



## 2020-21 Soccer Rules Considerations

### NHIAA Soccer Committee Adopted for 2020-21 Season

In support of the Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities, the NFHS Soccer Rules Committee offers this document for state associations to consider whether any possible rules could be altered for the 2020-21 season. The considerations outlined in this document are meant to decrease potential exposure to respiratory droplets by encouraging social distancing, limiting participation in administrative tasks to essential personnel and allowing for appropriate protective equipment.

### Return to Competition

#### 1. Soccer Rules Considerations

- ***Pregame Conference (5-2-2d)***
  - Limit attendees to head referee or center referee, the head coach from each team, and a single captain from each team.
  - Move the location of the pregame conference to center of the field. All individuals maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
  - Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.
- ***Ball Holders (6-1)***
  - Encourage social distancing of 6 feet
- ***Team Benches (1-5-1)***
  - Encourage bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet.
- ***Substitution Procedures (3-4)***
  - Each team presenting substitutes shall send at least one to the center line. Additional substitutes will be allowed to enter from the team bench area with the referee's permission. The subs at the center line will maintain social distancing of 6 feet.
- ***Officials Table (6-2; 6-3)***
  - Limit to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommend distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

## **2. Pre and Post Match Ceremony**

- a. Schools should consider suspending the pregame ~~world cup~~ introductions line and send players to their field positions with bench personnel lined up on the touch line (6 feet apart) for introductions.
  - i. Suggested alternative would be to send athletes directly to their field positions for introductions.
- b. Suspend post game protocol of shaking hands.

## **3. Soccer Rules Interpretations**

- **Rule 4-1 EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES**
  - Cloth face coverings are permissible.
  - Gloves are permissible.
- **Rule 4-2 LEGAL UNIFORM**
  - Long sleeves are permissible. (4-1-1)
  - Long pants are permissible (4-1-1). If long pants are worn, they must be tight-fitting and must be worn under the shorts, socks and shin-guards.
  - Under garments are permissible but must be of a similar length for the individual and a solid like color for team. (4-1-1d)
- **Rule 5-3 OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT**
  - By state association adoption, long-sleeved shirt/jackets are permissible. (5-1-3)
  - Electronic whistles are permissible (supplies are limited).
    - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry outside.
    - Fox 40 Mini -
    - Fox 40 Unisex Electronic - 3 tone
    - Ergo-Guard - (3 tone) - orange
    - Windsor - (3 tone) grey
    - Check the market for other choices
  - Cloth face coverings are permissible.
  - Gloves are permissible.

## **4. Other Considerations**

- **Spectators**
  - Schools should strongly consider defining spectator areas that are a minimum of 10 feet from the playing field and bench area for safety.
- **Mouthguards**
  - The NHIAA mouthguard requirement is suspended for the 2020 season only. Coaches are asked to remind student-athletes who wear mouthguards to leave them in as much as possible to protect their safety and that of others.