

**ARTICLE 210  
FOOTBALL**

**2100. AGE REQUIREMENT**

A student under 15 years of age may not participate in an interscholastic contest or scrimmage against the varsity team of another school. This Bylaw may be waived by Section action provided the Section adopts criteria for such a waiver which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. Participant must be at least 14 years of age;
- B. A signed consent statement from the parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver, allowing participation at the varsity level;
- C. A statement from the head coach that the student-athlete has the physical and mental maturity to compete at the varsity level;
- D. A statement of compliance must be forwarded by the principal to the respective Section Office verifying that all required documentation has been completed and is on file in the appropriate school office.

(Revised May 2000 Federated Council/Revised March 2004 Executive Committee/Revised April 2019 Federated Council)

**2101. NUMBER OF FOOTBALL PRACTICE DAYS; NO SUNDAY PRACTICE; TEAM CAMPS/OTHER OFF-SEASON ACTIVITIES**

- A. There shall be no football games until the team has had 14 days of practice before the first game. Each individual student on the team must have had at least 10 days of practice before being allowed to compete in a game. (The opening date of football practice may be determined by each Section.) No Sunday practice is permitted (See Bylaw 504.M. for exception).
- B. Football teams are limited to two days per week of full contact practice, with no more than 45 minutes of full contact on each of those days during the season of sport. For purposes of this Bylaw, each team's season of sport is defined as the first day of practice, as allowed by the Section, until the final contest for the team. All full contact practices are prohibited in the off-season which includes team camps. Full contact practice is defined by state statute as a practice where drills or live action is conducted that involves collisions at game speed where players execute tackles and other activity that is typical of an actual tackle football game. For the purposes of this Bylaw, refer to the definition of Live Action as defined by USA Football.  
(Revised April 2018 Federated Council)
- C. Team camps and other off-season activities are allowable with the following equipment only: footballs, bags, blocking sleds and football shoes.  
(Approved April 2015 Federated Council)

**NOTE:** For policies related to definition of full-contact and allowable in-season, off-season and team camp activities please consult the football section in the blue pages and local Section Bylaws.

**2102. SCRIMMAGE LIMITATIONS**

No individual student shall participate in an interscholastic scrimmage before his/her 10<sup>th</sup> day of practice for that particular school. Scrimmage is defined as practice where the teams alternate in carrying the ball, downs are not counted, no score is kept and the coaches are on the field directing play.

**2103. PHYSICAL CONDITIONING PRACTICE**

A high school shall not conduct a physical conditioning practice session during the summer prior to the opening date of authorized football practice, unless so authorized by the appropriate Section.

**2104. SPRING FOOTBALL PRACTICE/JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Eighth and ninth grade students from an elementary, middle or junior high school may not take part in the Spring football practice at the high school (See Bylaw 303 for multi-school exception). A high school coach may not conduct a football practice session at a separate junior high school.

**2105. NUMBER OF GAMES LIMITATION**

A high school football team of any classification or name shall not play more than two (2) games in any eight (8) day period. A continued game under National Federation football rules shall not be considered in this limitation.

**2106. TIE-BREAKER SYSTEM**

- A. Each Section is authorized to establish a tie-breaker system for regular season football games and Section playoff football games.

(Revised October 2017 Federated Council)

**2107. OFFICIAL NATIONAL FEDERATION AUTHENTICATION MARK**

Only balls with the National Federation authentication mark shall be used in the sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, lacrosse, soccer, softball, volleyball and water polo.

(Revised to include lacrosse November 2000 Federated Council)

**2108. MERCY RULE**

At the conclusion of the third quarter or any point thereafter, if there is a point differential of 35 or more points, a running clock shall be instituted for the remainder of the game regardless of the score. The game clock shall stop only for a score, a free kick following a fair catch or awarded fair catch, a charged team timeout, a coach-referee conference or an officials' timeout. This Bylaw applies to all levels of play.

(Approved May 2011 Federated Council)