



## **2023-24 WINTER LEAGUE YOUTH RULES**

10/9/2023

Where Winter League rules are not either clear or do not address a topic, follow NFHS rules.

### **2023-24 Revisions**

1. **NEW BONUS RULE:** Five fouls in one quarter, the opposing team will be in the bonus and shoot 2 foul shots. The team foul count resets every quarter. 1-1 bonus rule is eliminated per NFHS rules.
2. **SPORTSMANSHIP RULE:** When leading by 20 points or more in the 2nd half, no frontcourt pressure is permitted in any youth age group. Full court pressure may resume, once the differential is less than 20 points, provided it is permitted at that age group.
3. **MERCY RULE:** The clock runs, and doesn't stop except for injuries, and substitutions when a team is leading by 20 points in the 2nd half. Both teams lose any remaining timeouts.
4. **CLARIFIED LEAGUE POLICY FOR BEHAVIOR**

# **Table of Contents**

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>#1. PLAYING TIME, SUBSTITUTIONS, LATE PLAYERS, FILL-IN(s)</b> | <b>1</b> |
| <b>#2. GAME TIMING, TIMEOUTS, &amp; 3 POINT SHOTS</b>            | <b>3</b> |
| <b>#3. OVERTIME &amp; SUDDEN VICTORY</b>                         | <b>3</b> |
| <b>#4. 1st to 6th GRADE RULES, RESTRICTIONS, ADAPTATIONS</b>     | <b>3</b> |
| <b>#5. ILLEGAL DEFENSE &amp; DOUBLE-TEAM ENFORCEMENT</b>         | <b>5</b> |
| <b>#6. 7th to 12th GRADE RULES</b>                               | <b>6</b> |
| <b>#7. SPORTSMANSHIP &amp; MERCY RULES</b>                       | <b>6</b> |
| <b>#8. LEGAL GAMES &amp; FORFEITS</b>                            | <b>6</b> |
| <b>#9. ELIGIBILITY, TRADES, ETC.</b>                             | <b>6</b> |
| <b>#10. UNIFORMS</b>   | <b>7</b> |
| <b>#11. BEHAVIOR &amp; PUNISHMENT</b>                            | <b>7</b> |

## **#1. PLAYING TIME, SUBSTITUTIONS, LATE PLAYERS, FILL-IN(s)**

### **PLAYING TIME (Note: Equal playing time is not a league rule)**

- **7 or 8 PLAYER PLAYING TIME RULE:** Every player must play a minimum of half of the game and must sit a minimum of twice (i.e. two halves of a quarter).
- **6 PLAYER PLAYING TIME RULE:** Every player must play a minimum of half of the game and must sit a minimum of once (i.e. one half of a quarter).
- **EXCEPTION:** If your opponent has 2 players less than your team, every player on your team must play a minimum of half of the game and must sit a minimum of once (i.e. one half of a quarter).
- **SUBSTITUTE TIMING:** Substitutions may only occur at the start of a quarter, or halfway through each quarter except in the case of injury. A 10-second clock stoppage may occur around halfway through each quarter to allow for substitutes. This substitution stoppage is NOT a charged timeout. Only players who are being substituted should leave the court. This stoppage should occur at roughly between the 3:45 to 4:15 minute mark. It may occur at the referee's discretion when there is a stoppage, or even a slowdown in play and does not require a dead ball. Coaches may remind the referees and scorekeepers of this.
- **INJURED PLAYER RETURN:** An injured player may return to play ASAP or when there is a whistle or any stoppage in play. A player who is feeling better may return to action at any time and does not need to wait to come in at a normal substitute time.
- **TIME OUT AT SUBSTITUTION:** You may not substitute during a timeout unless it was called at the same time as a substitution stoppage.
- **PLAYING TIME TRACKING:** Both coaches MUST track substitutions, fouls, and violations such as Illegal defense, etc. Referees do not track total fouls, and the game cannot begin until both coaches are prepared to do so.
- **PLAYING TIME VIOLATIONS/ FORFEIT:** Breaking playing time rules results in a forfeit. Please FOREWARN any coach who is about to break this rule, to avoid a possible forfeit. Report violators to your commissioner.

### **LATE ARRIVING PLAYERS** (As it affects playing time rules)

- **LATE PLAYERS:** A player who has arrived late, is considered to have sat during those quarters during which they were not present and therefore did not play.
- **CASE PLAY:** A team is required to meet the playing time rules based on the total number of active, eligible, non-injured players at the game. A team must follow the playing time rule based on this most up-to-date adjusted player count. Example: #1: A

team begins the game with 5 players and a 6th player shows up late. They are now required to follow the 6-player playing time rule if logistically possible. Example #2: A team begins with 8 players at game time, one gets injured, and 1 gets disqualified early. They are now only required to follow the 6-player rule **if logistically possible**. Example #3: A team with 6 players has a 7th player show up late in the 3rd quarter. Since they cannot logistically follow the 7-player rule due to time left, they may continue to follow the 6-player rule. In addition, they may choose who will “legally” violate the 7-player rule and not sit twice.

### **FILL IN PLAYERS (Replacing Missing Players)**

The league policy is that no canceled games will be made up, or rescheduled unless the cancellation is weather-related, or facility-related, and only if space is permitted. All league-scheduled games must be played or will be recorded as a forfeit. To avoid this, a team may acquire legal Fill-in(s) and communicate with their commissioner.

### **FILL-IN PLAYER ACQUISITION PROCEDURE**

Coaches must use the following procedure to obtain a fill-in for a missing player unless otherwise directed by the commissioner.

- The coach will have to find the fill-in(s). The coach must contact their commissioner and opposing coach after obtaining the fill-in(s) before tip-off.
- The player you obtain **must not exceed** the rating of the original player you are replacing.
- You may not have more fill-in players than originally rostered players at a game.
- The fill-in player cannot be on the opposing team or it will be a forfeit (if this occurs, the game may still be played as a friendly).
- The fill-in should wear a team jersey in the correct color, or a very similar color if possible. Extra jerseys are provided to each team to help facilitate this and are to be returned afterward. Commissioner may issue a shirt violation waiver in this case.
- Only registered, paid, Winter League players from the same age group as the missing players, may fill in. If obtaining a younger player, please inform your commissioner, and opponent for prior approval.
- **March Madness:** Fill-in player(s) are allowed, but the fill-in(s) must be at least one whole rating lesser than the missing player. The commissioner and opposing coach must be notified before tip-off and as early as possible for approval.
- If a coach uses illegal players, they will forfeit the game. The League will review all questioned fill-ins.

## **#2. GAME TIMING, TIMEOUTS, & 3 POINT SHOTS**

- **QUARTERS:** (4) 8-minute quarters
- **INTERMISSION:** 1 minute between quarters and 2:00 minutes at half time. (Score Keepers - Please set the clock to keep games moving.)
- **CLOCK STOPPAGE:** The clock ONLY stops during injuries, foul shots, substitutions, and timeouts.
- **CLOCK END OF QUARTER STOPPAGE:** The clock stops on all whistles during the final 30 seconds of each quarter.
- **OT CLOCK STOPPAGE:** The clock also stops on all whistles during the final 30 seconds of overtime.
- **MARCH MADNESS Semis & Finals 4th Quarter and OT CLOCK STOPPAGE:** During March Madness Sem's & Finals, the clock will stop on all whistles in the 4th quarter during the last 2 minutes and overtime during the last 2 minutes.
- **TIMEOUTS PER GAME:** Each Team has 2-60 second timeouts and 1-30 second timeouts per game. Timeouts carry over into overtime. No additional timeouts in overtime.
- **3 POINT SHOTS:** 3-pointers count only where courts have a clearly marked 3-point line or tape to clarify.

## **#3. OVERTIME & SUDDEN VICTORY**

### **REGULAR SEASON OVERTIME (OT)**

- Tie games will be decided by a full 2:00 minute overtime period, you DO NOT have to substitute before, during, or after OT.
- Additional Over Time(s) - Teams will play sudden death OT (1st team to score wins). The clock will be set to 8 minutes and if the clock runs out before a team scores the game will result in a tie.
- 1st-2nd Grade: No overtime. The game ends in a tie.

### **MARCH MADNESS OVERTIME**

- No sudden victory. Instead, play an additional 2-minute overtime period(s) until a winner is decided.

## **#4. 1st to 6th GRADE RULES, RESTRICTIONS, ADAPTATIONS**

- **REGULAR SEASON OPPONENT SHORT ON PLAYERS:** If an opponent can only field 4 players, then you must play with 4 also during the regular season.

- **MARCH MADNESS OPPONENT SHORT ON PLAYERS:** During March Madness, you do not have to match their lower numbers.
- **LANE VIOLATIONS (1st-6th):** - A shooter who violates, will not be penalized, unless the foul shooter runs forward, boxes out, or interferes with any defender until the ball has been touched by another player.
- **1-2nd GRADE NO FREE THROWS:** - No free throws at all. If a player gets fouled in the act of shooting the basket counts and it will be an automatic 3-point play. The defense will get the ball.
- **LOWER BASKET HEIGHTS:** For Grades 1st & 2nd, hoops should be lowered, based on skill and size of players. Please have both coaches discuss this and come up with a consensus for that game. If they cannot agree, the referee will make the decision.
- **B1/2 & G1/2 OFFENSIVE VIOLATIONS:** All violations in the first half of the season will be given back to the offensive team to encourage improvement in players' skills. There is no backcourt violation in B1/2 or G1/2.

#### **1st to 6th NO FRONT COURT DEFENSE RULE**

- All Players must back up to the division line before they can play defense. No front-court defense is allowed. Violation: "Illegal Defense." The timeline is the division line.

#### **1st to 6th DEFENSIVE RULES**

- All players must play man-to-man defense in 1st to 6th grades.
- **MAN-TO-MAN RULE LEAGUE DEFINITION:** Man-to-Man by rule is staying within approximately 3' of your opponent while they are either touching the ball and are completely inside the 3-point arc (i.e. both feet are inside the 3-point arc).
- **DOUBLE TEAMING IS NOT PERMITTED:** Violation of "Double Team."
- **ZONE DEFENSE IS NOT PERMITTED:** Violation of "Illegal Defense." Illegal Defense is called when a defender sags too far away from their opponent, i.e. more than the required 3' distance. No illegal defense should be called outside the 3-point arc.
- **HELP DEFENSE:** Players may play help defense. If a player escapes from his defender, another defender may leave their man to go cover this newly uncovered player. If both players, intentionally or unintentionally, end up covering the same player, then double-teaming should be called. Sometimes, good officiating will apply discretion or advantage, i.e. holding the whistle, to allow less skilled players to self-correct and find their man, or even allow stronger players to finish, despite being double teams, as in the advantage call in soccer.

- **Rebounding Exception:** Double-teaming is not called on rebounds as long as the rebounder is in the paint. This continues, until the player with the ball either exits or passes the ball out of the paint. Even if they are indeed being double-teamed while in the paint after the rebound, there is no violation.
- **Exception A:** Double-teaming is not called if someone dribbles willingly or accidentally into a 2nd defender, i.e. “handing them the ball”, unless the defender actively moves and or attempts to steal the ball. The act of catching the ball is not considered to be a violation.
- **Exception B:** Double-teaming or illegal defense is not called when there is a loose ball.
- **Double Teaming Advantage:** Referees may allow “advantage” as in soccer. This means they may wait to see what happens, or blow the whistle late, and bring it back, on a potential double team to try and avoid calling it should the player, who, despite being double-teamed scores. If that player loses their advantage, due to the double team, then play is brought back to the spot of the double team, and the violation is enforced.
- **1st to 6th – NO CLEAR OUTS PERMITTED:** Coaches should not run clear out, or isolation plays. Involve all players. Referees should penalize violators with an “illegal offense” call, which adds to the double team/illegal defense totals.
- **1st to 6th – SINGLE PLAYER COVERING THE BALL NOT PERMITTED:** Coaches may not assign one player to always “cover the ball” but instead must match them up with a partner. Violation is an “Illegal defense”.

### **3rd -6th Grade FULL COURT MAN TO MAN “PRESS RULE”**

- During the final 2 minutes of the 1st half, 2nd half, and over time, teams may choose to play full-court man to man and are not required to back up to the division line.
- They still must comply with the Sportsmanship & Restricted Defense Rules. They also must observe all other man-to-man rules including but not limited to no double-teaming, etc.
- The defense may only have as many players pressuring as the offense has on that half of the court.

## **#5. ILLEGAL DEFENSE & DOUBLE-TEAM ENFORCEMENT**

- 1st & 2nd offenses of double-teaming, illegal defense, or illegal offense, will result in a warning, and possession at the spot of the violation.
- 3rd & future offenses will result in a two foul shot violation and possession at the division line.
- Illegal Defense counter resets at half time, but carries over in overtime.

## **#6. 7th to 12th GRADE RULES**

Follow NFHS basketball rules. No restrictions except playing time, Sportsmanship, and Mercy rules.

- **OPPONENT PLAYING SHORT:** Teams have the option to play 5v4 when their opponent has only 4 players in attendance.

## **#7. SPORTSMANSHIP & MERCY RULES**

- **SPORTSMANSHIP RULE:** When leading by 20 points or more in the 2nd half, no frontcourt pressure is permitted in any youth age group. Full court pressure may resume, once the differential is less than 20 points, provided it is permitted at that age group.
- **MERCY RULE:** The clock runs, and doesn't stop except for injuries, and substitutions when a team is leading by 20 points in the 2nd half. Both teams lose any remaining timeouts.
- **Exception:** March Madness - Mercy Rule is waived.
- **FIVE FOULS DISQUALIFIES PLAYER:** Five personal fouls result in a disqualification from the game at any age group. There are no exceptions.

## **#8. LEGAL GAMES & FORFEITS**

- A minimum of 4 players are required to begin
- Exception: 3rd/ 4th play 4v4, which requires 3 to begin.
- **FORFEIT:** If a team has less than the minimum No. of required players, 5 minutes after the scheduled start time they will forfeit the game. If there is a forfeit, a friendly game may still be played and officiated.
- **Boys 9/10-11/12:** Each team must have an adult coach, from that team, seated on each bench prior to starting and throughout the game. Note: if both teams do not have a coach on each bench, by the legal forfeit time, the game is permanently canceled, and all players must leave the gym. No friendly is permitted. Players not leaving immediately will face league discipline.

## **#9. ELIGIBILITY, TRADES, ETC.**

- All trades are strictly forbidden without prior commissioner approval.
- **No Game Day Trades are ever permitted!**
- Only players assigned to your team may play for you. Use of any other player will result in an automatic forfeit. (Exception: See legal Fill-in(s) & Procedures)
- All teams make the year-end "March Madness" playoffs. The season standings determine the seeding of those teams.



- There is no minimum number of games required for a player to be eligible to play in March Madness if they are registered and have paid in full.

## **#10. UNIFORMS**

- All players must be registered, paid, and be wearing the correct color Winter League jersey to participate. Coaches may not override this rule. A shirt with no # is legal and can be a 00.
- 2nd-6th grades: If a player does not wear the correct team jersey, a team foul is given.
- 7th-12th grade: If a player does not wear the correct team jersey, a team, and personal foul are given and two points are awarded to the opposing team. The game will begin with a tip-off.
- If a team has players with the same numbers, the coach must inform the scorekeeper prior to the start of the game. If the officials and scorekeeper are not notified or do not catch the duplicate numbers before the tip, it will result in a uniform violation per that age group's rules.
- No jewelry or casts may be worn at any time on the hand, forearm, or elbow as per NFHS rules.
- **Fill In "Out of uniform player approval rule"**: Any player who is out of uniform must have the opposing coach, & commissioner's approval to be eligible to play. If he is a legal Fill-in, then there is no penalty involved. The opposing coach must verify that the player is indeed on that roster, to be permitted to play.
- Persistent uniform violations may result in a player not being permitted to play. Cutting the sleeves off must keep in adherence with the image of the league and be modestly altered. Alterations should not expose undergarments.
- The league reserves the right to reject any uniform alterations and require that player to purchase a replacement jersey at the player's expense. Consult the league before altering any jerseys.
- If a player intentionally alters their jersey mid-game the referees may issue an administrative technical. This occurs if a player rips their jersey affecting the numbers or logo of the uniform. This is a team and personal foul as well as two shots and the ball for the opposing team. The player must change into a different shirt.

## **#11. BEHAVIOR & PUNISHMENT**

### **FOUL LANGUAGE & QUESTIONING OFFICIALS**

- Coaches, players, and spectators are not permitted to question a referee's call.

- Coaches who wish to discuss something with a referee should be polite and ask the opposing coach to be present as well during the discussion. This should take place during a timeout, or normal stoppage in play.
- Swearing, foul, or abusive language will not be tolerated.
- Spectators must not engage in verbal harassment of players, fans, or officials.
- All players, coaches, and spectators must follow the code of conduct policy.

### **LEAGUE DISCIPLINE & BEHAVIOR**

- All technicals and suspension penalties will be league-wide. The accumulations of technicals in one age group also apply to other age groups. Suspensions result in the individual being banned from being present in any league activities (games, practices, and any other league events) in all age groups and leagues while the suspension is being served. Example: Player A plays on Monday and gets suspended one game in the High School league and their next game is the following Tuesday. They are suspended from all FCWL activities until the following Wednesday and that includes any/all other FCWL leagues they may play or coach in.
- Anyone coming onto the court unless summoned by the official will be automatically ejected from the building and banned from all league activities for 1 calendar year, the second offense is a lifetime ban. Advisory has the power of review.
- Any confrontation with an official after the game results in a calendar-year suspension. Advisory has the power of review.
- Referees may eject a player, coach, or spectator.
- Scorekeepers, referees, and coaches are to report all issues including technical fouls to the league office.
- Any player, coach, or spectator who is ejected, must immediately and quickly leave the facility or face further punishment unless the player is underage and does not have a parent present. In this case, they may quietly sit on the bench. Any further disturbance will result in the termination of the game.
- Regular season, 3v3, and March Madness suspensions carry over to the playoffs and into future seasons! The 3v3 tournament as a whole is considered one game.
- Ejections result in an automatic 1 game suspension, starting with that game, and adding one additional game. In addition, the board may further review the incident for additional suspension time up to and including a full season, or total loss of playing/coaching privileges.

- 2 ejections in one season will result in a season-long suspension and a board review of future eligibility.

### **Coaches in all age groups and players from 3-8th grade: Level 0, 1, and 2 Technicals**

**Level 0:** Administrative T's, such as a dead ball nonaggressive foul. No after games consequences. Not tracked in the league database.

**Level 1:** Swearing “audibly.” Behavior that causes technicals by the book, but no ill intent or non-aggressive in the judgment of the officials or Advisory Board. No carryover from year to year.

**Level 2:** Aggressive behavior towards another person, opponent, official, coach, scorekeeper, or fan. Foul language directed at an opponent, official, coach, scorekeeper, or fan. Arguing with officials. Slamming, tossing, or kicking the ball in frustration with a call. Aggressive taunting (ie. in the opponent's face, making contact for the purpose of intimidation, stepping over someone, etc). Any flagrant fouls. Postgame technicals or referee confrontation. 3 level 2 technicals in a year is a two-game suspension. A 4th level 2 technical is a calendar year suspension.

#### **SUMMARY ACTION CHART**

- 3 level 2 technicals in a year is a two-game suspension. A 4th level 2 technical is a calendar year suspension.

### **Boys 9/10-11/12: Level 0, 1, and 2 Technicals**

**Level 0:** Administrative T's, such as a dead ball nonaggressive foul. No after games consequences. Not tracked in the league database.

**Level 1:** Swearing “audibly.” Silly behavior that causes technicals by the book, but no ill intent or non-aggressive in the judgment of the officials or Advisory Board. A 3rd Level 1 technical will result in a one-game suspension—no carryover from year to year.

**Level 2:** Aggressive behavior towards another person, opponent, official, coach, scorekeeper, or fan. Foul language directed at an opponent, official, coach, scorekeeper, or fan. Arguing with officials. Slamming, tossing, or kicking the ball in frustration with a call. Aggressive taunting (ie. in the opponent's face, making contact for the purpose of intimidation, stepping over someone, etc). Any flagrant fouls. Postgame technicals or referee confrontation. 3 level 2 technicals, while a player is in high school, will result in expulsion from HS League. 2 level 2 technicals in one year is a one-game suspension.

If a High Schooler coaches in another age group, any technicals received will apply to the high school policy.

#### **SUMMARY ACTION CHART**

- 3 level 2 technicals, while a player is in high school, will result in expulsion from HS League.
- A 3rd Level 1 technical will result in a one-game suspension.
- 2 level 2 technicals in one year is a one-game suspension

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**

- The Advisory Committee has the power to review any instance that involves behavior, sportsmanship, code of conduct, or persistent rules violations. Advisory has full power to suspend, add to suspension, or take away suspension. This shall be interpreted as full and broad power.
- Appeals of suspensions may only be in writing to the [advisory@fcarea.org](mailto:advisory@fcarea.org) email address. The appellant should give in writing their reasoning for the appeal in detail. Phone calls and meetings are not part of the committee's protocol for appeals, only if prompted by the committee.
- The Advisory Committee is overseen by the league board.