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2025-2026 Ice Hockey Rules Modifications

All NFHS rules and all NJSIAA rules modifications shall apply to all member school's sponsoring ice hockey programs at all high school levels.

The Pregame Sportsmanship Statement must be read before each game to each team and coaching staff.

Prior to the start of the game, each head coach will certify that all participants are properly equipped. It shall be the responsibility of coaches and officials to strictly enforce all player-safety rules. Player safety equipment shall not be modified from its original manufactured state and shall be worn in the manner the manufacturer intended it to be worn. No captain or coach shall delay the game by challenging any players use of dental guards or neck guards.

Point of emphasis

1. Players must refrain from sitting on the top of the boards of the players bench while play is ongoing for safety concerns

Ice Cuts

1. **Regular season** – The home team or the home teams facility will determine when the ice cut will take place. The home team must communicate to both the officials and the visiting team upon their arrival as to when the ice cut will take place. If there is overtime, there will be NO ice cut after the third period.
2. **NJSIAA tournament** – The ice cut will take place after the first period at all NJSIAA tournament games. If there is overtime, there will be an ice cut after the third period.
3. **NJSIAA Finals** (Prudential Center) – The ice cut will take place after every period. If there is overtime, the ice cut will take place after the third period, after the first 15-minute overtime period, and after two 7 ½ minute overtime periods.

Warm-ups/Period Breaks

1. 8-Minute Warm-Up
 - An official must be on the ice for the start of the warm-up period.
 - A coach must be on the bench during warm-ups.
2. If there is no ice cut after the completion of a period
 - A Maximum of 5-minute break between periods.
3. If there is an ice cut after the completion of a period
 - A Maximum of 15-minute break between periods.
4. After an ice-cut, teams must warm-up/skate in front of **THEIR** team's goalie.
5. Warm-up time will be put on the clock and start running down immediately after the end of the period.
6. There will be a mandatory 2-minute break between the third period and the 5-minute overtime.

Rule 1-9-2 - Player's Bench

The number of team personnel permitted to occupy the team bench area shall be unlimited.

Rule 2-4-2 - Starting Lineups

The home team shall determine which period the ice resurfacing will take place during the regular season. This must be communicated to the visiting team and the officials upon arrival at the facility. There shall be an intermission after the period in which there is no scheduled ice resurfacing of up to five (5) minutes. It is recommended teams remain at the players bench area during the intermission between non-ice resurfacing periods. A team may retire to their locker room, however, must return within the intermission time and proceed directly to the player's bench. The Game Timekeeper shall sound a warning signal with one (1) minute remaining in the intermission time. The game clock shall be reset, and the starting line ups shall immediately proceed to the face off.

- **Penalty:** Minor (captain's choice of players)

Rule 3-4-4 - Neck Guards

All players must wear a commercially manufactured neck laceration protector that shall not be altered from its original manufactured state.

- **Penalty:** Bench minor each occurrence

Rule 3-4-5 - Dental Guards

There will no longer be a State Modification in relation to mouthpieces. The rule for mouthpieces going forward will be exactly what is in the NFHS Rule Book, Rule 3-4 Art. 5. Players will no longer need to have their mouthpieces attached to their helmet.

- **Penalty:** First offence, Team Warning; Subsequent Team Violations, Misconduct

Rule 5-1 - Appointment of Officials

A minimum of two (2) On Ice Game Officials must be assigned to all Varsity Interscholastic Games and Scrimmages.

Rule 5-3 - Duties of The Referees

The On Ice Game Officials must remain on the ice until completion of the team handshake and both teams have exited the ice surface.

Rule 5-7 - Scorer /Adult Supervision

Adult supervision shall be required at the Scorer's/Game Timekeepers Table for the duration of the game. This Adult shall Not be an Athletic Trainer.

Rule 9-10 - Start of Game and Periods/Pregame Warm-Up

For all Varsity regular season, League and Conference games, there shall be a warm-up period of eight (8) minutes. Ice resurfacing shall not be allowed between the pregame warm up and the first period. "Dirty ice" may be utilized for warm up however, the first period shall commence immediately after the conclusion of warm up.

- **Penalty:** Minor (captain's choice of players), the incident shall be reported to the NJSIAA office

Rule 9-11-1 - Tied Games (Varsity Games Only)

1. Regular Season League & Non-League Games

- In NJSIAA games in the Regular Season if the score is tied there will be a 2-minute intermission followed by a 5-minute, 4-on-4 sudden death overtime period. Goalies will switch ends to start the overtime. No timeouts will be allowed during overtime. If a team is down two players at any time during overtime the on-ice strength will be 5-3 with play going back to 4-on-4 following the first whistle after the expiration of both penalties. If there is no score during these 5-minutes the game will be declared a tie.

2. All State / League / Conference / County & Cup Tournaments)

- For these tournaments that require a team to advance, the following procedure will be used. At the conclusion of the third period, there will be a 15-minute intermission which includes an ice cut. One 15-minute sudden victory overtime period will be played. Each team will be awarded a single timeout for the overtime period. If the score is tied after the 15-minute overtime period, a shootout will take place after a 5-minute rest period with no ice cut. See full shootout procedures on the next page. Teams shall change ends

3. All State / League / Conference / County & Cup FINALS)

- At the conclusion of the third period, there will be a 15-minute intermission which includes an ice cut. One 15-minute sudden victory overtime period will be played. Each team will be awarded a single timeout for the overtime period. If the score is tied after the first overtime period, there will be a 15-minute intermission which includes an ice cut. Then a 7 ½ minute sudden victory overtime period will be played with each team playing 4 v 4 (plus the goaltender). If the score remains tied after the first 7 ½ minute overtime period, then a 5-minute rest period will take place with no ice cut. The game shall continue with subsequent 7 ½ minute sudden victory overtime periods and 5-minute rest periods until a goal is scored. After every two 7 ½ minute OT periods there will be an ice cut. See full overtime procedures on the next page. Teams shall change ends
- **Please be advised that league, conference, county, and cup tournament rules will supersede the rules above if it is stated in their bylaws. The State tournament will follow numbers 2 & 3 overtime rules above.**

Rule 9-12-3 - Time of Game

The game will be terminated after two periods or during the third period when a team leads the opposing team by 10 or more goals. The game shall end immediately and will be considered complete.

NJSIAA Overtime Procedure (For games that require teams to advance - not championship):

1. At the end of the third period, there will be a 15-minute intermission which includes an ice cut.
2. The overtime will start with One 15-minute sudden victory overtime period.
3. Teams shall change ends prior to the overtime period.
4. Each team will be awarded a single timeout for this overtime period. There will be no carryover of unused timeouts from the end of regulation.
5. If the score remains tied after the 15-minute overtime period, a shootout will take place after a 5-minute rest period with no ice cut
6. The choice to shoot first shall be determined by the higher seeded team.
7. The first five (5) players from each team alternate attempts at a penalty shot. No list needs to be obtained by the referee. Referees will keep track of who shoots for each team.
8. The team scoring the most goals at the end of the five (5) player shootout will win the game.
9. If score is tied after the five (5) player shootout, then it becomes a sudden victory shootout.
10. The next five (5) players will attempt a sudden victory shootout on a paired basis. This will continue until a team has won.
 - Example 1 - If player #6 on team A scores and player #6 on team B does not score, game is over and team A wins.
 - Example 2 - If player #6 on team A does not score and player #6 on team B scores, game is over and team B wins.
 - Example 3 - If player #6 on team A scores and player #6 on team B scores, the shootout will continue to player #7.
 - Example 4 - If player #6 on team A does not score and player #6 on team B does not score, the shootout will continue to player #7.
 - A player cannot shoot a second time until ten (10) different players from their team have attempted a shot.
 - No player may shoot a third time until (10) more players from their team have attempted a shot.
11. During the shoot-out, both teams shall remain at their benches and defend their goal.
12. Penalized players, whose penalty does not expire by the end of the overtime, cannot shoot, and shall be replaced prior to the start of the shoot-out.
13. Any injured player may be replaced prior to the start of the shoot-out.

NJSIAA State Final Overtime Period Procedure (For games that require a team champion):

1. At the end of the third period, there will be a 15-minute intermission which includes an ice cut.
2. The overtime will start with One 15-minute sudden victory overtime period.
3. Teams shall change ends prior to the overtime period.
4. Each team will be awarded a single timeout for this overtime period. There will be no carryover of unused timeouts from the end of regulation.
5. If the score is tied after the first overtime period, there will be a 15-minute intermission which includes an ice cut.
6. Then a 7 ½ minute sudden victory overtime period will be played with each team playing 4 v 4 (plus the goaltender).
7. If the score remains tied after the first 7 ½ minute overtime period, then a 5-minute rest period will take place.
8. The game shall continue with subsequent 7 ½ minute sudden victory overtime periods and 5-minute rest periods until a goal is scored.
9. Teams shall change ends prior to each overtime period.
10. After every two 7 ½ minute OT periods, there will be a 15-minute intermission which includes an ice cut.