

# Football Rules Changes - 2020

By NFHS on February 06, 2020

## football

---

DEFINING TEAM DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE FOR PENALTY DECISIONS [1-4-1, 1-4-4 (NEW), 2-32-5, 3-5-2, 10-1-1, 10-1-2, 10-2-4]

**Rationale:** Prior to the game, the head coach will notify the referee of the designated representative (coach or player) who will make decisions regarding penalty acceptance or declination.

HALFTIME INTERMISSION OPTION FOLLOWING WEATHER DELAY [Table 3-1 NOTES 2 (NEW)]

**Rationale:** The halftime intermission may be shortened by mutual agreement of opposing coaches if a weather delay occurs during the last three minutes of the second period.

40-SECOND PLAY CLOCK CLARIFICATION [3-6-1a(1)e EXCEPTIONS 2 and 3 (NEW)]

**Rationale:** To eliminate a potential timing advantage gained by the defensive team, the rules committee approved the play clock being set to 40 seconds when an officials' time-out is taken for an injury to a defensive player or a defensive player has an equipment issue.

25-SECOND PLAY CLOCK CLARIFICATION [3-6-1a(1)f (NEW)]

**Rationale:** Following a legal kick when either team is awarded a new series, the play clock will be set to 25 seconds.

DISCONCERTING ACT PENALTY RECLASSIFIED [7-1-9 (NEW), 7-1-9 PENALTY (NEW), 9-5-1d]

**Rationale:** Disconcerting acts or words by the defense has been reclassified from a 15-yard unsportsmanlike foul to a 5-yard foul.

SPIKING THE BALL TO CONSERVE TIME (7-5-2 EXCEPTION)

**Rationale:** The exception to allow a player to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving the snap, has been expanded to include any player positioned directly behind the center. This exception now includes snaps that are not hand-to-hand.

2020 EDITORIAL CHANGES

TABLE 1-3-1, 2-41-9, 3-4-8, 7-2-5a, b and c (NEW), 7-5-12, 8-2-4, 10-4-2 EXCEPTION, 10-5-1j,  
PENALTY SUMMARY, NFHS OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS, APPENDIX, INDEX

## 2020 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Sportsmanship
2. Intentional Grounding
3. Ineligible Downfield and Line of Scrimmage Formation