



**2025-26 NFHS  
VOLLEYBALL  
RULES BOOK**

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**NFHS Publications**

To maintain the sound traditions of this sport, encourage sportsmanship and minimize the inherent risk of injury, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) writes playing rules for varsity competition among student-athletes of high school age. High school coaches, officials and administrators who have knowledge and experience regarding this particular sport and age group volunteer their time to serve on the rules committee. Member associations of the NFHS independently make decisions regarding compliance with or modification of these playing rules for the student-athletes in their respective states.

NFHS rules are used by education-based and non-education-based organizations serving children of varying skill levels who are of high school age and younger. In order to make NFHS rules skill-level and age-level appropriate, the rules may be modified by any organization that chooses to use them. Except as may be specifically noted in this rules book, the NFHS makes no recommendation about the nature or extent of the modifications that may be appropriate for children who are younger or less skilled than high school varsity athletes.

respect to each contest, athlete and facility, and each athlete is responsible for exercising caution and good sportsmanship. These rules should be interpreted and applied so as to make reasonable accommodations for athletes, coaches and officials with disabilities.

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**Cover photo courtesy of Minnesota State High School League.**

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## FACILITIES

Because facilities used for high school athletics come in many shapes, sizes and conditions, on-site event management may on occasion conclude that compliance with NFHS directives about event configuration is not feasible. Under all circumstances, onsite event management should utilize setups that minimize risk. If a given facility cannot be made reasonably hazard-free, the event should be relocated.

## **2025-26 Volleyball Rules Changes**

**(For comments on the 2025-26 rules changes, see page 55)**

**3-2-1 NOTE (NEW)** — Beginning with the 2026-27 school year, state associations may adopt the use of a non-smooth or textured volleyball for either boys or girls volleyball.

**4-2-1h(3), 4-2-1i(2)** — Team members may wear black, white or gray undergarments in addition to undergarments that match the predominant color of the uniform top/bottom under the uniform top and/or bottom. All team members, other than the libero, wearing an undergarment must wear the same color.

**4-2-4d, f** — Beginning July 1, 2029, the number on the front of the uniform must be centered on the upper half of the uniform top eliminating the measurement requirements from the shoulder seam and neckline creating consistency in number placement.

**5-3-2b, 5-5-3b(9)** — Eliminates the requirement for the second referee to carry and use a lineup card to check the starting lineups allowing veteran officials to use each coach's submitted lineup sheet to check the starting lineup while allowing the use of the lineup card as a training tool for newer officials to assist with tracking rotations during the match.

**9-4-8c (NEW)** — Eliminates the judgment call of a multiple contact fault in a single attempt to play the ball on the second team hit if the ball is next contacted by a teammate.

**10-4 PENALTIES 1** — Changes the penalty administration for an illegal libero replacement to an unnecessary delay if identified before contact of serve and an illegal alignment if identified after contact of serve.

**4-1 PENALTIES, 4-2 PENALTIES** — Combines penalties to eliminate redundancy between equipment and uniform penalties and clarifies that when a team cannot begin the match with six players without body paint or glitter, after attempting to remove, the same penalty for illegal uniforms applies.

## **2025-26 Volleyball Editorial Changes**

4-2-4c; 7-1-2a; 7-1-4, 7-1-4 PENALTIES 1 & 2; How to Use the Signals Signal 1

### DISCLAIMER – NFHS Position Statements and Guidelines

The NFHS regularly distributes position statements and guidelines to promote public awareness of certain health and safety-related issues. Such information is neither exhaustive nor necessarily applicable to all circumstances or individuals, and is not a substitute for consultation with appropriate health-care professionals. Statutes, codes or environmental conditions may be relevant. NFHS position statements or guidelines should be considered in conjunction with other pertinent materials when taking action or planning care. The NFHS reserves the right to rescind or modify any such document at any time. Please see pages 73-75 for these position statements.

## **2025-26 Points of Emphasis**

### **Lineup Card**

The second referee's lineup card is an optional tool to record each team's lineup. It is the choice of the second referee to verify each team's starting

second referee's lineup card.

Some second referees use the lineup card to assist with rotations/positional faults, substitutions/libero replacements, time-outs and to quickly check the next server. It is recommended for newer officials that are less familiar with the game to use the lineup card as a tool to learn how to track rotations. Veteran officials or those who are more familiar with identifying players and rotations through memorization, opposites or patterns, may choose not to use the lineup card.

Mechanics:

- Lineups must be checked at the beginning of each set by the second referee and the scorer.
- If a second referee chooses to use a lineup card, the starters must be noted, and it is the official's choice to record any additional information.
- When a substitute is requested (by the coach or by the player entering the sub zone), the second referee recognizes a substitute, one at a time, by whistling two short blasts, signaling substitution and showing the authorization to enter signal.
- If using a lineup card, the second referee records the substitution and turns slightly at an angle to ensure that the scorer has recorded the substitution as well.
- If the lineup card is not being used, the second referee simply authorizes the entry and turns slightly at an angle and ensures that the scorer has recorded the substitution.
- Scorers have their way of acknowledging that the entry was made into the scorebook. This should be discussed pre-match with the score crew.
- Immediately following the acknowledgment from the scorer, the second referee turns, takes their position on the receiving team's side of the court and signals the ready to play signal to the first referee.
- If each team has a substitute(s), the second referee should hold their hand up to indicate to that substitute to wait until the second referee has completed the opposing team's request and entry.

Regardless of the method, using a lineup card or not, communication with the scorers is crucial in pre-match and during the match to ensure the players are in correct service order.

## **Ball Handling**

part of the body. The sport continues to grow in popularity, with an annual increase in the number of participants and spectators. The inconsistency in judgment of contacts from one official to another and from one player to another causes anxiety for all parties. As the sport has evolved, the rules have adapted to allow multiple contacts on the ball with the caveat that the first referee should only judge the length of time on a body part, whistling a catch/throw or illegal contact, along with the number of contacts made on the same attempt by one player.

With the 2025 rules changes, officials no longer adjudicate the multiple contact fault on a second contact when the ball is played to a teammate. What this means for high school volleyball is:

- More play, less whistles.
  - Less controversy between coaches (players) and referees.
  - A team whose second contact to a teammate is a “double,” is allowed one more contact to play the ball over the net.
- 
- Less concern about the consistency of officials between sets/matches and from player to player (setter or non-setter).

Related Mechanics:

- The first referee still needs to be diligent about judging multiple contacts **IF** the ball is contacted by the opponent first, not a teammate. (A double hit, with a slightly delayed whistle)
- The first referee must be prepared to whistle a double contact **IF** the second team contact completely crosses the plane of the net. (A double hit, with a slightly delayed whistle)
- The first referee must continue to call any third contact that is “doubled.”
- The first referee will continue to allow the first ball double that travels over the net.

## **R1 Assigning LJs**

For those states who have selected to remain on the same side of the court throughout the match, the default is for line judges to switch sides of the court between sets to allow for equitable adjudication of the lines. There may be a situation in which the first referee requires line judges to remain on the same

to do so in order to create the best environment for match administration.

First referees may make line judge position assignments based on experience of line judges, level and type of play by one or both teams, and/or observed performance. The authority of the first referee should not be used to prejudge line judges or create an unfair environment for either team. Any divergence from the default line judge positioning should be communicated with both head coaches.

### **Uniforms – Contrasting Colors**

The NFHS Volleyball Rules not only require the libero jersey to clearly contrast from the team jersey, but also the body of the uniform number must clearly contrast from the uniform top. These rules are in place to assist officials in easily identifying the libero as well as player numbers. When the ball and players are on the move, officials must clearly see the libero's positioning when playing the ball as well as player numbers when watching for net, line, and attack faults.

There are infinite color shades and combinations that schools around the country use which makes it very difficult to create rules defining which colors contrast with each other. It is important to emphasize the word "clearly." The colors should be obviously contrasting from one another in all types of gym lighting when viewing from the floor and the top of the bleachers.

Tips for selecting color combinations:

- If the jersey color is dark, the color of the number should be light or even white.
- If the jersey color is light or white, the color of the number should be dark or even black.
- If the team jersey color is dark, the libero jersey color should be light or even white.
- If the team jersey color is light or white, the libero jersey color should be dark or even black.
- Avoid too many colors on the team jersey as it limits the colors for a legal libero jersey and the uniform numbers.

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Each state high school association adopting these rules is the sole and exclusive source of binding rules interpretations for contests involving member schools. Any person having questions about the interpretation of NF

school association.

The NFHS is the sole and exclusive source of model interpretations of NF rules. State rules interpreters may contact the NFHS for model rule interpretations. No other model rules interpretations should be considered.

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The competition court should be set up and available at least one hour before the first scheduled match.

A timed warm-up period for each team should be predetermined. The timed warm-up

period will vary depending on facility and format of matches.

During shared warm-up, players may not intentionally or cause balls to intentionally

enter the opponent's court.

When one team has exclusive use of the court the other team should be at its' bench

or off the playable area. Teams can utilize an auxiliary gym or the area behind the team

bench if adequate space is available.

Announcements – teams on their endlines for player introductions, national anthem, shaking hands, etc

### **Sample Prematch Warm-up for Dual Matches**

| <b>Timing</b>   | <b>Protocol</b>                                       |
|---|---|
| 60 minutes before start of match                          | Court setup by host management and available to teams |
| No later than 30 minutes prior to start of match          | Officials arrive on court in uniform                  |
| No later than 20 minutes prior to start of match          | Assistant officials report to first referee           |
| Prior to timed warm-ups                                   | Prematch conference (rosters due)                     |
| Timed warm-up begins                                      | Timed warm-up – shared court                          |
| Minimum 4 minutes   | Timed warm-up – home team's court                     |
| Minimum 4 minutes   | Timed warm-up – visiting team's court                 |
| No later than 2 minutes prior to the end of timed warm-up | Lineups due   |

timed warm-ups

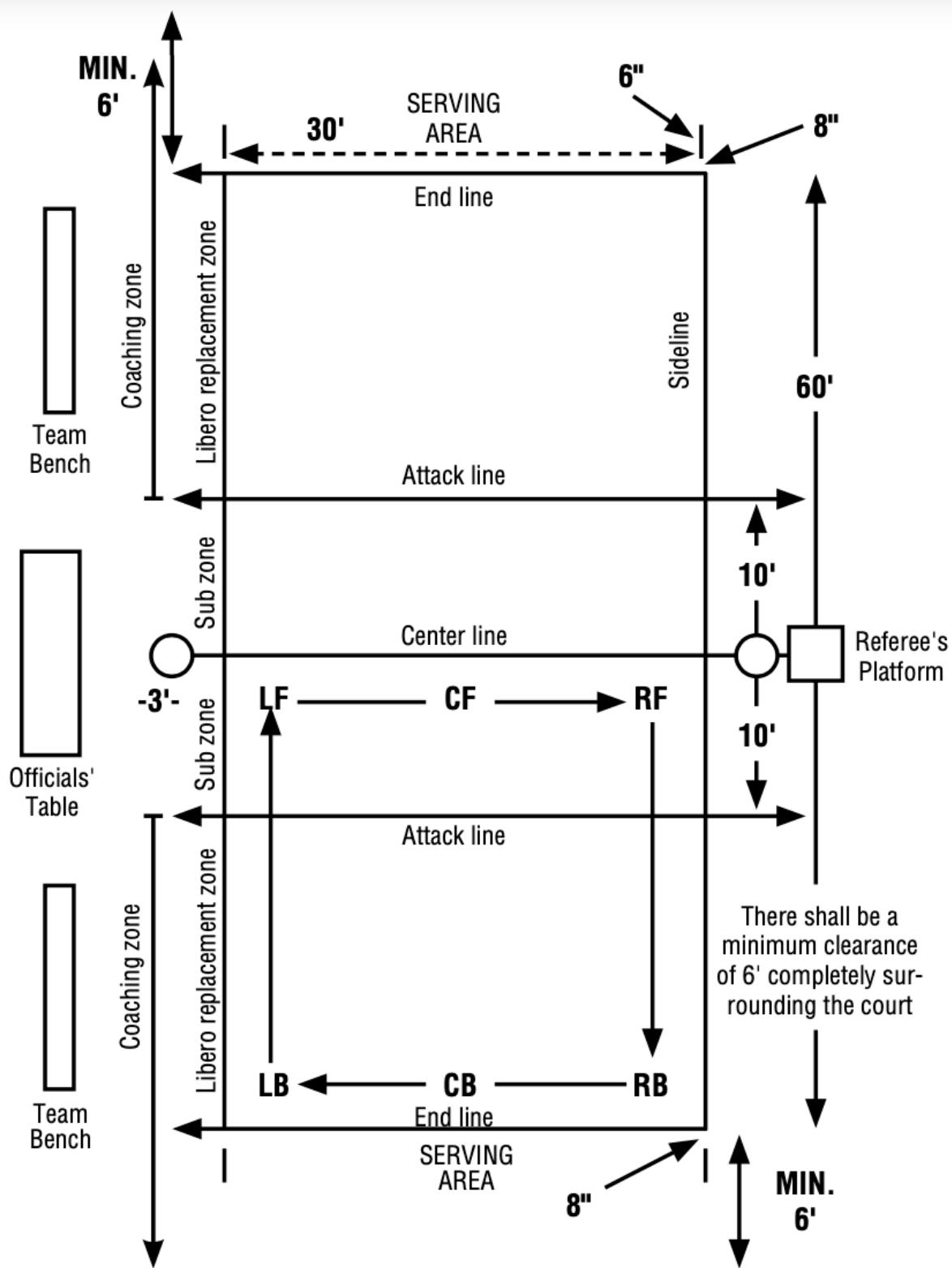
Announcements (National Anthem,  
Introductions,  
etc.)

Team huddle

Match begins

**NOTE:** Times may be adjusted to accommodate arrival times, facilities, tournaments, etc. It is recommended that each team receives a minimum of 4 minutes on the court for hitting and serving.



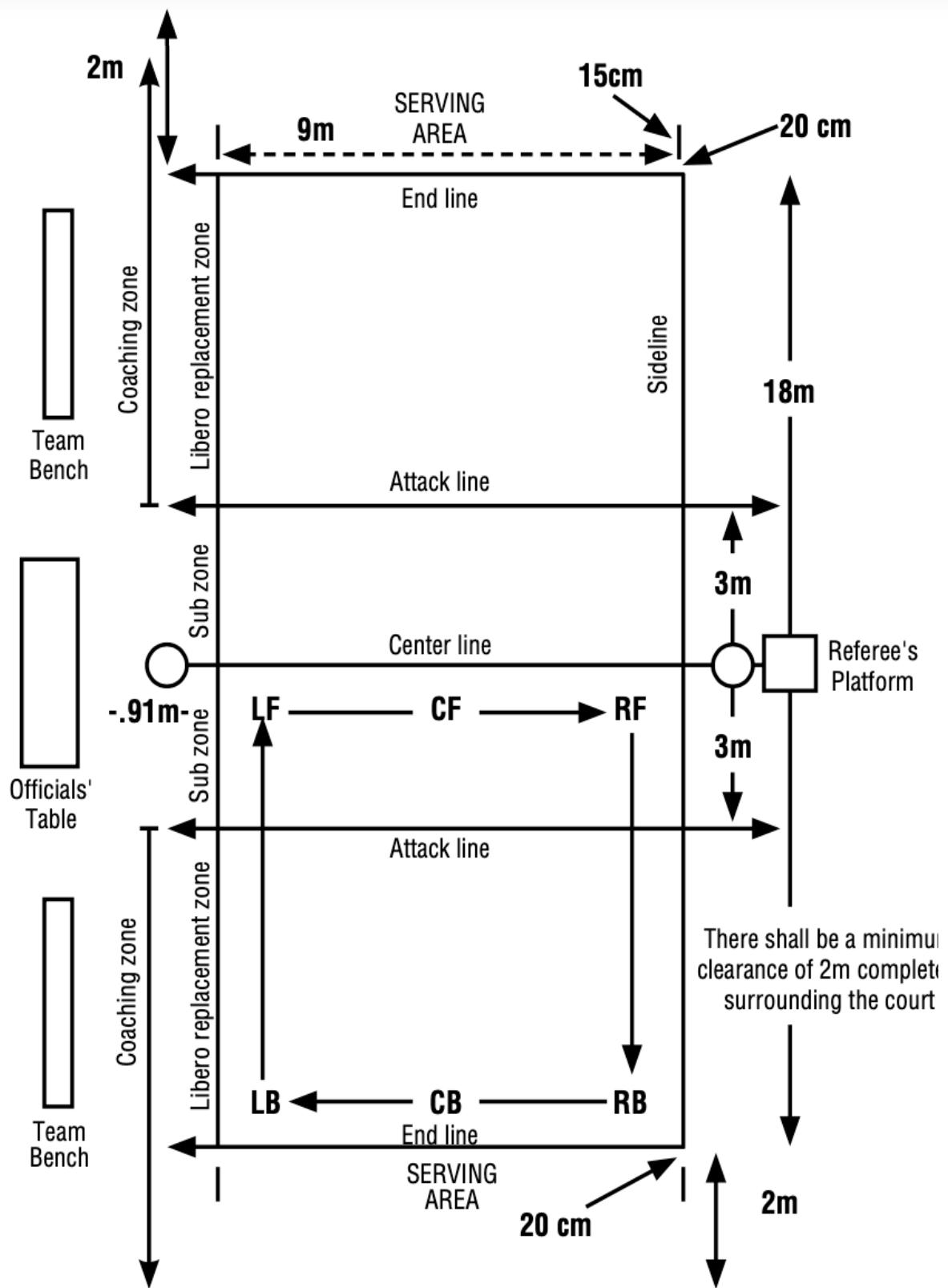


**DIAGRAM 1**

**NOTE 1:** Please refer to Rule 2-1 for specific rule requirements for the court

information on court diagrams in this book is suggestive only; it is not required by NFHS rules. The construction and layout of all courts and fields used for high school competition are subject to any controlling laws and building codes, and to the sound judgment of the persons in charge of the facilities.)





## DIAGRAM 2

and recommended ceiling height.

# Rule 1 The Game

## SECTION 1 DEFINITION

Volleyball is a game played by two teams consisting of six players on a rectangular court separated into two areas by a net and using an inflated ball. One team serves the ball over the net, trying to make it land within the opponent's playing area. The receiving team attempts to return the ball over the net in such a manner that it will land within the opponent's playing area.

## SECTION 2 MATCH

**ART. 1 . . .** A match shall consist of the best three-of-five sets. The first team to win three sets shall be the winner of the match. The fourth and fifth sets shall not be played unless it is necessary to determine the winner of the match.

### NOTES:

1. By state high school association adoption, teams may play a best two-of-three sets match in which a team is considered the winner of the match when it wins two sets. All sets shall be 25 points (no cap). The third set shall not be played unless it is necessary to determine the winner of the match. If a third set is necessary, a coin toss shall be conducted prior to that set.
2. By state high school association adoption, modification of match format is permitted for series other than dual varsity matches.

**ART. 2 . . .** The interval between sets is a maximum of three minutes unless an intermission for promotional or special recognition activities is used. (11-5-1) Any intermission shall not exceed two minutes.

**ART. 3 . . .** A match shall entitle each team a maximum of two time-outs per set.

**ART. 4 . . .** The serve/receive for set No. 1 is determined by a coin toss conducted during the prematch conference. If a deciding set is required, the serve/receive and playing areas are also determined by a coin toss.

- a. First set – During the prematch conference, a visiting team captain shall call the toss. The winner shall choose to serve or receive.

call the toss. The winner shall choose to serve/receive or the playing area. The loser of the toss shall be given the remaining choice.

### **SECTION 3 SCORING POINTS**

**ART. 1 . . .** When a team commits a fault, the result is a loss of rally and the opponent shall receive a point.

**ART. 2 . . .** If the serving team wins the rally, it scores a point and continues to serve. If the receiving team wins the rally, it scores a point and gains the serve. Each time a team gains the serve, it must rotate one position clockwise before serving.

**ART. 3 . . .** A loss of rally/point is awarded each time a vacant position rotates to serve in the right back position. (Recorded on the scoresheet as regular loss of rally/point.)

### **SECTION 4 THE SET**

**ART. 1 . . .** The first four sets shall be 25 points (no cap), and a team must win by at least two points.

**ART. 2 . . .** The fifth and deciding set shall be 15 points (no cap), and a team must win by at least two points.

### **SECTION 5 TERMINATION OF SET/MATCH**

**ART. 1 . . .** A team that has scored the required points and has at least a two-point advantage is the winner of that set. If the leading team does not have a two-point advantage, play shall continue until one team has a two-point advantage (no cap).

**ART. 2 . . .** Unless state association rules determine otherwise, a match shall be declared a forfeit when:

- a. A team refuses to play when directed to do so by the first referee;
- b. A coach is removed from the premises for unsporting conduct and no authorized school personnel is present to assume responsibility for the team;
- c. A disqualified individual violates conduct rules following disqualification.

**NOTE:** School personnel refers to faculty or administrators unless defined otherwise by state association policy.

**ART. 3 . . .** The score of a forfeited set shall be 25-0 (15-0 in the deciding set) if the set has not started. If the set is in progress, the offending team shall be

points in the deciding set) or a sufficient number to reflect a two-point advantage.

**ART. 4 . . .** Unless state association rules determine otherwise, a set shall be declared a forfeit when a team has fewer than six players to start the match. ( 11-2-2 for requested time-outs.)

#### **SECTION 6 PREMATCH**

**ART. 1 . . .** Upon entering the facility, the home team selects its team bench.

**ART. 2 . . .** Prior to timed warmups, a conference shall be conducted with the head coach and a captain(s) from each team.

**ART. 3 . . .** During the prematch conference, a coin toss shall be conducted between the captains and head coach of each team. A visiting captain shall call the toss. The winner shall choose either to serve or receive.

**ART. 4 . . .** A timed warm-up period shall be afforded each team.

#### **SECTION 7 SUSPENSION**

A match may be suspended due to:

- a. Power failure;
- b. Host management failing to resolve a situation of an unruly spectator(s) in reasonable amount of time;
- c. Other unforeseen circumstances.

It may be resumed from the point of suspension unless the state association determines otherwise. When play is resumed, the score and lineup shall be the same as they were at the moment of suspension.

#### **SECTION 8 MUSIC/SOUND EFFECTS/ARTIFICIAL NOISEMAKERS**

The playing of music/sound effects shall only be permitted prior to the start of the set during warmups, during time-outs, between sets and following the competition. The use of artificial noisemakers shall be prohibited.

## **Rule 2 The Court**

#### **SECTION 1 THE COURT AND MARKINGS**

meters) wide, measured to the outer edges of the boundary lines. The court and adjacent playable area shall be flat, smooth and free of obstructions other than required equipment and padding. It is recommended that the area above the court be clear of any obstructions and at least 23 feet (or 7 meters) high.

**ART. 2 . . .** It is recommended all boundary lines be of one clearly visible color contrasting to the color of the floor and other lines on the floor.

**ART. 3 . . .** Boundary lines shall be 2 inches (or 5 centimeters) wide. There shall be at least 6 feet (or 2 meters) and preferably 10 feet (or 3 meters) of unobstructed space outside the boundary lines. The end lines are the boundary lines on the short sides of the court. The sidelines are the boundary lines on the long sides of the court.

**ART. 4 . . .** A continuous center line, 2 inches (or 5 centimeters) wide, parallel to and equidistant from the end lines, shall separate the court into two playing areas.

**NOTE:** A solid or shadow-bordered 2-inch (or 5 cm) wide center line is permissible. A shadow line is a line that designates the required 2-inch (or 5 cm) width by use of border or outline lines at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch (.64 cm) wide, which shall be within the 2-inch (or 5 cm) width. Border lines that are the natural color of the court are permissible. The area within these lines need not be one color but the continuous 2-inch (or 5 cm) wide outline must be clearly visible to the officials. If the floor has a logo in the center of the court, that logo should not distract from the visibility of the center line.

**ART. 5 . . .** An attack line shall be solid and of one clearly visible color, 2 inches (or 5 centimeters) wide, and shall be drawn across each playing area from sideline to sideline, 10 feet (or 3 meters) from the center line and parallel to it, measured from the edge of the attack line farthest from the center line to the axis of the center line.

**ART. 6 . . .** A serving area which is 30 feet (or 9 meters) wide shall be provided behind and excluding the end line. It shall be laterally limited by two short lines, each 6 inches (or 15 centimeters) long by 2 inches (or 5 centimeters) wide, drawn 8 inches (or 20 centimeters) behind and perpendicular to the end line, as extensions of the sidelines. Both lines are included in the width of the serving area.

event that such a space is not available, the serving area shall extend into the court to whatever distance necessary to provide the minimum depth and be so marked. (Diagrams 1 and 2 in the front of the rules book.)

**ART. 7 . . .** The substitution zone is the area near the sideline between the attack line and the center line.

**ART. 8 . . .** The libero replacement zone is the area near the sideline between the attack line and the end line.

**ART. 9 . . .** The coaching zone is the area defined as the libero replacement zone and the area beyond the end line and sideline extended.

**ART. 10 . . .** The playable area includes the court and the unobstructed space outside of the court boundary lines. The playable area outside of the court boundary lines shall be visible to all team members and officials.

**ART. 11 . . .** Nonplayable area is that space located beyond the court and surrounding playable area. It includes walls, bleachers, team benches, area behind the team benches, and any other areas identified in the prematch conference, deemed by the first referee as unsuitable for playable area.

## **SECTION 2 PLAYABLE OVERHEAD OBSTRUCTIONS**

A ball striking the ceiling or an overhead obstruction above a playable area shall remain in play provided the ball contacts the ceiling or obstruction on the side of the net extended that is occupied by the team that last played the ball, and the ball is legally played next by the same team.

## **SECTION 3 OUT OF BOUNDS**

A ball is out of bounds and becomes dead when it:

- a. Touches a wall, curtains serving as a wall, objects mounted flush with a wall, or objects on the floor outside the court that do not interfere with a player's legitimate effort to play the ball;
- b. Touches the floor completely outside the court's boundary lines, with no part of the ball in contact with the boundary line(s);
- c. Touches the net antennas above or within the net or does not pass over the net entirely between the net antennas;
- d. Touches the net cables or net not completely inside the antenna, net - supports or first referee's platform;
- e. Touches a non-team member who is not interfering with a player's legitimate effort to play the ball;

the net and its out-of-bounds extension;

- g. Touches or enters (from the direction of the court) a nonplayable area beyond the legal reach of a player, or adjacent courts scheduled for play;
- h. Touches any part of a backboard or its supports hanging in a vertical position, over a playable area if it is a served ball or, in the judgment of the referee, the ball would not have remained in play if the backboard had not been there;
- i. Touches any part of a backboard or its supports hanging in a vertical position over the service area when tossed for serve and shall not be subject to a re-serve;
- j. Touches the cable(s) and/or diagonal pole(s) used to retract a ceiling-suspended net system located on one side of the net, and in the judgment of the referee, the ball would have not remained in play if the cable(s) and/or pole(s) had not been there.

**PENALTY: Loss of rally/point is awarded to the opponent.**

#### **SECTION 4 RESTRICTED PLAY**

**ART. 1 . . .** A referee shall stop play when:

- a. A wall, floor obstacle, nonplayable area or non-team member interferes with a player's legitimate effort to play the ball;
- b. A player gains an advantage by contacting any floor obstacle (team benches, officials' table, bleachers, etc.), wall or team members;
- c. It is necessary to prevent player injury from contact with obstacles or walls;
- d. The ball contacts any part of a backboard or its supports which is hanging in a vertical position over a playable area. Supports are considered part of a backboard;
- e. The ball contacts the cable(s) and/or diagonal pole(s) which are used to retract a ceiling-suspended net system and located on one side of the net.

**ART. 2 . . .** A player may play a ball over a nonplayable area if the player has a body part in contact with a playable area at the time the ball is contacted, and may enter the nonplayable area after playing the ball.

**EXCEPTION:** When competition is scheduled to occur on adjacent courts, no player or ball may enter or break the plane of the adjacent court before, during

## **PENALTIES:**

- 1. When a wall, floor obstacle or nonplayable area that is less than 6 feet (2 meters) from a boundary line, or a non-team member causes the interference, a replay is declared provided the player had a legitimate play on the ball.**
- 2. When, in the judgment of the referee, the ball would have remained in play had the vertical backboard not been over the playable area, a replay is granted.**
- 3. When, in the judgment of the referee, the ball would have remained in play had the cable(s) and/or diagonal pole(s) not been there, a replay is granted.**
- 4. In all other situations, a loss of rally/point is awarded to the opponent.**

## **SECTION 5 NON-TEAM MEMBERS**

Non-team members include but are not limited to all authorized officials, medical personnel (including equipment) and spectators located in playable areas.

# **Rule 3 Game Equipment**

The NFHS does not perform scientific tests on any specific items of equipment to determine if the equipment poses undue risks to student-athletes, coaches, officials or spectators. Such determinations are the responsibility of equipment manufacturers.

## **SECTION 1 THE NET AND MARKINGS**

**ART. 1 . . .** The net shall be 36 inches to 39 inches (or 1 meter) wide overall and at least 31'6" (or 9.5 meters) up to 33 feet (or 10 meters) in length when stretched. It shall consist of 4-inch-square (or 10 centimeters) mesh of at least No. 21 size dark, natural or synthetic cord. A plain white 2-inch (or 5 centimeters) to 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch (or 7 centimeters) wide double thickness of canvas or single thickness of durable synthetic material shall be sewn along the full length of the top of the net. A white net sleeve, no wider than 3 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches (or 8.6 centimeters) may be installed along the top of the net. It shall be secured so it does not affect the net.

school mascot and/or advertising along the top or the net or net sleeve by way of a decal or professional printing.

Through the top shall run a  $1/8$  to  $3/16$ -inch-diameter flexible steel cable (or aramid-type fiber cable no more than  $1/4$ -inch thick which is no heavier, has more stretch and has at least as much tensile strength as the required steel cable). Through the bottom shall run a  $1/8$  to  $3/16$ -inch-diameter flexible steel cable or a  $1/4$ -inch rope. Any exposed steel cable and/or metal tensioning device through the top and bottom of the net shall be covered. Through each side may be inserted a  $1/2$  to 1-inch-diameter wooden, metal or fiberglass rod which, when the net is installed, holds the sides perpendicular to the floor.

**NOTES:**

1. No markings are permitted on a side tape, vertical tape markers or other non-supportive straps other than the manufacturer's name/logo/trademark for reference.
2. Net systems which do not have a cable/rope through the top or bottom of the net are legal provided they meet all other rule specifications, and the entire net remains taut at the specified net height.

**ART. 2 . . .** The net shall be attached to upright standards which are 3 feet (or 1 meter) outside the court or from its four corners to walls which are at least 6 feet (or 2 meters) from the sideline.

**ART. 3 . . .** The net supports include any attachments to the net used for anchoring the net to walls or upright standards, as well as the standards themselves and any attachments used for anchoring the standards to the floor or walls or ceiling. The standards, first referee's platform and floor/wall cables shall be padded as follows:

- a. Standards shall be padded to a minimum height of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet with at least 1-inch-thick, resilient, shock-absorbing material (such as polyethylene foam) to encase the uprights and all tensioning devices;
- b. Front and sides of first referee's platform shall be padded in the same manner as the standards;
- c. Any guy cables or rigid braces shall be padded to a minimum height of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet with at least  $1/2$ -inch-thick resilient, shock-absorbing material.

**cables and first referee's platform according to Rule 3-1-3, the match shall not be played, and the state association shall be notified to determine further action or penalty, as deemed necessary.**

**ART. 4 . . .** Net placement shall be such that the net crosses the court midway between and parallel to the end lines. The height of the net shall be 7 feet,  $4\frac{1}{8}$  inches (2.24 meters) for girls and 7 feet,  $11\frac{5}{8}$  inches (2.43 meters) for boys measured at the center of the net. The net measured at the ends shall not exceed these heights by more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch (1.92 cm).

**ART. 5 . . .** Net antennas shall be attached to the net in line with the outside edge of the sideline and extend upward at least  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet but no more than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet above the net. The antennas shall be fastened securely to the top and bottom of the net. They shall be of an unbreakable material no more than  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch in diameter with alternating 4-inch to 6-inch white and orange or red bands.

**ART. 6 . . .** A safe, stable platform, which elevates the first referee's head to between 2 and 3 feet above the top of the net, is required. It is recommended the top of the platform be at least 18 inches long by 12 inches wide, and that steps up to the platform be provided.

## **SECTION 2 THE BALL**

**ART. 1 . . .** The volleyball shall be spherical with a laceless molded cover of 12 or more basic, rectangular-shaped panels of equal size and genuine or simulated smooth leather (not suede). All panels of the ball shall be solid white or a maximum combination of three colors (with each panel being a solid color) and of which at least one-third of the panels shall be solid white. It shall measure at least 25 inches but no more than 27 inches in circumference, with a weight of 9-10 ounces when inflated with 4.3 - 4.6 pounds per square inch of air pressure.

**NOTE:** Beginning in 2026-27, by state association adoption, the volleyball may be spherical with a laceless molded cover of genuine, simulated textured leather (not suede) panels. No limitation on color combinations or number and shape of panels. All measurements and weight requirements still apply.



## SECTION 3 THE SCORESHEET AND SCOREBOARD

**ART. 1 . . .** A scoresheet shall be supplied by the host team and kept at the officials' table from at least 20 minutes before the match and throughout the match. It shall provide adequate space for lineups, individual scoring, team scoring and time-outs. It also shall provide space in a Comments section for recording warnings, penalties and disqualifications for unsporting conduct; removal of a player who is rendered unconscious or apparently unconscious; exceptional substitutions, re-designation of libero, unnecessary delay administrative cards, and uniform/equipment violations.

The visiting team may maintain a second scoresheet at the officials' table, but the one supplied by the host team is official unless the first referee determines otherwise.

**ART. 2 . . .** A scoreboard visible to teams, officials and spectators is required.

## SECTION 4 THE OFFICIALS' TABLE

The officials' table, where the official scorer, libero tracker, timer and their respective assistants sit, shall be placed at least 6 feet (or 2 meters) [10 feet (or 3 meters) preferred when space permits] outside the court sideline opposite the first referee.

## SECTION 5 TEAM BENCHES

Team benches shall be on the same side of the court as the officials' table, placed no closer to the sideline than 6 feet (or 2 meters) and no closer to the

**PENALTY:** When game equipment, other than required padding, does not meet rule specifications, the match shall be conducted, and the improper conditions reported to the appropriate authority as determined by the state association.

## Rule 4 Player Equipment and Uniforms

The NFHS does not perform scientific tests on any specific items of equipment to determine if the equipment poses undue risks to student-athletes, coaches, officials or spectators. Such determinations are the responsibility of equipment manufacturers.

### SECTION 1 EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES

#### NOTES:

1. Prior to the match, head coaches shall verify with the first referee that all their players are legal and wearing legal uniforms and equipment.
2. Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities or unique and extenuating circumstances. The accommodations should not fundamentally alter the sport, heighten risk to the athlete/others or place opponents at a disadvantage.

**ART. 1 . . .** A guard, cast or brace made of hard and unyielding leather, plaster, pliable (soft) plastic, metal or any other hard substance shall not be worn on the hand, finger, wrist or forearm, even though covered with soft padding.

**ART. 2 . . .** Hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, etc.) on the elbow, upper arm or shoulder shall be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick. An elbow brace shall not extend more than halfway down the forearm.

manufacturer's original design/production, do not require any additional padding.

**ART. 4 . . .** A protective face mask made of hard material may be worn but must be molded to the face with no protrusions.

**ART. 5 . . .** Any equipment that in the judgment of the first referee increases a player's advantage or presents a safety concern is prohibited.

**ART. 6 . . .** Head and hair devices must adhere to the following:

- a. Hair-control devices and other adornments in the hair that are securely fastened and do not present an increased risk to the player, teammates or opponents are allowed;
- b. Headbands made of soft material and no more than 3 inches wide may be worn in the hair or on the head;
- c. Head coverings worn for religious reasons are not considered hair devices; must be made of non-abrasive or soft materials; and must fit securely;
- d. Head coverings worn for medical reasons require state association approval. (4-1 NOTES 2)

**ART. 7 . . .** All jewelry shall be removed, except small, secured jewelry (stud or post). No jewelry shall be permitted below the chin. String bracelets, commemorative bracelets and body jewelry are considered jewelry and are not permitted. Taping over jewelry is not permitted.

- a. A medical-alert shall be taped to the body and the alert may be visible.
- b. Religious medals and/or other religious items shall be taped to the body and worn under the uniform.

**ART. 8 . . .** Players shall not wear body paint or glitter on their hair, face, uniform or body.

**NOTE:** Uniform and Equipment penalties can be found after Rule 4-2.

## **SECTION 2 LEGAL UNIFORM**

**ART. 1 . . .** All uniforms shall adhere to the following:

- a. Uniform tops [with the exception of the libero (4-2-2)] shall be like-colored and uniform bottoms shall be like-colored;
- b. Uniforms shall be worn as the manufacturer intended;

tasteners, etc.);

d. A single, visible manufacturer's logo and/or single school name or insignia no more than 2½ inches are permitted on each visible undergarment;

e. The school's name, nickname, logo, mascot and/or team member's name are permitted on the uniform top and/or bottom;

f. A single partial/whole manufacturer's logo/trademark/reference, no more than 2½ square inches with no dimension more than 2½ inches, is permitted on each piece of the uniform provided placement does not interfere with the visibility of the player's number. Manufacturer's logo/trademark/reference restrictions do not apply to waistbands on uniform bottoms;

g. One American flag, not to exceed 2 inches by 3 inches, may be worn or occupy space on each item of uniform apparel. By state association adoption, to allow for special occasions, commemorative or memorial patches, not to exceed 4 square inches, may be worn on the uniform without compromising its integrity.

h. Uniform top:

1. Bare-midriff tops are not allowed.

2. The uniform top shall hang below or be tucked into the waistband of the uniform bottom when the player is standing upright.

3. Any visible garment (t-shirt, body suits and other similar garments) worn underneath the uniform top shall be unadorned and of a single, solid color that is similar in color to the predominant color of the uniform top or be solid black, white or gray. All team members, other than the libero, must wear the same color undershirt.

i. Like-colored uniform bottom:

1. Multiple styles of uniform bottoms may be worn by teammates and may include: shorts, spandex, pants or skirts.

2. A visible undergarment may be worn under the uniform bottom. It shall be unadorned and of a single, solid color similar to the predominant color of the uniform bottom or be solid black, white or gray and may

extend below the uniform bottom. All team members must wear the same color undergarment.

color(s) of the team uniform top, excluding trim. The libero's uniform top cannot be made solely of the same predominant color(s) of the team's uniform top, even if the like color(s) are placed differently on the uniform top. Numbers shall meet all specifications in Rule 4-2-4.

**ART. 3 . . .** Each player, including the libero, shall be identified by a number on the uniform top which is not a duplicate of a teammate's number.

**NOTE:** When a player's number changes due to blood on or damage to the uniform, the roster is corrected, and no penalty is assessed.

**ART. 4 . . .** The number shall be:

- a. Permanent and clearly visible;
- b. Not more than two digits (0-99). Beginning July 1, 2028, numbers with a leading zero are not legal (01, 02, etc.);
- c. A plain, Arabic numeral of a solid color, where the body of the number (measuring not less than  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch in width at its narrowest point) is a color that clearly contrasts to the color of the uniform top. A trim (contrasting border not to exceed 1/2 inch in width at its widest point) or a shadow on part of the number not to exceed  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch at its widest point is permitted but shall not be used to make the number clearly visible;
- d. Located on the upper front and back of the uniform top. Beginning July 1, 2029, the number on the front of the uniform must be centered on the upper half of the uniform top and the requirements in item f. will be eliminated;
- e. At least 4 inches tall on the front of the top and at least 6 inches tall on the back of the top;
- f. Placed so the top of the number on the front of the uniform is no more than 5 inches down from the shoulder seam; or placed so the number is centered no more than 5 inches below the bottom edge of any neckline ribbing, placket or seams on the uniform top.

**ART. 5 . . .** If a visible number is worn on the uniform bottom, it shall be the same number as on the uniform top.

**ART. 6 . . .** Appropriate playing shoes shall be worn.

**ART. 7 . . .** Removal of any part of the uniform, top or bottom, while in the playing area is unsporting conduct (yellow card for first offense or red card for subsequent offense) and shall be assessed to the coach.

**PENALTIES:**

shall result in a referee directing that player, by way of a coach, to remove the jewelry. A player(s) who does not comply shall be charged with unsporting conduct.

2. When a player, not legally equipped, attempts to enter the set, unnecessary delay (administrative yellow card for the first offense or admin

istrative red card for subsequent offense in that set) shall be assessed to the team. The player shall not enter the set until the illegal uniform/equipment is replaced or made legal.

3. When a player, not legally equipped, is discovered in the set, unnecessary delay (administrative yellow card for the first offense or administrative red card for subsequent offense in that set) shall be assessed to the team. The player shall be removed until the uniform/equipment is replaced or immediately made legal. Following the administration of unnecessary delay, if the team has a time-out remaining it may be taken, and the player may remain in the set provided the illegal uniform/equipment is replaced or made legal during the time-out period.

4. For subsequent violations by the same team during the set, a loss of rally/point shall be awarded to the opponent. The player(s) shall be removed unless the illegal uniform/equipment is removed or made legal immediately. Following the administration of unnecessary delay, if the team has a time-out remaining, the player may remain in the set provided the illegal uniform/equipment is replaced or made legal during the time-out period.

5. When a team cannot begin the match with six players wearing legal uniforms or without body paint or glitter, a loss of rally/point shall be awarded to the opponent at the beginning of the match, and the state association shall be notified to determine further action or penalty, as deemed necessary.

# Rule 5 Officials: Responsibilities and Positions

## SECTION 1 AUTHORIZED OFFICIALS

**ART. 1 . . .** The match is administered by the first referee and the second referee. Assistant officials include scorer, libero tracker, timer and line judges. All authorized officials shall be secured by the host school.

**NOTE:** Line judges, unless determined otherwise by state association policy, shall be provided by the host school.

**ART. 2 . . .** The first referee and second referee shall have the authority to make decisions about infractions of the rules committed. The use of replay, any monitoring or electronic device by the referees to make decisions related to the set is prohibited.

**ART. 3 . . .** Jurisdiction of the referees begins upon their arrival on the floor and extends through the second referee's verification of the final score of the match. The referees retain clerical authority over the contest through the completion of any reports, including those imposing disqualifications, that are responsive to actions occurring while the referees had jurisdiction. State associations may in

tercede in the event of unusual incidents that occur before, during or after the referees' jurisdiction has ended or in the event that a contest is terminated prior to the conclusion of regulation play.

**ART. 4 . . .** There shall be no exchange of duties by the first referee and second referee during a match except when an official is unable to continue.

## SECTION 2 OFFICIALS HAND SIGNALS MECHANICS

**NOTE:** This section serves as guidance to the referees' mechanics and shall not be considered as a game-playing rule and subject to any review under Rules [11-3-1](#), [11-3-2](#), [11-3-3](#).

**ART. 1 . . .** After a referee whistles to signal the end of the rally, that referee indicates the decision with the official hand signals.

a. If the fault is whistled by the first referee, the first referee indicates the result of the play (point or replay) followed by the nature of the fault. The second

**EXCEPTION:** The second referee does not mirror the signal for a net serve.

b. If a fault is whistled by the second referee, the second referee will indicate the nature of the fault and the player committing the net fault. The first referee, if in agreement, will then indicate the result of the play (point or replay), followed by the player committing the net fault; the second referee will mirror the signal of point or replay.

**ART. 2 . . .** When a double fault occurs, either referee indicates the nature of the fault(s) and, if necessary, the players at fault. The first referee then indicates the result of the play (9-7 PENALTY 2), which is mirrored by the second referee.

### **SECTION 3 OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT**

**ART. 1 . . .** The officials uniform shall be:

a. A collared polo-style shirt, short or long-sleeved, that may be any of the three colors approved by the state association: white, bright blue (cyan) or gray. Officials must dress in like colors;

b. Black slacks;

c. Solid black athletic shoes and black socks.

**NOTES:**

1. The state association may make a temporary adjustment in the officials' uniform to accommodate varying conditions within competition facilities while adhering to the established colors in items (a) and (b) above.

2. Officials' uniform accommodations may be made for religious and medical reasons while adhering to the established colors in items (a) and (b) above.

**ART. 2 . . .** Referees equipment shall include:

a. For the first referee, a whistle, a set of yellow and red cards, a coin and a watch;

b. For the second referee, a whistle, lineup "card" (optional), a pen/pencil, a set of yellow and red cards, a coin and a watch.

**NOTE:** It is recommended that whistles be black.

### **SECTION 4 FIRST REFEREE RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ART. 1 . . .** Prematch – The first referee shall:

starting time;

- b. Examine the competition volleyball to make sure it meets rule specifications, and make the final decision on the competition volleyball to be used;
- c. Inspect the court markings, net supports, net antennas, first referee's stand or other equipment. Measure net height;
- d. Establish nonplayable areas, and define any additional ground rules which might be necessary;
- e. Designate the official scorer, libero tracker, timer and line judges;
- f. Review specific duties with the second referee and line judges;
- g. Assign line judges to their positions;
- h. Call a captain(s) and the head coach from each team together at the officials' table for a prematch conference by sounding a double whistle and raising a coin in the air;
- i. Check players for open wounds, bleeding or any blood on the uniform;
- j. Verify with each head coach that all teammates are wearing legal uniforms and equipment;
- k. During the prematch conference, conduct the coin toss between the head coaches and captains to determine which team shall have the choice of serving or receiving for the first set;
- l. Inform scorer which team will serve first.

**ART. 2 . . . Position** – The first referee shall take a position on an elevated - platform at the end of the net opposite the officials' table so the first referee's head is 2 to 3 feet above the net in order to have an unobstructed view of both playing areas of the court.

**ART. 3 . . . During the set:**

- a. The first referee is the head official who shall:
  - 1. Have general supervision of officials;
  - 2. Make decisions on matters not specifically covered by the rules;
  - 3. Make the final decision when there is disagreement between officials;
  - 4. In the spirit of good sporting conduct, promptly handle any unexpected situation.

who is not properly performing duties as assigned.

b. To start the set, and after time-outs, the first referee shall check that playing captains and officials are ready, then whistle and give a visible signal for the serve. After dead balls, the first referee shall make certain both teams, the second referee and the officials are ready, then whistle and give the visible signal for the serve.

c. The first referee shall:

1. Whistle and direct players to their respective end lines prior to the first set only; then direct starting players onto the court to begin play;
2. Whistle for each serve and dead ball;
  
3. Give a visible signal for each loss of rally/point, serve, fault, violation, penalty, replay/re-serve, end-of-set and change of courts as shown and described in the officiating manual, and give verbal clarification when necessary;
4. Recognize requests for time-out or substitution, if necessary;
5. Grant time-outs, substitutions and requests for serving order;
6. Mirror the second referee's signal for time-out and substitution;
7. Signal at the completion of each charged time-out, how many time-outs each team has used;
8. Determine illegal hits;
9. Determine the alignment of players on the serving team at the moment of the serve;
10. Determine screening by players on the serving team at the moment of the serve;
11. Determine net faults;
12. Determine faults in the serving area;
13. Determine back-row player faults;
14. Determine double faults;
15. Determine the number of hits by a player and team;
16. Determine ball in play and dead ball;
17. Determine loss of rally/point;

scoresheet;

19. Call an injury time-out when a player exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (10-3-5);
20. Administer cards for misconduct by players, coaches or team members, and inform the individual(s) of such actions;
21. Administer cards for unnecessary delay warning and/or penalty by a coach, player, substitute, replacement or team and inform the individual(s) of such actions;
22. Notify (or request the second referee to notify) the appropriate coach of reason for any disqualification;
23. Whistle and signal "end-of-set," whistle and direct players to their respective team benches (5-4-4b, c);
24. Visually confirm the score of each set with the second referee, then whistle and direct teams to the appropriate team benches.

**ART. 4 . . . Court Protocol:**

- a. At the end of the timed warmup period and prematch ceremonies, the officials shall take their positions on the court. The first referee whistles and directs the starting players to their respective end lines. When all officials are ready, the first referee whistles and signals the players onto the playing court. The second referee then checks the lineups for each team.
- b. Following nondeciding sets, after the first referee has confirmed the score of the set, the first referee whistles and signals the teams to change courts. The team members proceed immediately to their new team benches. The players proceed counter clockwise along the sideline outside the standards, then directly to their new team benches. The timer begins timing the

three-minute interval between sets with the first referee's second whistle directing teams to their team benches.

c. Prior to a deciding set:

1. The first referee whistles, signals end-of-set and directs the teams to their benches.
2. The second referee double whistles and raises coin in the air to signal the captains to go near the officials' table for the deciding set coin toss. The home

3. Upon completion of the deciding set coin toss, the second referee communicates the results of the toss to the first referee by extending an outstretched arm on the side of the team to serve first and gives the appropriate signal indicating if teams will remain on their own sides or change courts.

4. The first referee whistles and gives the appropriate signal indicating whether the teams will remain on their current sides or will change courts. The timer will begin the three-minute clock after this final signal.

d. At the end of the match, the first referee shall whistle, give the end-of-set signal, then whistle and release the players. The second referee then verifies the score by initialing the scoresheet. The match becomes official when the scoresheet is initialed, and no change of score shall be allowed thereafter.

## **SECTION 5 SECOND REFEREE RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ART. 1 . . .** Prematch – The second referee shall:

- a. Be in uniform at the site of the match no less than 30 minutes before the starting time;
- b. Assist the first referee in prematch duties, collect each team roster during the timed prematch conference, and supervise the placement of the officials' table and team benches;
- c. Review specific duties and responsibilities with the scorer, libero tracker and timer;
- d. Verify the starting lineups have been entered correctly on the official scoresheet.

**ART. 2 . . .** Position – The second referee shall be in a standing position on the floor opposite the first referee, outside the sideline boundary and back from the standard.

- a. At the moment of the serve, the second referee shall be standing away from the net on the side of the receiving team to view illegal alignment and illegal block or attack of the serve.
- b. During a live ball, the second referee shall move quickly to the side of the net opposite the ball and focus on play by both the offense and defense near the net.

**ART. 3 . . .** During the set:

- a. The second referee shall assist the first referee by ruling upon situations which are clearly out of the first referee's view. If assistance is provided, it

b. The second referee's specific responsibilities shall be to:

1. Whistle and give the signal for calls initiated by the second referee including time-out, substitutions and ball out of bounds for an antenna fault on second referee's side of the net;
2. Mirror the first referee's signal for each loss of rally/point, fault, replay/re-serve or end-of-set;
3. Assist the first referee by making sure a whistle is blown for each dead ball;
4. Determine the alignment of players on the receiving team at the moment of the serve;
5. Determine net faults on both sides of the net;
6. Determine hand/foot faults at the center line;
7. Assist the first referee in determining back-row player faults;
8. Control the entry of substitutes onto the playing area;
9. Check the lineup of each team from the submitted lineup sheets or lineup card (optional) prior to each set. Once verified, the libero may enter the set;
10. Ensure that the head coach remains in the coaching zone, no closer than 6 feet to the sideline, when standing during play;
11. Ensure that no more than one assistant coach is standing in the coaching zone during dead-ball situations and returns to the bench before play begins;
12. Manage illegal replacements;
13. Grant time-outs, substitutions and requests for serving order;
14. Indicate a warning at 45 seconds with a double whistle and instruct the timer to sound the audio signal (horn) at 60 seconds to end the time-out or whistle if both teams are ready to play prior to the 45-second warning whistle, instruct timer to sound the horn; (Procedure for multiple courts, see 5-8-3a NOTE)
15. In coordination with the timer, time 30 seconds for an injury/illness;
16. Signal at the beginning and at the completion of a charged time-out, how many time-outs each team has used;

substitution;

18. Check the scoresheet for accuracy during each time-out and at the end of each set;
19. Verify and confirm, using the informal signal, to the first referee that the 24th point has been scored (14th point in the fifth set);
20. Initial the scoresheet after each set and for verification of the match results;
21. Indicate a warning at two minutes, 45 seconds (4:45 when intermission is used) with a double whistle followed by the timer sounding the audio signal at three minutes (five minutes when intermission is used) unless both teams are on the court; (Procedure for multiple courts, see 5-8-3a NOTE)
22. Determine, then notify the first referee of unsporting conduct violations by players, coaches or other team personnel;
23. Confirm with the scorer illegal player equipment or uniform and warnings, penalties and disqualifications for unsporting conduct;
  
24. Confirm with the scorer initial unnecessary delay warning and second and subsequent unnecessary delay penalties during a set by a coach, player, substitute, replacement or team and confirm with the first referee;
25. Notify appropriate coach of reason for disqualification;
26. In the absence of a timer, time time-outs and intervals between sets;
27. Conduct the coin toss prior to the deciding set, and indicate the serving team and proper team benches to the first referee.

## **SECTION 6 SCORER RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ART. 1 . . .** Prematch – The official scorer shall:

- a. Be designated and report to the first referee no less than 20 minutes before the starting time;
- b. At the conclusion of the prematch conference, receive each team's roster from the second referee. When discovered, the scorer shall report any inaccuracies to either referee;
- c. No later than two minutes prior to the end of the prematch warmup and no later than one minute prior to the subsequent sets, enter on the scoresheet the uniform numbers of the starting players in the proper service order. Prior to

lineup, which lists the players' numbers and the serving order of each team. This information shall be made available to the libero tracker;

d. Print the first referee's and second referee's names on the official scoresheet.

**ART. 2 . . .** Position – The official scorer shall be seated at the officials' table between the libero tracker and the official timer.

**ART. 3 . . .** During the set, the official scorer shall:

a. Record individual and team scoring and supervise the operation of the visual scoring device;

b. Notify the second referee during the first dead ball when there is a discrepancy with the score and/or an improper server;

c. Verify the serving order to the first referee or second referee;

d. Provide the proper serving order upon request of the first referee or second referee during a dead ball;

e. Keep a record of time-outs charged to each team, and notify the second referee how many time-outs each team has used at the completion of each team time-out;

f. Record in the Comments section of the scoresheet all warnings, penalties and disqualifications for unsporting conduct violations; notify the second referee of any previous unsporting conduct violations recorded for the same individual;

g. Record in the Comments section of the scoresheet all penalties for unnecessary delay warning and/or penalties; notify the second referee if this is the second or subsequent unnecessary delay for a team in the same set;

h. Record in the Comments section of the scoresheet all uniform/equipment violations and notify the second referee of any previous violations recorded for the same team;

i. Record in the Comments section of the scoresheet when a player is removed from the set under concussion management;

j. Record in the Comments section of the scoresheet the number of any player replaced by exceptional substitution and a re-designated libero;

k. Notify the second referee when a team has requested an illegal time-out;

immediately notify the second referee if a substitution is a request for a:

1. 15th, 16th, 17th or 18th substitution;
  2. 19th entry (illegal);
  3. Re-entry in wrong service position;
  4. Re-entry of a disqualified player;
  5. Re-entry of an injured/ill player during the same set in which the player was replaced by exceptional substitution;
  6. Player not listed on the roster.
- m. Not count an illegal substitution as one of the 18 entries allowed per team;
  - n. Notify the second referee when a team reaches set point.

**ART. 4 . . .** The official score is the individual points being kept by the official scorer. Whenever a discrepancy occurs between this score and the visible scoring device or another part of the scoresheet, the individual points shall be considered official and correct.

## **SECTION 7 LIBERO TRACKER RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ART. 1 . . .** Prematch – The libero tracker shall:

- a. Be designated and report to the first referee no less than 20 minutes before the starting time;
- b. Enter on the tracking sheet the starting players in the proper service order, when this information is received from the scorer.

**ART. 2 . . .** Position – The libero tracker shall be seated at the officials table next to the official scorer.

**ART. 3 . . .** During the set, the libero tracker shall:

- a. Record libero replacements and substitutions;
- b. At the beginning of each time-out, inform the second referee of each team's libero status;
- c. Notify the second referee during the first dead ball when there is a discrepancy with a replacement;
- d. Notify the second referee if the libero does not remain out of the set for one rally between replacements, unless the libero is replacing the player in the right back position and will serve the next rally.

## **SECTION 8 TIMER RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ART. 1 . . .** Prematch – The official timer shall:

the starting time;

- b. Test the timing device to be certain it is in proper working order;
- c. Time the prematch warm-up period.

**ART. 2 . . . Position:**

- a. The official timer shall be seated at the officials' table next to the official scorer;
- b. An assistant timer may be seated next to (outside) the official timer.

**ART. 3 . . . During the set, the official timer shall:**

- a. Time the interval for each charged time-out beginning with the referee's signal, and give an audio signal at 60 seconds or as instructed by the second referee for a time-out ending earlier. Every time-out ends with a warning whistle by the official followed by the audio signal (horn) sounded by the timer;

**NOTE:** When multiple courts are in use, the second referee may end a time-out or interval between sets with a whistle.

- b. Time the interval for each injury time-out, on a timing device other than the visible scoreboard, beginning with the referee's signal, and notify the second referee when 30 seconds have elapsed unless play has resumed or the referee indicates a decision has been made;
- c. Time the interval between sets, three minutes and five minutes when intermission is used, beginning when the first referee signals the teams to report to the appropriate team benches. Give an audio signal (horn) at the end of three minutes (five minutes when intermission is used), unless both teams are on the court.

**SECTION 9 LINE JUDGES RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ART. 1 . . . Prematch – Line judges shall:**

- a. Be designated and report to the first referee no less than 20 minutes before the scheduled starting time of the match;
- b. Review specific responsibilities with the first referee;
- c. Be assigned to their positions by the first referee prior to the match.

**ART. 2 . . . Position – Line judges shall:**

they have a clear view of both the end line and the sideline;

**NOTE:** If the server serves from the left third of the service area and encroaches on the line judge's position, the line judge on the serving team's side shall move a few steps to the side in line with the extension of the end line until the ball is contacted for serve. Then the line judge quickly moves back into position at the intersection of the end line and left sideline.

b. Hold the same positions relative to the court throughout the match;

**NOTE:** When, by state adoption, teams remain on the same benches throughout the match, the line judges must switch sides of the court between sets.

c. Stand at the intersection of the attack line and sideline, on their respective side of the court, nearest the first referee during time-outs. The line judge on the serving team's side of the net shall hold the game ball;

d. Have a designated neutral area where they can be seated between sets.

**ART. 3 . . .** During the set, each line judge shall assist the first referee and second referee by:

a. Determining at the moment of contact for the serve whether the server touches the end line or the floor outside the lines marking the width of the serving area;

b. Indicating when the serve, or any played ball, crosses the net not entirely between the net antennas;

c. Indicating when the ball touches the net, net antennas, and/or net support not entirely between the net antennas;

d. Indicating whether a ball is inbounds or out of bounds when it lands on or near any line for which the line judge is responsible;

e. Indicating when a player touches a ball that is going out of bounds on the player's side of the net;

f. Communicating with the first referee when asked, when the ball touches the ceiling or overhead obstruction, if out of the view of the referees.

**ART. 4 . . .** Flags shall be used by line judges for signals, unless determined by the state association to use hand signals.

approximately 12 inches by 12 inches to approximately 16 inches by 16 inches. The flag and hand grip should be securely affixed to the pole.

## Rule 6 The Team: Composition and Positions

### SECTION 1 TEAM MEMBERS

Team members consist of all school representatives located in the team bench area, including but not limited to coaches, teammates, managers, certified athletic trainers and the players.

### SECTION 2 PLAYERS

**ART. 1 . . .** All players on the same team in uniform are teammates. Players are the teammates currently located on the court. A team shall consist of six players to begin the first set of the match. If a team has fewer than six players to begin the match, a forfeit shall be declared unless state association rules determine otherwise. (11-2-2)

**ART. 2 . . .** If a team has fewer than six eligible players due to illness, injury or disqualification after the start of a match, it shall continue play. (1-3-3)

### SECTION 3 THE CAPTAIN

**ART. 1 . . .** A playing captain shall be designated by each team, and this is the only player who may communicate with the referees. If this player is replaced by a substitute, the coach shall designate a player as captain who shall remain as such until substituted for or until the original playing captain returns to the set.

**ART. 2 . . .** During any dead ball, the playing captain may request the following for the captain's own team:

- a. Time-out;
- b. Verification of time-outs used;
- c. Verification of serving order.

The playing captain may request verification of the proper server for the opponent, and, if a signal is missed, ask the first referee to repeat the call.

**ART. 1 . . .** The position of players in order of the serve shall be Right Back, Right Front, Center Front, Left Front, Left Back and Center Back.

**ART. 2 . . .** The libero is a back-row player who is a defensive specialist. Only one libero may be designated per set.

The libero, when used:

- a. Shall be designated on the lineup sheet prior to each set;
- b. May be the team captain;
- c. May be used as an exceptional substitution for an injured player if no other legal substitutes are available; (10-3-6, 10-4-3b)
- d. Shall not replace a disqualified teammate;
- e. Shall be allowed to serve in one position in the serving order.

**ART. 3 . . .** At the moment of serve:

- a. All players, except the server, shall be within the team's playing court and may be in contact with the boundary lines or center line, but may not have any part of the body touching the floor outside those lines;
- b. All players, including the libero, shall be in correct serving order. Each right-side player shall have at least part of one foot touching the floor closer to the right sideline than both feet of the center player in the corresponding row (except the server and the center back of the serving team). Each left-side - player shall have at least part of one foot touching the floor closer to the left sideline than both feet of the center player in the corresponding row. Each front-row player shall have at least part of one foot touching the floor closer to the center line than both feet of the corresponding back-row player;
- c. After the ball is contacted for the serve, players may move from their respective positions.

**ART. 4 . . .** When a loss of rally occurs, the team preparing to serve shall rotate clockwise one position. A point is awarded as this team rotates.

**ART. 5 . . .** When a team plays with fewer than six players due to illness, injury or disqualification, a loss of rally/point shall be awarded to the opponent each time a vacant position rotates to serve in the right back position.

**NOTE:** The vacant position remains open when rotating to the front row.

**ART. 6 . . .** A request for the team serving order may be made by that team's coach or playing captain while the ball is dead.

**PENALTIES:**

tor:

- a. Overlapping by players other than the server at the moment a legal serve occurs;
- b. Positioning, at the moment of a legal serve, of any player, other than the server, outside the boundaries of the playing area.

2. For an improper server or illegal replacement found in the set, loss of rally shall be awarded as soon as the improper server or illegal replacement is discovered and verified.

- a. When an improper server is discovered prior to the contact of the first serve by the opposing team, all points earned by the improper server shall be canceled.
- b. When an improper server is not discovered until after the serve has alternated and the first serve has been contacted, there shall be no cancellation of points and no penalty is assessed.
- c. Proper serving order as written in the scoresheet shall be immediate regained.

#### **SECTION 5 SCREENING**

**ART. 1 . . .** Players on the serving team shall not take action to prevent receiver from seeing the contact of the serve or the path of the served ball.

**ART. 2 . . .** Potential screens exist, but are not limited to:

- a. When a player(s) on the serving team waves arms, jumps, moves sideways or stands close to the server, and the ball is served over the player(s);
- b. When a group of two or more players on the serving team stand close together and the ball is served directly over them.

**PENALTY:** A loss of rally/point is awarded to the opponent.

## **Rule 7 Roster and Lineup**

#### **SECTION 1 ROSTER AND LINEUP**

**ART. 1 . . .** Roster:

including names and uniform numbers of all players at the timed prematch conference.

- b. Changes to the rosters may be made until 10 minutes remain on the pregame clock.
- c. Any teammate designated as a libero in the match may be listed on the roster with two numbers. The first number represents the uniform number to be worn as a non-libero player; the second number represents the number to be worn as libero (e.g., 15/L4). If the libero player's uniform number is the same as the player's non-libero uniform number, it is not necessary to identify the libero number on the roster. The libero number shall not be a duplicate of any other player on the roster.

**PENALTIES:**

- 1. Failure to submit a roster to the second referee at the prematch conference results in an unnecessary delay (administrative yellow card) assessed at the start of the set.**
- 2. Any corrections made to the roster after 10 minutes remain on the pregame clock results in a loss of rally/point awarded to the opponent when the inaccuracy is discovered.**
- 3. Failure to list on the roster a player/substitute entering the set results in a loss of rally/point being awarded to the opponent. The player/substitute may enter the set after the roster is corrected.**

**NOTE:** When a player's number changes due to blood on or damage to the uniform, the roster is corrected, and no penalty is assessed. ([11-4-3](#))

**ART. 2 . . . Lineup:**

- a. No later than two minutes prior to the end of timed prematch warmup, a coach from each team shall submit to the second referee a written lineup listing the uniform numbers for the six starting players in the proper serving order. Only one libero may be designated per set and shall be designated on the lineup sheet prior to each set.
- b. Thereafter, the written lineup shall not be changed except between sets of a match (no later than one minute remaining in the timed interval or intermission when used), for a legal substitution prior to the start of the set, or to replace a starting player who is injured/ill prior to the start of the set.

designated as the playing captain by placing a "C" next to the player's number.

**ART. 3 . . .** The written rosters and current lineups shall remain at the officials' table throughout each set.

**ART. 4 . . .** No later than one minute remaining in the timed interval, or intermission when used, following each set, a coach from each team shall submit a written, numeric lineup in proper serving order to the second referee.

a. If a team submits its lineup and lists a number that no team member is wearing, the team shall:

1. Legally substitute a player with a legal number into that position. The team is charged with a substitution.

2. Change the incorrect libero number to the legal libero number (no penalty is assessed).

b. If a lineup is submitted with a player's number duplicated in more than one starting position (including the libero), the error shall be corrected by revising the submitted lineup in one of two ways to ensure six unique, legal player numbers to start the set.

1. Change the listed libero with the duplicate number to a different legal number.

2. Use a substitution to change the starting player to a different legal number into that position.

#### **PENALTIES:**

**1. Failure to submit to the second referee no later than two minutes prior to the end of timed prematch warmup, a written, numeric lineup results in an unnecessary delay (administrative yellow card) assessed at the start of that set. If the lineup has not been submitted by the end of the timed prematch warmup, a subsequent unnecessary delay (administrative red**

**card) shall be assessed to the offending team at the start of that set resulting in a loss of rally/point awarded to the opponent.**

**2. Failure to submit a complete and written, numeric lineup to the second referee no later than one minute remaining in the timed interval or intermission when used results in an unnecessary delay (administrative**

~~submitted by the end of the timed interval or intermission when used, subsequent unnecessary delay (administrative red card) shall be assessed to the offending team at the start of the next set, resulting in a loss of rally/point awarded to the opponent.~~

## Rule 8 The Serve

### SECTION 1 DEFINITION

**ART. 1 . . .** A serve is contact with the ball to initiate play. The server shall hit the ball with one hand, fist or arm while the ball is held, or after it is released by the server. The ball shall be contacted within five seconds after the first referee's signal to serve. A serve contacting and crossing the net shall remain in play provided the ball is entirely within the net antennas.

**ART. 2 . . .** The server shall serve from within the serving area (2-1-6) and shall not touch the end line or the floor outside the lines marking the width of the serving area at the instant the ball is contacted for the serve. The server's body may be in the air over or beyond the serving area boundary lines, having left the floor from within the serving area.

**ART. 3 . . .** A team's term of service begins when a player assumes the right back position as the server and ends when a loss of rally is awarded.

**ART. 4 . . .** For teams with fewer than six players, each time a vacant position rotates to serve in the right back position, a loss of rally/point is awarded to the opponent.

**ART. 5 . . .** A player's term of service begins when the player assumes the right back position as the server and ends when a loss of rally is awarded or a substitution for the player is made prior to the end of the team's term of service. Each player may have only one re-serve during a team's term of service.

**ART. 6 . . .** A re-serve shall be called when the server releases the ball for service, then catches it or it drops to the floor. The first referee shall cancel the serve and direct a second and last attempt at serve. The server is allowed a new five seconds for the re-serve. A tossed ball that contacts a backboard or its supports hanging in a vertical position over the serving area is an illegal serve and not eligible for a re-serve. (Signal 13)

A re-serve is considered to be a part of a single attempt to serve. Therefore, after the first referee's signal for service, no requests, e.g., time-out, service order, lineup, substitution, libero replacement, etc., may be recognized until after the ball has been served.

## **SECTION 2 GENERAL**

**ART. 1 . . .** The first server of the set is the right back position. Thereafter, when a team is awarded a loss of rally, the player in the right front position rotates to the serving area.

**ART. 2 . . .** A team continues serving until it loses the rally or the set ends.

**ART. 3 . . .** The serve alternates when the serving team loses the rally.

**ART. 4 . . .** The team not serving first in the previous set of a match shall serve first in the next set. For a deciding set, the first serve is determined by the coin toss.

**ART. 5 . . .** A serve is illegal and the ball remains dead if the server:

- a. Hits the ball illegally; (Signal 3)
- b. Is touching the end line or the floor outside the serving area when the ball is contacted; (Signal 2)
- c. Does not contact the ball to serve within five seconds; (Signal 4)
- d. Is out of serving order; (Signal 1, 6-4-3 PENALTY 2)
- e. Deliberately serves before the first referee's signal to begin the serve; (Unsporting Conduct)
- f. Releases the ball for service, then catches it or drops it to the floor more than once during one term of service; (Signal 3)
- g. Tosses the ball for serve and the ball touches any part of a backboard or its supports hanging in a vertical position over the serving area. (Signal 13)

**ART. 6 . . .** A served ball is a service fault and becomes dead when the ball:

- a. Does not legally cross the net, such as when the ball:
  1. Passes under the net; (Signal 6)
  2. Touches one of the server's teammates; (Signal 6)
  3. Touches the floor on the server's side of the net. (Signal 6)
- b. Crosses the net not entirely between the net antennas, or lands out of bounds; (Signal 13)

**ART. 7 . . .** When a receiving team player is out of position on the serve and:

- a. The ball is served illegally, the serving team is penalized;
- b. A service fault occurs, the receiving team is penalized.

**PENALTIES:**

- 1. For an illegal serve, a service fault, or the serving team being out of position when there is an illegal serve, loss of rally/point is awarded to the receiving team.**
- 2. For the receiving team being out of position when there is a service fault, a point is awarded to the serving team.**
- 3. For the server having a second re-serve during the team's term of service, a loss of rally/point is awarded to the receiving team.**

## Rule 9 During Play

### SECTION 1 TEAM BENCHES

**ART. 1 . . .** All nonplaying team members shall be seated on the designated team bench during the set. The head coach may stand during the set in the coaching zone, subject to Rule 12-2-5.

**ART. 2 . . .** Teams shall occupy the bench located on the side of the net adjacent to their playing area throughout the match.

**NOTE:** By state association adoption, teams may remain on the same benches throughout the match.

### SECTION 2 COURT PROTOCOL

**ART. 1 . . .** A team may use electronic devices during the match:

- a. The location and use of the device(s) shall not be in a restricted area as determined by host management;
- b. The first referee may restrict the use of the device(s) if it is determined the device(s) interferes with the contest.

**NOTE:** State associations may also have policies in place to further address the use of electronic devices.

playing areas and benches immediately when directed by the first referee unless state association rules determine otherwise.

**NOTE:** In a three-set match, teams shall change playing areas and benches for set two.

**ART. 3 . . .** After each set,

- a. When directed to do so by the first referee, the players proceed immediately to change courts or to their respective team benches.
- b. When directed by the first referee to change courts, the teams shall proceed immediately to their new team benches and the players shall proceed counterclockwise along the sideline past the standard to their new team benches.
- c. When directed by the first referee following the coin toss for a deciding set, the teams shall remain at their respective team benches or shall change

**PENALTY:** For delay in following the court protocol procedures (5-4-4 unnecessary delay or an unsporting conduct penalty may be assessed.

### **SECTION 3 LIVE AND DEAD BALLS**

**ART. 1 . . .** A live ball is in play, from the moment the ball is legally contacted by the correct server until a dead ball occurs.

**ART. 2 . . .** A dead ball is declared by a referee for any decision temporarily suspending play until the ball is legally contacted again for the serve.

**ART. 3 . . .** A live ball becomes dead when:

- a. The ball touches the net antennas or does not pass entirely between the net antennas and passes completely beyond the plane of the center line extension;
- b. The ball lands out of bounds; (2-3)
- c. The ball contacts the ceiling or an overhead obstruction and is not legally played next by the offending team;
- d. The ball contacts the ceiling or an overhead obstruction after the third hit;
- e. The ball contacts a wall or ceiling obstruction which is over a nonplayable area;
- f. The ball becomes motionless in the net or on an overhead obstruction;

- h. The ball passes completely under the net;
- i. The ball contacts a non-team member in a playable area;
- j. The ball (from the direction of the court) breaks the plane of a nonplayable area and goes beyond the legal reach of a player;
- k. A referee's whistle sounds;
- l. In the referee's judgment, a timer's audio signal interrupts play.

#### **SECTION 4 CONTACTING THE BALL**

**ART. 1 . . .** A contact is any touch of the ball by a player (excluding the player's loose hair).

**ART. 2 . . .** A hit is a contact/touch of the ball which is counted as one of the team's three allowable plays before the ball is returned to the opponent's side of the court.

**ART. 3 . . .** A team shall not have more than three hits before the ball crosses the net into the opponent's playing area or is touched by the opponent. When the team's first contact is simultaneous contact by opponents, or an action to block, the next contact is considered the team's first hit.

**ART. 4 . . .** A ball is considered to have crossed the net when:

- a. It has passed completely beyond the vertical plane of the net;
- b. It is partially over the net and is contacted by an opponent;
- c. No part of the ball has crossed the net, and it is legally blocked.

**ART. 5 . . .** Legal contact is a touch of the ball by any part of a player's body which does not allow the ball to visibly come to rest or involve prolonged contact with a player's body.

**ART. 6 . . .** Simultaneous contact is more than one contact of the ball made at the same instant.

a. When one player contacts the ball with two or more parts of the body at the same instant, it is permitted and considered one hit (except for a block which does not count as a hit).

b. When teammates contact the ball at the same instant, it is permitted and considered one hit (except a block which does not count as a hit). Any player

team's third hit.

- c. A "joust" occurs when two opponents cause the ball to come to rest above the net through simultaneous contact. A "joust" is not a fault, and play continues as if the contact was instantaneous.
- d. When opposing players contact the ball at the same instant, the player on the opposite side of the net from which the ball falls shall be considered the player to have touched the ball last. The other player may participate in the next play and the simultaneous contact shall not count as a hit.

**ART. 7 . . .** Successive contacts of the ball are two or more separate attempts to play the ball by one player with no interrupting contact by a different player between the two plays. A player shall not have successive contacts of the ball unless there is:

- a. Simultaneous contact by teammates;
- b. Simultaneous contact by opposing players;
- c. Successive contacts by a player whose first contact is a block; then the second contact shall count as the first hit by the player's team.

**ART. 8 . . .** Multiple contacts are more than one contact by a player during one attempt to play the ball. Multiple contacts are permitted only:

- a. When the first ball over the net rebounds from one part of the player's body to one or more other parts in one attempt to block;
- b. On any first team hit, whether or not the ball is touched by the block;
- c. On the second team hit if the ball is next contacted by a teammate.

#### **PENALTIES:**

- 1. Loss of rally/point is awarded to the opponent when a team has more than three hits.**
- 2. Loss of rally/point is awarded to the opponent when there is any illegal contact, illegal successive contacts and/or illegal multiple contacts of the ball.**

#### **SECTION 5 PLAYER ACTIONS**

##### **ART. 1 . . . Definitions**

- a. Pass – A play in which the ball is hit into the air so another player can get into position to contact the ball.
- 1. Forearm pass – a controlled skill, generally used as a team's first hit, in which the ball rebounds from the forearms of the receiver to a teammate.

3. Set – two (or one)-hand finger pass directing the ball to an attacker.
4. Dig – an underhand or overhand defensive saving skill in which the ball is contacted by the forearms, fists or hands.
- b. Attack – Any action other than a block or a serve that directs the ball toward the opponent's court. A team's third hit is always considered an attack. A completed attack occurs the instant the ball completely crosses the vertical plane of the net, or is legally contacted.

1. Spike – an attack play in which the ball is forcibly hit into the opponent's court with a one-hand overhead motion.
2. Tip – a fingertip attack on the ball which directs the ball into the opponent's court.
3. Dump – a fingertip attack most commonly used by a setter on the second hit to direct the ball into the opponent's court.
4. Overhand pass – two-hand finger pass directing the ball over the net.
- c. Block – the action of a player(s) close to the net that deflects the ball coming from the opponent by reaching higher than the top of the net at the moment of contact. A block may involve wrist action provided there is no prolonged contact.
  1. Block attempt – the action of blocking without touching the ball. An attempt to block does not constitute a block.
  2. Completed block – when the ball is touched by a blocker. Only front-row players are permitted to complete a block.
  3. Collective block – a block executed by more than one blocker in close proximity. It is completed when one of the players touches the ball. It is a blocking fault if a back-row player or libero participates in a completed collective block.

**NOTE:** If a player near the net is reaching above the height of the net and opponents legally cause the ball to contact that player, the player is considered to be a blocker. A back-row player attempting to play a ball in the space directly above the net is considered an illegal blocker if the ball is attacked or blocked by an opponent into the back-row player while the player is reaching above the height of the net (including simultaneous contact).

outside the court provided the ball has not completely crossed the vertical plane of the net or the net extended. (9-5-7, 9-5-8)

**ART. 3 . . .** Back-row players, while positioned behind the attack line, may contact the ball from any position inside or outside the court above or below the top of the net.

**ART. 4 . . .** A back-row player (on or in front of the attack line), cannot contact the ball completely above the height of the net and complete an attack.

**ART. 5 . . .** A back-row player shall not:

- a. Participate in a completed block;
- b. Attack a ball which is completely above the height of the net while - positioned:
  1. On or in front of the attack line or its out-of-bounds extension;
  2. In the air, having left the floor on or in front of the attack line or its out-of-bounds extension.

**NOTE:** An illegal back-row attack shall not be called until the ball has completely crossed the net or is contacted by the opponent. (9-4-4)

**ART. 6 . . .** A libero shall not:

- a. Complete an attack from anywhere if, at the moment of contact, the ball is entirely above the height of the net;
- b. Set the ball using overhand finger pass while on or in front of the attack line extended, resulting in a completed attack above the height of the net;
- c. Block or attempt to block;
- d. Rotate to the front row.

**ART. 7 . . .** A player may touch the floor across the center line with one or both feet/hands provided a part of the foot/feet or hand(s) remains on or above the center line. Contacting the floor across the center line with any other part of the body is illegal.

**ART. 8 . . .** A player may cross the extension of the center line outside the court at any time provided the player does not interfere with play by the opposing team.

ball that has not completely crossed the vertical plane of the net extended.

**PENALTY: Loss of rally/point is awarded to the opponent for an illegal hit, center line fault or back-row player fault.**

## **SECTION 6 NET PLAY**

**ART. 1 . . .** A ball contacting and crossing the net shall remain in play provided contact is entirely within the net antennas. A serve contacting and crossing the net shall remain in play provided the ball is entirely within the net antennas.

**ART. 2 . . .** Recovering a ball hit into the net shall be permitted.

**ART. 3 . . .** A player shall not contact a ball which is completely on the opponent's side of the net unless the contact is a legal block.

**ART. 4 . . .** Blocking a ball which is entirely on the opponent's side of the net is permitted when the opposing team has had an opportunity to complete its attack. The attack is considered complete when the:

- a. Attacking team has completed its three allowable hits;
- b. Attacking team has had the opportunity to complete the attack or, in the referee's judgment, directs the ball toward the opponent's court;
- c. Ball is falling near the net and, in the referee's judgment, no legal member of the attacking team could make a play on the ball.

**ART. 5 . . .** Blocking a served ball is not permitted.

**ART. 6 . . .** A ball may be attacked, excluding a served ball, when it has partially crossed the net.

Attacking a served ball while the ball is completely above the height of the net is not permitted. However, the contact is legal, and the ball is not out of play until it completely crosses the vertical plane of the net or is legally contacted by an opponent.

**ART. 7 . . .** A net fault occurs while the ball is in play and:

- a. A player contacts any part of the net including net cables or net antennas. It is not a fault when a player's loose hair touches the net, or the force of a ball hit by an opponent pushes the net or net cables into the player.
- b. A player gains an advantage by contacting the floor/wall cables, standards or first referee's platform;
- c. There is dangerous contact by a player with the floor/wall cables, standards or first referee's platform;

d. There is interference by a player who makes:

1. Contact with an opponent which interferes with the opponent's legitimate effort to play the ball;
2. Intentional contact with a ball which the opponent has caused to pass part under the net or into the body of the net and the opponent is attempting to play the ball again.

**PENALTY: For a net fault or over-the-net fault, loss of rally/point is awarded to the opponent.**

#### **SECTION 7 FAULTS**

**ART. 1 . . .** A fault is a failure to play as permitted by the rules.

**ART. 2 . . .** A double fault occurs when opposing players commit faults at the same instant.

**ART. 3 . . .** A multiple fault occurs when the same team commits more than one fault of a single rule at the same instant during play or dead ball.

**ART. 4 . . .** A simultaneous fault occurs when a team violates more than one rule at the same instant during play or dead ball.

**ART. 5 . . .** A double hit occurs when a player's successive or multiple contacts are illegal. (9-4-7, 9-4-8)

**ART. 6 . . .** A foot fault occurs when a player violates the serving area or center line restrictions. (8-1-2, 9-5-2, 9-5-7)

#### **PENALTIES:**

**1. For a single fault, e.g., double hit or foot fault, loss of rally/point is awarded to the opponent.**

**2. For a double fault during a:**

**a. Live-ball play, a replay is called;**

**b. Dead ball, the penalty is assessed against the serving team followed by the receiving team with both teams rotating.**

**3. For a multiple fault, only one penalty is assessed (loss of rally/point).**

**4. For a simultaneous fault during a:**

**a. Live-ball play, only one penalty is assessed;**

**b. Dead ball, all applicable penalties are assessed.**

#### **SECTION 8 REPLAY**

rally/point and without a rotation for the serve. A replay may be declared when:

- a. A referee's inadvertent whistle or a timer's audio signal interrupts play;
- b. A double whistle occurs on the serve;
- c. A player unintentionally serves the ball prior to the first referee's signal to serve;
- d. There is a double fault during a live ball;
- e. There are conflicting calls which the first referee cannot resolve;
  
- f. A player's legitimate effort to legally play the ball, in the judgment of the referee, is affected by a:
  1. Non-team member anywhere in a playable area;
  2. Wall, curtain serving as a wall, floor obstacle or nonplayable area within 6 feet of the court;
  3. Ball becoming motionless in the net inside the net antennas or on/in an overhead obstruction over a playable area.

**EXCEPTION:** Third hit. (9-3-3d)

g. Play is interrupted because:

1. A foreign object enters the proximity of the playing area;
2. A referee determines that a player has been injured.

h. The ball contacts a backboard or its supports hanging in a vertical position over a playable area and, in the judgment of a referee, the ball would have remained in play had the backboard not been there, and a player is able to make a legitimate play for the ball;

i. The ball contacts the cable(s) and/or diagonal pole(s) used to retract a ceiling-suspended net system and, in the judgment of the referee, the ball would have remained in play had the cable(s) and/or pole(s) not been there, and a player is able to make a legitimate play for the ball.

**ART. 2 . . .** A replay is considered to be a part of a single play action. Therefore, once a replay is signaled by the first referee, no requests, e.g., time-out, service order, lineup, substitution, libero replacement, etc., may be recognized until after the replay.

## **SECTION 9 UNNECESSARY DELAY**

**ART. 1 . . .** Unnecessary delay results in any action by a team or team member that causes a delay in the start or resuming of play within a set. An unnecessary delay includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Failure to submit a roster to the second referee at the prematch conference;
- b. Late submission of a team's lineup;
- c. Delay by a team not being immediately ready to start play when directed by the first referee;
- d. Delay resulting from a substitute attempting to enter or when a player is in the set wearing illegal equipment/uniform;
- e. Delay in resuming play due to a coach/captain making excessive requests for the serving order;
- f. Delay by a team in properly completing a substitution(s) or a substitute(s) entering the court before authorization by the referee;
- g. An illegal substitute attempting to enter the set;
- h. An illegal replacement attempting to enter the set (illegal alignment once signal for serve is initiated);
- i. A team repeatedly using an improper substitution procedure;
- j. A coach does not make a decision about an injured player within 30 seconds (11-4-1);
  
- k. Delay in returning to play after a time-out, or delay caused by cleaning up liquid or other substance used by a team(s) during a time-out;
- l. Team conferring during a time-out at a location other than the team bench or court area;
- m. A team requesting a time-out in a set after it has taken its allotted time-outs;
- n. A libero or libero replacement entering the court outside the libero replacement zone;

recognized (whistled) due to being illegal;

p. Improper request for a substitution, time-out or lineup check that is acknowledged (whistled) by the referee.

**PENALTIES:**

1. The first unnecessary delay by a coach, player, substitute, replacement or team results in a warning (administrative yellow card), but shall not result in a head coach being required to remain seated during play.
2. For any subsequent unnecessary delay during the same set by a coach, player, substitute, replacement or team results in an unnecessary delay penalty, (administrative) red card with a loss of rally/point awarded to opponent. The head coach is not required to remain seated during play.

**NOTE:** For repeated unnecessary delay violations in multiple sets, unsporting conduct may be issued by the first referee.

## **Rule <sub>10</sub> Substitution and Libero Replacement**

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**ART. 1 . . .** A substitution is the exchange of at least one player in the set by a teammate (substitute) who is listed on the roster.

**ART. 2 . . .** A request for substitution shall not be recognized if made:

- a. By anyone other than a head coach or substitute entering the substitution zone;
- b. During a live ball;
- c. After the first referee has signaled for serve.

**ART. 3 . . .** Each team is permitted only one request for substitution during the same dead ball. Other requests for substitution by the same team shall be denied.

**ART. 4 . . .** Substitution requests prior to the start of the set shall be permitted and shall be recorded as a regular substitution in that set. In case of an injury or illness to a starting player, a lineup change may be made, and no entry shall be charged to the team.

## **SECTION 2 PROCEDURE FOR SUBSTITUTION**

**ART. 1 . . .** To request a substitution:

- a. The head coach may verbally request or visually signal (Signal 15) to the referees that substitution is desired; or
- b. The substitute may enter the substitution zone.

**ART. 2 . . .** The referee recognizes the request by whistle and signal.

**ART. 3 . . .** After the referee's recognition of a request, the substitute shall proceed without delay to the substitution zone (sideline between the attack line and the center line of the team's playing area).

- a. The substitute may report to the second referee the substitute's number and the number of the player leaving the court;
- b. If more than one substitution is to be made, the substitutions shall be made in succession, one pair of players after another (substitute and outgoing player) with only one substitute in the substitution zone at a time;
- c. When more than one substitution is requested, the incoming substitutes shall be ready to enter the substitution zone once the preceding substitute has

**ART. 4 . . .** The player and substitute shall remain in the substitution zone until the second referee releases them. (Signal 16)

**ART. 5 . . .** During a time-out, substitute(s) shall enter the set at the end of the time-out after both teams have returned to the court and follow normal exchange procedures.

**ART. 6 . . .** Improper substitution occurs and is corrected when a:

- a. Substitute and the outgoing player do not take correct exchange positions;
- b. Substitute enters and/or a player leaves the court before the second referee directs them to do so.

**ART. 7 . . .** Delaying substitution is illegal and occurs when a:

- a. Coach:
  1. After the request and instructing players, does not remain in the coaching zone at least 6 feet back from the sideline, once the first referee extends the arm in preparation to whistle and signal serve;
  2. Withdraws a substitution request after it has been recognized.
- b. Substitute fails to immediately:
  1. Report to the second referee after substitution request is recognized;
  2. Enter the court when indicated by the second referee.
- c. Substitution includes more than one substitute from a team, and multiple substitutes do not report (one at a time) to the substitution zone ready to enter the set once the preceding substitute has been released to enter the court.

**PENALTIES:**

**1. Unnecessary delay (administrative yellow card for the first offense or administrative red card for subsequent offense in that set) is charged to the offending team when a:**

- a. Substitution is delayed;**
- b. Substitution is denied by the second referee after the request has been recognized because the substitute is illegal; or is wearing illegal equipment or an illegal uniform;**
- c. Team repeatedly uses improper substitution.**

**substitutions may be requested by that team until the next completed rally.**

### **SECTION 3 SUBSTITUTES**

**ART. 1 . . .** The position of the substitute shall be that of the player replaced without changing the serving order as recorded on the scoresheet.

**ART. 2 . . .** A team is allowed a maximum of 18 substitutions per set. Each player is allowed unlimited entries within the team limit. Starting the set does not count as a substitution. An illegal substitution does not count as an entry provided the illegal substitute is removed from the court.

**ART. 3 . . .** A re-entering player shall not return to the set during the same dead ball in which the player was substituted. The re-entering player shall assume the original position in the serving order in relation to other teammates.

**ART. 4 . . .** An injured/ill player who is legally replaced may re-enter the set.

**ART. 5 . . .** Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. (NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion, Appendix B).

**ART. 6 . . .** When teams have exhausted their 18 team substitutions or when no legal substitutes are available, an exceptional substitution is permitted only for an injured/ill player in the following priority:

- a. By a teammate who has never played in the set or a player who has played in that position earlier in the set;
- b. By any legal non-libero teammate on the bench who is not currently being replaced by the libero, regardless of previous position played;
- c. By a libero if no other possible substitute exists. When no longer playing as a libero, that player shall wear the same uniform as the teammates and the team continues play without a libero.

**NOTE:** An exceptional substitution is counted as a team substitution if the team has not exhausted its 18 team substitutions. An injured/ill player replaced by an exceptional substitution may not re-enter a set in which the exceptional substitution takes place. A team may not play with fewer than six players if there is a legal substitute (including an exceptional substitution) available.

**ART. 7 . . .** A substitution is illegal when the substitute:

- b. Re-enters or attempts to re-enter the set:
  - 1. During the same dead ball;
  - 2. In which the substitute was previously replaced by exceptional substitution - procedure;
  - 3. As a 19th substitution;
  - 4. Without assuming the original position in the serving order as recorded on scoresheet (except for an exceptional substitution).

#### **PENALTIES:**

- 1. Unnecessary delay (administrative yellow card for the first offense administrative red card for subsequent offense in that set) is charged to offending team when an illegal substitute attempts to enter the set. Illegality is charged to the offending team when an illegal substitute identified in the set after the whistle/signal for serve and results in a loss of rally/point.**
- 2. For the serving team, any points known to have been scored during a term of service in which an illegal substitute is discovered in the set shall be canceled.**
- 3. For the receiving team prior to the contact of the serve by the opposing team, all points earned during the previous term of service by the violating team while the illegal substitute was in the set, shall be canceled.**
- 4. After the serve has alternated and the first serve is contacted, there shall be no cancellation of points.**

**In all cases, the illegal substitute shall enter legally or be replaced by a legal player.**

#### **SECTION 4 LIBERO REPLACEMENT**

##### **ART. 1 . . . Procedures for libero replacement:**

- a. The libero designated on the lineup for that set is allowed to replace any player in a back-row position. The libero may serve in one position in the serve order;
- b. The libero may only be replaced by the player whom the libero replaced;

- replacing the player in the right back position and will serve the next rally;
- d. Libero replacements do not count as substitutions and are unlimited;
  - e. A libero replacement shall take place between the attack line and the endline in front of that team's bench;
  - f. A libero replacement shall be completed during a dead ball prior to the whistle and signal for serve.

**ART. 2 . . .** Replacements may only take place:

- a. At the start of each set after the starting lineup has been checked;
- b. After the end of a rally;
- c. While the ball is out of play and prior to the whistle and signal for serve;
- d. After a time-out, once all players have returned to the court, provided the replacement sits out one rally/dead ball.

**ART. 3 . . .** Libero re-designation and disqualifications:

- a. Injury substitution – If the libero is injured and cannot continue play, the libero shall first be replaced by the player whom the libero replaced. A new libero may then be re-designated using the following criteria:
  1. Re-designation does not need to occur immediately after the injury and replacement, but may occur at the discretion of the coach(es);
  2. Any substitute may be designated as the libero for the injured libero. The injured libero may not play in the remainder of that set;
  3. The player re-designated as the libero shall wear a libero uniform and shall remain the libero for the remainder of the set. The re-designated libero's uniform shall have a unique number (not worn by any teammate).
- b. Exceptional substitution – The libero may be used as an exceptional substitution for another injured player if no other possible substitute exists. When no longer playing as a libero, that player shall wear the same uniform as the teammates and the team continues play with no libero.
- c. Disqualification substitution – The libero shall not be used as a substitute for a disqualified teammate.

shall be replaced by the player whom the libero replaced. The team continues to play with no libero.

**ART. 4 . . .** A libero replacement is illegal when:

- a. The libero or the replacement is in the set without following the required replacement procedure (10-4-1, 10-4-2);
- b. The libero or the replacement is not listed on the roster;
- c. A libero other than the libero designated on the lineup for that set replaces a player on the floor.

**ART. 5 . . .** Libero serving:

- a. The libero is allowed to serve in one position in the service order;
- b. When serving, the libero is not required to leave the playing area or be out of the set for one rally/dead ball before replacing the incoming player in the right back position.

**PENALTIES:**

- 1. Unnecessary delay (administrative yellow card for the first offense or administrative red card for subsequent offense in that set) is charged to the offending team when an illegal libero replacement takes place prior to the contact for serve. If identified after contact for serve, illegal alignment results (loss of rally/point). In all cases, the illegal libero shall enter legally or be replaced by a legal player.**
- 2. For the serving team, any points known to have been scored during a term of service in which an illegal libero is discovered in the set shall be canceled.**
- 3. For the receiving team prior to the contact of the serve by the opposing team, all points earned during the previous term of service by the violating team while the illegal libero was in the set shall be canceled.**
- 4. After the serve has alternated and the first serve is contacted, there shall be no cancellation of points.**

## **Rule 11 Time-outs and Intermission**

**ART. 1 . . .** Charged time-outs are those requested by a team or charged to a team by the first referee or second referee.

**ART. 2 . . .** Referees' time-outs are those taken by referees for any reason they deem necessary and are not charged to either team.

## **SECTION 2 GENERAL**

**ART. 1 . . .** Requests for time-outs shall be signaled or verbalized by the head coach or playing captain only during dead balls, but shall not be honored after the first referee has signaled for the next serve.

**ART. 2 . . .** A time-out requested prior to the start of the set shall be honored.

**ART. 3 . . .** Charged time-outs begin when a referee recognizes the request with the whistle and signal. A time-out will last for a maximum of 60 seconds, unless both teams are ready to play. Each team is limited to two time-outs per set. Requests for additional time-outs shall be denied and the requesting team penalized. Time-outs may be taken consecutively without play between them.

**NOTE:** State associations may determine the number, length and protocol of electronic media time-outs for matches that are transmitted and may reduce the number of charged time-outs when there are scheduled electronic media time-outs.

**ART. 4 . . .** During referees' or team time-outs, teams may confer with their coaches only on their court or at their team bench area.

## **PENALTIES:**

**1. For a team not conferring in the specified area or delaying its return to the court after a time-out, unnecessary delay (administrative yellow card for the first offense or administrative red card for subsequent offense in that set) shall be assessed.**

**2. For a team requesting a time-out in a set after it has taken its allotted time-outs, unnecessary delay (administrative yellow card for the first offense or administrative red card for subsequent offense in that set) shall be assessed.**

## **SECTION 3 REVIEWING DECISIONS**

**ART. 1 . . .** To review a decision by a referee that may have resulted in an incorrect decision, the head coach may request and be granted a time-out, - provided the request is made during the dead ball immediately following the situation in which the possible incorrect decision occurred. When a time-out is

referee's platform. If the conference

results in the first referee altering the ruling, the opposing coach shall be notified by the second referee, the revision made, and the time-out charged to the referee.

**ART. 2 . . .** Electronic devices shall not be used for any review of a referee's decision.

**ART. 3 . . .** Decisions based on the judgment of the referee(s) are final and not subject to review.

**PENALTY:** If the referee's decision prevails, the team requesting the conference shall be charged a time-out. If the team has already used its allotted time-outs, a loss of rally/point shall be awarded to the opponent.

#### **SECTION 4 INJURY**

**ART. 1 . . .** In the case of an injury/illness during the set, a referee may interrupt play and call a referee's time-out. If the injured/ill player cannot continue play within 30 seconds, the head coach shall:

- a. Request a substitution for the injured/ill player;
- b. Complete a legal libero replacement for the injured/ill player, and may substitute for the replacement player, or;
- c. Take a team time-out if the team has not used its allotted time-outs.

The set shall resume with a replay.

#### **NOTES:**

1. If the decision is made to substitute for the injured player, the team shall be allowed the necessary time to safely move the player from the court.
2. If a coach does not make a decision within 30 seconds, an unnecessary delay (administrative yellow card for the first offense or administrative red card for subsequent offense in that set) is charged.

**ART. 2 . . .** In the case of a team having an injured/ill player who is unable to play at the end of an official's time-out regarding injury/illness and all other time-outs and no legal or exceptional substitute is available, the first referee may call a special injury time-out of up to three minutes for the injured/ill player to return. If the player cannot return by the conclusion of the special injury

penalty being assessed when the vacant position rotates to serve (6-4-5). Each player may be granted a single special injury time-out during the match.

**ART. 3 . . .** An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on the uniform, or has blood on the athlete's body, shall be directed to leave the activity until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed (Appendix D).

**ART. 4 . . .** In case of injury or illness to a starting player prior to a set, the injured/ill player is replaced in the lineup without penalty and no entry is charged to the injured or ill player.

## **SECTION 5 BETWEEN SETS**

**ART. 1 . . .** The time period between sets of a match shall be no more than three minutes, beginning when the first referee signals the teams to their appropriate team benches for the next set unless an intermission for promotional or special recognition activities is used.

**ART. 2 . . .** If using an intermission, it shall occur between set Nos. 2 and 3 and shall be no longer than five minutes in duration for the time between sets.

- a. The host school determines prior to the beginning of the match if an intermission will be utilized.
- b. Promotional or special recognition activities shall be completed in time to make the court available to the returning teams no later than the expiration of the five minutes.
- c. Each team is responsible to report to the court at the proper time.
- d. The visiting coach and match officials shall be notified no later than the prematch conference (before the coin toss) that the time interval between set Nos. 2 and 3 shall be extended to five minutes for the intermission.
- e. If the match consists of two-of-three sets by state association adoption, any intermission shall occur between set Nos. 1 and 2.

**ART. 3 . . .** Between sets, teams may warm up in their playing area. **Volleyballs** may not be hit over the net.

# Rule 12 Conduct

## NOTES:

1. No participant, team personnel, coach or contest official shall use any form of alcohol or tobacco or be under the influence (i.e., impaired by) a controlled or illicit substance(s), beginning with arrival at the competition site until departure following the completion of the match.
2. Prior to the match, referees shall meet with the head coach and captains to discuss sporting conduct expectations.

## SECTION 1 DEFINITION

Unsporting conduct includes actions which are unbecoming to an ethical, fair and honorable individual. It consists of acts of deceit, disrespect or vulgarity and includes taunting.

**NOTE:** The NFHS disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances.

## SECTION 2 CONDUCT: PLAYERS, COACHES AND/OR TEAM ATTENDANTS

**ART. 1 . . .** No player, teammate, coach and/or team attendant shall act in an unsporting manner while on or near the court before, during or between sets.

**ART. 2 . . .** It is considered a serious offense (red card) for any player, teammate, coach and/or team attendant to use any form of alcohol or tobacco product (e-cigarette or similar items).

**ART. 3 . . .** The captain(s) and the head coach from each team shall attend the prematch conference.

**ART. 4 . . .** A team shall not refuse to play when directed to do so by the first referee.

**ART. 5 . . .** The head coach may stand in the coaching zone, defined as the libero replacement zone and the area beyond the end line and sideline extended to coach (Diagrams 1 and 2). During play, the head coach shall be no closer to the court than 6 feet from the sideline. If a red card is issued for

coaches shall remain seated for the remainder of the match except:

- a. To request a time-out or substitution during a dead ball;
- b. To confer with officials during specifically requested time-outs;
- c. As provided in Rule 12-2-6, items a through e.

**ART. 6 . . .** One assistant coach may stand within the coaching zone during dead-ball situations. All other assistant coaches shall remain seated on the bench during a set except to:

- a. Ask the second referee, during a dead-ball situation, to review the accuracy of the score, verify the number of time-outs and/or the number of substitutions used by their team, request the serving order of their team, or verify the proper server for the opponent;
- b. Stand at the bench to greet a replaced player;
- c. Confer with players during time-outs;
- d. Spontaneously react to an outstanding play by a player(s) of their own team;
- e. Attend to an injured player with permission of a referee.

**NOTES:**

1. The privilege to stand during play shall not be designated to an assistant coach.
2. Administrative yellow or administrative red cards issued for unnecessary delay shall not require the head coach to remain seated for the remainder of the match.

**ART. 7 . . .** Teammates and other bench personnel other than the head or assistant coach(es) (12-2-5, 12-2-6) shall remain seated on the team bench during a set except to:

- a. Spontaneously react to an outstanding play by members of their own team;
- b. Go to a nonplayable area to warm up without volleyballs prior to entry into the set as a substitute;
- c. Stand at the bench to greet a replaced player(s), then immediately sit down.

**ART. 8 . . .** Unsporting conduct for a coach, substitute or team attendant includes, but is not limited to the following:

- a. Using disconcerting acts or words when an opponent is about to play the ball;

- c. Attempting to influence a decision by a referee;
- d. Disrespectfully addressing a referee and/or other match officials;
- e. Questioning a referee's judgment;
- f. Disrespectfully addressing, baiting or taunting anyone involved in the contest;
- g. Using a sounding device (i.e., megaphone, horn, etc.) at courtside for coaching purposes;
- h. Holding unauthorized conferences;

- i. Attempting the re-entry of a disqualified player;
- j. Illegally leaving the designated bench during the set;
- k. Making any excessive requests designed to disrupt the set;
- l. Abusing the re-serve rule.

**ART. 9 . . .** Unsporting conduct by a player includes but is not limited to:

- a. Using disconcerting acts or words when an opponent is about to play the ball;
- b. Disrespectfully addressing a referee and/or other match officials;
- c. Questioning or trying to influence referees' decisions;
- d. Showing disgust with referees' decisions;
- e. Using profane or insulting language or gestures or baiting/taunting anyone involved in the contest;
- f. Making any contact with an opponent which is deemed unnecessary and which incites roughness;
- g. Using any part of a teammate's body or any object to gain physical support for advantage in playing the ball;
- h. Deliberately serving prior to the signal for serve;
- i. Abusing the re-serve rule;
- j. Spitting other than into the proper receptacle;
- k. Making any excessive requests designed to disrupt the set.

**PENALTIES: Unsporting conduct shall be penalized as follows:**

**2. Red Conduct Card (penalty) for first serious offense or second minor offense and loss of rally/point awarded to opponent;**

**3. Disqualification (yellow and red card displayed apart) for first flagrant offense, second serious offense, or third minor offense and loss of rally/point awarded to opponent. Offender is disqualified from further participation in match and may be removed from the vicinity of the team bench.**

**4. Forfeit results when:**

- a. Disqualified individual violates conduct rules following disqualification;**
- b. Coach is disqualified and removed from premises and no other authorized school personnel is available to take the bench;**
- c. Team refuses to play when directed to do so by the first referee.**

**NOTES:**

1. The first referee shall follow the procedures for unsporting conduct violations when issuing cards.
2. Cards issued for unsporting conduct carry over from set to set throughout the match.

#### **Procedure for Unsporting Conduct Violations**

1. The first referee, as the head official, sets the tone for the match and shall be responsible for controlling the unsporting conduct of coaches, players and/or other team personnel. Therefore, only the first referee shall administer the cards as follows:

- a. Whistle and hold the card(s) in the hand(s) on the offending team's side of the court with the arm outstretched, elbow bent 90 degrees and hand(s) held head-high;
- b. Indicate to the second referee the number of the player(s) or which coach is receiving the card. The first referee should be sure that the second referee also has identified the offender(s) and verified that the scorer has recorded the information on the scoresheet. Under no circumstances shall the referees permit unsporting conduct to occur without a penalty. If there are multiple offenses, each offender shall be penalized.

necessitates a card, the second referee shall move to the offending team's side of the net and take a few steps onto the court toward the first referee. The second referee holds the card(s) in the middle of the chest and indicates verbally the number of the offending player(s) or coach. It is the responsibility of the first referee to immediately whistle and administer any card(s) requested by the second referee.

**3. Yellow Conduct Card (warning):** A yellow card is administered by the first referee at the first dead ball. The yellow conduct card (YC) shall be recorded in the Comments section on the scoresheet. No penalty point is assessed.

**4. Red Conduct Card (penalty):** A red card is administered at the first dead ball. The red conduct card (RC) is recorded in the Comments section and the penalty is noted in the individual scoring section on the scoresheet; loss of rally/point awarded to opponent.

**5. Disqualification:** The yellow and red cards are displayed apart (usually at the first dead ball). The offender may be removed from the vicinity of the team bench provided there is authorized school personnel available to supervise. (When the offender is a coach or other adult team personnel, the offender shall be removed from the premises.) The referee shall notify the appropriate head coach of the reason for the disqualification. The disqualification is recorded in the Comments section of the scoresheet; loss of rally/point awarded to opponent.

**6. Forfeit**, if awarded to the opponent, shall be recorded on the scoresheet.

7. If the situation warrants, the first referee may issue a red card or a yellow and red card on a first unsporting conduct violation.

8. The second referee shall direct the scorer to record the proper notations and verify that the scorer has recorded them.

9. All cards issued for unsporting conduct carry over from set to set throughout the match. If using a lineup card, the second referee may keep notations on the card. The scorer shall notify the second referee of any previous violations by the same individual.

10. When unsporting conduct occurs from the bench or court and the referees cannot determine the specific offender(s), the warning or penalty is issued to the head coach.

11. Any cards issued for unsporting conduct prior to the first set or between sets shall be administered at the beginning of the set immediately following the violation. After lineups are recorded, the card(s) is recorded in the Comments section on the scoresheet for the set in which it is administered.

not be recognized until after the card(s) is administered.

13. If the team captain asks in a proper manner, the first referee shall give the reason for the penalty, but shall not permit further discussion of the penalty.

### **SECTION 3 UNSPORTING CONDUCT: SPECTATORS**

When a spectator becomes unruly or interferes with the orderly progress of the set, the first referee shall suspend the set until the host management resolves the situation and the set can proceed in an orderly manner.

**NOTE:** In the absence of a designated school representative, the home head coach shall serve as the host management.

### **COMMENTS ON THE 2025-26 RULES CHANGES**

**3-2-1 NOTE (NEW)** — Beginning in 2026-27, state associations will be permitted to adopt the use of a textured ball – commonly utilized in boys volleyball – for boys and/or girls matches. Textured volleyballs must still meet the size requirements of the traditional smooth ball but will not have restrictions on color or shape of panels to be inclusive of all current textured volleyballs on the market. The delayed implementation allows volleyball manufacturers the time necessary to go through the authenticating mark process as well as allows state associations time to make informed decisions.

**4-2-1h(3), 4-2-1i(2)** — Aligning with other NFHS rules codes, team members may wear black, white or gray undergarments in addition to undergarments that match the predominant color of the uniform top/bottom under the uniform top and/or bottom. All team members, other than the libero, wearing an undergarment must wear the same color.

**4-2-4d, f** — Beginning July 1, 2029, the prescriptive measurements for number placement on the front of the uniform top will be eliminated. The number placement will be considered legal if it is centered on the upper half of the uniform top. This creates consistency in number placement and allows for small variances due to player body types and uniform styles.

referee. Second referees who choose not to use the lineup card will now use the coach's submitted lineup to check the starting lineups and use their memory and knowledge of the game to track rotations. The lineup card should still be used as a training tool for newer officials and/or officials not familiar with offensive patterns and rotations.

**9-4-8c (NEW)** — The second team contact when directed to a teammate has been added to the list of times when multiple contacts (more than one contact by a player during one attempt to play the ball) are allowed. If the ball is directed into the plane of the net or goes over the net with multiple contacts and next contacted by an opponent a fault has occurred. Allowing multiple contacts on the second team contact that is next contacted by a teammate eliminates the judgment call when no advantage is gained.

**10-4 PENALTIES 1** — Illegal alignment cannot occur until contact for service. The previous penalty for illegal libero replacement required officials to indicate illegal alignment when an illegal libero replacement was identified after the whistle/signal for serve which did not align with the definition of illegal alignment. The change to adjudicating this penalty based on service contact corrects this issue.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCORER

The NFHS Official Volleyball Scorebook provides an accurate method of scoring. Scoresheets are designed to accommodate 2-out-of-3 or 3-out-of-5 set matches. There is a Comments section for recording cards issued for unsporting conduct, administrative cards issued for unnecessary delay, disqualification, player removed under concussion management, re-designation of libero or an exceptional substitution.

## SCORING

Each square represents one play or action such as a serve, a substitution or a time-out. Each play should be recorded as such using the appropriate figure in the key accompanying the scoresheet. The squares, unless otherwise indicated, represent a serve. If a point is scored on the serve, the respective point shall be recorded. If the serve resulted in a loss of rally, replay or penalty,

appropriate number should be marked in the running score section.

## **PREMATCH**

The scorer shall:

- a. Have access to blue, black and red ink pens or pencils to record alternate rotations during the set.
- b. Record all the information on the header of the scoresheet in blue or black ink, including the team name, site, date, set number and names of the officials.
- c. After the coin toss, indicate the serving team with an X in the appropriate box.
- d. Review the lineups to ensure that a captain is indicated (C), no duplicate or illegal numbers are entered, and the libero's number is noted. If no libero is indicated, as a courtesy, the scorer or libero tracker may notify the second referee to confirm with the coach that no libero will be used in that set.
- e. Record the lineups on the scoresheet including the libero player number. The starting player numbers of each team are recorded in the appropriate spaces under the "Player No." heading. The Roman numerals represent the service order.

**NOTE:** The scorer and libero tracker are part of the officiating crew. No comments about play shall be allowed from the assistant officials at the officials' table unless relevant to scoresheet or libero tracking sheet. No cheering or comments about play shall occur.

## **DURING THE SET**

The scorer shall:

- a. Record the start time at the beckon of the first serve.
- b. Mark the appropriate number in the individual scoring section and in the running score column as each point is scored.

| KEY FOR RECORDING COMMENTS      |                         |                             |                  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| YUD/RUD                         | YC                      | RC                          | DQ               |
| Yellow/Red<br>Unnecessary Delay | Yellow Conduct<br>Card  | Red Conduct<br>Card         | Disqualification |
| CM                              | RL                      | ES                          |                  |
| Concussion<br>Management        | Re-designated<br>Libero | Exceptional<br>Substitution |                  |

**Yellow Unnecessary Delay (YUD):** YUD (16-18) means administrative yellow card was issued to a coach, team or player for unnecessary delay when score was 16-18 (offending team's score listed first). This does not need to be marked in the individual score boxes, only in the Comments section.



**Red Conduct Card (RC):** RC #11 (19-18) means a red unsporting conduct card was given to player #11 when the player's team led (19-18). The P-| (penalty) indicates the side-out was due to the red penalty card and the P19 (penalty/point) indicates the rally point scored due to the penalty. #19 in the running score would also be circled. Penalty carries over from set to set.

**NOTE:** Code followed by # indicates player number (RC #3), code followed by C indicates coach (RC-C).

**Disqualification:** (Yellow and Red card held apart): DQ #10 (4-14) means #10 was disqualified when the player's team trailed 4-14.

**Concussion Management:** CM #10 (12-13) means player #10 was removed from the set under concussion management when the player's team score was 12-13.

**Re-designation of Libero:** RL #7 (5-1) means the libero was removed for injury and a new libero re-designated when the libero's team was leading 5-1.

**Exceptional Substitution:** ES #20 means #20 was replaced by exceptional substitute.

## SAMPLE SET

| Set No.  | I          | TIME-OUTS |      | Team: Visitor |    | X  | First Serve<br>(check box) | TIME-OUTS |    | Team: Home |    | Set No. /<br>L: 30 |  |
|--|------------|-----------|------|---------------|----|----|----------------------------|-----------|----|------------|----|--------------------|--|
|  |            | 8-5       | 9-12 | 1             | 2  | 3  | 4                          | 5         | 6  | 7          | 8  | 9                  |  |
| Serve Order  | Player No. | 1         | 2    | 3             | 4  | 5  | 6                          | 7         | 8  | 9          | 10 | 11                 |  |
| I  | 5          | 1         | 2    | 3             | 4  | 5  | 6                          | 7         | 8  | 9          | 10 | 11                 |  |
| II   | 4          | 5         | 6    | 7             | 8  | 9  | 10                         | 11        | 12 | 13         | 14 | 15                 |  |
| III  | 3          | 4         | 5    | 6             | 7  | 8  | 9                          | 10        | 11 | 12         | 13 | 14                 |  |
| IV   | 2          | 3         | 4    | 5             | 6  | 7  | 8                          | 9         | 10 | 11         | 12 | 13                 |  |
| V  | 1          | 2         | 3    | 4             | 5  | 6  | 7                          | 8         | 9  | 10         | 11 | 12                 |  |
| VI   | 10         | 11        | 12   | 13            | 14 | 15 | 16                         | 17        | 18 | 19         | 20 | 21                 |  |
| Subs: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 |            |           |      |               |    |    |                            |           |    |            |    |                    |  |
| Comments: 25 - 27                                  |            |           |      |               |    |    |                            |           |    |            |    |                    |  |
| Final Score  |            |           |      |               |    |    |                            |           |    |            |    |                    |  |
| Referee's Verification                             |            |           |      |               |    |    |                            |           |    |            |    |                    |  |

Comments: Subs: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

Comments: 25 - 27

Comments:

|                                     |   |   |   |  |   |  |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Point    | <input type="checkbox"/> - Loss of Rally      | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Point Scored Off Loss of Rally | <input type="checkbox"/> P3 Penalty Point         | <input type="checkbox"/> S Substitution Serving Team | <input type="checkbox"/> Sx Substitution Opponent | <input type="checkbox"/> C Playing Captain |
| <input type="checkbox"/> T Time-out | <input type="checkbox"/> TX Time-out Opponent | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Libero Point                   | <input type="checkbox"/> P1 Penalty Loss of Rally | <input type="checkbox"/> R Replay                    | <input type="checkbox"/> RS Re-Serve              |  |

## DEFINITIONS FOR SCORER

**Serve:** Contact with the ball to initiate play.

**Point:** Awarded when the opponent commits a fault.

**Penalty Point:** Awarded when the receiving team violates a rule during play or a dead ball. **(P3)** Indicates point #3 was scored as a result of a penalty.

**Loss of Rally Point:** Awarded when the serving team violates a rule during play.

**Replay:** The act of putting the ball in play (other than at the start of the set) without awarding a loss of rally/point and without a service rotation.

**Re-Serve:** The server releases the ball for services, then catches it or it drops to the floor. Only one reserve is allowed per term of service.



**Visitor Serve:** V5 serves first and scores three regular points (1, 2, 3). Fourth serve results in loss of rally.

**Home Serve:** (loss of rally, point 1) 23 serves, loss of rally. (□ indicates rally points earned)

**Visitor Serve:** (loss of rally, point 4) Home substitution 25 for 23 (Sx 25/23).

**NOTE:** The number of the entering player is on the left of "/". V4 inadvertently serves before first referee's signal, replay (R). V4 serves four straight points (5, 6, 7, 8). Next serve is loss of rally.

**Home Serve:** (loss of rally, point 2) H24 serves three straight points (3, 4, 5) before Visitors call time-out (Tx), then substitute 13 for 3 (Sx 13/3), H24 serves three points (6, 7, 8). Next serve is loss of rally.

**Visitor Serve:** (loss of rally, point 9) V13 serves and it results in a loss of rally.

**Home Serve:** (loss of rally, point 9) Home libero replacement H30 replacement for H26. H30 serves two points (10, 11) (serving position and libero points indicated by  $\triangle$ ). The next serve begins with a re-serve (RS), then point (12). Visitors call a time-out (Tx), H30 serves point (13). Next serve is a loss of rally.

**Visitor Serve:** (loss of rally, point 10) Visitor libero replacement V7 replacement for V12. V7 serves three straight points (11, 12, 13). Next serve is a loss of rally.

**NOTE:** The running score column is marked as the set progresses. When there is a discrepancy between the running and individual scores, the individual score is considered official.

**Home Serve:** (loss of rally, point 14) H20 serves, loss of rally

**Visitor Serve:** (loss of rally, point 14) Visitors substitute back in for 13 (S 3/13) V11 serves point (15). Home substitution 33 for 21 (Sx 33/21). Net serve results in a loss of rally.

**Home Serve:** (loss of rally, point 15) H33 serves three straight points (16, 17, 18). Next serve results in a loss of rally.

**Visitor Serve:** (loss of rally, point 16) V10 serves three straight points (17, 18, 19). Next serve results in a loss of rally.

**Home Serve:** (loss of rally, point 19) Home libero replacement H26 replacement for H30. H22 serves resulting in a loss of rally. **NOTE:** With each complete service rotation (all six plays serve), a different color pencil/ink should be used for the rotation. (e.g., first rotation in black, second rotation in white, third rotation in black, etc.)

**Visitor Serve:** (loss of rally, point 20) Visitor replacement V5 replacement for V7. V5 serves resulting in a loss of rally.

**Home Serve:** (loss of rally, point 20) H25 serves one point (21). Next serve results in a loss of rally.

**Visitor Serve:** (loss of rally, point 21) V4 serves one point (22). Home calls a time-out (Tx) V4 serves two points (23, 24). Next serve results in a loss of rally.

**Home Serve:** (loss of rally, point 22) H24 serves two points (23, 24). Next serve results in a loss of rally.

**Visitor Serve:** (loss of rally, point 25) V3 serves, loss of rally.

**Home Serve:** (loss of rally, point 25) H26 serves (26, 27). cord final score in appropriate boxes.

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR LIBERO TRACKER**

An individual other than the scorer must be provided to track the entries of the libero player. The home team is responsible for obtaining a libero tracker (5-1-1). This libero tracker is charged with tracking the libero replacements. There are two important procedures that the libero tracker is responsible for enforcing. The first procedure is to assure that once the libero is replaced, at least one rally/deadball must take place before the libero can replace another player unless the libero assumes the serving position. The second procedure is to ensure that when the libero leaves the court, the player replacing the libero must be the same player that the libero replaced when the libero last entered the set.

## **SCORER AND LIBERO TRACKER DUTIES**

Before the start of each set, the scorer shall:

- a. Obtain the lineup sheets from the second referee and record the uniform numbers of the starting players in serving order and the libero on the scoresheet;
- b. Ensure that the libero tracker accurately records the lineups on the libero tracking sheet.

After the toss of the coin and before each set, the scorer and libero tracker shall:

- a. Review the lineups submitted to ensure that a captain is indicated, no duplicate or illegal numbers are entered, and the libero's number is noted. If no libero is indicated, as a courtesy the scorer or libero tracker may, but is not obligated to, notify the second referee so the coach can verify that no libero will be utilized in the current set.
- b. Record the team information and the positions of the players on the court according to the serving order on the lineup sheet.

After the coin toss and before each set, the libero tracker shall:

- a. Record all libero replacements accurately so the libero tracking sheet reflects the players actually on the court at all times.
- b. If an incorrect libero replacement occurs, notify the second referee unless the team immediately corrects the replacement with no delay.

During the match the libero tracker shall:

sneet.

- b. Notify the officials if the libero is replaced by an incorrect player or if an undesignated libero enters the set.
- c. Notify the officials if the libero does not remain out of the set for one rally between replacements, unless the libero assumes the serving position.
- d. Communicate and coordinate with the scorer to ensure accuracy of both the scoresheet and the libero tracking sheet.
- e. At the beginning of a time-out, report the status of each team's libero to the second referee.

## **TRACKING SHEET**

1. Enter Home and Visiting team on Tracking Sheet.
2. Next to L: put the # of the Libero being used for that set. If no libero is being used, no tracking will take place.
3. Enter in the "SP" column the starting players for each team. This should be an exact match of the lineup entry on the scoresheet.
4. When a libero enters the set as a replacement, place an "L" on the line next to the number.

## Libero Tracking Sheet

| TEAM |               |    | L |
|------|---------------|----|---|
| SET  | Serving Order | SP |   |
| 1    | I             |    |   |
|      | II            |    |   |
|      | III           |    |   |
|      | IV            |    |   |
|      | V             |    |   |
|      | VI            |    |   |

| TEAM |               |    | L |
|------|---------------|----|---|
| SET  | Serving Order | SP |   |
| 1    | I             |    |   |
|      | II            |    |   |
|      | III           |    |   |
|      | IV            |    |   |
|      | V             |    |   |
|      | VI            |    |   |

| TEAM |               |    | L |
|------|---------------|----|---|
| SET  | Serving Order | SP |   |
| 2    | I             |    |   |
|      | II            |    |   |
|      | III           |    |   |
|      | IV            |    |   |
|      | V             |    |   |
|      | VI            |    |   |

| TEAM |               |    | L |
|------|---------------|----|---|
| SET  | Serving Order | SP |   |
| 2    | I             |    |   |
|      | II            |    |   |
|      | III           |    |   |
|      | IV            |    |   |
|      | V             |    |   |
|      | VI            |    |   |

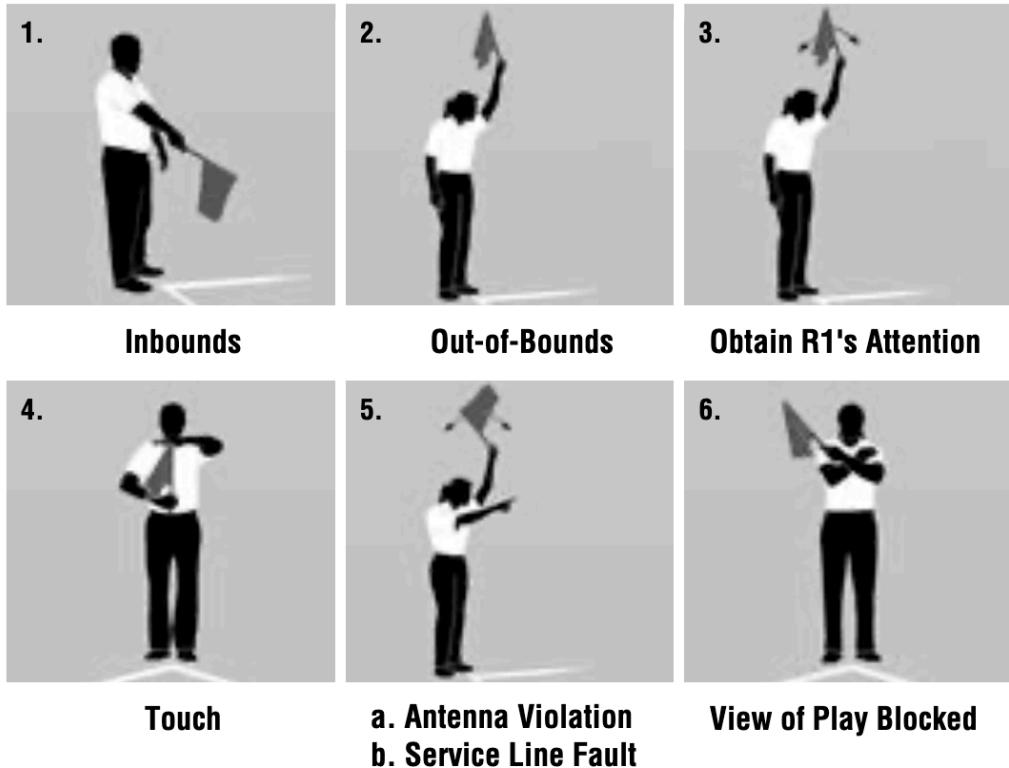
| TEAM |               |    | L |
|------|---------------|----|---|
| SET  | Serving Order | SP |   |
| 5    | I             |    |   |
|      | II            |    |   |
|      | III           |    |   |
|      | IV            |    |   |
|      | V             |    |   |
|      | VI            |    |   |

| TEAM |               |    | L |
|------|---------------|----|---|
| SET  | Serving Order | SP |   |
| 5    | I             |    |   |
|      | II            |    |   |
|      | III           |    |   |
|      | IV            |    |   |
|      | V             |    |   |
|      | VI            |    |   |

Enter the libero's number next to the L: located at the top right of each tracking sheet. Enter the number of the starting player (SP) for each position in the serve order under SP. When the libero enters, record the L. When the libero is replaced, record the replacement player's number. When a player (not a libero) is substituted out of the set, the player's number is crossed off and the player's number entering the set is recorded. If the libero serves, place a triangle around the serving order position in which the libero served.

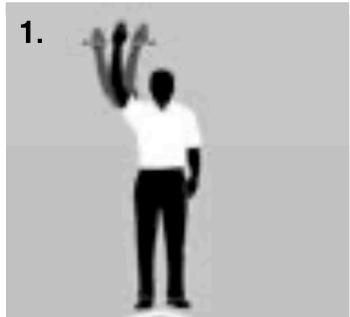
| TEAM: |               |    | L |
|-------|---------------|----|---|
| SET   | Serving Order | SP |   |
| 1     | I             |    |   |
|       | II            |    |   |
|       | III           |    |   |
|       | IV            |    |   |

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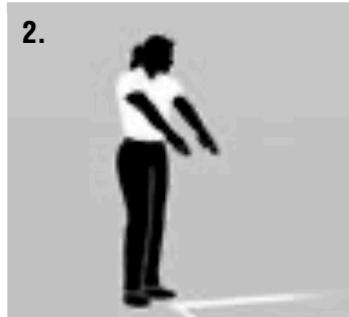


1. **In bounds:** Point with the flag down and toward the middle of the court.
2. **Out-of-Bounds:** Raise the flag, arm extended.
3. **Obtaining First Referee's Attention:** Raise flag over head and wave to obtain the first referee's attention, when necessary.
4. **Touch:** Raise the flag to shoulder height in front of body and place the open palm of the other hand on top of the flag.
- 5a. **Ball Outside or Hitting Antenna:** Wave the flag over the head and point to the antenna.
- 5b. **Service Line Fault:** Wave the flag over the head and point the service area using index finger, extended arm shoulder height.
6. **View of Play Blocked:** Raise and cross both arms in front of the chest, palms facing the body.

**NOTE:** Flags shall be used by line judges, unless determined by the state association to use hand signals.



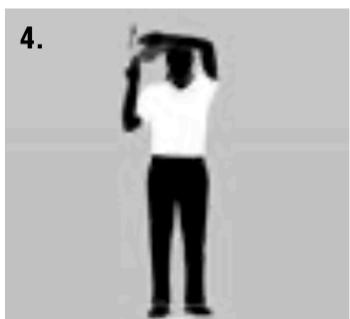
**1.**  
**Obtain First Referee's Attention**



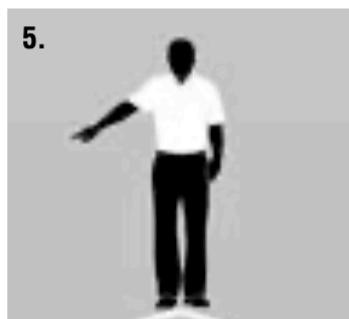
**2.**  
**Inbounds**



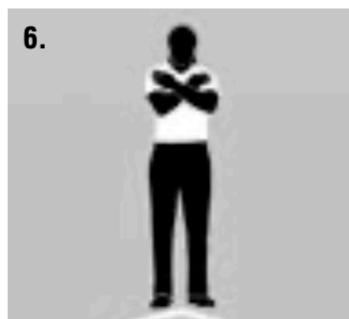
**3.**  
**Out-of-Bounds/Antenna Violation**



**4.**  
**Touch**



**5.**  
**Line Violation/  
Service Fault**



**6.**  
**View of Play Blocked**

**2. Inbounds:** Arms extended in front of body, hands open (palms down) toward the floor area between the attack line and the net. (2)

**3. Out-of-Bounds/Antenna Fault:** Hold forearms in front of chest, hands open(fingers together) and palms toward face. (3)

**4. Ball Touched:** Hand on offending team's side held beside head, palm toward head,then brush upward across fingertips one time with other hand, palm forward. (4)

**5. Line/Service Fault:** Indicate the line where fault occurred by extending arm and pointing toward the line with the index finger. (5)

**6. View of Play Blocked:** Cross forearms in front of chest, palms facing the body. (6)

**NOTE:** Flags shall be used by line judges, unless determined by the state association to use hand signals.



# OFFICIAL VOLLEYBALL SIGNALS

PlayFirst

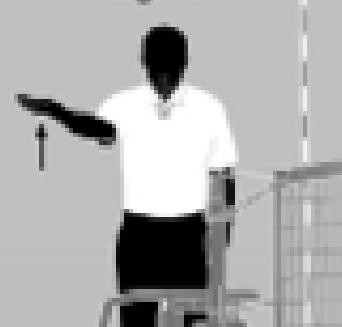
1. Illegal Alignment/  
Improper Server



2. Line Violation



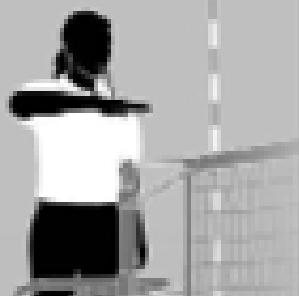
3. Illegal Hit



4. Delay of Service



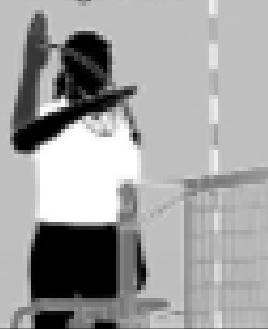
5. Over-the-net



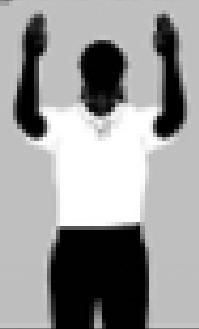
6. Net Fault or Net Serve



7. Illegal Attack



8. Illegal Block/Screening



9. Ball Touched



10. Four Hits



11. Double Hit



12. Ball Lands Inbounds

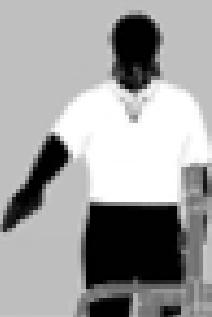






# OFFICIAL VOLLEYBALL SIGNALS

## Player

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 13. Out-of-Bounds/<br>Antenna Violation   | 14. Begin Serve   | 15. Substitution  |
|    |    |    |
| 16. Authorization to Enter  | 17. Point   | 18. Replay/Re-serve   |
|   |   |   |
| 19. Time-out  | 20. Team  | 21. Official  |
|  |  |  |
| 22. Unnecessary Delay   | 23. End-of-Set  | 24. Change of Courts  |
|  |  |  |

## HOW TO USE THE SIGNALS

**When stopping play, officials should:**

- **Sound the whistle** with authority;
- **Signal result of play**, point/loss of rally, replay or re-serve;
- **Signal the fault**, and hold the hand and arm signal long enough to be seen;
- **Verbalize the decision** when necessary, except Signal 14 (Begin Service). Signals are given with arm or hand on the side of the team involved. These signals shall be used by the first referee and second referee.

1. **Illegal Alignment/Improper Server:** Circular motion with arm and hand outstretched on side of violating team, then indicate player(s) involved.
2. **Line Fault:** Indicate the line where fault occurred by extending arm and pointing toward the line with the index finger.
3. **Illegal Hit:** Slowly lift hand and forearm, palm up from the height of the waist to the height of the chest, on the side where fault occurred.
4. **Delay of Serve:** Raise hand on server's side to head height with fingers spread, palm forward.
5. **Over-the-Net Fault:** Pass forearm, palm down, over the net.
6. **Net Fault or Net Serve:** Hand of outstretched arm on the side of the net on which the fault occurred.

**NOTE:** The referees are not required to touch the net for this signal or signal net serve.

7. **Illegal Attack:** Raise hand beside head and rotate forearm forward and downward on the offending team's side.
8. **Illegal Block/Screening:** Raise both hands to head height, palms forward.
9. **Ball Touched:** Hand on offending team's side held beside head, palm toward head, then brush upward across fingertips one time with other hand, palm forward.
10. **Four Hits:** Hand and arm nearest violating team raised, showing four fingers.
11. **Double Hit:** Hand and arm nearest violating team raised, head high, showing two fingers.

toward the floor area between the attack line and the net on the offending team's side.

13. **Out-of-Bounds/Antenna Fault:** Raise both hands head high, fingers together, palms toward face, elbows bent.

14. **Begin Service:** Extend arm towards server at shoulder height with hand perpendicular to floor, then whistle to serve and move the extended hand and arm in a sweeping motion to the opposite shoulder.

15. **Substitution:** Two short whistles, rotate forearms around each other with closed hands at shoulder height two times.

16. **Authorization to Enter:** Extend the arm (palm forward) on the substitution side, and make a forward motion waist high toward the respective court.

17. **Point:** Indicate point by extending the arm in the direction of the team that will serve next, palm perpendicular to the floor.

18. **Replay/Re-serve:** With fisted hands, thumbs up, and held shoulder height front of body.

19. **Time-out:** Double-whistle, place the palm of a hand horizontally over a vertical hand on the side requesting the time-out, forming a "T."

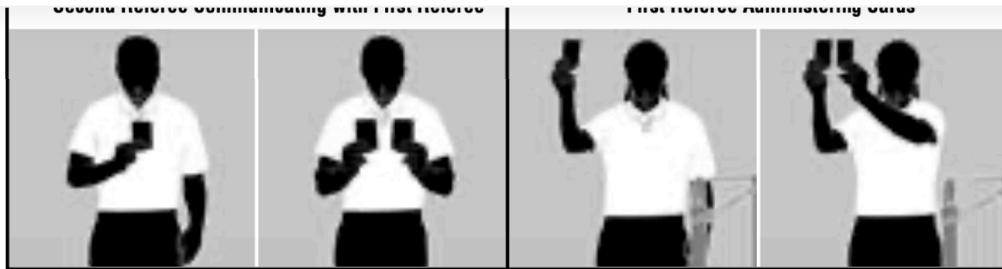
a. Team Time-out – indicate court of team being charged by extending the vertical arm towards the court with the palm facing toward the net.

b. Official Time-out – tap top of shoulders with hands.

20. **Unnecessary Delay:** Raise the hand on the side of the offending team beside head, palm facing in, hold the appropriate card on the wrist of the raised hand.

21. **End-of-Set:** Arms crossed in front of chest, hands open followed by a sweeping motion.

22. **Teams Change Courts:** Raise forearms and swing right arm in front of the body and the left arm in back of the body with hands open.



Second referee steps to side of offending team and a few steps towards first referee holding card in middle of chest, then verbalizes number of player or which coach received the card.

- First referee whistles and holds card in hand on offending team's side held head high, then verbalizes number of player or which coach received the card.

#### **Disqualification:**

- Second referee steps to side of offending team and a few steps towards first referee holding a card in each hand in the middle of the chest, then verbalizes number of player or which coach is disqualified.
- First referee whistles and holds a card (head high) in each hand on the side of the offending team, then verbalizes number of player or which coach is disqualified.
- A referee shall notify the appropriate coach the reason for the disqualification.

#### **INFORMAL OFFICIALS SIGNALS**

Informal hand signals used to enhance the match may be used for communication by the second referee to the first referee. How these calls are to be communicated should be addressed in the referees' pre-match conference. Such additional signals include:

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 2. Four hits                                   | 7. Net Fault player identification    |
| 3. Identifying possible back-row player faults | 8. Antenna fault team identification  |
| 4. Position of setter prior to the serve       | 9. Double hit                         |
| 5. Illegal hit                                 | 10. In/Out/Touch                      |
|  | 11. Offending player's uniform number |

Informal signals can also be used to communicate with coaches during play. These signals can be used to communicate that the referee is aware of a potential decision or to provide information regarding the reason for the continuation of play. Such additional signals include:

1. Legal Back-row Attack
  - a. Behind the line
  - b. Below the net

**NOTE:** A full description of how to display and use the informal signals is located in the NFHS Volleyball Case Book and Officials Manual.

## UNNECESSARY DELAYS

**(An unnecessary delay includes, but is not limited to:)**

| Delay Examples   | First Occurrence( in set) | Penalty | Subsequent Occurrence(i n set) | Penalty |
|--|---------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Failure to submit a roster to the second referee at the pre-match conference. | Yellow                    | Warning | N/A                            | N/A     |

|  |                                      |             |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| submission of (after 2:00/1:00 a team's 0 warnings)<br>lineup.   | left on clock)                       | Rally/Point |
| 3. Team not ready to start play when directed by first referee.  | Warning                              | Red         |
| 4. A substitute attempting to enter or when a player is in the set wearing illegal equipment/uniform.                    | Warning/<br>Must<br>be made<br>legal | Red         |
| 5. Coach or Captain making excessive requests for serving order.   | Warning                              | Red         |
| 6. Delay in properly completing a substitution(s) or a substitute(s) entering court before authorization by the referee. | Warning/<br>Sub.<br>Denied           | Red         |
| 7. An illegal substitute attempting to enter set.  | Warning/<br>Sub.<br>Denied           | Red         |

|  |   |                        |
|--|---|------------------------|
| replacement attempting to enter the set. (illegal alignment once signal for serve initiated)                           | Re-<br>placemen<br>t or<br>Libero<br>Denied | Rally/Point            |
| 9. A team Yellow repeatedly using an improper substitution procedure.  | Warning/<br>Sub.<br>Denied                  | Loss of<br>Rally/Point |
| 10. A coach Yellow fails to make decision about an injured player within 30 seconds.                                   | Warning                                     | Red                    |
| 11. Delay Yellow returning to court after time-out, or delay caused by spillages (liquids/substances) during time-out. | Warning                                     | Red                    |
| 12. A team Yellow conferring during a time-out at a location other than the team bench/court area.                     | Warning                                     | Red                    |

|  |                         |                     |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------|
| requests a time-out after taking allotted time-outs.   |                         | Rally/Point         |
| 14. A libero or Yellow replacement enters/exits court outside the libero replacement zone.                                   | Warning Red             | Loss of Rally/Point |
| 15. A Yellow substitution is denied by second referee after the request has been recognized (whistled) due to being illegal. | Warning/ Sub. Denied    | Loss of Rally/Point |
| 16. Improper Yellow request for substitution, time-out or lineup check that is acknowledged (whistled) by referee.           | Warning/ Request Denied | Loss of Rally/Point |

**NOTE:** For repeated unnecessary delay violations in multiple sets, unsporting conduct may be issued by the first referee.

**following:**

1. Authorizing use of best two-of-three sets. Any intermission shall occur between set Nos. 1 and 2. 1-2-1 NOTE 1, 11-5-2e
2. Authorizing use of modified match format for series other than dual varsity matches. 1-2-1 NOTE 2
3. Determining protocols for match forfeits. 1-5-2a, b and c; 1-5-4; 6-2-1
4. Authorizing resumption of play for a suspended match. 1-7
5. Authorizing the use of a textured volleyball. (Beginning in 2026-27) 3-2-1 NOTE
6. Authorizing rule exceptions to provide reasonable accommodations. 4-1 NOTE 2
7. Authorizing use of one commemorative/memorial patch on the uniform. 4-2-1g
8. Determining if line judges will be provided by someone other than the host school. 5-1-1 NOTE
9. Authorizing temporary adjustments to the officials uniform based on facility conditions. 5-3-1 NOTES
10. Authorizing use of hand signals by line judges. 5-9-4
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## MISSION STATEMENT

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) serves its members by providing leadership for the administration of education-based high school athletics and activities through the writing of playing rules that emphasize health and safety, educational programs that develop leaders, and administrative support to increase participation opportunities and promote sportsmanship.

## CORE BELIEFS AND VALUES

---

### WE BELIEVE

Student participation in education-based high school athletics and activities:

- Is a privilege.
- Enriches the educational experience.
- Encourages academic achievement.
- Promotes respect, integrity and sportsmanship.
- Prepares for the future in a global community.

### THE NFHS:

- Serves as the national authority that promotes and protects the defining values of education-based high school athletics and activities in collaboration with its member state associations.
- Serves as the national authority on competition rules while promoting fair play and seeking to minimize risk of injury for student participants in education-based high school athletics and activities.
- Promotes lifelong health and safety values through participation.

- Fosters the inclusion of diverse populations.
  - Promotes healthy lifestyles and safe competition.
  - Encourages positive school/community culture.
  - Should be fun.
- innovative and engaging educational programs to serve the changing needs of state associations, administrators, coaches, directors, officials, students and parents.
- Provides professional development opportunities for member state association staffs.
  - Promotes cooperation, collaboration and communication with and among state associations.
  - Collects and provides data analysis in order to allow its membership to make informed decisions.



## **SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSION IN SPORTS**

### **COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION INCLUDE:**

- |                            |           |  |
|----------------------------|-----------|--|
| <b>Headache</b>            | <b>or</b> | Mood, behavior or personality changes;             |
| <b>“pressure” in head;</b> |           | Can’t recall events prior to or after hit or fall; |
| <b>Neck pain</b>           |           |  |
| <b>Dizziness</b>           |           | Nausea;  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| appearance;                              | Double or blurry vision;                           |
| Confusion about assignment or position;  | Sensitivity to light or noise;                     |
| Forgetfulness;                           | Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy;           |
| Uncertainty of game, score, or opponent; | Concentration or memory problems;                  |
| Clumsy movements;                        | Emotions of "not feeling right" or "feeling down." |
| Slow response to questions;              |  |

Activate the Emergency Medical System or Call 9-1-1 if, after a blow, or jolt to the head or body, an athlete has one or more of these danger signs:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| One pupil larger than the other;                               | Convulsions or seizures (shaking or twitching);  |
| Drowsiness or inability to wake up;                            |  |
| A headache that gets worse and does not go away;               | Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation;   |
| Slurred speech, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination; | Loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out).  |
| Repeated vomiting or nausea;                                   | Even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously. Consider activating EMS for prolonged loss of consciousness. |

### **SUGGESTED CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT:**

No athlete should return-to-sport (RTS) or practice on the same day of a concussion.

Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional as soon as possible.

Any athlete with a concussion should be medically cleared by an appropriate health-care professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.

After medical clearance, RTS should follow a step-wise protocol with provisions for delayed RTS based upon return of any signs or symptoms at rest, while doing school work or with physical activity.

For further details, please see the "NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports" at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

Revised and Approved October 2023



## EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES

1. Each NFHS sports rules committee is responsible for recommending the official playing rules to the NFHS Board of Directors for adoption. The committee is NOT responsible for testing or approving playing equipment for use in interscholastic sports. Equipment manufacturers are responsible for the development of playing equipment that meets the specifications established by the committee, and that is otherwise of good design and quality. The NFHS urges manufacturers to work with the various independent testing agencies to ensure the production of safe products. Neither the NFHS nor the applicable NFHS sport rules committee certifies the safety of any sport equipment. Non-compliant equipment is inappropriate for use in competition under NFHS sports rules. While the committee does not regulate the development of new equipment and does not set technical or scientific standards for testing equipment, the committee may, from time to time, provide manufacturers with guidance as to the equipment-performance levels it considers consistent with the integrity of the game. The committee reserves the right to intercede to protect and maintain that integrity.
2. Each NFHS sport rules committee suggests that manufacturers planning innovative changes in sports equipment submit the equipment to the applicable NFHS sport rules editor and/or rules committee for review before production.
3. Protective headgear is required by NFHS rules in some sports and is permissive in others. Hard helmets can decrease the incidence of certain head trauma, such as skull fractures and subdural hematomas. Soft headgear may protect against cuts and bruises to the scalp and forehead. Coaches, athletes and parents/guardians should review the manufacturers' warnings about proper usage and performance limits of such products. **No helmet or headgear can eliminate the risk of concussion**

or that fact.

Revised and Approved March 2019



## **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SPORTS HYGIENE, SKIN INFECTIONS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Proper precautions are needed to minimize the potential risk of the spread of communicable disease and skin infections during athletic competition. These conditions include skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment. The transmission of infections such as Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and Herpes Gladiatorum, blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis B, and other infectious diseases such as Influenza and COVID-19 can often be greatly reduced through proper hygiene. The NFHS SMAC has outlined and listed below some general guidelines for the prevention of the spread of these diseases.

### **UNIVERSAL PROTOCOL FOR ALL SPORTS: HYGIENE BLOOD-BORNE INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

Shower immediately after every competition and practice, using liquid soap and not a shared bar soap;

Wash all workout clothing after each practice, washing in hot water and drying on a high heat setting;

Clean and/or wash all personal gear (knee pads, head gear, braces, etc.) and gym bags at least weekly;

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these agents include following Universal Precautions such as:

A student who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on a uniform, or has blood on their body shall be directed to leave

hygiene products (razors) with others; Refrain from full body and/or cosmetic shavings of head, chest, arms, legs, abdomen, and groin; Students should clean hands with an alcohol-based gel or soap and water before and after every practice and contest to decrease bacterial load on the hands; Covering up coughs and sneezes in the bend of the elbow instead of the hand; Stay home from school and athletic participation if frequent cough, diarrhea, vomiting or fever.

### **INFECTIONS SKIN DISEASES**

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these infectious agents include:

Students must notify a parent/guardian and coach of any skin lesion prior to any competition or practice. An appropriate health-care professional must evaluate all concerning skin lesions before returning to practice or competition; If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, all team members should be evaluated to help prevent the potential spread of the infection. All shared equipment shall be properly cleaned/disinfected prior to use;

Coaches, officials, and appropriate health-care professionals must follow NFHS or state/local guidelines on "time until return to competition." Participation with a

the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to activity;

Athletic trainers or other caregivers must wear gloves and use Universal Precautions to prevent blood or body fluid-splash from contaminating themselves or others;

In the event of a blood or body fluid-splash, immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water. Skin antiseptics (e.g., isopropyl alcohol) or moist towelettes may be used if soap and water not available;

Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves when cleaning;

Blood on an opponent's uniform during competition or teammate's uniform during practice should be cleaned at that time by wiping with a disinfectant such as isopropyl alcohol;

Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and immediately evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.

### **OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include:

in accordance with NFHS, state or local guidelines and the lesion is no longer contagious.

coaching staff, and medical staff are current on all required vaccinations (MMR, Hepatitis B, Chickenpox, Meningitis, Hepatitis A). COVID-19 vaccine and yearly influenza vaccine are strongly encouraged; During times of outbreaks, follow the guidelines set forth by the CDC as well as State and local Health Departments.

For more detailed information, refer to the “Blood-Borne Pathogens,” “Infectious Mononucleosis” and “Skin Conditions and Infections” sections contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

Revised and Approved in January 2022



## COACHES

### CODE OF ETHICS

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student should be treated with the utmost respect and the student's welfare should be considered in decisions by the coach at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFHS Board of Directors:

**Coaches** shall be aware that they have a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

contact with students, officials, athletic directors, school administrators and staff, the state high school athletic association, the media, parents, and the public, coaches shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct. Communication with all parties should be wholesome, appropriate and positive.

**Coaches** shall respect and support contest officials. Coaches shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical and inappropriate.

**Coaches** shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, tobacco and other substance abuse.

**Coaches** shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products when in contact with players.

**Coaches** shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct the program in harmony with the total school program.

**Coaches** shall master the contest rules and shall teach the rules to their team members.

**Coaches** shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

**Coaches** shall utilize their positive influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, other school club sponsors, booster clubs and administrators.

**Coaches** shall promote a culture that encourages diversity and inclusion.

**Coaches** shall ensure they familiarize themselves and their teams with their schools' emergency action plans and, where applicable, with concussion and heat illness prevention plans.

**Coaches** should meet and exchange cordial greetings with the opposing coach to set the positive example and correct tone for the event before and after the contest.

**Coaches** shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give students special consideration.

**Coaches** shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school association.



## OFFICIALS

### CODE OF ETHICS

Officials at an interscholastic athletic event are participants in the educational development of high school students. As such, they must exercise a high level of self-discipline, independence and responsibility. The purpose of this Code is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all interscholastic officials.

**Officials** shall master both the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm and controlled manner.

**Officials** shall work with each other and their state associations in a constructive and cooperative manner.

**Officials** shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interaction with

student-athletes, coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, colleagues, and the public. This includes, but is not limited to, positive verbal and nonverbal communication with coaches, bench personnel and players.

**Officials** shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products beginning with the arrival at the competition site until departure following the completion of the contest.

**Officials** shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally, shall dress neatly and appropriately, and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.

**Officials** shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual obligations.

**Officials** shall remain mindful that their conduct influences the respect that student-athletes, coaches and the public hold for the profession.

inherent risk or injury that competition poses to student-athletes. Where appropriate, officials shall inform event management of conditions or situations that appear unreasonably hazardous.

**Officials** shall take reasonable steps to educate themselves in the recognition of emergency

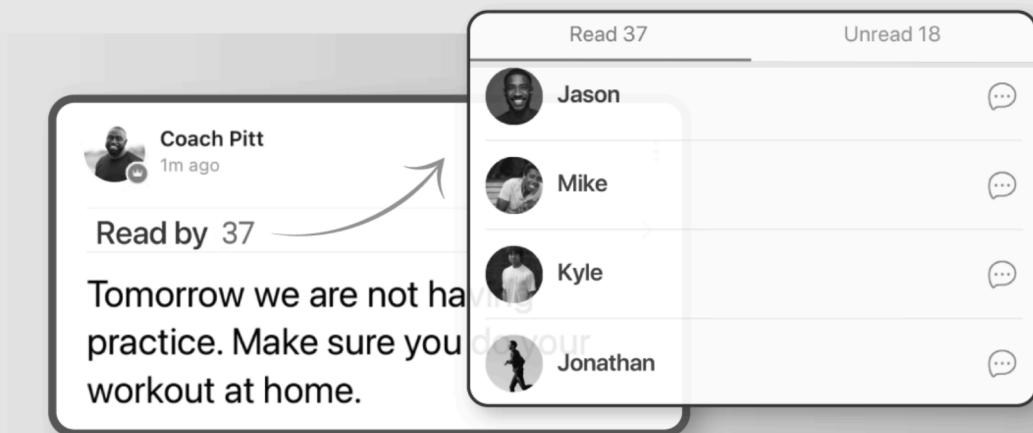
conditions that might arise during the course of competition.

**Officials** shall maintain an ethical approach while participating in forums, chat rooms and all forms of social media.

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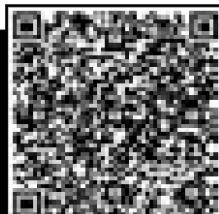


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