



2020-21 NFHS ICE HOCKEY RULES CHANGES





RULE 3-2

3-2 Change: ...PENALTY: ~~First offense, warning. Returning to game without correcting equipment,~~ **GAME MISCONDUCT.**

Rationale: The rule is clear that skates can potentially be dangerous. If skates are deemed dangerous per the rule language, a game misconduct penalty is warranted and strengthens the emphasis on the health and safety of the participants.





RULE 3-4-2

3-4-2 Change: ART. 2... ...Recommended equipment includes a throat/neck laceration protector.

Rationale: Clarifies the purpose of the recommended equipment for players.





RULE 7-6-1

7-6-1 Change: ART. 1...No player shall make contact from any direction with an opposing player's head or neck area. In any manner, including, but not limited to, with the shoulder, stick, elbow, hand, etc.

Rationale: Hand contact, particularly a closed hand, is often classified as unnecessary roughness (minor penalty). This change would give officials a major penalty option for a single punch to the head area that they deem not to be considered as fighting (DQ).





RULE 7-13-3

7-13-3 Change: ART. 3...No player shall kick, throw, hold or knock an opponent's stick, glove, tooth and mouth protector or any other piece of equipment for the purpose of keeping it from the possession of an opponent.

Rationale: Gloves and tooth and mouth protectors (mouthguards) are two common pieces of equipment found on the ice during play, unfortunately. This change clarifies that these pieces of equipment are a part of this rule.





RULE 9-13

9-13 Change: By state association adoption, state association-authorized video replay may be used in games for reviewing goals and undetected goals, ~~and for~~ determining correct time on the clock, and to review infractions that may affect the ejection of a student-athlete. Procedures for video replay shall be determined by state association policy and procedures.

Rationale: More and more venues have the technology available to accomplish this proposed rule change. As a state adoption, states have a choice to implement this addition.





POINTS OF EMPHASIS





2020-21 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

The NFHS Ice Hockey Rules Committee continues in its belief that the main threat to the health of high school ice hockey is violent and reckless play. The safety and well-being of the participants is paramount and the primary focus of this committee. The committee has addressed the following areas to minimize dangerous, violent and reckless play.





HEALTH AND SAFETY

Coach Safety

It is recommended that all members of the coaching staff wear a HECC-certified helmet while on the ice for practice.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

Player Safety/Dangerous Hits

The purpose of a body-check is to gain possession of the puck, not to injure, punish or intimidate another player.

- Boarding and checking from behind are viewed as two of the most dangerous plays in the sport. Coaches and players must understand that the responsibility in this rule remains with the player approaching an opponent along the boards.
- The following are illegal and need to be eliminated from high school hockey:
 - Hits to the head
 - Fighting
 - Hits on defenseless players (blindside hits)
 - Late hits and unnecessary body contact





HEALTH AND SAFETY

Concussion Recognition and Management

- The NFHS has been at the forefront of national sports organizations in emphasizing the importance of education, recognition and proper management of concussions.
- Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the game.
- State association protocol pertaining to concussion management must be reviewed and followed.
- Please review Rule 2-6-1 and the Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussions on page 91. Additional concussion education can be found in the "Concussion in Sports" online course at www.nfhslearn.com.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mouthguards

- Commercially manufactured mouthguards are widely accepted as effective and provide oral protection. This applies to all levels of contact sports. NFHS rules require mouthguards for no other reason than oral protection for student-athletes.
- For this concept to work, it requires buy-in from all constituents within education-based athletics.
- This includes students, parents, coaches, officials and school administrators.
- Enforcement of mouthguard rules primarily rests with the coaches and officials working cooperatively, emphasizing player safety.





SPORTSMANSHIP

- All coaches, officials, administrators, parents and participants need to understand their role in education-based athletics and activities.
- Fair play and respect are an essential part of high school hockey.
- Create a positive learning environment and respect all participants, fans, officials, coaches and administrators.





OFFICIALS – GAME MANAGEMENT

- Faceoffs – Both teams must have an equal opportunity to play the puck. This requires proper positioning of all players and the official conducting the faceoff.
- Icing – If the puck is shot from behind the center red line, potential icing applies. It is improper to waive icing simply because the puck is close to the center red line.



OFFICIALS – GAME MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

- Offsides – Officials must always be in a proper position to accurately determine offsides. A goal scored on an obvious offsides play will adversely impact the officials' credibility throughout the game.
- Calling the game – A smooth flowing game is a great experience for all participants and spectators. However, this does not mean that officials should "let them play." Offenses must be penalized at all times during the game, regardless of the score or period.





COACHES AND ADMINISTRATORS

- It is the responsibility of the head coach to ensure that all participants are equipped according to the rules.
- All players shall wear a HECC-certified helmet and face mask, including J-clips, ear pieces and a valid HECC Certification sticker. A school administrator or designee must annually review all helmets and face masks to confirm compliance.
- Taunting and unsportsmanlike conduct directed at opponents or officials will not be tolerated.
- Please be aware of the penalty for racial, ethnic and gender slurs.





RULES BOOK REMINDERS





STATE ASSOCIATION ADOPTIONS CHART

- **New this year!**
- Chart can be found on **page 78**

1. Regulations for the team bench area. (1-9-2)	7. Suspensions for Disqualification penalties (4-6-1)
2. Accommodations for special occasions, commemorative or memorial patches. (2-1-2d)	8. Overtime procedures (9-11-1)
3. Number of players that may dress for a game. (2-3-1)	9. Procedure to play 17-minute periods. (9-12-2)
4. Procedure for returning to the locker room at the end of a period. (2-3-4)	10. Establishment of game-ending procedures. (9-12-3 and 9-12-5)
5. Procedure for players prior to each period. (2-4-2)	11. Procedures for video replay. (9-13)
6. Accommodations for participants with disabilities or special needs (2-7)	





GOALKEEPER MASK GUIDE – PAGE 20

These images serve as a guide to distinguish the difference in a HECC certified cat-eye goalkeeper mask and a non-HECC certified cat-eye goalkeeper mask. Learn more at hecc.net.



**Cat-Eye
HECC certified**



**Cat-Eye
Non-HECC certified**



**HECC
certified**



**Non-HECC
certified**

