

PROPOSED IHSA FOOTBALL CONDITIONING POLICY

13. Football Policies

The purpose of the policy is to address safety and the heat acclimatization period of early season practice, which is considered the first 14 calendar days of football practice for a member school, commencing with the first day a school begins football practice. The key points that must be adhered to in implementing this policy are:

- During the first five (5) days of practice for each player, athletes may not participate in more than 3 hours of practice per day (Wednesday of Week 6 – Monday of Week 7 in the IHSA standardized calendar).
- If practice is interrupted for any reason, the practice should recommence once the conditions are deemed safe, but total practice time should not exceed three hours per day during the first 5 days of practice.
- A one-hour maximum walk-through is permitted during the first five days of practice; however, a minimum of 2 hour recovery period should be inserted between the practices and walk-through (or vice-versa).
- During the first two days of practice, helmets and appropriate footwear should be the only protective equipment permitted.
- During days three through five, helmets, shoulder pads and appropriate footwear should be the only protective equipment permitted.
- Beginning on calendar day seven (Tuesday of Week 7 in the IHSA standardized calendar), all protective equipment may be worn and full contact may begin.
- Sunday of week 6 and Sunday of week 7 are determined to be rest days and no practice is allowed.
- Beginning no earlier than the 7th calendar day and continuing through the 14th day (Tuesday of Week 7 through Tuesday of Week 8 in the IHSA standardized calendar), 5 hour practice days must be followed by a 3 hour practice day.
- On 3 hour practice days, one walk-through is permitted, but it must be separated from the practice(s) by at least two hours of continuous rest.
- When a 5 hour practice day is followed by a rest day, another 5 hour practice day is permitted after the rest day.
- On a 5 hour practice day, no single practice duration can exceed three hours total.
- Warm-up, stretching, cool-down, walk-through, conditioning, and weight room activities are included as part of the practice time.

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The chart below illustrates the 14 day period of acclimatization based upon the points outlined above:

Day of week IHSA calendar	FB calendar day	Practice Type	Allowed Equipment
Wed Week 6	1	3 hours of practice limit. With a 1 hour walk-through. 2 hours rest between all practices and the w-t.	Helmet only
Thur Week 6	2	3 hours of practice limit. With a 1 hour walk-through. 2 hours rest between all practices and the w-t.	Helmet only
Fri Week 6	3	3 hours of practice limit. With a 1 hour walk-through. 2 hours rest between all practices and the w-t.	Helmet and Shoulder Pads
Sat Week 6	4	3 hours of practice limit. With a 1 hour walk-through. 2 hours rest between all practices and the w-t.	Helmet and Shoulder Pads
Sun Week 7	5	No practice allowed - day of rest	
Mon Week 7	6	3 hours of practice limit. With a 1 hour walk-through. 2 hours rest between all practices and the w-t.	Helmet and Shoulder Pads
Tues Week 7	7	5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours. 2 hours rest between all practices.	Full pads
Wed Week 7	8	3 hours of practice limit. With a 1 hour walk-through. 2 hours rest between all practices and the w-t.	Full pads
Thur Week 7	9	5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours. 2 hours rest between all practices.	Full pads
Fri Week 7	10	3 hours of practice limit. With a 1 hour walk-through. 2 hours rest between all practices and the w-t.	Full pads
Sat Week 7	11	5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours. 2 hours rest between all practices.	Full pads
Sun Week 8	12	No practice allowed - day of rest	
Mon Week 8	13	5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours. 2 hours rest between all practices.	Full pads
Tues Week 8	14	3 hours of practice limit. With a 1 hour walk-through. 2 hours rest between all practices and the w-t.	Full pads
End of Acclimatization Period			

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All practices during the 14-day acclimatization period must be separated by at least **two continuous** hours of recovery in a cool environment, with no sport- or conditioning-related activity permitted (e.g. speed or agility drills, strength training, conditioning, or walk-through). Treatment with the athletic trainer is permitted as is classroom work and/or video review.

Regardless of the conditioning program and conditioning status leading up to the first formal practice, all students-athletes (including those who arrive after the first day of practice) must follow the 14-day heat-acclimatization plan.

A **walk-through** is defined as a teaching opportunity with athletes not wearing protective equipment (helmets or shoulder pads). During a walk-through, no running or running activities by team members is allowed and no protective equipment can be worn. *A football cannot be used during the one hour walk through.* The walk-through is not part of the practice period on a three hour practice day, and it can last no more than one (1) hour per day. The walk-through does not include conditioning or weight room activities.

The By-laws also specify that each individual football player must participate in on-the-field practice for at least ninety (90) minutes per day on twelve (12) different days prior to playing in a contest. Please note that a practice on the day of a contest will not be counted toward this requirement.

School Equipment Use

A member school may loan or rent any school-owned football player equipment only to its students for use in summer camps and may loan or rent football helmets only to its students for use in 7 on 7 passing leagues conducted in compliance with the specifications of IHSA By-law 3.157.

Football Scrimmage Definition

Any action, regardless of whether it would involve 11 on 11, 9 on 8, 4 on 4, etc., which simulates any game play conditions where members of one school would be organized against members of one or more schools would be considered a scrimmage.

Football Scrimmages

A scrimmage against another school in football as well as any other sport is viewed to be an interscholastic contest. Therefore, it must be counted as one of the contests a school is permitted to play during the season, and is restricted by the legal dates for playing contests. Therefore a school which begins its football practice on Wednesday, Week 6, and has its first varsity game scheduled for Friday of Week 8 many not play a controlled scrimmage against a neighboring school on Saturday of Week 7 since it would be scheduled prior to the date of the first possible interscholastic contest for football. If it were rescheduled for after the first possible playing date, it would have to be counted as one of the school's contests in football.