



2020-2021 MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

Football

Section Tournament Information

Dates	Monday, November 16- Saturday, November 28, 2020
Location/Facility	Sections have local control to schedule host sites – high seeds or neutral sites are optional. High Seeds are recommended for sites to greatest extent possible.
Tournament Format	<p>Teams are limited to a max. of THREE games for-post-season. Games must be played on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tuesday, November 17 – Section Quarterfinals ○ Saturday, November 21 – Section Semifinals • Second Week – Sections can play their Section Championship game on Friday, November 27 or Saturday, November 28. <p>*Class 6A Football will follow Board policy format for Section Tournament Brackets. (Those that advance will play 3 games, similar to other classes). See Seeding for potential brackets.</p>
Changes/ Adjustments in MSHSL Approved Season Sport Guidance	All MSHSL Approved Season Sport Guidance remain in effect.
Information on Advancement	No advancement beyond Section Tournament.
Site Management (Spectators, Concessions, personnel, officials, band, cheer, dance, media, medical, locker rooms, etc.)	See MSHSL Event and Facility Management
Seeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined by Sections. *Class 6A: Potential brackets are #1, #2, #3, and #6.
Awards/Certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trophies 1st - 2nd Place Teams • Medals 1st - 2nd Place Teams: 6A (65) 5A (65), 4A (56), 3A (48), 2A (41), A (38), 9M (29)
Streaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streaming may take place.
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See MSHSL Event and Facility Management • See MSHSL Media Guidance
Promotions/Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section brackets updated by each section and MSHSL will post on the website. (Class 6A will be updated by MSHSL)

<p>Ticketing/Passes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region committees determine ticket prices. • Ticketing and passes must comply with the Executive Order limiting spectators and others to a total of 250 individuals. (This limit is for anyone not essential to the competition; participants, coaches, officials, etc.) • Region committees can determine how to best divide up tickets for its section games, allowing for fans from both teams the opportunity to attend (for example, the host team cannot use the maximum number of tickets, allowing none for the visiting team). <u>Most ADs have been doing this all season so will have ideas of how this is being handled best locally.</u> Some examples used during the regular season include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allowing a certain number of tickets per athlete on each team ○ Allowing a lower number of tickets per athlete on each team and additional tickets for student fans and general public ○ Schools may determine how to best select which student fans have an opportunity to purchase tickets: first-come, first-served; priority to seniors; as a reward for a contest, attendance, etc. ○ Tickets can be presold at schools, or schools can submit lists of people who can purchase tickets on site (again, rely on ADs for best practice locally). If lists of people are being provided to ticket sellers, it is encouraged that a staff member from both schools be on-hand to assist ticket sellers with any conflicts regarding names or identities.
<p>Competition Playing Rules Adjustments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See section below: Note the information on Resolving Tied Games.

All aspects of athletics including meetings, practices, competitions, transportation and facility usage must align with the requirements of the Minnesota Department of Education plan for return to learning, must follow the requirements from the [Minnesota Department of Health’s Guidance on Youth Sports](#), and must include the required actions identified in the Governor’s Executive Orders.

Sportsmanship should have a constant presence in all school-based athletics.

- Teams are encouraged to find appropriate methods of demonstrating good sportsmanship and respect towards others within the physical distance guidance.
- Additional care should be taken when addressing contest officials with questions or seeking interpretations. At no time, other than in the natural course of competition, should a coach or player violate the required physical distance with an official. Any coach or player verbally interacts with an official must do so with a mask on and at a safe distance.

COVID Related Guidance:

1. Educate athletes about physical distancing, handwashing and sanitizer use, and other immune system protocols.
2. Any person who has had a fever or cold symptoms in the previous 24 hours should not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate healthcare professional.
3. Individually or as a team, participants should confirm that they are symptom free. These confirmations can be aligned with the CDC's "Coronavirus Self-Checker" or current MDH recommendations.
4. A record should be kept of all individuals present at practices and competitions (contact tracing).
5. It is recommended that personal prep areas are to be set up prior to practice - Cones or other markers should be set up at least 6 feet apart so student-athlete have a specific place for their own bag, water bottle, etc. One cone or marker should be assigned per player.
6. Avoid grouping of athletes at start and end of practice or during transitions. Staggered start times for practices and team meetings are recommended, when possible and when space does not allow student-athlete to come and go from separate areas.
7. Workouts should be conducted in "pods" – following current MDH Return-to-Play guidelines. Pods are small groups of students always working out together. This will ensure limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
8. Whenever possible, student-athletes should maintain the recommended six feet of distancing between individuals and should not be in contact with each other. In addition, there is to be no sharing of equipment to the extent that it is possible.
9. Officials are not expected to monitor physical distancing: each person is responsible to provide space between themselves and others. Coaches should provide direction to their students regarding social distancing and other safety protocols.
10. Team celebrations or congratulations should be no-touch and should be done with appropriate social distancing.

MSHSL Football Guidance and Information

Practice	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand sanitizer should be available for each student-athlete and used as often as possible. • Masks or gaiters are required for coaches and school personnel during practice. Err on the side of safety whenever possible.
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended that all activities occur outdoors
Equipment	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footballs should be sanitized before and/or after each practice, whether self-provided or brought by the coach. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spalding Football Cleaning Recommendations: https://nfhs.org/media/4029991/spalding-ball-cleaning-7-7-20-revised.pdf • All students shall bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared. • Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) should not be utilized.
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be no shared athletic equipment (towels, clothing, shoes, or sports specific equipment) between students. • Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing) individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout. • Individual drills requiring the use of athletic equipment are permissible, but the equipment should be cleaned prior to use by the next individual.
Competition	
General	
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before, during and after the contest, players, coaches, game officials, team personnel and game administration officials should wash and sanitize their hands as often as possible. • Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times while on the sidelines and on the field of play when possible. • Gloves are permissible for all coaches and team staff and for all game administration officials. • Try and limit the number of non-essential personnel who are on the field level throughout the contest. • Guidelines continue to recommend one game per week. A team may play on Monday / Friday or Tuesday / Saturday due to COVID or weather-related postponements. Daily and season limits still apply. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep in mind Bylaw 502 when doing. <i>"An individual may not participate in more than 6.5 quarters of play during any consecutive 3-day period."</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimizing exposure/risk, controlling your environment, and assessing each individual's readiness for play continue to be essential and required.
Masks/Face Coverings	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaches must wear masks at all times. Game participants, including student-athletes, officials and personnel, must wear masks <u>if they cannot socially distance</u> at 6 feet from others, unless actively participating in the game. This includes coming and going from the facility, and on the sideline during the game. If a student-athlete needs to recover after coming off the field and before putting on mask, the player should stand 12 feet away from others.
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participants are strongly encouraged to wear masks during the Pregame Conference. All participants, including student-athletes, coaches, officials and personnel, are strongly encouraged to wear masks when arriving and leaving the site. All participants, including student-athletes, coaches, officials and personnel, are strongly encouraged to wear masks on the sideline. If coaches need to remove a mask to give instructions to a player across the field, they need to be away from other sideline personnel and players. On field, masks are permissible for players and officials, but not required. Note: Gaiters can also be used in place of masks.
Equipment	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ball should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the contest as recommended by the ball manufacturer. (Rule 1-3-2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spalding Football Cleaning Recommendations: https://nfhs.org/media/4029991/spalding-ball-cleaning-7-7-20-revised.pdf Cloth face coverings are permissible. Plastic shields covering the entire face (unless integrated into the face mask and attached to the helmet and clear without the presence of any tint) shall NOT be allowed during the contest. (Rules 1-5-1a, 1-5-3c(4)) All students shall bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared. Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) should not be utilized.

<p>Recommendations and Considerations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tooth and mouth protector: **Still being determined at this time on how to best handle the tooth and mouth protector during the contest. The NFHS SMAC will update the membership as soon as guidance is developed for all sports that require a tooth and mouth protector. (Rule 1-5-1d(5)) • Gloves are permissible but still must comply with Rule 1-5-2b by meeting either the NOCSAE Standard or the SFIA Specification. (Rule 1-5-2b) • There should be no shared athletic equipment (towels, clothing, shoes, or sports specific equipment) between students. • Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing) individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout. • Individual drills requiring the use of athletic equipment are permissible, but the equipment should be cleaned prior to use by the next individual.
<p>Site Set Up</p>	
<p>Required:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Benches - Bench personnel should observe social distancing of 6 feet. Recommend to place tape or other marks 6 feet apart on the bench.
<p>Recommendations and Considerations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team box and the restricted areas may be extended on both sides of the field to the 10- yard lines in order for more social distancing space for the teams. (Rule 1-2-3g) • If available, dressing facilities for game officials and teams should be large enough for them to use social-distancing protocols and should be properly cleaned and sanitized prior to their arrival. • Due to weather, facilities may be provided to teams at halftime assuring that all MDE/MDH requirements are met.
<p>Pre-competition</p>	
<p>Required:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspend pregame protocol of shaking hands during introductions.
<p>Recommendations and Considerations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team huddles should be avoided (pregame and throughout competition). • If teams are arriving for the second game of a double-header, they should not enter the venue until the previous teams have left the venue.
<p>Competition</p>	
<p>Recommendations and Considerations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times while in the team box. (Rule 1-2-3g) • Do not share uniforms, towels and other apparel and equipment. (Rule 1-2-3g) • The ball holders should maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times during the contest. (Rule (1-3-2) • Intermission between periods and after scoring: The intermission may be extended to a maximum of two minutes between the first and second and the third and fourth periods and following a try, successful field goal or safety, and prior to the succeeding free kick. (Rule 3-5-7I)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclement weather – if a game has to be postponed due to lightning, when making the decision to wait 30 minutes or postpone to a later date (if the game is in the first half) or declare the competition complete (if the game is in the second half), administration and officials should work together to consider if student-athletes can be safely socially distanced while taking shelter. If taking shelter will put many participants in a tight indoor space (bus, practice shed, small hallway, etc.), officials and administration may choose to implement a contest-ending procedure prior to waiting 30 minutes. • Chain crews located on the home sidelines
Post-competition	
<p>Required:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspend post-game protocol of shaking hands. • Teams need to clean bench areas completely, so they are free of ALL trash and belongings.
<p>Recommendations and Considerations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams’ post-game meetings should be brief (leave venue asap). • Referees’ post-game meetings should be brief (leave venue asap). • Teams/coaches can consider other ways to show post-game appreciation for opponents and officials.
Competition Playing Rules Adjustments	
<p>Required:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing fields must be marked according to rule including restricted areas, team boxes and restraining lines as shown in the 2020 NFHS Rule Book. • The restricted area must be a minimum of two yards from the sideline away from the field of play. • Only school authorized personnel are allowed to be present in the team areas while maintaining physical distancing. • NO individuals are allowed inside the restraining lines, including chain crew and ball people. • Coaches and substitutes are only allowed to be in the restricted area between plays. • Only players and game officials are allowed on the field of play. • Footballs that will be used during the game are subject to the approval of the back judge or referee. 1-3-2 • Players, coaches and other personnel shall maintain distancing from the chain crew and allow them to perform their duties without delay. • Only one captain is allowed at the coin toss. • The referee and umpire will meet with the head coach of the home team first and the visiting team second while maintaining physical distancing. • Communication with game officials is limited to the head coach only and physical distancing and masking is recommended. • All NFHS uniform and equipment rules apply unless otherwise noted. • Plastic shields covering the entire face (unless integrated into the face mask and attached to the helmet and clear without the presence of any tint) shall not be allowed during the contest.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measurements should be limited to fourth down plays only. The judgement of the referee is final. • Resolving Tied Games: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One captain at the coin toss with the referee and umpire ○ Choices for the winner of the toss are offense, defense or end of field for both possession series. ○ The loser of the toss shall exercise the remaining option and shall have the choice of offense or defense for the second overtime period. Choices will be alternated for remaining overtime periods. ○ All overtime periods will take place at the same end of the field that is chosen at the first coin toss. ○ If the game is still tied after two overtime periods, the offensive team must attempt a two point try from the three-yard line. ○ Teams must attempt a <u>single</u> two point try from the three-yard line in the 3rd OT or beyond. ○ The game will continue until a team scores a greater number of points during an overtime period. ○ All other NFHS overtime rules apply.
<p>Recommendations and Considerations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The restricted area and the team box may be extended to the 10-yard line. • The ball should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the contest as recommended by the ball manufacturer. • The ball holders should maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times during the contest. • The kicker should retrieve the kicking tee following kickoffs/free kicks. • A chain crew shall consist of three individuals and it is recommended that auxiliary chains not be used. • Game clock/play clock operators shall meet with the referee, line judge and/or back judge approximately 30 minutes prior to the contest on the field while maintaining physical distancing. • Game clock or play clock operators shall be placed with as much distancing as possible and press box entrance should be limited to operations and coaches as space allows. • Cloth face coverings are permissible. • Players should limit contact with tooth and mouth protectors. Tooth and mouth protectors should remain in place as much as possible. • Periods may be shortened at any time by mutual agreement of opposing coaches and the referee. • A running clock may be instituted at any time by mutual agreement of opposing coaches and the referee. • Players and coaches shall remain within the playing enclosure while maintaining physical distancing during the halftime intermission. Due to weather, facilities may be provided to teams at halftime assuring that all MDE/MDH requirements are met. • The referee is not required to hold the ball overhead to indicate the end of a period. • All conferences/time outs shall take place near the team box area while maintaining physical distancing.