

NFHS RULES GOVERNING PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

FOOTBALL

- Any hard/unyielding item on the hand (including thumb/fingers), wrist, forearm, elbow or upper arm must be padded with a closed cell, slow recovery foam no less than 1/2" thick.
- Knee and ankle braces, if unaltered, do not require additional padding.
- Knee braces cannot be worn over the pants.
- Rib pads and back protectors must be fully covered by the jersey.
- Eye shields on helmets must not be tinted.

BASKETBALL

- No rigid material item may be worn on the hand (including thumb/fingers), wrist, forearm or elbow even if padded.
- Any hard/unyielding item on the upper arm or shoulder must be padded with a closed cell, slow recovery foam no less than 1/2" thick.
- Knee and ankle braces, if unaltered, do not require additional padding.
- A protective face mask may be worn and made of hard material, but must be worn molded to the face with no protrusions.
- Headbands, must be non-abrasive and cannot be more than 2" wide.
- Arm sleeves, knee sleeves, lower leg sleeves and tights are permissible. The sleeves/tights shall be black, white, beige or the predominant color of the jersey and shall be the same solid color.

TRACK & FIELD

- If a guard, cast, brace, splint, etc. (hard or unyielding items) is worn and determined by the referee that padding is required, such padding shall be closed-cell, slow-recovery foam no less than ½" thick.
- Knee and ankle braces which are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production do not require any additional padding.

WRESTLING

- Any equipment which does not permit normal movement of the joints and which prevents one's opponent from applying normal holds/maneuvers shall not be permitted.
- Any protective equipment which is hard and/or abrasive must be covered and properly padded with a closed cell, slow recovery foam no less than 1/2" thick.
- Taping or strapping which substantially restricts the normal movement of a joint shall be prohibited.

VOLLEYBALL

- No rigid material item may be worn on the hand (including thumb/fingers), wrist or forearm even if padded.
- Any hard/unyielding item on the elbow, upper arm or shoulder must be padded with a closed cell, slow recovery foam no less than 1/2" thick.
- Elbow braces cannot extend more than half-way down the forearm.
- Knee and ankle braces, if unaltered, do not require additional padding.
- Any hair devices, including headbands, must be soft and cannot be more than 2" wide.

SWIMMING & DIVING

- Tape may be used by a swimmer to treat a documented medical condition. The referee must be presented signed documentation from an appropriate health-care professional before permitting the athlete to compete.
- Divers may wear tape or wraps for support.
- Medical-alert medals are not required to be taped to the body. It is recommended the medical alert itself is visible to assist in care by a health-care professional.

BASEBALL

- A face mask/guard may be attached to batting helmets at the time of manufacture. All face mask/guards shall meet the NOCSAE standard. A face mask/guard specifically designed for a particular helmet model may be attached after manufacture, provided that procedure is approved by the manufacturer and meets the NOCSAE standard.
- Defensive players may wear face/head protection in the field. The equipment must have a non-glare surface.
- Any hard/unyielding items must be covered and padded with a closed cell, slow recovery foam no less than 1/2" thick.
- Knee and ankle braces, if unaltered, do not require additional padding.

SOFTBALL

- Any hard/unyielding items must be covered and padded with a closed cell, slow recovery foam no less than 1/2" thick.
- Knee and ankle braces, if unaltered, do not require additional padding.

SOCCER

- Any hard/unyielding item on the hand (including thumb/fingers), wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm or shoulder must be covered and padded with a closed cell, slow recovery foam no less than 1/2" thick.
- Knee and ankle braces, if unaltered, do not require additional padding. If ankle braces with metal or other unyielding material are used, they must be worn under the sock.
- Artificial limbs must be padded with a closed cell, slow recovery foam no less than 1/2" thick.
- A protective face mask may be worn and made of hard material, but must be worn molded to the face with no protrusions. A medical release signed by an appropriate health-care professional shall be available at the game site.

- Athletes may wear medical appliances (insulin pumps, heart monitoring equipment, etc.) provided the device is securely padded and attached to the player’s body under the uniform. Devices attached to the head such as hearing aids and cochlear implants do not need to be padded, but should be securely attached to the body.
- Soft padded headgear should not be worn in a sport in which the uniform rules deem it illegal unless prescribed by a physician. If the soft headgear is being prescribed by a physician for concussion prevention or safety reasons, the physician’s statement must indicate the student-athlete is cleared for participation with or without the soft headgear. A KSHSAA letter of exception is required. (See KSHSAA soft headgear policy)
- Any athlete wearing protective equipment which may need to be evaluated by an official before competition should have a physician’s note stating the purpose of the additional equipment.
- Schools/athletes should obtain a letter of exception from the KSHSAA for any protective equipment prescribed by a physician that would otherwise be illegal according to NFHS playing rules.
- Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. The accommodations should not fundamentally alter the sport, heighten risk to the athlete/others or place opponents at a disadvantage.