

Central Florida Officials Association

**Emergency Action Plan
Mechanics and Procedures
2013**

Introduction

Emergency Action Plan

The duty of an official is to maintain order and administer the game so that the rules established by the NFHS and the FHSAA are administered in a fair and impartial manner. Our job has become harder due to administrators, coaches, players and fans emulating the antics of players and coaches at the college and pro level. This type of behavior is not acceptable at the high school level. The FHSAA has asked each association to develop mechanics to address this ever-growing problem, **as published in sections 500 - 506.04 and 600 of the 2012-13 FHSAA Officials Guidebook.**

The mechanics will cover several aspects of game administration as it relates to officials and their responsibilities in the event of a fight or disturbance on the field or in the stands. The purpose is to establish mechanics that all officials can follow so the reporting of an incident that may arise can be addressed in an organized and factual manner. We have included weather related issues so all involved in the game understand the importance of following the standards for suspending play due to the weather.

Introduction

Emergency Action Plan

The CFOA at the direction of the FHSAA has developed mechanics for officials to use in the event of a brawl on the field or in the stands or other threats that may occur once the officials have entered the field and until the referee declares the game over. The trend in recent years has shown an increase in hostilities towards officials and players. The mechanics give the official steps to take in the event such an act were to occur.

The following pre-game is to be used by all referees and officials of the CFOA, **NO EXCEPTIONS**. The mechanics are to be used for all games assigned by the CFOA (freshman, junior varsity and varsity) or any game sanctioned by the FHSAA that the CFOA assigns officials.

These mechanics are being put in place in an effort to protect officials in the event of a brawl or threatening situation. It may seem to some that this is not necessary, but it is better to be prepared in the event of such an occurrence than regret not being prepared and have an official injured. As noted by the FHSAA, there has been an increase of fights resulting in the ejection of coaches, players and fans in recent years.

General Information

Crew Parking

- All officials will park in the assigned area designated by the schools. Schools should have security or an administrator meet the officials and escort them to their meeting room.
- If possible officials should meet at an offsite location and travel to the game in 1 or 2 cars.
- Officials who insist on parking in areas not designated by the school take on the responsibility of getting to their car without security if the school is not able to provide it.
- Back into the parking spot and have your keys with you in the event you need to make a quick exit after the game. Referee's make sure your ECO gets to their car safely.

Mechanics

Emergency Action Plan

- Officials should arrive at the game site 90 minutes prior to but no later than 60 minutes before game time. Note: JV & FR need a good pre-game on these issues.
- Referee and Umpire will meet with the AD/Administrators and security to discuss the safety of officials and players in the event of a brawl or weather related problems.
- It is the responsibility of home team management to regulate the number of authorized non-team personnel allowed on the sidelines. All must remain behind the 2 yard belt at all times.
- The referee will send the AT-6 report to the FHSAA, the VP of Football and the President of the CFOA. This applies to varsity/JV/FR games that the crew has to report a player, coach or fan for unruly conduct.

Mechanics

Emergency Action Plan

- Remind the home team AD/Administrator to have the game announcer read the sportsmanship statement provided by the FHSAA.
- With the new coin toss mechanics, inform the AD, head coach and band director that the teams, band and all other non-team members must be off the field and in their end zone or on their sidelines before the coin toss. All pre-game activities should be concluded and off the field by 7:25 for a 7:30 kick off.

Information to the Crew

Emergency Action Plan

- Any game control problems or brawls will be reported to the FHSAA, to the VP of Football and the President of the CFOA.
- Officials/clock operators will not give interviews or discuss game incidents with family, friends, spectators, others in the press box, coaches and television, newspaper or internet reporters. Your comments will usually be taken out of context and misrepresented by the median or others. Your comments may be used in litigation.
- Clock operators - do not discuss penalties or comment on enforcement with anyone in the press box.
- Discussion should only be among the crew members pertaining to an incident so an accurate report can be compiled.
- Complete the report as soon as possible while the information is fresh on your mind and details can be noted. See FHSAA Officials Guidebook (506) for details.
- The AT6 report must in sent to the FHSAA no later than 24 hours after the game. **Give only the facts and not opinions in the report.**

Information to the Crew

Emergency Action Plan

- An official who is not officiating a game and who is merely a spectator, will not make comments to administrators, coaches or fans on the quality of officiating, perceived or actual mistakes, the officiating crew may have made. They will not intervene or try to influence the crew, administrator or coach to question a call.
- If an official is a spectator and wants to comment on the quality of officiating or sportsmanship by teams during or after a game, they are not to use any forms from the CFOA or FHSAA or represent themselves or their views as an official, those of the Association or its Board of Directors.

Information to the Crew

Emergency Action Plan

- If security, parking or dressing facilities are not provided, report it to: the VP of Football. Game management should provide a secure location for the officials to meet for pre-game and halftime.
- Leave your problems at work or home. Do not let them influence your judgment in respects to game administration.
- Do not hesitate when throwing your flag or be tentative in decision making. This type of non action will usually incite unrest among players, coaches and fans.
- Officials, do not bicker amongst yourselves during the game. Referees must take charge of the game and the crew. Control yourself and be professional.

Information to the Crew

Emergency Action Plan

- Remember - we are a crew, and if we have to leave the field we will leave together.
- The referee is responsible for making sure all officials are accounted for, this includes the clock operator.
- After meeting with the Administrators, the referee will instruct the crew on any issues related to crew safety and evacuation procedures. Review Weather related issues.
- The crew is not to leave the stadium until all crew members are present, including the clock operator. If necessary send security to help the clock operator get down from the press box safely.

Mechanics

Information to the Crew

- Clock Operator, In the event of a problem in the stands or on the field, you will immediately step away from the window and remain out of sight of the fans. Remove officials hat and shirt (always wear an undershirt) if necessary.
- The clock operator should not attempt to leave the press box until security arrives. If no press box, retreat to a safe area as soon as possible. Referee discuss this with game administrators before the game. Note time & score
- Clock operators that are field qualified for varsity contest will wear their full uniform to the game. Clock operators not non-field qualified officials will wear pullover shirt, slacks and closed toe shoes and have your officials hat.

Mechanics

Information to the Crew

- In the event of a brawl, the crew members should retreat from the action and take numbers of players and others coming off the bench and involved in the fight.
- Get the head coach or coaches on the field to break up the fight.
- Coaches coming off the bench should be monitored to make sure they are trying to break up the fight and not become part of it.

Mechanics

Emergency Action Plan

- Referee and Umpire, will stay in the middle of field and monitor action taking place between the 9 yard marks.
- Line Judge and Linesman will monitor the area between the 9 yard marks and sideline lines on their side of the field. Summon coaches on the field as soon as possible to break-up action between players, non-players or fans.
- Back Judge will assist in areas where other officials may need help.
- SJ and FJ (7 man crew) will help maintain order on their side of the field between 9 the yard marks and the sidelines.
- All officials will observe the action and take notes and numbers of players and others who may become involved in the disturbance.

Mechanics

Emergency Action Plan

- The referee, in the company of the umpire, will inform the head coach that on-the-field demonstrations to intimidate or taunt the other team or fans, will not be allowed during the pre-game warm-up period or when the team comes on the field for the game.
- If team acts such as this occur, inform the head coach that their team (he/she) will be penalized for an unsportsmanlike foul. 2 team acts and he/she will be ejected by rule and must leave the stadium.
- L and LJ find the get-back coach and instruct him that in the event of a brawl they are responsible for keeping players and others in the team box and off the field.
- Make sure coaches know it is their responsibility to maintain order on their sideline and to break-up fights if they occur.

Mechanics

Emergency Action Plan

- Back Judge/Line Judge (5 Man). Take a position at the inbounds lines at opposite 45 yard lines at least 30 minutes prior to the game and monitor activity of the teams during warm-up.
- Line Judge/Referee or Umpire (4 man). Take same position as above.
- Field Judge/Side Judge (7 man). Take same position as above.
- Assume a position with hands at your sides. Look professional. No hands on your hips or arms crossed on your chest.
- Any conversations with coaches and players should be courteous and professional in nature. Use a handshake, only, when greeting before and after the game.

Mechanics

Emergency Action Plan

- Use preventative officiating, good judgment and common sense when dealing with potential problems. Start talking to the players and coaches early in the game.
- Never get in a shouting match with a coach, player or fan. Be professional in these situations.
- A conference with a coach or administrator should be held on the field in front of the team box with the referees back to the bench and the coach facing his bench at the top of the 9 yard mark. Referee always have a second official with you at the conference
- Have field awareness. Look for signs of trouble early and relay information to other officials. Referees and back judges you have the best view of what is going on behind the end men, be alert for potential problems.

Mechanics

Crowd Attacks Officials

- If threatened or attacked, all officials should come together as a group and summon police and administrators. If an official is being confronted a second or third official should aid his fellow official.
- If hostility continues, the officials and teams will be escorted to a secured location by security and the administrator.
- The referee will inform the schools that the game will not continue unless order is restored.

Mechanics

Crowd Attacks Officials

- The game can be delayed until order is restored and additional police protection is available at the field.
- The game can be suspended at that point and resumed at a later date, if agreed to by the schools.
- If necessary order the stadium cleared, except for the teams, coaches, administrators and police personnel before resuming the game.
- The referee can forfeit the game at that point and declare the offended team the winner.
- In all cases the safety of the officials and players is foremost.

Mechanics

Crowd Attacks Team

- This same procedure will apply if the crowd attacks the teams or others in the stands, and the action becomes uncontrollable with the security personnel on hand.
- In all cases, the officials are to perform their duties in a professional manner in accordance with NFHS and FHSAA standards.
- The announcer will inform the fans that if they leave the stands and enter the field they are subject to expulsion, arrest or both.
- Officials do not get involved in fights that occur in the stands. If necessary, referee, notify administrators that if it continues the game will be suspended until order is restored.

Mechanics

Player or Coach Attacks Officials

- The official will retreat from the attack and seek support from other officials and security personnel. Security should be near the playing area at all times in the event this were to happen.
- It is recommended that officials not touch players in any manner other than to protect themselves against bodily harm.
- The official or officials involved should blow their whistle and throw their flag to stop the attack and draw the attention of the other officials.

Mechanics

Player or Coach Attacks Official

- Use preventative officiating early in the game to stop any escalation of aggression or hostilities.
- Be aware of verbal and body language that shows signs of aggression towards the officials.
- Derogatory remarks about an official's race, religion or ethnic background can be signs of problems to come.
- Never allow a coach or player to get in your face. Step away from these situations as quickly as possible.

Mechanics

Player Attacks Player

- The covering official should use his/her whistle and flag to stop the action.
- At no time should officials try and separate players by using physical force.
- Step back and summon coaches to separate the players.
- Be aware of verbal and body language of the players during the game. Never allow players to refer to another player's race, religion, ethnic background, family heritage or use vulgar language.

Mechanics

Player Attacks Player

- Football is a contact sport, but being overly aggressive is not part of the game and can lead to game control problems.
- Standing over a player after a tackle to intimidate or use gestures that are meant to demean are not acceptable. Stop it early but know excitement from aggression.
- The antics of college and pro players are not part of the high school game.

Mechanics

Crowd on Crowd Attack

- The safety of the players and officials are your primary concern. In today's society a weapon may be involved and threaten the safety of players and officials.
- Have the players and officials escorted to a safe location until the authorities have restored order.
- Officials are to maintain order on the field. Do not go into the stands to help break up the disturbance.
- Referee, as soon as possible, have security sent to the press box to escort the clock operator to safety.

Mechanics

Crowd on Crowd Attack

- What can be done to help control the crowd?
- The announcer should read the FHSAA statement on sportsmanship before the game and periodically throughout the contest.
- The announcer will refrain from criticizing or commenting about the officials or calls they have made or use music to raise doubt about an officials call or conference to discuss penalty.
- If an announcer will not stop criticizing officials or others the referee will direct the AD or his designate to have the announcer removed from that position and if necessary from the stadium.

Mechanics

Crowd on Crowd Attack

- The announcer will refrain from criticizing the opposing team or its fans.
- Anyone around the field, or a coach who incites the crowd towards violence, or disrupts the game, should be removed from the stadium.
- Additional police or security personnel should be available and placed in positions that are visible to the fans. Have police cars visible to the fans.
- All personnel in and around the field must remain behind the 2 yard belt. This includes, reporters, cameramen, alumni, band members or any others who may be involved in the administration of the game.

Mechanics

Crowd Attacks Players or Coaches

- Officials should not get involved in this situation. Get players not involved and officials off the field quickly.
- Be alert for possible physical and verbal attacks on the visiting team by the home team crowd.
- Problems usually occur when the winning team keeps pouring on the points in a one-sided game.
- Keep the fans in the stands, do not allow them on the sideline or on the track. Alumni, booster club members tend to migrate to the sideline as the game progresses.

Mechanics

Lightning & Weather

- The National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) in 2009 implemented a new policy for Lightning and Weather. If you hear thunder or see lightning the game must be suspended at that point and you must wait 30 minutes from the last time you heard the thunder or see lightning before the game can continue. The FHSAA has amended the rule to state;

Mechanics

Lightning & Weather

- If the school has equipment to detect Lightning then that detection device can be used to determine if the game is to be suspended instead of the NHFS Policy. As always the safety of the Officials, Player and Fans are of utmost concern. If an Official, AD or Coach wants to suspend the game because of weather concerns than it will be suspended.

Mechanics

Lightning & Weather

- If lightning detection equipment is being used it must be in close proximity to the field. There must be an adult, a school administrator, teacher, trainer or coach monitoring it at all times so the information can be quickly relayed to the teams and officials.