

Inclement Weather

I. On threatening days, game management should consult with contest officials about steps to be followed if conditions worsen.

II. When suspending an outdoor contest, officials and game management shall follow these policies.

A. When lightning is observed or thunder is heard, the contest must be suspended. The occurrence of lightning or thunder is not subject to interpretation or discussion – lightning is lightning; thunder is thunder.

B. Severe weather in the form of rain or snow may make the field unplayable.

III. When a contest is suspended, the home school administration shall attempt to arrange for the security of all participants.

A. Contestants and support personnel shall be moved to appropriate indoor facilities.

B. When lightning is observed or thunder is heard and the contest is suspended, contestants shall not return to the playing field until lightning has been absent from the local sky and thunder has not been heard for 30 minutes.

C. Spectators shall be advised of the action being taken to seek shelter. (Some hosts may be able to offer shelter to spectators but are not required to do so.)

IV. In considering the resumption of competition, the following steps shall be followed.

A. Delays for contests scheduled prior to 3 p.m. must not exceed three hours. Delays for contests scheduled for 3 p.m. or later must not exceed one and one-half hours. Delays on nights not followed by school for all the competing teams may be longer by mutual agreement of participating schools. A postponed contest shall be rescheduled on a date/time mutually agreed to by the schools involved.

B. A decision to resume the contest within the time frame must be made by the officials who shall consult the home team administration and visiting school administration present at the contest.

C. The home school is responsible for facilities and will be given priority consideration in the final decision if there is no consensus among the three parties.

D. The final decision shall consider liability and conditions of facilities as well as future schedules, the need to play the contest, and finally the quality of all other options.

NOTE: MHSAA tournament policies for MHSAA tournament contests, or more restrictive local policies for regular-season contests would supersede these policies and should be shared with the opponents and officials prior to the contest, preferably in writing.

Otherwise, and to the extent allowed by the playing rules code, the official(s) shall make the final decision regarding game suspension once the game begins.

Regular-Season Contest Delays

When a league or conference does not have a written policy regarding late contest start time, the following MHSAA policy shall apply:

1. If a team fails to arrive for a regular-season contest at the time stated on the contract, it shall be necessary for the host administration to delay the contest, declare the game forfeited, reschedule the contest, or declare the event “no contest.”
2. If the host management has been notified of the reason for the delay and projected arrival, the officials must stand by for 60 minutes beyond the scheduled starting time. When the team arrives, a reasonable amount of time must be provided for the visiting team to conduct a pregame warm-up. In any case, warm-up shall not be less than 15 minutes.
3. If the host management has not been notified that there is a delay and the reason for it, the officials have permission to leave the site, without obligation, 30 minutes after the contracted start time has passed.

(In MHSAA tournament play, the Participating School Tournament Information for each sport will prescribe the specific action to be taken. For regular-season play, league and conference policy supercedes the policy above, so coaches and officials should inquire with their league to see if any policy exists.)

Tornado Policy

IF THERE IS A WATCH OR WARNING AT AN MHSAA TOURNAMENT SITE –

- A. Watch or warning issued at least three hours prior to the event:
 1. If the local district policy closes the tournament facility, all participating teams must be called and informed of postponement with information pertaining to next playing date and time included in

the call.

2. If the host district policy does not close the facility, all participating schools who have not called the host must be called to be sure all who are scheduled to play will be present. (The participating school local policy must prevail).

a. If one team of a dual type competition (i.e. Baseball Tournament) cannot be present by their policy, no contest shall be held. The competition for that day/night must be rescheduled on the next possible day.

b. If the competition is multiple team type (i.e. Track, Tennis), the meet shall be conducted as long as a reasonable number of teams (60 percent) can be present.

B. Watch or warning less than three hours before event:

1. If the competing teams are enroute, no decision shall be made until both teams in a bracket have arrived or contact has been made, unless local policy forbids use of facility once the watch or warning has been issued.

2. If competing teams arrive, are on the premises, and local policy permits, play the contest when and if time permits.

3. If it is not possible that date, reschedule for next playable date.

4. Local policy shall always prevail.

C. Watch or warning first issued during contest:

1. Suspend play.

2. Take necessary steps and precautions as directed by local policy.

3. Resume play at the point of suspension as soon as permitted. If not that day/night, then reschedule for the next possible date.

II. IF THE WATCH OR WARNING IS IN AN AREA OF ONE OR MORE COMPETING SCHOOLS AND NOT AT A TOURNAMENT SITE:

A. It shall be the responsibility of the competing school to inform the manager of the tournament immediately.

B. The decision as to play or not to play shall be made by the Tournament Manager, based on the information presented and the type of sport event involved.

1. If one or more local policies do not permit travel or competition, the game, games, or tournament shall be postponed.

2. If the scheduled competition is of a multiple team nature (i.e. Track and Field), the competition may take place even though all teams are not able to be present. (60 percent is suggested guideline).

3. The rationale for No. 1 and No. 2 hinges on the fact that in No. 1, both teams of a dual type competition must be present if a contest is to take place. No. 2 permits competition, even though all teams cannot be present.

C. If one or more schools are on the road to the tournament site at the time of watch or warning, no decision shall be and until contact has been made with all concerned. (An authorized person from the assigned schools).

D. If one school arrives on site and the opponent cannot travel due to local policy, the game shall be postponed and rescheduled on the next possible date.

GENERAL GUIDELINE: The local Tournament Manager has full jurisdiction over the policies of the tournament site. If the above guidelines do not cover a certain situation, the decision on the matter shall be that of the Tournament Manager.