRY	NATIONAL FEDERATION
FIELD HOCKEY	NATIONAL FEDERATION
FOOTBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
GOLF	UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION
SOCCER	NATIONAL FEDERATION
TENNIS	UNITED STATES TENNIS ASSOCIATION
VOLLEYBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
BASKETBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
BOWLING	UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS
GYMNASTICS	U.S.A. GYMNASTICS
ICE HOCKEY	NATIONAL FEDERATION
SWIMMING AND DIVING	NATIONAL FEDERATION
WRESTLING	NATIONAL FEDERATION
BASEBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
SOFTBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
TRACK AND FIELD	NATIONAL FEDERATION

#### 2. Mandatory Attendance at OHSAA-Sponsored Rules Interpretation Meetings

- 2.1) Any school sponsoring a sport recognized by the OHSAA in which a state tournament is held, must have the head varsity coach or assistant varsity coach in that sport or the athletic administrator attend or participate in an OHSAA-sponsored state rules interpretation meeting in that sport if such a meeting is held in order for teams or individuals from that school to be eligible to enter the OHSAA-sponsored tournament.
- 2.2) Those attending a meeting in person will be responsible to be in attendance within 10 minutes of the start of the meeting and remain until the conclusion of the meeting to receive credit for attendance.

#### 3. Mandatory Requirement for Rating/Voting for Tournament Officials

To assist in the process in determining which contest officials will be assigned to OHSAA tournament contests the following school year, member high schools are required to rate and vote for officials.

Following each varsity contest, head coaches or athletic administrators are required to rate the contest officials. Athletic administrators have additional voting responsibilities. The sports in which rating and voting is required; the deadlines in which ratings and voting must be completed, and the procedures on how to rate and vote for officials are published in the *OHSAA Officials Handbook*

or the sport-specific OHSAA coaches/officials manual and provided in memos disseminated to athletic administrators.

Failure to participate in the required rating or voting process will result in the school being fined \$150 per occurrence.

**4. Penalties for Failure to Acquire Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit**

High school and 7th-8th grade coaches who do not possess the Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit, which is part of the State Board of Education requirements to coach in Ohio, shall not be permitted to coach at any level at an OHSAA member school. Further, high schools shall submit to the **OHSAA per the tournament entry procedures in myOHSAA the name of each board-approved coach along with the Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit number** in each of the 24 recognized sports. Further, any high school coach who does not possess this Permit at the first level of the tournament shall not be permitted to coach at any level of the tournament until such time that the Permit is obtained and verification of such permit is provided to the OHSAA. Falsification of this information shall result in a coach’s removal from the OHSAA tournament.

**Note:** It is the intention of the OHSAA to perform random audits of these permits throughout the school year and to fine schools that have not complied with the bylaw in the amount of \$250 per coach.

**5. Penalties for Failure to Conduct Pre-Season Meetings**

When it has been verified that the member school has failed to conduct a pre-season meeting(s) in accordance with Bylaw 3-1-4, the member school shall be fined \$500 for each violation.

**Note:** Please be advised that the OHSAA intends to do random audits of compliance with this standard. Please refer to the OHSAA website for a checklist of items that must be covered and sample agendas and other resources to assist with compliance. Each member school shall record on *myohsaa* the date and location of each meeting as well as the person responsible for each meeting.

**6. OHSAA-Sponsored Tournaments Entry/Withdraw Procedures and Draw/Seed Meeting Dates**

6.1) When schools complete the OHSAA participation form online each spring and indicate they sponsor a varsity sport, they will select “yes” for each sport in which they plan to enter the OHSAA tournaments. Those who select “no” after each sport will be withdrawn from the OHSAA tournament. Instructions for filling out the participation form will be provided to the membership.

6.2) Prior to each draw/seed meeting date for each sport, schools will be given a period to enter or withdraw from an OHSAA tournament should they change their previous decision in that particular sport. **The specific periods for each sport during the upcoming school year are listed on the next page.**

6.2.1) Whether a school selected “yes” for an OHSAA tournament on its participation form or changed its previous decision and entered an OHSAA tournament during the designated period for that particular sport, all schools shall complete all tournament and souvenir program forms (roster, pass lists, schedule, submission of team photo, etc.) online during the same designated period for each particular sport. **The specific periods for each sport during the upcoming school year are listed on the next page.** Instructions for filling out the tournament and souvenir program forms will be provided to the membership. Schools that fail to complete all tournament souvenir program forms online during the designated period for each particular sport will be fined \$150 for each missed deadline.

6.3) After the periods end as outlined in 6.2 above, schools that desire to enter or withdraw from an OHSAA tournament may do so by filing a “Petition Letter of Entry or Withdraw” with the OHSAA office (**not the tournament manager or District Athletic Board**) prior to the particular sport’s draw/seed meeting. If entry is approved, schools will be provided instructions on how to complete entry online and complete all tournament and souvenir program forms. Schools will be fined **\$150** for their late entry or withdrawal.

6.3.1) The Commissioner’s office shall have the authority to approve or disapprove such “Petitions.” Decisions to disapprove an entry may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

**GENERAL SPORTS REGULATIONS 2015-2016**

6.4) A school coach or administrator shall attend a mandatory draw/seed meeting for each sport. **The specific dates for each sport’s draw/seed meeting during the upcoming school year are listed below.** Common tournament draw/seed procedures shall be used as approved by the Board of Directors and listed within each sport’s tournament regulations (District Athletic Boards shall determine placement of teams on brackets). District Athletic Boards will provide schools with seeding information, will notify schools of the exact locations and times of the meetings and will notify schools in what sports the meetings will not be conducted.

6.4.1) Schools that fail to send a coach or administrator to a mandatory draw/seed meeting or fail to seed as instructed will be fined **\$150**. See the specific tournament regulations for additional procedures and/or penalties.

6.5) Schools that fail to participate in a tournament (individual or team) after indicating that they will enter a tournament will be ineligible to participate in that particular sport’s OHSA-sponsored tournament the following year. Additional penalties may include: 1.) a fine of **\$150**; 2.) payment of officials’ fees for the missed contests; 3.) payment of the opponent’s travel expenses for the missed contests, and 4.) additional penalties as deemed appropriate by the Commissioner. The penalties rendered by the Commissioner may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

2015-16 Sport	First-Round Tournament	Tournament Entry/Withdraw	Tournament Entry/Withdraw (w/ Penalty)	Draw/Seed Meeting Date (all at 2:00 unless noted)
<b>FALL SPORTS</b>				
Golf	Sectional 9/28-10/3 & 10/5-10/10	8/1-9/14	9/15	9/20
Girls Tennis	Sectional 9/28-10/3	8/1-9/14	9/15	9/20
Soccer	Sectional 10/19-10/24	8/1-10/5	10/6	10/11 (G-3:00 p.m.)
Volleyball	Sectional 10/19-10/24	8/1-10/5	10/6	10/11
Field Hockey	State Qualifying 10/19-10/31	8/1-10/5	10/6	10/11
Cross Country	District 10/24	8/1-10/5	10/6	10/11
<b>WINTER SPORTS</b>				
Wrestling (Team)	Regional Quarters 1/27	8/1-12/10	12/11	1/6&7*
Swimming & Diving	Sectional 2/8-2/13	8/1-1/25	1/26	1/31
Gymnastics	District 2/15-2/27	8/1-1/25	1/26	2/14
Wrestling (Individual)	Sectional 2/15-2/20	8/1-1/18	1/19	1/24
Bowling	Sectional DI 2/8-2/13 DI 2/15-2/20	8/1-1/25	1/26	1/31
Girls Basketball	Sectional 2/8-2/20	8/1-1/25	1/26	1/31
Ice Hockey	District 2/15-3/3	8/1-2/1	2/2	2/10
Boys Basketball	Sectional 2/15-2/27	8/1-2/1	2/2	2/7
<b>SPRING SPORTS</b>				
Softball	Sectional 5/7-5/14	8/1-4/25	4/26	5/1
Baseball	Sectional 5/7-5/14	8/1-4/25	4/26	5/1
Boys Tennis	Sectional 5/9-5/14	8/1-4/25	4/26	5/1
Track & Field	District 5/16-5/21	8/1-4/25	4/26	5/1

\*See the OHSA website ([www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org)) for additional seeding information. The January 6 and 7 dates indicate dates that seed voting is due to the OHSA Office.

**7. Non-School (Non-Interscholastic) Programs or Teams**

**7.1) Definitions**

7.1.1) **Definition of a Non-School Program or Team** – A non-school (non-interscholastic) program, also known as a non-school team, is one in which a student-athlete participates in team play or as an individual, and that program or team is not under the direct or indirect control of the OHSAA member school. This means the OHSAA member school does not sponsor (one that is Board of Education- or other governing board-approved), supervise or have financial responsibility for that non-school program or team.

The non-school program or team may be composed of participants in grades 7 through 12 and may be located within or operate outside the OHSAA member school. Admission may be charged and fees or expenses may be collected for training and/or competitions sponsored by that non-school program or team. It is not necessary for a coach to be present or for instruction to be given for a program or team to be considered a non-school program or team.

Examples of or names associated with non-school programs or teams are: church, intramural, rec (recreation), YMCA, CYO, AAU, USAVB, USSF, USASwimming, all-star, club, non-interscholastic or any combination of players involved in team play.

7.1.2) **Definition of a School Program or Team** – A school (interscholastic) program or team is one in which a student-athlete participates in team play or as an individual, and that program or team is under the direct or indirect control of the OHSAA member school. This means the OHSAA member school sponsors, supervises or has financial responsibility for that program or team.

7.1.3) **Definition of a Member of a School Team/Team Member** – A student is considered to be a member of a school (interscholastic) team or program when he/she participates in a school contest in a sport that is sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board, is provided instruction from a coach who is employed and/or approved, whether paid or unpaid, by the Board of Education or other governing board and the sport is one of the Ohio High School Athletic Association recognized or emerging sports or is a non-recognized sport sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board.

7.1.4) **Definition of a School Contest** – A school (athletic) contest is one involving participants from one school against participants from either another school or from a non-school program or team. Examples of school contests are games, meets, matches, previews, scrimmages, jamborees, Foundation Games or any other type of competition.

7.1.5) **Definition of Coaching** – Coaching is providing instruction or being present with a team or individual during contests, tryouts, training and practices.

**7.2) Regulations Prohibiting Students from Participating on Non-School Teams During the School Team’s Season**

7.2.1) **Team Sports** – A member of a school team in the team sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, soccer, softball and volleyball may not participate in an athletic contest, a tryout or any type of team or group training or practices with a non-school team in that same sport during the school team’s season.

**Note:** This regulation applies to students invited to participate in a tryout, group training or practice at a college or in contests, tryouts, group training or practices with any non-school program or team.

7.2.2) **Individual Sports** – A member of a school team in the individual sports of bowling, cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming & diving, tennis, track & field and wrestling may not participate in an athletic contest with a non-school team or in non-interscholastic competition in that same sport during the school team’s season.

**7.3) Regulations Permitting Students to Participate on Non-School Teams Outside of the School Team’s Season**

7.3.1) **Selected Team Sports** – A member of a school program or team in the team sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, soccer, softball and volleyball may participate with a non-school program or team in contests, tryouts, training and/or practices prior to and after the school team’s season under the following condition:

- a.) The number of team members on the non-school team who came from the same school or who participated in that sport as a team member at another school in the preceding season is limited to a maximum of 50 percent of the members of a team as defined in the playing rules of the sport. The 50 percent team limit is as follows:

<b>50% Limitation on Sport</b>	<b>Number of squad members</b>
Baseball	4
Basketball	2
Field Hockey	5
Soccer	5
Softball	4
Volleyball	3

**Exceptions:**

- a.) The team members limit for the sport of ice hockey shall be five (5).
  - b.) The 50 percent team limit is not in effect for the sports of basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, soccer and volleyball from June 1 through July 31.
  - c.) The 50 percent team limit is not in effect for the sports of baseball and softball from the Friday before Memorial Day through July 31 provided the members of the school team have completed their school team’s season.
  - d.) A member of a school team may continue to participate with a non-school team in a national qualifying tournament after July 31 until the team is eliminated from the tournament but no later than Labor Day.
  - e.) Graduating seniors may participate on a non-school team if their final school contest has been completed in the same sport and are exempt from the 50 percent participation limitation.
  - f.) These regulations do not apply if the “members” of the non-interscholastic squad are all siblings (by blood or adoption) and no other player from the same interscholastic squad is a participant on behalf of the non-interscholastic squad.
- 7.3.2) **Selected Individual Sports** – A member of a school team in the individual sports of bowling, golf, gymnastics, swimming & diving and tennis may participate with a non-school program or team in contests, tryouts, training and/or practices prior to and after the school’s season with no restriction when coached by either a school coach or a non-school coach.
- 7.3.3) **Other Individual Sports** – A member of a school team in the individual sports of cross country, track & field and wrestling may participate with a non-school team in contests, tryouts, training and/or practices prior to and after the school’s season with no restriction when coached by a non-school coach.

- a.) A member of a school team in the individual sports of cross country, track & field and wrestling may participate with a non-school team in contests, tryouts, training and/or practices that is coached by the school coach with no restriction for a maximum of 10 days from June 1 through July 31.

**Notes:** Students from school teams shall not be required to attend the coaching/instruction. A paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board violates this regulation when he/she suggests or implies that a student’s chance to be selected for a school (interscholastic) team is contingent upon this participation.

If a student-athlete quits or is dropped from a school team and joins a non-school team during the school team’s season, he/she may not rejoin that school team for the remainder of the season.

**7.4) Regulations Prohibiting Football Players from Participating on Non-School Teams – See the General Football Regulations**

**7.5) Regulations Permitting Coaches to Coach Their Own Student-Athletes on Non-School Teams Outside of the School Team’s Season (10-Day Rule)**

7.5.1) **Team and Selected Individual Sports** – Members of a school team’s coaching staff in the team sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, soccer, softball and volleyball and the individual sports of cross country, track and field and wrestling may coach students from their school teams for a maximum of 10 days from June 1 through July 31. In addition:

- a.) The 10-day limitation applies to the entire coaching staff. Each individual coach is not entitled to 10 different days for coaching. Ten days refers to any amount of time utilized during those 10 days (i.e. the regulation does NOT permit 240 total hours of coaching... 10 days of 24 hours each).
- b.) In the sport of football, only non-contact football is permitted.
- c.) The Board of Directors may further limit the number of contact days during this period as specified in the specific sports regulations.
- d.) See General Sports Regulation 8.2.1 for regulations pertaining to out-of-season instruction, which is different than this regulation on coaching.

**Exception 1:** A paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board may coach students from his/her school teams without limitation from June 1 through July 31 so long as the 50 percent limitation is observed. See Regulation 7.3.1 for more details on the 50 percent limitation.

**Exception 2:** So long as the 50 percent limitation is observed, a paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board may coach students from his/her school teams team in a national qualifying tournament after July 31 until the team is eliminated from the tournament but no later than Labor Day.

7.5.2) **Selected Individual Sports** – Members of a school team’s coaching staff in the individual sports of bowling, golf, gymnastics, swimming and diving and tennis may coach students from their school teams outside the school (interscholastic) season. In addition:

- a.) Students from school teams shall not be required to attend the coaching instruction.

**7.6) Regulation Limiting Coaches to Coach Their Own Student-Athletes on Non-School Teams Outside of the School Team’s Season (“All-Star” Games)**

7.6.1) Interscholastic team coaches may coach players from his or her school in special “All-Star” contests. Coaches are permitted to coach in “All-Star” contests if they meet all the following provisions:

- a.) Participants shall be selected from at least four schools.
- b.) All participants shall be graduating seniors or students completing their athletic eligibility at the end of the semester.
- c.) Participants shall not participate until after they have participated in their final contest for their school.

**Note on “All-Star” Games:** “All-Star” games are non-interscholastic events by rule. Student-athletes in team sports who wish to participate in one of these “all-star” competitions outside the school season may do so without jeopardy to eligibility provided the students maintain compliance with General Sports Regulation 7.3.

**7.7) Exceptions to Participation on Non-School Teams for Students**

7.7.1) **Special Olympics or Paralympics** – After a student becomes a member of a school (interscholastic) team sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board, the student may participate in tryouts and/or a contest(s) sponsored by either the Special Olympics or the United States Paralympics provided:

- a.) A request for waiver is submitted to the Commissioner’s Office that includes that student’s name, nature of the disability and the date of the event(s) in which the student desires to compete. The waiver must be submitted by the school’s principal or another senior administrator.

7.7.2) **National Governing Body Selection** – After a student becomes a member of a school (interscholastic) team sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board, the student

may participate as a member of a national team, as determined by the National Governing Body in that sport, or in a national or international competition by virtue of his/her past performance in an OHSAA sport.

- a.) The waiver process, should one exist for a specific sport, is contained within the specific regulations for that sport.
- b.) A specific waiver in the sport of golf is listed under Golf Regulation 5.2.
- c.) A specific waiver in the sport of swimming and diving is listed under Swimming and Diving Regulation 9.1.

**7.8) Penalties for Violation of Regulations in This Section**

- 7.8.1) The maximum penalty for violation of this regulation for any non-senior member of a school team shall be ineligibility in that sport for the remainder of the season or the ensuing season.
- 7.8.2) The maximum penalty for violation of these regulations for a senior shall be ineligibility for all interscholastic athletics for the remainder of the school year.
- 7.8.3) The penalty for a coach for a violation of these regulations may include suspension, probation, public reprimand, a fine not to exceed \$1,000 per occurrence, or any other penalty as the Commissioner may deem appropriate.

**8. Regulations for Participation in Camps, Clinics, Workshops and Programs Where Individual Instruction is Provided**

**8.1) Definitions**

- 8.1.1) **Definition of Individual Skill/Coaching Instruction** – Instruction or coaching provided to a member of a school team in which the techniques and skills of the sport are being taught.
- 8.1.2) **Definition of Providing Individual Skill/Coaching Instruction** – It is considered to be providing individual skill/coaching instruction when the techniques and skills of the sport are taught in a one-on-one or individual setting. This means instruction or coaching comes directly to a student-athlete from an instructor or coach.
- 8.1.3) **Definition of Providing Individual Skill Instruction – Team Sports of Baseball, Basketball, Field Hockey, Football, Ice Hockey, Soccer, Softball and Volleyball and Selected Individual Sports of Cross Country, Track & Field and Wrestling with School Coaches** – It is considered to be providing individual skill/coaching instruction in the above mentioned team sports and selected individual sports with school coaches when the techniques and skills of the sport are taught when no more than **four members** of a school team or individuals are present at one time in all facilities where the instruction or coaching is taking place.

**8.2) Permissible Individual Skill Instruction**

- 8.2.1) **Team Sports of Baseball, Basketball, Field Hockey, Football, Ice Hockey, Soccer, Softball and Volleyball and Selected Individual Sports of Cross Country, Track & Field and Wrestling**
  - a.) **During the Season** – Individual skill instruction may be received by a member of a school team at any time in a one-on-one/individual setting or in group lessons from non-school coaches or instructors provided this instruction does not violate any Board of Education, school administrators’ or coaches’ policies.
  - b.) **From August 1 through May 31 From School Coaches** – Individual skill instruction may be received by a member of a school team at any time prior to and after the school season and **outside the defined no-contact periods** from school coaches provided that no more than **four members of a school team** or individuals are present at one time in all facilities where the instruction or coaching is taking place.
  - c.) **From June 1 through July 31 From School Coaches** – Individual skill instruction may be received by a member of a school team at any time from school coaches provided that no more than four members of a school team or individuals are present at one time in all facilities where the instruction or coaching is taking place. For additional instruction permitted from school coaches between June 1 and July 31, see General Sports Regulation 7.5.1.



- d.) **From August 1 through May 31 From Non-School Coaches or Instructors** – Individual skill instruction may be received by a member of a school team at any time outside the season of play.
- e.) **From June 1 through July 31 From Non-School Coaches or Instructors** – Individual skill instruction may be received by a member of a school team at any time in a one-on-one /individual setting or in group lessons from non-school coaches or instructors provided this instruction does not violate any Board of Education, school administrators’ or coaches’ policies.

**Exception** – Students from school teams may be used for out-of-season demonstration purposes if approved in advance by the Commissioner’s Office.

**8.2.2) Selected Individual Sports of Bowling, Golf, Gymnastics, Swimming & Diving and Tennis**

- a.) Individual skill instruction may be received by a member of a school team at any time in a one-on-one or individual or in a group setting from either school or non-school coaches or instructors provided this instruction does not violate any Board of Education, school administrators’ or coaches’ policies.

**Notes:** Students from school teams in these individual sports shall not be required to attend the camps, clinics, workshops or programs where individual skill instruction is provided. A paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board violates this regulation when he/she suggests or implies that a student’s chance to be selected for a school (interscholastic) team is contingent upon this participation.

**8.3) Penalties for Violation of Regulations in This Section**

- 8.3.1) The maximum penalty for violation of these regulations by a member of a school team shall be ineligibility for interscholastic athletics for a maximum of one year.
- 8.3.2) The maximum penalty for violation of these regulations by a paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board shall be suspension from participation in camps, clinics, workshops and programs where individual skill instruction is provided to members of the school team where employed for a maximum of one year and any other penalties in Bylaw 11-1-2, Penalties, as deemed appropriate by the Commissioner’s Office.

**Note:** It is not a requirement for schools to register their instructional programs with the Commissioner’s Office, nor to have these programs sanctioned or approved.

**9. Conditioning, Weight Training and/or Physical Fitness Programs**

- 9.1) **Definition of a Conditioning, Weight Training or Physical Fitness Program** – These programs include specific training for strengthening the body, developing the cardiovascular system, improving flexibility and agility and do **not** include specific sports skills training or instruction.

**9.2) Specific Regulations**

- 9.2.1) These programs may be conducted at any time and are not a violation of OHSA Bylaws and Regulations so long as no coaching and instruction of sports techniques and skills is provided.
- 9.2.2) These programs may have oversight by any individual approved by the Board of Education or governing body including coaches, provided the oversight by coaches of members of a school team in their sport in conditioning and physical fitness programs does not occur during a designated no-contact period.
- 9.2.3) Equipment used in playing a sport is prohibited in these programs.  
Exceptions:
  - a.) Mats may be used for safety purposes.
  - b.) Cross country and track & field athletes may be directed in aerobics, stretching exercises and running, but interval training, sprinting and specific drills are prohibited.
  - c.) Sticks may be used in field hockey and ice hockey.



9.2.4) Weight rooms and machines may be utilized.

9.2.5) These programs may not be conducted for a select group of students (example: members of the football team only).

**Notes:** Students from school teams shall not be required to attend these programs. A paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board violates this regulation when he/she suggests or implies that a student's chance to be selected for a school (interscholastic) team is contingent upon this participation.

**10. Open Gymnasiums or Facilities  
Member Schools**

**10.1) Regulations**

10.1.1) A school may open its athletic facilities for unstructured free play provided the activity is supervised by a school employee who may remove participants or spectators for disciplinary reasons.

10.1.2) The school may designate the sport or sports that will be played during the free play period, but may not limit participation to a select group of students from within the school. The school may also designate the grade levels involved and may limit participation to students enrolled in the school.

10.1.3) There may be no designation of who will play on which team or who will play whom. Only the students participating may be involved in selecting or substituting players.

10.1.4) The regulation timing of games is not permitted.

10.1.5) Written scorekeeping is not permitted.

10.1.6) No individual invitations, written or oral, are permitted.

10.1.7) A coach, paid or unpaid, violates the provision of these regulations when the coach requires, suggests or in any way implies that a student's chance to be selected for an interscholastic squad is contingent upon participation at an open gymnasium or facilities program.

10.1.8) Mandatory attendance at open gymnasiums or facilities is not permitted.

10.1.9) Transporting athletes to a school or non-school open gym is a violation for any member of the coaching staff, paid or unpaid.

10.1.10) It is not a violation for the coach or supervisor to participate in unstructured free play in the open gym or facilities.

10.1.11) Member schools may restrict individuals from observing the open gym activity.

**10.2) Penalty for Violation**

10.2.1) A squad member who violates the open gymnasium or facilities regulations may be penalized not to exceed one year of ineligibility for interscholastic athletics.

10.2.2) A coach who violates any of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations may be prohibited from involvement for one year in any open gymnasium or facilities programs in or out of school.

10.2.3) A school which permits use of athletics facilities in violation of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations is subject to penalty as specified in Bylaw 11.

**Non-School**

**10.3) Regulations for School Squad Members (Bylaw 4-1-3)**

10.3.1) A school squad member may participate in unstructured free play at non-school athletic facilities without jeopardizing athletic eligibility providing there are no violations of the following regulations.

10.3.2) There may be no designation of who will play on which team or who will play whom. Only the students participating may be involved in selecting or substituting players.

10.3.3) The regulation timing of games is not permitted.

- 10.3.4) Written scorekeeping is not permitted.
- 10.3.5) No individual invitations, written or oral, are permitted.
- 10.3.6) A coach, paid or volunteer, violates the provision of these regulations when the coach requires, suggests or in any way implies that a student's chance to be selected for an interscholastic squad is contingent upon participation at an open gymnasium or facilities program.
- 10.3.7) Mandatory attendance at non-school facilities is not permitted.
- 10.3.8) Transporting athletes to a school or non-school open gym is a violation for any member of the coaching staff, paid or unpaid.

#### 10.4) **Penalty for Violation**

- 10.4.1) A squad member who participates at a facility where there is one or more violations of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations may be penalized not to exceed one year of ineligibility for interscholastic athletics.
- 10.4.2) A school coach who is responsible for causing a violation of any of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations by a squad member may be prohibited from involvement in any open gymnasium or facilities program in or out of school for one year.

### 11. **Mandatory No Contact Periods — Coaches**

- 11.1) Any coach, paid or volunteer, approved by the Board of Education to coach basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, soccer or volleyball is prohibited from providing coaching, providing instruction or supervising conditioning and physical fitness programs or open gyms to members of a school team in their 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 type of tryouts in or out of school for purposes of non-interscholastic competition.
- 11.2) Any coach, paid or volunteer, approved by the Board of Education to coach baseball, basketball, ice hockey or softball is prohibited from providing coaching, providing instruction or supervising conditioning and physical fitness programs or open gyms to members of a school team in their sport for the period of time ending with Labor Day and beginning four weeks prior to Labor Day. This includes any type of tryouts in or out of school for purposes of non-interscholastic competition.

**EXCEPTIONS** — Activities which may be conducted by a coach with members of a school team in their sport during the mandatory no-contact period include: all-star contests, awards ceremonies, fund-raisers; providing oversight during weight training; verbal contact with underclass athletes for the purpose of reviewing the season that just concluded and goal setting for the next season; verbal contact with a senior athlete for the purpose of facilitating the college recruitment process; contact as a faculty member assigned to teach in the regular curriculum (ex.: physical education courses such as weight training, fitness, etc.); contact as a certified athletic trainer involved with athlete rehabilitation and treatment, pick up and return of school-issued equipment, and attendance at OHSAA tournaments.

**PENALTY** — Any coach who violates the mandatory no contact periods regulations may be prohibited for one calendar year from out-of-school season contact with athletes from the school where employed. A school whose coach violates the mandatory no contact periods regulations is subject to penalty as specified in Bylaw 11.

### 12. **Cheerleader Pyramids and Acrobatic Routines**

#### 12.1) **Regulations for OHSAA Tournaments:**

- 12.1.1) Pyramids and mounts by cheerleaders are prohibited. Individuals may not stand on another's shoulders or support another individual in any type of mount.
- 12.1.2) Mini trampolines are prohibited.

#### 12.2) **Penalty**

In OHSAA-sponsored tournaments, individual cheerleaders violating the regulations shall be removed from the floor immediately.

12.3) **Recommendation**

It is recommended that schools adopt the same regulations for cheerleading activities at regular season contests sponsored by schools.

13. **Ejection Procedures for Schools**

After a contest official provides electronic notification of an ejection, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's athletic administrator, who shall have seven days to respond to the notification. If no response has been received after seven days, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's athletic administrator a second time, and the athletic administrator shall be given seven additional days to respond to the notification.

If no response has been received after the second 7-day period lapses, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's principal, who shall have seven additional days to respond to the notification.

If no response has been received after the third 7-day period lapses (21 total days), the OHSAA shall electronically notify both the principal and athletic administrator one final time, and the school shall have seven additional days to respond to the notification.

If no response has been received after the fourth 7-day period lapses (28 total days), the OHSAA shall assess the school a \$150 fine per unanswered report.

**Note:** It is the responsibility of each member school to notify the OHSAA Office each time a coach or player(s) has been ejected from a contest played out of state within seven days once the team has returned to the school. Failure to adhere to this procedure shall result in the school being fined \$150 and subject to additional penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

14. **Ejection for Unsporting Conduct (Disqualification for unsporting conduct or flagrant violation)**

14.1) **Players**

Any player ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct or flagrant foul shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the player shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until two regular season/tournament contests (one in football) are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification.

A student who has been declared ineligible for two games (one in football) may be on the sidelines/team bench, accompany and/or travel with the team but may not participate in pre-game warmups and may not wear a team warmup or game uniform while on the sidelines/team bench, accompanying and/or traveling with the team. When ejection or disqualification of a player results from illegal substitution in baseball, softball or basketball, the two contest ineligibility does not apply.

Any player ejected for unsporting conduct during a scrimmage or preview shall be ineligible for all scrimmages or previews for the remainder of that day. If a scrimmage occurs prior to the season, the player shall also be ineligible for the first regular season contest (previews are only permitted prior to the first regular season contest). If a scrimmage occurs after the first regular season contest, the player shall be ineligible for the next regular season or OHSAA tournament contest. In addition, any second ejection in a scrimmage, preview, regular season contest or OHSAA tournament contest will result in the student being suspended for the remainder of the season.

If the ejection or disqualification occurs in the last contest of the season, the student shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the next sport in which the student participates.

A student who is ejected or disqualified a second time shall be suspended for the remainder of the season in that sport. A student who has been ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct for the second time in the season during the last contest shall be ineligible for a period of time/number of contests subject to the discretion of the Commissioner. The period of ineligibility shall commence during the next sport in which the student participates.

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this regulation is enforced. When an ineligible student is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory.

This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Commissioner as specified in the OHSAA tournament regulations. In accordance with Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

**Note:** When national playing rules refer to a disqualification for unsporting conduct or a flagrant violation, this is considered an ejection as referenced in this regulation.

14.2) **Coaches**

Any coach ejected or disqualified from an interscholastic contest for unsporting conduct shall be suspended from coaching in all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the coach shall be suspended from coaching for all contests at all levels in that sport until two regular season/tournament contests (one in football) are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification and shall be fined \$100. In addition, the coach shall take the National Federation of State High School Association’s *“Teaching and Modeling Behavior”* course, which must be completed within 30 days of the ejection and can be taken at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com).

If the ejection or disqualification occurs in the last contest of the season, the coach shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the same sport during the following season in the next school year.

On the day of the ejection, a coach who has been disqualified shall be ejected from the vicinity of the playing area and is prohibited from further contact, direct or indirect, with team members, managers and other coaches during the remainder of the contest. The coach must return to the locker room or team bus or leave the premises. The coach shall not go to the spectator area.

The penalty for failure of the coach to comply with the ejection regulation shall result in the forfeiture of the contest.

If a coach is ejected/disqualified from a contest and no other coach or a person authorized by the Board of Education from that school is present (Bylaw 3-2-1), the contest shall be forfeited.

After the initial ejection and suspension, a coach who has been suspended from coaching for the next contest(s) may attend the next contest(s), but must be seated in the spectator area and may not give instructions to the players or to the individual who has been assigned to coach the team any time prior to or during the contest including halftime or any intermission. A suspended coach shall not travel with the squad to an away contest.

A coach who has been ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct for the second time shall be suspended indefinitely and required to attend a mandatory conference with the Commissioner at the OHSAA headquarters. The principal of the school shall be required to attend this conference as well. Any penalty shall be determined in accordance with Bylaw 11.

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this regulation is enforced. When a suspended coach is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Commissioner as specified in the OHSAA tournament regulations. In accordance with Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

15. **Participants Leaving The Playing Area**

No member of any school-sponsored interscholastic athletics squad shall leave the ‘playing area’ in which a contest is being conducted and enter the ‘spectator area’ of the facility to engage in any type of conflict—verbal or physical. If a student-athlete leaves the ‘playing area’ and enters the ‘spectator area’ of a facility to so engage a person, the minimum penalties shall be:

- 15.1) The student-athlete’s privileges to participate in interscholastic athletics shall be revoked and the student-athlete shall be ineligible for the remainder of the school year.
- 15.2) The school shall be immediately placed on probation pending an investigation (and report) into what happened, what caused it to happen, what was done by the school to diffuse what happened and what ‘safeguards’ have been implemented by the school to prevent future happenings.

**16. Tournaments**

**16.1) Recognized and Emerging Sports**

16.1.1) See Bylaw 1, Section 5 for the definition of “Recognized” Sports.

The Board of Directors may accord a new sport as “recognized” when a minimum of 150 schools sponsor teams or individuals in the sport.

16.1.2) The Board of Directors may accord a new sport as “Emerging” when less than 150 schools sponsor teams or individuals in the sport. While in the Emerging sport category:

- a.) All applicable OHSAA bylaws and general sports regulations shall be adhered to;
- b.) Specific sport regulations, tournament regulations and a tournament series shall be developed and adopted;
- c.) A process for training and registering contest officials and for assigning officials to tournament contests shall be developed/continued and adopted and a director(s) of officiating development shall be hired;
- d.) The Board of Directors has the discretion to suspend compliance with General Sports Regulation 16.2, Divisions Determination (251 schools needed to add a second division);
- e.) The Board of Directors shall conduct an annual review of each Emerging sport to determine if it shall continue as an Emerging; be elevated to a Recognized sport, or be suspended or discontinued as an Emerging sport.

**16.2) Regulations for Sponsoring and Conducting**

OHSAA tournaments will be sponsored and conducted in divisions according to the number of schools sponsoring a team in the recognized sport.

**Team Sports**—Those that require a certain number of players to form a team. Presently, those sports are baseball, boys and girls basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, boys and girls soccer, softball and volleyball.

**Individual Sports**—Those that involve primarily participation and scoring by individuals and in which team scoring could be obtained by totaling the efforts of individuals. Presently, those sports are boys and girls bowling, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls golf, gymnastics, boys and girls swimming & diving, boys and girls tennis, boys and girls track & field and wrestling.

The minimum number of individuals required for a team designation\* follows:

Bowling	5	Swimming & Diving	7
Cross Country	5	Tennis	4
Golf	4	Track & Field	9
Girls Gymnastics	3	Wrestling	7

\* The number for a team designation has been selected to reflect either the minimum number of participants needed to score in a contest or the number of participants needed to compete in at least half of the contest’s events.

**Divisions Determination**—The number of divisions in OHSAA tournaments in a sport shall be determined by the number of school teams that participated in the tournaments the preceding year or years, depending upon the sport.

<u>Number of Teams Participating in Tournaments</u>	<u>Divisions</u>
250 or less	I
251-500	I, II
501-750	I, II, III
751 or more	I, II, III, IV

Sports tournament changes relative to adding a division or discontinuing a division or adding a tournament or discontinuing a tournament may be made only after the number of schools has been higher or lower for two successive years.

**EXCEPTION**—In football, the Board of Directors may schedule tournament play in divisions other than specified in the table above.

16.3) **School Assignments—Divisions**

After the number of divisions is approved by the Board of Directors, schools are assigned to tournament divisions based upon the specifications in Bylaw 2-1-1.

The number of schools assigned to each division shall be determined by the number of school teams that participated in the tournament either the previous year or two years earlier (refer to Bylaw 2-1-1 for specifics), with each tournament division to have as equal number of teams as possible.

**EXCEPTIONS:** In all sports, except football, a school sponsoring a sport is eligible for tournament participation regardless of regular season performance. The top 10 percent of football-playing schools based on enrollment will be placed in Division I of the football tournament. The remaining schools will be divided as evenly as possible and placed into six additional football divisions based on enrollment. Each of the seven divisions shall qualify 32 teams to the OHSAA tournament.

In the sport of cross country, girls and boys enrollments in schools with both genders will be added together and divided in half in order to determine the enrollment number (and subsequent tournament division) for that school. In the case of averages being more than a whole number, those averages shall be rounded down.

16.4) **Failure to Appear and School Closures – OHSAA Tournament Contests**

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

“Closure,” “closed” or “school closing” shall mean that a local school or school district’s board of education/governing board or superintendent/head of school has cancelled all high school classes and/or school-sponsored extracurricular activities due to inclement weather; a strike; a natural or technological/man-made disaster; an issue deemed catastrophic or an emergency\*, or the local health authority has cancelled all high school classes and school-sponsored extracurricular activities due to a specific public health/safety concern.

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

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

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

If a team “fails to appear” or is not ready to play within 30 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the tournament contest, the space on the bracket may be declared vacant. A “forfeit” shall be declared, and the opposing team shall advance to the next round of competition.

In the event of a school “closure” within 48 hours of a tournament contest in which the school is scheduled to participate, the Commissioner’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, shall make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the competing school with rescheduling the contest (time, date and/or location), provided that such rescheduled dates do not adversely affect the next round of the tournament competition/tournament schedule.

In the event of a “closure” at the site of the tournament contest within 48 hours of a tournament contest(s) in which schools are scheduled to participate, the Commissioner’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, shall reschedule (time, date and/or location) the tournament contest(s) for the schools thus affected.

**Note:** In the event a school is not closed but unforeseen or extenuating circumstances arise within 48 hours of a tournament contest in which the school is scheduled to participate, the Commissioner’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel,

shall make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the competing school with re-scheduling the contest (time, date and/or location), provided that such rescheduled dates do not adversely affect the next round of the tournament competition/ tournament schedule.

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

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

In the event of a school “closure” within 48 hours of a tournament contest in which the school is scheduled to participate, the tournament shall proceed as scheduled.\*

**\*Note:** The Commissioner’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, reserves the right to delay or reschedule a tournament competition when all factors related to the severity of the situation are considered and provided it is practical to delay or reschedule such competitions.

In the event of a “closure” at the site of the tournament competition within 48 hours of a tournament competition in which schools are scheduled to participate, the Commissioner’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, shall reschedule (time, date and/or location) the tournament competition for the schools thus affected.

**16.4.3) Information on any changes regarding OHSAA tournaments will be posted on the Association’s website ([www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org)).**

**A Note on Public Health Issues**

Ohio health professionals have advised that it will be the decision of each local health authority in Ohio or each board of education/governing Board as to whether or not to close a school or university due to a public health issue. The Center for Disease Control does not recommend closures except in extreme circumstances.

**Help Links**

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention Emergency Preparedness and Response:  
<http://emergency.cdc.gov/planning/>
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention Preparedness for All Hazards:  
<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/hazards-all.asp>
- Ohio Department of Health Guidelines and Publications:  
<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhPrograms/chss/schnurs/guidepub.aspx>

**17. Athletic Uniforms**

Uniforms worn by participants in a high school athletic contest must conform to the playing rules adopted by the OHSAA for that sport. Any lettering or emblems on uniforms must pertain to the school name, school nickname, individual’s name, the sport, drug use prevention, sportsmanship, ethics or integrity or be of a patriotic nature and provided it does not violate the rules of the sport in regard to location. Any visible manufacturer’s logo on a uniform or undergarment must conform to the rules adopted by the national rules committee for that sport. However, if there is no specific rule, the maximum size is 2¼ square inches with no dimension exceeding 2¼”.

**18. Individual Non-Interscholastic Competition Date**

In all sports, an athlete who has not participated for a school in a given sport that season must cease all non-interscholastic competition in a given sport six weeks (42 days) prior to the Monday of the week of the state tournament in that sport in order to be eligible for OHSAA tournament competition provided applicable bylaws and regulations have been followed.

In addition, an athlete who has participated for the school in an individual sport (bowling, cross country, golf, swimming & diving, tennis, track & field, and wrestling) and who violates this non-interscholastic competition date by participating in a non-interscholastic contest shall be ineligible for OHSAA tournament competition in that sport in addition to any other penalties that may be prescribed. **Note:** See Golf Regulation 5.2 for an exception to this regulation.



**19. Non-Recognized Sports**

There is no bylaw that requires a school to comply with all OHSAA bylaws and applicable sports regulations when conducting interscholastic athletics programs in sports which are not recognized, (not recognized means a sport that is not one of the OHSAA tournament sports – See Bylaw 1-5-1 for a complete list of the current Board of Directors adopted “recognized” sports).

Therefore, there is no requirement to register a non-recognized sport with the OHSAA. Nor is it required that the school comply with eligibility standards for students in those sports. A local school district could, however, require participants in non-recognized sports to meet certain eligibility standards and conform to certain sports regulations.

Catastrophe insurance under the OHSAA plan for Recognized and Emerging sports will not be available for non-recognized sports. Schools are offered an opportunity to purchase catastrophe insurance coverage for non-recognized sports under a separate plan.

**20. Regular Season Participation Limitation Penalty**

A team that exceeds the regular season participation limitation (maximum number of contests permitted) or participates in regular season contest(s) prior to the designated start date for contests in the respective sport is subject to the penalties outlined in Bylaw 11, which will include denial of participation in the OHSAA tournament. Athletes from sub-varsity teams may not be used to replace the varsity team in the OHSAA tournament.

An athlete who exceeds the regular season participation limitation (periods, quarters, halves, or contests) as specified in the individual sports regulations becomes an ineligible athlete. The athlete is ineligible for further regular season competition if the violation occurs prior to the end of the season or tournament competition if the violation occurs during the last regular season contest in the sport concerned. The forfeiture bylaws apply as written in Bylaw 10.

Should a team in an individual sport exceed the regular season participation limitation but a specific individual athlete on that team did not exceed the individual participation limitation, that specific individual athlete may be eligible for participation in the OHSAA tournament.

Should a team in an individual sport participate in a regular season contest(s) prior to the designated start date for contests but a specific individual athlete on that team did not participate in a contest(s) prior to the designated start date for contests, that specific individual athlete may be eligible for participation in the OHSAA tournament.

**21. Transportation To and From Interscholastic Contests**

It is the responsibility of the Board of Education or other governing board of a member school to provide for the safe transportation of student-athletes and other contest participants to and from athletic events. The OHSAA Catastrophe Accident Insurance Policy covers team or group travel directly to and from a covered event. A covered event is defined by the OHSAA (the authorized policy holder) as any regular-season (includes scrimmages and previews) or tournament competition in an interscholastic athletic event in an OHSAA-recognized sport, sponsored by the Board of Education or governing board of a member school. Travel must be supervised by staff members or designated representatives of the member school.

Therefore, it is recommended that schools require student-athletes and other participants in interscholastic athletic events to travel with their school squads in school-authorized carriers. It is not recommended that students be released to travel with parents or other persons; however, permission to make alternative travel arrangements remains the purview of the Board of Education/governing board of the member school. In the event that such alternative arrangements are approved, it is strongly recommended that the Board of Education secure proof of insurance from those who will be providing the transportation.

**22. Interscholastic Scrimmage**

22.1) An interscholastic scrimmage is defined as a contest in sports in which the rules of the sport are not followed in all respects. With the exception of golf, the length of the scrimmage is limited to a maximum of three hours per squad or individual per day for grades 9-12, and two hours per squad or individual per day for grades 7-8.

22.2) A scrimmage may involve any number of teams from various schools. A scrimmage does not count in the won/lost record for any school involved in the scrimmage.

- 22.3) No admission of money, materials or supplies may be charged for a scrimmage. Voluntary donations of supplies or money may be accepted at a scrimmage but cannot be required for admission.
- 22.4) This regulation prohibits two or more school teams from practicing together unless it is a scrimmage.
- 22.5) A scrimmage must be considered the same for all schools involved.

**23. Preview**

- 23.1) A preview is an athletic contest played according to the adopted rules for a sport except that one-half the length of a regular season contest is permitted. Previews are permitted only in those sports in which scrimmages are allowed. Refer to the specific sport relative to length of preview and when it may be scheduled.
- 23.2) A preview may be scheduled and played only starting with the first day after the official start date of coaching and ending with the date of the first regular season contest of the teams involved. See the Football Regulations for the exception to this regulation. A preview does not count in the won/lost record.
- 23.3) When a preview is scheduled, admission may be charged.

**24. Athletic Contest**

Any type of athletic activity involving participants from a member school and another school, or non-interscholastic team or individuals including organized adults. Such activities are categorized as games, meets, matches, previews, scrimmages, jamborees, Foundation Games or any other type of competition. A practice involving two or more school squads is also an athletic contest. A game, meet or match must follow the rules as written in the game rules adopted by the Board of Directors. Athletic contests may be scheduled and conducted only during the time periods as specified in the individual sport regulations.

**25. OHSAA-Sponsored Tournaments Curfew Regulations**

The first priority when making the decision to delay, suspend, continue or postpone a contest is the safety of the student-athletes, coaches/school administrators, parents/fans and officials.

- 25.1) No tournament contests/events shall start later than 11:00 p.m.
- 25.2) When deciding whether or not to delay, suspend, continue or postpone a tournament contest/event, the tournament manager must consult with the school administrator/designee. Items to consider in the decision:
  - 25.21) The estimated time to complete the contest.
  - 25.22) The travel time of all schools involved.
  - 25.23) The current and expected weather conditions.
  - 25.24) The availability of the officials.
  - 25.25) Other events scheduled at the host site and the participating schools.
- 25.3) In the case of unforeseen circumstances or an emergency, the following factors shall be used to develop a tournament contest/event contingency plan:
  - 25.31) Overnight accommodations.
  - 25.32) A list of all parties involved and local emergency telephone/cellular numbers.
  - 25.33) Plans established by the participating schools' emergency plan.

**Note:** A sample tournament contest/event contingency plan is posted on the OHSAA website ([ohsaa.org](http://ohsaa.org)).

**The OHSAA recommends that all member schools develop an athletic contest/event contingency plan for use during the regular season.**

**26. All-Star Games – See Sports Regulation 7.6**

**27. Sunday Contests**

Sunday contests are permitted by the Board of Directors. Local Board of Education policies and administrative decisions will be determining factors.

**28. Exhibition Competition**

Any event or competition involving students representing member schools may involve only students who are eligible in all respects insofar as age, enrollment and attendance, scholarship, residence and individual sports limitation. So-called “scratch” or “exhibition” competition permitted or conducted by any school could result in ineligibility for athletes and suspension of the school.

**Exception:** The Board of Directors may authorize competition in events within specific sports in order to accommodate students with disabilities without affecting team scoring in those sports.

**29. School Teams**

Member schools may sponsor more than one varsity or sub-varsity teams for interscholastic competition, but each team must have its own schedule and is limited according to specific contest limitations for that sport. No school may enter more than one team in any OHSAA-sponsored team tournament.

**Note:** See the specific sport regulations for participation limits for individuals.

**30. Squad Member**

A student who has participated in an interscholastic athletic contest representing a school.

**31. Team Play**

Any activity of individuals with more than one player opposing one player (2-on-2, 2-on-1, 3-on-2, 3-on-3, 4-on-4, 5-on-5, etc.).

**32. Pick-up Games**

Unsupervised, unstructured contests in which there is no adult planning, scheduling or organization involved.

**33. Interrupted Contest**

If an interscholastic contest (game, match, meet, etc.) is interrupted for any reason beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority, the contest shall be resumed from the point of interruption. **EXCEPTION:** Those sports which have a specific procedure for determining the outcome of an interrupted contest: e.g., baseball, football, soccer and softball.

**34. No Contests/Forfeits**

Any scheduled regular season contest which is not started due to inclement weather; a strike; a natural or technological/man-made disaster; an issue deemed catastrophic or an emergency, or the local health authority has cancelled all high school classes and school-sponsored extracurricular activities due to a specific public health/safety concern that would cause a team to fail to appear, shall be considered a “no contest.” A “no contest” shall not be included in won-lost records.

Any scheduled regular season contest in which the winner is determined to have used an ineligible participant or committed other rules infractions shall be considered a “forfeit.”

Any tournament contest in which a team fails to appear for reasons other than those outlined in Sports Regulation 16.4 or a team has been removed from the tournament in accordance with Bylaw 11-1-2, Penalties, shall be considered a “forfeit.”

Should a “forfeit” occur, the “forfeit” shall be included in won-lost records. See Bylaw 10, Section 2 for additional regulations on forfeits.

**35. Grades 7 & 8**

35.1) A student shall not participate in more than one interscholastic contest on any one day unless permitted by specific sports regulations. **EXCEPTIONS:** baseball, basketball, softball, volleyball, tennis. (See specific sport regulations.)

35.2) Sports Season Waiver — Schools, leagues or conferences may adjust seasons to accommodate school teams because of the lack of availability of physical facilities or personnel. Proposed changes in seasons shall be submitted in writing to the Commissioner and include the proposed dates of the 7th & 8th grade season not to exceed the length of the interscholastic season for the sport concerned. All other regulations regarding contest limitations, required practice time and coaching requirements shall be followed.

35.3) 7th & 8th grade students may not practice with, participate on the same team with or compete against 9th through 12th grade students.

- 35.4) Students below the 7th grade may not practice with or participate with 7th through 12th grade students.
- 35.5) It is strongly recommended that the coaches of 7th & 8th grade sports attend the OHSAA rules interpretation meetings for the sports they are coaching.

**36. Penalties**

PENALTIES for violations will be administered in accordance with Bylaw 11 if not otherwise stated.

**CONCUSSION REGULATIONS**

**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://ohsaa.org/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. The Concussion Information Sheet can be found here: <http://www.healthyohioprogram.org/~media/HealthyOhio/ASSETS/Files/injury%20prevention/concussion/Interscholastic%20Concussion%20Form%20-%20ODH%20Revised%202.ashx>

### APPROVED ONLINE CONCUSSION EDUCATION COURSES

**The following free online training courses have been approved by the Ohio Department of Health for coaches and contest officials:**

**National Federation of State High School Associations Concussion in Sports - What you Need to Know:** <http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=38000>

(This free online course is available through the NFHS. Click the “order here” button, and complete a brief registration form to take the course. Follow these steps to complete the course:

1. Click on the button that says “Please Login to Order.” In the window that appears, click “Register Now.”
2. When your registration is complete, you may “order” the free concussion course offered along the left-hand side of the page. Continue following prompts. Although it may look like you will be charged for the course, there is no cost.
3. Once you’ve completed “Checkout,” you will be able to take the free online course.
4. When you have completed and passed the course, you have the option of printing a certificate of completion.
5. All Ohio Officials should select this option to print, retain a copy of the certificate and carry it with them to all contests.

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports On-Line Training Program:** [http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online\\_training.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html) -

**PLEASE NOTE:** Both courses offer a “certificate of completion” upon successful passage. The NFHS course allows organizations to search for and track coaches and other individuals such as contest officials who have completed the course, while the CDC course does not.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *What are the “signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion?”* The National Federation rule lists some of the signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published the following list of signs, symptoms and behaviors that are consistent with a concussion:

**SIGNS OBSERVED BY OTHERS**

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game score or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Cannot recall events prior to hit
- Cannot recall events after hit

**SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE**

- Headache
- Nausea
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion

2. *Who is responsible for administering this rule?*

All individuals who have responsibilities and duties in the interscholastic athletics environment are responsible: coaches, contest officials, administrators, students, parents and medical personnel.

3. *What is the role of coaches in administering this rule?*

- Coaches are to review and know the signs and symptoms of concussion and to prohibit any athlete who displays these signs or symptoms from participating in a practice or a contest.
- Coaches are not medical professionals and have no authority to determine whether or not a student has sustained a concussion. The coach is responsible for insuring that the student’s parents are notified and the student is referred to a medical professional.
- Coaches shall be aware that any student removed from a practice or a contest due to a suspected concussion or head injury **shall not return to participation on the same day as the removal.**
- Coaches shall possess a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit and shall take one of the approved online concussion courses upon renewal of the permit.

4. *What is the role of contest officials in administering the rule?*

- Officials are to review and know the signs and symptoms of concussion and to direct immediate removal of any student who displays these signs or symptoms. When informing the head coach about removal of an athlete, the official shall be accompanied by another (second) official if possible.
- An official **shall not permit the athlete who has been removed under this rule to return to competition that same day.**
- If a contest official is aware that a student has been permitted to return to competition on the same day as removal, that official shall immediately stop play and remove that student from competition and report the incident to the OHSAA.
- Note that officials are not medical professionals and have no authority to determine whether or not a student has sustained a concussion. The official is responsible for directing removal when he or she observes signs and symptoms that may indicate a student is concussed.
- All Officials shall possess either a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or shall complete one of the online concussion courses which are valid for three years from the date of completion.
- At initial licensure or renewal of the OHSAA officiating permit, the official shall indicate that he or she has either a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or has completed one of the approved online concussion courses.

- All officials should carry with them evidence of completion of one of these options at all times while officiating a contest.
- Officials are required to submit to the OHSAA the “OHSAA Concussion Report” within 48 hours whenever a student has been removed from a contest under this regulation.

5. *What are the expectations of student-athletes in concussion management?*

- While all individuals involved in the interscholastic athletics program have a responsibility to recognize the potential for catastrophic injury and even death from concussions, it is also the responsibility of student-athletes to recognize the signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion.
- Student-athletes who exhibit symptoms such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems, have the responsibility to report these immediately to their coach and/or health care professional. Teammates also share the responsibility to report these symptoms when they are exhibited by a fellow student-athlete.
- Student-athletes shall review and sign, on an annual basis, along with their parents or legal guardians, the Ohio Department of Health’s Concussion Information Sheet found on the OHSAA website and at this link <http://www.healthyohioprogram.org/~media/HealthyOhio/ASSETS/Files/injury%20prevention/concussion/Interscholastic%20Concussion%20Form%20-%20ODH%20Revised%20.ashx>

6. *Who decides if an athlete has not been concussed and/or who has recovered from a concussion?*

- **Only** an M.D. (Medical Doctor), D.O. (Doctor of Osteopathy), or another health care provider approved by the school’s Board of Education or other governing body who 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;
  - 4) Under the supervision of a physician

is empowered to make the on-site determination that an athlete has not received a concussion. **Even if that determination has been made, however, the student may not return to practice or competition on the same day he/she has been removed from a practice or competition** (see No. 7 below).

- If any one of these physicians or authorized medical providers has answered that “yes” there has been a concussion, that decision is final.

7. *Can an athlete return to play on the same day as he/she has been removed from a practice or competition for a suspected concussion?*

- No, under no circumstances can that athlete return to play that day.
- No coach or contest official shall allow a student to return to practice or to competition on any day after the initial removal until that student has been assessed and cleared for return with **written authorization** by a physician or licensed health care provider authorized by the school.
- If the event continues over multiple days, then the designated event physician has ultimate authority over return to play decisions.

8. *Once the day has concluded, who can issue authorization to return to practice/competition in the sport for a student who has diagnosed with a concussion?*

- Once a concussion has been diagnosed by a physician or other approved health care provider, only a physician or approved provider can authorize subsequent Return To Play (RTP), and such authorization shall be in writing to the administration of the school. This written **RTP authorization shall be kept at the school indefinitely** as a part of that student’s permanent record. Click here <http://ohsaa.org/medicine/AuthorizationToReenter.pdf> to access the OHSAA “Medical Authorization to Return to Play” Form.
- School administration shall then notify the coach as to the permission to return to practice or play.



9. *What should be done after the student is cleared by an appropriate health care professional?*

- After a clearance has been issued, the student's actual return to practice and play should follow a graduated protocol.
- The National Federation of State High School Associations has included the following graduated protocol in its Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports: (Note: This is simply a suggested protocol. The appropriate health care professional who issues the clearance may wish to establish a different graduated protocol.)

**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. Game 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.healthyohiprogram.org/~media/HealthyOhio/ASSETS/Files/injury%20prevention/concussion/Interscholastic%20Concussion%20Form%20-%20ODH%20Revised%202.ashx>

Online Concussion Management Training - <http://www.healthyohiprogram.org/concussion.aspx#Training>

Ohio's Return to Play Law: Frequently Asked Questions - <http://www.healthyohiprogram.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.healthyohiprogram.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.healthyohiprogram.org/~media/HealthyOhio/ASSETS/Files/injury%20prevention/concussion/Return%20to%20Play%20-%20What%20Parents-Guardians%20Need%20to%20Know%20-%20School%20Sports%20-%20Final.ashx>

**ADDITIONAL CONCUSSION RESOURCES**

Ohio Department of Health, Violence and Injury Prevention Program - Sports/Recreation Traumatic Brain Injuries - <http://www.healthyohiprogram.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 - <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/schools.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](http://www.biaoh.org)

**HEAT REGULATIONS**

This procedure is to be used until such time as the temperature is below 84 degrees as no combination of heat and humidity at that level will result in a need to curtail activity.

1. Thirty minutes prior to the start of activity, temperature and humidity readings should be taken at the site.
2. The temperature and humidity should be factored into the Heat Index Calculation and Chart and a determination made as to the Heat Index. If schools are utilizing a digital sling psychrometer that calculates the Heat Index, that number may be used to apply to the table.
3. If a reading is determined whereby activity is to be decreased (above 95 degrees Heat Index), then re-readings would be required every thirty minutes to determine if further activity should be eliminated or preventative steps taken, or if an increased level of activity can resume.
4. Using the following table, activity should be altered and/or eliminated based on this Heat Index as determined:

**Under 95 degrees Heat Index—**

- Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration to allow hydration as a group.
- Have towels with ice for cooling of athletes as needed.
- Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.
- Re-check temperature and humidity every 30 minutes if temperature rises in order to monitor for increased Heat Index.

**95 degrees to 99 degrees Heat Index—**

- Water shall always be available and athletes shall be able to take in as much water as they desire.
- Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration to allow for hydration as a group.
- Have towels with ice for cooling of athletes as needed.
- Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.
- Helmets and other equipment should be removed when athlete not directly involved with competition, drill or practice and it is not otherwise required by rule.

**Notes:** Reduce time of outside activity. Consider postponing practice to later in the day. Re-check temperature and humidity every 30 minutes to monitor for increased Heat Index.

**100 degrees (above 99 degrees) to 104 degrees Heat Index—**

- Water shall always be available and athletes shall be able to take in as much water as they desire.
- Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration to allow hydration as a group.
- Have towels with ice for cooling of athletes as needed.
- Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.
- Alter uniform by removing items if possible and permissible by rules.
- Allow athletes to change to dry shirts and shorts at defined intervals.
- Reduce time of outside activity as well as indoor activity if air conditioning is unavailable.
- Postpone practice to later in day.
- If helmets or other protective requirement are required to be worn by rule or normal practice, suspend practice or competition immediately.

**Note:** Re-check temperature and humidity every 30 minutes to monitor for changes in Heat Index.

**Above 104 degrees Heat Index—**

- Stop all outside activity in practice and/or play, and stop all inside activity if air conditioning is unavailable.

**TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS AND STEROIDS****1. Tobacco**

School participants (coaches, players, trainers, managers, statisticians, scorekeepers, cheerleaders, etc.) and contest officials in an athletic contest are prohibited from using any form of tobacco at the

playing site of an interscholastic contest. Penalty for violation by school participants is disqualification from that contest. Violations by contest officials shall be reported to the OHSAA.

**2. Alcohol and Illegal Drugs**

The sale of, the distribution of, or the consumption of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs is not permitted at the site of any contest involving OHSAA member schools.

**3. Steroids**

A student who uses anabolic steroids or other performance-enhancing drugs is ineligible for interscholastic competition until such time as medical evidence can be presented that the student's system is free of anabolic steroids or other performance-enhancing drugs.

**Note:** At its September 1998 meeting, the OHSAA Board of Directors endorsed the position statement issued by the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee of the National Federation of State High School Associations on the use of drugs, medicine and food supplements in interscholastic sports. The statement is as follows:

“School personnel and coaches should not dispense any drug, medication or food supplement except with extreme caution and in accordance with policies developed in consultation with parents, health-care professionals and senior administrative personnel of the school or school district.

“Use of any drug, medication or food supplement in a way not prescribed by the manufacturer should not be authorized or encouraged by school personnel and coaches. Even natural substances in unnatural amounts may have short-term or long-term negative health effects.

“In order to minimize health and safety risks to student-athletes, maintain ethical standards and reduce liability risks, school personnel and coaches should never supply, recommend or permit the use of any drug, medication or food supplement solely for performance-enhancing purposes.”

**LIGHTNING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER**

**Recognition**

Coaches, athletic trainers, athletes, administrators and contest officials shall be educated regarding the signs indicating thunderstorm development. Since the average distance between successive lightning flashes is approximately two to three miles, ANYTIME that lightning can be seen or heard, the risk is already present. Weather can be monitored using the following methods:

- **Monitor Weather Patterns** – Be aware of potential thunderstorms by monitoring local weather forecasts the day before and morning of the competition, and by scanning the sky for signs of potential thunderstorm activity.
- **National Weather Service** – Weather can also be monitored using small, portable weather radios from the NWS. The NWS uses a system of severe storm watches and warnings. A watch indicates conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area; a warning indicates severe weather has been reported in an area, and everyone should take proper precautions. Any thunderstorm poses a risk of injury or death even if it does not meet the criteria for severe weather. Therefore, anytime thunderstorms are in the forecast (even if it is only a 20 percent chance), event organizers shall be at a heightened level of awareness to the potential danger of lightning.

**Management**

- **Evacuation** – If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators shall evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced and displayed on placards at all athletic venues.
- **Thirty-minute rule** – Competition or practice shall be suspended once lightning has been recognized or thunder is heard. It is required to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming practice or competition. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10-12 miles away from the area. This significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes. **Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.**

<b>MEDIA REGULATIONS</b>
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The Ohio High School Athletic Association develops the regulations for media coverage of all OHSAA tournament contests. Some policies shall also be in effect for regular season contests. General media regulations shall be approved annually by the Board of Directors and published separately from the *OHSAA Handbook*.

**A. Videotape Regulations****Section 1. — Regular Season Contests**

- a. It is permissible for a school or a school representative to videotape or photograph regular season contests (including previews and scrimmages) in which the school team is participating. Such videotapes or photographs may be used for “in-game” coaching purposes only if it is specified in the national playing rules of the sport or in the specific sport regulations.
- b. It is not permissible for a school or a school representative to videotape or photograph regular season contests (including previews and scrimmages) of other school teams without the written consent of all schools participating in the contest(s).

**Section 2. — OHSAA Tournament Contests****Videotaping by Participating Schools**

- a. Videotaping OHSAA tournament contests by one or more schools participating in the contest is permitted provided prior arrangements are made with the tournament manager, and it is done at the expense of the school involved. A maximum of one individual per school is permitted to videotape.
- b. All photographs and videos taken by school representatives at OHSAA tournament contests are for school use ONLY. The use of photographs or videos taken by school representatives for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited. Such videotapes or photographs may be used for “in-game” coaching purposes only if it is specified in the national playing rules of the sport or in the specific sport regulations.
- c. It is not permissible for a school or a school representative to videotape tournament contests of other school teams without the written consent of all schools participating in the contest(s).

**Section 3. — Regular Season and OHSAA Tournament Contests****Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Drones)**

- a. For purposes of this policy, an unmanned aerial vehicle (“UAV”), commonly known as a drone, is any aircraft without a human pilot aboard the device.
- b. It is the responsibility of each local school district to establish policies for the use of drones during home regular season contests (including previews and scrimmages) and practices.
- c. The use of drones is prohibited for any purpose by any persons at OHSAA tournament contests. Tournament management shall remove anyone attempting to use a drone and/or confiscate the drone until the event has been completed.

**Note:** An exception to this policy may be made in specific cases for OHSAA broadcast partners, provided the management of the tournament facility permits the presence of drones for broadcast purposes under the control of the OHSAA.

**Videotaping and Photographing by Spectators**

- a. Spectators taking videos or photos at OHSAA tournament contests shall not interfere with the view of a contest by other spectators, nor will spectators or their equipment take additional space in seats that have been purchased. No spectators shall be provided “media” access to videotape or photograph an event, nor will spectators and/or their equipment be permitted in any playing area. In addition, no sources of power will be provided for spectators’ video or photo equipment.
- b. All photographs and videos taken by spectators at OHSAA tournament contests are for personal use ONLY. The use of spectator photographs or videos for commercial, scouting or coaching purposes is strictly prohibited. Videotaping of one’s next opponent is strictly prohibited regardless of the personal use/purpose of the taping.
- c. The tournament site accepts no liability for damage or theft of spectator equipment or injury as a result of privately owned equipment.
- d. The OHSAA reserves the right to remove violators of these policies from a tournament contest, invoke additional penalties and seek maximum legal recourse.

**B. Coaches' and Participants' 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 game.

Officials are trained and expected to make no derogatory public comments directly to the media or through the use of social media regarding other officials, the players, coaches or schools. Coaches and participants are expected to follow the same procedure and make no derogatory public comments directly to the media or through the use of social media regarding not only the officials, but also the players, coaches or schools. Failure to follow this request will result in penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

**C. Use of the OHSAA Trade Names and Trademarks**

The OHSAA owns certain trade names and trademarks that are registered and protected under state and federal law. Any unauthorized use of these trade names and trademarks is strictly prohibited. Notwithstanding this prohibition, the OHSAA does issue certain non-exclusive, non-transferable limited licenses for the use of its trade names and trademarks. The OHSAA's policies regarding these licenses can be found on the OHSAA website ([www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org)) under "News and Media."