

2020 KSHSAA FOOTBALL CONSIDERATIONS

Updated 8/10/20

With support of the NFHS, the KSHSAA Sports Medicine Committee and the KSHSAA Executive Board, we offer this document as guidance to the member schools of the KSHSAA to consider for the 2020 football season. The considerations outlines 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 and reasonable protective equipment. With the considerations the KSHSAA believes these reasonable accommodations will help with risk mitigation for the upcoming football season.

1. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- ❖ Before, during and after a practice or contest, players, coaches, game officials, team personnel and game administration officials should wash and sanitize their hands as often as possible.
- ❖ Always maintain social distancing guidelines while on the sideline, the practice field, and the field of play, when possible.
- ❖ Everyone should have their own beverage container (identifiable water bottle) that is not shared. Disposable cups are a consideration, if not handled by too many people.
- ❖ Face coverings are permissible and recommended for all coaches and team and game administration officials. School district policy should be followed.
 - **(Updated 8/10/20)** Gaitor (pull-up) style face coverings may pose a risk of neck/tracheal/laryngeal injury if grabbed from behind and used to drag a player down. Therefore, the KSHSAA recommends these style of coverings NOT be worn during competition or Live Action team activities.
- ❖ Gloves are permissible for all coaches, team staff, and game administration officials.
- ❖ **Keep non-essential personnel off the sidelines and practice fields throughout a contest and practice.**
- ❖ If available, dressing facilities for game officials and teams should be large enough for them to use social distancing guidelines and should be properly cleaned and sanitized prior to their arrival each day. **Schools should consider using staggering locker room guidelines to minimize the number of athletes entering, dressing, and leaving the locker room at one time.**
- ❖ The schools should establish a protocol on cleaning and sanitizing of all player equipment (helmets, shoulder pads, etc.), and locker room on a routine basis to mitigate risk. Participants can be required to clean their own equipment daily, as the protocol from the school.
- ❖ Encourage, educate, and stress the importance of behavioral patterns that mitigate the spread, so each athlete has an opportunity to start and finish the 2020 season.
- ❖ **The line-to-gain crew (chain crew) should always wear face coverings.**
- ❖ Huddle formations should be modified. Huddles should not be formed in a circle, but in rows. Not huddling helps a great deal with social distancing.
- ❖ **For 2020, Jamborees are discouraged. Not having a jamboree will limit one exposure to help with the season ahead. If you choose to compete in a Jamboree, then we will permit them to be two teams, three teams or four teams for 2020 only.**

2. PRACTICE CONSIDERATIONS:

- ❖ Practice may look different than it has over the years. Using best practice to mitigate exposure, as stated in the general guidelines is a valuable step.

- ❖ Maintain static small groups when possible.
- ❖ Limit the amount of team activities.
- ❖ Maintain social distancing guidelines when not involved in direct activity.
- ❖ No non-essential personnel should be on the practice field.
- ❖ Face coverings should be worn by coaches and essential personnel unless social distancing guidelines are being met.
- ❖ Follow the water bottle considerations.

3. GAME - FOOTBALL RULE CONSIDERATIONS:

❖ TEAM BOX (Rule 1-2-3g)

- The team box may be extended on both sides of the field to the 10-yard lines (**for players only**) to provide more social distancing space for the team.
- Always maintain social distancing of 6 feet while in the team box.
- Do not share uniforms, towels and other apparel and equipment.

❖ BALLS (Rule 1-3-2)

- The football should be cleaned and sanitized before, throughout and after each practice and competition as recommended by the ball manufacturer.
- The game ball holders should always maintain social distancing guidelines during a contest.

❖ FACE MASKS / FACE COVERINGS {Rule 1-5-1a, 1---5-3c (4)}

- Face coverings are permitted to be worn directly over the mouth and nose.
- **(Updated 8/10/20)** Gaitor (pull-up) style face coverings may pose a risk of neck/tracheal/laryngeal injury if grabbed from behind and used to drag a player down. Therefore, the KSHSAA recommends these style of coverings NOT be worn during competition or Live Action team activities.
- Approved plastic splash guards are permitted by must be NOCSA and NFHS approved and be clear without the presence of any tint.
- If at any time during the game, a face shield becomes damaged or does not function as designed, then the individual player should be sent out for a minimum of one play to remedy the issue. If the individual can remedy the issue, without delay, then they can stay on the field, just like a helmet coming unsnapped.
- **(Updated 8/10/20)** The following helmet face shields are permissible for competition and compliant with NFHS rules:
 1. Schutt Sports - Flexible 2-piece "Splash Shield" (Clear).
 2. Actuated Medical, Inc. - Polycarbonate 2-piece face shield (Clear).

Schools should check with their helmet manufacturer prior to attaching any face shield to a helmet to ensure the NOCSAE certification will remain valid with the addition of the face shield.

❖ GLOVES (Rule 1-5-2b)

- Gloves are permissible but still must comply with Rule 1-5-2b by meeting either the NOCSAE Standard or the SFIA Specifications.
- Gloves should be cleaned and sanitized after each practice and competition.

❖ **TOOTH AND MOUTH PROTECTORS (Rule 1-5-1d)**

- Tooth and mouth protectors should be cleaned and sanitized after each practice and competition.
- Should never be shared
- Should be handled as few times as possible with your hands. Keep them in your mouth.

❖ **CHARGED TIME-OUTS & AUTHORIZED CONFERENCES (Rule 2-6-2, 3-5-3, 3-5-8)**

- All charged time-outs will be two minutes in length. This is to facilitate proper individual hydration getting individual water bottles to players and for coaching. Per rule, play may resume earlier if both teams are ready for play.
- The authorized conference for charged time-outs should take place between the 7 or 9-yard marks and not on the sideline for social distancing purposes. It will be permissible for more than one coach to be involved in these conferences and for technology to be used.
- Each game official, player and coach should have their own beverage container (water bottle) brought out to them on the field. Disposable cups could also be used, but there should be consideration given to the number of people handling these cups. Each school should develop a system to provide water to officials. Considerations may be to have ball boys or designated chain gang members to deliver water to officials at appropriate times, or to station the water bottles for all officials behind each goal post.

❖ **INTERMISSION BETWEEN PERIOD AND AFTER SCORING (Rule 3-5-7)**

- The intermission may be extended to a maximum of two minutes between the first and second and the third and fourth periods and following a try, successful field goal or safety, and prior to the succeeding free kick.

4. FOOTBALL GAME OFFICIALS CONSIDERATIONS:

❖ **GAME OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT**

- Electronic whistles are permissible but not required (supplies are limited). The tone should carry outside.
- Face coverings are permissible, but not required.
- Gloves are permissible, but not required.
- Do not share uniforms, towels, water bottle and other apparel and equipment.

❖ **PREGAME CONFERENCE, COIN TOSS AND OVERTIME PROCEDURES**

- For the coin toss, limit attendees to the referee, umpire and no more than two representatives from each team. You are permitted to forego the pre-game coin toss in the middle of the field if the coin toss has already taken place.
- The coin toss should take place in the center of the field with designated individuals maintaining social distancing requirements.
- No handshakes prior to and following the coin toss.
- Maintain social distancing while performing all pregame responsibilities with all officiating crew members, game administration staff, line-to-gain crew, clock operators, individuals handling the balls during the game and team personnel.
- For the overtime procedure, please use the same procedures as used at the start of the contest for the coin toss.

❖ **LOCKER ROOMS**

- School should communicate locker room availability to officials in advance. Whenever possible, schools should provide adequate space for social distancing to be maintained while officials change before and after a game. In addition, shower facilities need to be offered to officials, so proper hygiene guidelines can be met to mitigate the spread of the virus back to their homes.

❖ **SIDELINES**

- The sidelines should be clear for you to work the game. Officials need to make sure coaches are in their coaching box and players are in their designated areas, as social distancing guidelines are vital for the mitigation of the spread. Coaches should not need to be told to be in their designated areas. No exceptions!

5. PRE AND POST GAME CONSIDERATIONS:

- ❖ Suspend the pregame protocol of shaking hands during introductions.
- ❖ Suspend the postgame protocol of shaking hands.
- ❖ in lieu of handshakes, please develop and utilize an appropriate sign of respect and sportsmanship that does not include handshake or other physical contact; suggestions include head nod, chest thump, salute, etc.

6. TRAVEL:

- ❖ Follow school district guidelines and protocols.
- ❖ Consider face coverings for all individuals. This includes players, coaches, student managers and the bus driver. Mitigating the spread is important with the longer time together on a bus.

7. MEDIA:

- ❖ Follow the guidelines and stay out of the player box and coaches box areas of the field. Therefore, media should not be on the sideline from the 10-yard line to the opposite 10-yard line.
- ❖ Face coverings should be worn when social distancing guidelines cannot be met.