



# Texas High School Basketball Officials Association

## 2020-2021 Season Guidelines and Covid-19 Protocols

In conjunction with guidelines issued by the University Interscholastic League (UIL) and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), THSBOA is issuing the following guidelines for officials concerning Covid-19 season protocols, rules and mechanics modifications.

All officials should take necessary precautions to ensure a safe playing environment. Your safety and well-being are critical. Anyone with serious underlying health conditions or other circumstances should review their overall risk level and take appropriate precautions.

All officials should adhere to the following guidelines to help stop the spread of Covid-19.

### **Risk Mitigation**

The most important risk mitigation strategy remains a combination of daily self-health checks, physical distancing, masking and hand sanitization. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations](#) include the following for proper wearing of face masks:

- Wash your hands before putting on your mask.
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face.
- Make sure you can breathe easily.
- Masks with exhalation valves or vents should not be worn to help prevent the person wearing the mask from spreading COVID-19 to others (source control).

All officials should actively participate in mitigation of COVID-19 infection through proper behavior at all times.

### **Daily Self-Health Checks**

Every official should practice at least daily self-health evaluations before officiating in any game assignment. If you identify any of the following symptoms or signs during a daily self-health evaluation you are encouraged to contact the appropriate health care representative by telephone or virtual visit before traveling to any game site:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
- Cough or other respiratory symptoms.
- Headache.
- Chills.
- Muscle aches.
- Sore throat.

- Congestion or runny nose.
- New loss of taste or smell.
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.
- Pain, redness, swelling or rash on toes or fingers (COVID toes).
- New rash or other skin symptoms.
- High-risk exposure: a new contact with an infected individual or prolonged contact with a crowd without physical distancing (for example, attended a party in which there was no masking or physical distancing).
- Temperature of 100.4° Fahrenheit or above.

THSBOA requires all officials to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before participating in any assigned game.

## **General Expectations**

We recommend all chapter assignors communicate with their respective school athletic directors and coaches well in advance of any game assignments so that there is a clear understanding as to what is expected from both schools and officials. Failure to discuss such details may create greater conflicts at the date/time of the game.

## **Game Assignments**

Officials are not responsible for monitoring activities on the sidelines, such as physical distancing, hand washing, symptoms of illnesses, wearing of face coverings and any other issues. This monitoring remains the responsibility of the coaching staff and school personnel.

Upon arrival at a game site for any assignment, officials will follow and submit to all screening protocols in place by the host site.

All officials are required to wear appropriate face coverings upon entry to any game site. Face coverings are to be worn until the official arrives on the court and participates in the assigned game. Face coverings are not required for any official actively participating in an assigned game. However, face coverings should be worn whenever reasonably possible while on the court during dead balls and timeouts.

Officials must have their mask readily available to wear for extended conferences with the scorer's table and coaches.

Depending on individual circumstances and game locations, it is recommended that officials come to assignments dressed to officiate.

We encourage all officials to bring their own personal protective equipment, including hand sanitizer, towels, water, gloves, and snacks.

Officials may wear gloves – including medical latex gloves, work gloves or gloves designed specifically for officiating.

We recommend that all officials wear a plain black cloth face covering. Face coverings with the THSBOA logo or the logo of their respective chapter are permitted. All other markings are not permissible.

## Illness or contracting Covid-19

If an official has a laboratory positive or clinically diagnosed case of COVID-19, they should immediately contact their Chapter Secretary. They must also inform the athletic director(s) of any school visited within the previous two days before displaying COVID-19 symptoms. The official should quarantine and must return all assignments scheduled for the next 14 days.

If an official has officiated at a game where a positive case of COVID-19 has been reported within two days of the game assignment, the officials should be closely monitored for any symptoms of COVID-19. (Officials should receive testing if they develop or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms).

## NFHS 2020-21 Basketball Considerations

### 1. Basketball Rules Considerations

- ***Pregame Protocol (2019-2020 NFHS Officials Manual, page 16, 1.8; NFHS Basketball Rule Book – 3-4-5)***
  - Limit attendees to the referee and the head coach from each team with each coach standing on the center circle on each side of the division line.
  - All individuals maintain a social distance of 6 feet or greater at the center circle.
  - Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.
- ***Team Benches (1-13-1)***
  - ***Social distancing should be practiced when possible. Below are some suggestions.***
    - Limit the number of bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.
    - Place team benches opposite the spectator seating.
    - Additional chairs or rows may be added to allow bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.
    - Create separation between the team bench and spectator seating behind the bench.
    - Limit contact between players when substituting.
    - Personnel not in the game should adhere to any required local/state face covering requirements.
- ***Officials Table (2-1-3)***
  - The host should sanitize the table before the game and at half time.
  - Place officials table sufficiently away from the sideline to allow for additional space for substitutes.
  - Limit seats at the table to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommend distance of 6 feet or greater between individuals. Other personnel (visiting scorer, statisticians, media, etc.) may not be deemed essential personnel and consider an alternate location for them.

- Table personnel should adhere to any required local/state face covering requirements.

## 2. Pre and Post Game Ceremony

- Suspend the pregame introduction handshakes.
- Suspend post game protocol of shaking hands.

## 3. Basketball Rules Interpretations

### ○ **Rule 4-1 EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES**

- Basketball
  - Ball given to officials in the locker room, where it is sanitized as recommended by the ball manufacturer and not used for warm-ups.
  - The host school should ensure that the ball is sanitized during time-outs and between quarters.
  - Sanitizer should be provided by the host team at the table.
- Cloth face coverings are permissible for players.
- Consider requiring coaching staff and other bench personnel to wear face coverings while on the bench.

### ○ **Rule 5-3 Officials Uniform and Equipment**

- By state association adoption, long-sleeved shirts are permissible. (5-1-3)
- Officials should not be required to wear jackets during pre-game court/player observation.
- Electronic whistles are permissible (supplies are limited).
  - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry inside.
  - Check the market for choices
- Cloth face coverings are permissible.
- Gloves are permissible.

## 4. Other Considerations

- **Throw-in**
  - Official may stand 6 feet or greater away from player making the throw-in and bounce the ball to that player on a front court throw-in.
- **Free Throw Administration**
  - The lead official shall stand on the end line and bounce the ball to the free thrower.