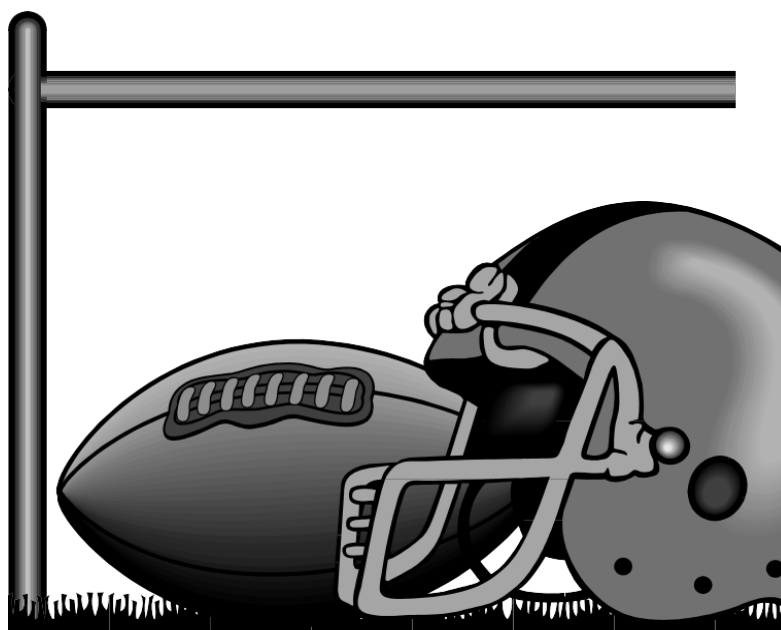




2026



FOOTBALL PLAYOFF MANUAL



WVSSAC

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FOOTBALL PLAYOFF HISTORY

The framework for determining a high school champion in football was set forth by the principals of West Virginia in 1947. At this time, a resolution was adopted to institute a rating system for use in determining a champion of the larger schools (Class A) and a champion for the smaller or Class B schools. Beginning in 1948, it was decided that champions of the two classes would be decided by a playoff or championship game between the two top rated schools of each class. Although a championship game did not take place in Class A in 1948, the two-class procedure and a class championship game existed until 1955. At this time, the schools were divided into three classes: AA, A, and B. A championship game was held in each class among the two top rated teams. The names of the three classes were changed in 1958 to the present system of AAA, AA, and A. Again, championship games were held in each class until 1972, with the exception of 1963, at which time no championship game was held in Class AAA. The four-team playoff in each class had its inception in 1972.

The idea of an eight-team playoff began in 1976. At this time, it was discussed with the Football Coaches' Committee which is appointed by the Executive Secretary of the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission, and which meets yearly to discuss this area of the interscholastic program. The committee expressed unanimous interest and recommended that the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission poll member schools concerning their interest in such a change. A 92% affirmative response prompted the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission to appoint a committee to study and propose a procedure for implementing the eight-team concept.

The committee of athletic directors and coaches appointed by the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission consisted of the following people: John Chmara, Paul Clovis, Tom Korab, Ron Renner, Fred Taylor, Frank Vincent, Carl Ward, Kenneth Wright, and Granville Zopp.

The committee presented their findings and possible procedures to the Board of Appeals on two different occasions. After numerous findings and recommendations, the Board of Appeals instructed the Executive Secretary, in December 1977, to present a final draft to each member for study. The final draft was adopted in March 1978 for full implementation in the 1978 season.

In 1990, the Football Coaches' Committee recommended to the Board of Appeals that the playoffs be expanded to sixteen teams in each class. After much discussion, the Board voted to try the sixteen-team format for the 1991 season. The Board also voted to limit the regular season to 10 weeks. In 1992, the sixteen-team format continued, and the regular season was expanded to eleven weeks.

It is interesting to note that seven major revisions have been made in the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission football rating and playoff program in its history. The latest change has had the same positive impact as previous changes.

§127-3-23. Football.

23.1. Rules: Football rules published by the NFHS are the official rules for all interscholastic competition unless otherwise provided by Commission modification.

23.2. Organized Team Practice: Organized team conditioning practice will begin on Monday of Week 5 and the first contest may be played during Week 8.

23.2.a. The following table establishes for high school the equipment/contact level, earliest date for scrimmage or Grid-O-Rama, date for first contest, and date season must be completed.

Year	First Date Organized Practice Helmets Only No Contact	First Date Helmet & Shoulder Pads Soft Equipment Contact: Bag, shields sleds, tackling wheel, etc.	Full Pads Soft Equipment Contact: Bag, shields sleds, tackling wheel, etc.	Full Pads Full Contact	Earliest Scrimmage Or Grid-O-Rama After 4:00 PM	First Contest	Date Season Must Be Completed
2025	Aug. 4 & 5	Aug. 6 & 7	Aug. 8	Aug. 9	Aug. 15	Aug. 25	Nov. 8
2026	Aug. 3 & 4	Aug. 5 & 6	Aug. 7	Aug. 8	Aug. 14	Aug. 24	Nov. 7
2027	Aug. 2 & 3	Aug. 4 & 5	Aug. 6	Aug. 7	Aug. 13	Aug. 23	Nov. 6
2028	Jul. 31 & Aug. 1	Aug. 2 & 3	Aug. 4	Aug. 5	Aug. 11	Aug. 21	Nov. 4
2029	Jul. 30 and Jul. 31	Aug. 1 & 2	Aug. 3	Aug. 4	Aug. 10	Aug. 20	Nov. 3

23.2.b. Individual students of a team must have practiced on 12 separate days, exclusive of the day of a contest, before participating in an interscholastic contest.

23.2.c. In season football camps sponsored by a member school or by other school related organizations where football coaching and instruction are given are not permitted.

23.2.d. The use of football uniforms, protective equipment, tackling or blocking dummies, charging sleds, or similar devices are strictly prohibited during the conditioning program. During the date of pads no live contact, the use of sleds, shields, and blocking dummies is allowed to permit gradual adaptation of the students to carrying the weight of their pads and adjusting to temperature variation.

23.3. Length of Season: The football season will end for each team at the end of the regular season or by play-off elimination.

23.4. Maximum Team Contests: A football team will be permitted to play no more than 10 games exclusive of the play-off games.

23.4.a. The total number of quarters for a student in one season is 50 exclusive of the play-off games.

23.4.b. A student may only play four quarters in one day.

23.4.c. Any student who participated in one or more downs in one quarter shall be charged with one quarter of play. Downs in which the football teams are in a free kick formation, or the offensive team is in a scrimmage kick formation, as defined in the NFHS Football Rule Book, will not count as a down.

23.4.d. Overtime is considered as an extension of the fourth quarter.

23.4.e. Interscholastic practice game in which teams representing a member school play against alumni or others is not allowed.

23.5. A football team is permitted to participate in a Grid-O-Rama and one preseason scrimmage or two preseason scrimmages. (See Glossary for definitions of Grid-O-Rama and Scrimmage.)

23.6. Special Regulations:

23.6.a. All rules and regulations of these bylaws pertaining to football are also applicable to six-man and eight-man football.

23.6.b. Any member of a freshman team who plays in a varsity contest (scrimmage, Grid-o-Rama or game) is ineligible to return to the freshman team.

23.6.c. A student may not play or practice on a non-school football team while a member of the school team.

23.7. A student may accept awards for WVSSAC sanctioned and non-sanctioned events during the entire year. These awards must be consistent with the items specified in the §127-3-5.

23.8. The Board of Directors is authorized to adopt a point rating system and overall procedure for determining a state champion in each class.

FOOTBALL RATING PLAN

A team must play 6 teams in their class or above to be eligible to be considered in the playoff ratings. Schools may request a waiver from the Executive Director to be exempt from the 6 game in-class or above requirement. Waivers for the upcoming season must be requested to the Executive Director by May 1. When a contract is signed with a school, the classification of that school will be used in determining the 6-game requirement for the length of the contract. Copies of the contracts will be necessary to verify the agreement. However, rating points will only be given for the true classification.

1. Games regularly scheduled under the provisions of the official contract form of the Commission which are cancelled by mutual agreement and approved by the Board of Directors shall not be included in any calculation of the rating system. Games which are cancelled or terminated without mutual agreement and for which the penalty features for the contract are paid or ordered paid by the Board of Directors, shall be counted under the forfeiture rule. The offended team may: 1) accept the forfeit in the ratings; 2) not accept the forfeit in the ratings and play less games to be counted in the ratings; 3) schedule a game to replace the forfeited game that will count in the ratings, or 4) schedule a game to replace the forfeited game that does not count in the ratings for either team : the offending team may not play another game. **If a team folds after playing a contest, the offended team can accept a forfeit, schedule a replacement game, or accept a "no-contest". (Revised 2/26)**
2. Should a tie exist at the end of regulation play in any regular season football game, the procedure for breaking the tie shall be the same as that described in the National Federation Football Rule modified "20-yard line Overtime Procedure". Overtime play shall not be limited in regular season games.
3. Games played by WVSSAC member schools after date listed in Rule 127-3-23.2.a ("Date Season must be Completed") shall not count in the rating system.
4. A team's final rating shall not be affected by the result of a protest registered after the preliminary playoff meeting held on the Sunday prior to the first-round game.
5. The sixteen top rated football teams in each class (AAAA, AAA, AA, A) shall be eligible for first round playoff competition in their respective class. Pairing for first round games for each class will be as follows: 1 vs. 16, 4 vs. 13, 5 vs. 12, and 8 vs. 9 in the upper bracket and 2 vs. 15, 3 vs. 14, 6 vs. 11, and 7 vs. 10 in the lower bracket.

The winner in each class championship game shall be declared the class champion, and the loser shall be declared the runner-up. No determination below champion and runner-up shall be made. If any eligible rated team declines to compete in first round competition, the next eligible rated team shall be designated to participate in first round competition.

Should there be a tie for any position in the final rating for each class, the following criteria will be used to determine first round pairing and resolve ties which create more than sixteen top rated teams for any class (A, AA, AAA, and AAAA):

- (A) If teams tie for the sixteenth position and competed against each other, the loser will be eliminated. If teams tie for any other position other than sixteenth and competed against each other, the winner will be selected for the higher position in pairing.
- (B) If a tie still exists that cannot be resolved by (A), the team with the most bonus points as computed by the WVSSAC Rating Plan will be selected or moved up for pairing. Bonus points are awarded for the wins or ties of defeated opponents and strength of schedule points as determined by the WVSSAC Rating Plan.
- (C) If A and B do not select any sixteenth-place team or eliminate a tie above sixteenth, the team with the best win-loss record will be selected (based upon percentage).
- (D) Record against common opponent(s).
- (E) Difference of points scored minus points allowed by defeated common opponents.
- (F) Difference of points scored minus points allowed by defeated opponents.
- (G) In case a tie still exists for any position which cannot be resolved by (A) through (F), a coin flip will be used to determine the position and sixteen participants for each class.

6. If any class championship game cannot be played because of uncontrollable factors as determined by the Board of Directors, the two teams thus affected shall have equal entitlement to all honors and awards.
7. Each school's entire schedule of football games, exclusive of those played against junior varsity opponents, scheduled prior to October 1 and within the seasonal limits shall be counted in the Rating Plan. However, should a high school team compete two times during a given season with the same school, points for both games shall be counted in the Rating Plan (may involve only one (1) team and two games in a season).
8. **Schools are required to post scores by 12:00 noon on Monday following a game date. Failure to post each game scores will result in a \$50.00 fine for each week.**
9. The classification of a non-member school shall be made on the basis of enrollment in a manner similar to the plan used by members of this Commission. Records from non-member opponents who play more than 10 games per season may be included only to the extent of the first nine regularly scheduled games of that opponent in addition to the game with the member school. Games played by non-member schools after the last date, as specified in Rule 127-3-23.2.2 of this manual and WVSSAC Handbook will count only if a rating point(s) is insured as calculated by the method(s) used in this Rating Plan.
10. Schools playing non-member opponents shall furnish the WVSSAC with the following information:
 - A. 127-3-10: 10.1 - Each member high school shall be classified as either AAAA, AAA, AA, or A based on the total enrollment in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 using the West Virginia Department of Education enrollment figures at the end of the second school month of the year preceding classification.
 - B. Classification of non-member opponent(s) will be based on the enrollment figures under the following criteria.
Classification for 2025-2026 through 2026-2027:
AAAA – 1050 or more
AAA – 625 to 1049
AA – 351 to 624
A – 350 or less
 - C. Failure to perform the duties as defined above may terminate the right of a member school to participate in the rating plan and said right may be regained only through the Board of Directors.
11. A high school must play a minimum of eight varsity games to participate in the Rating Plan and be eligible for playoff competition.
12. Disputes concerning the validity of any interscholastic athletic contest shall be resolved by the Board of Directors.
13. To determine the final rating, total the points and divide by the number of games played.

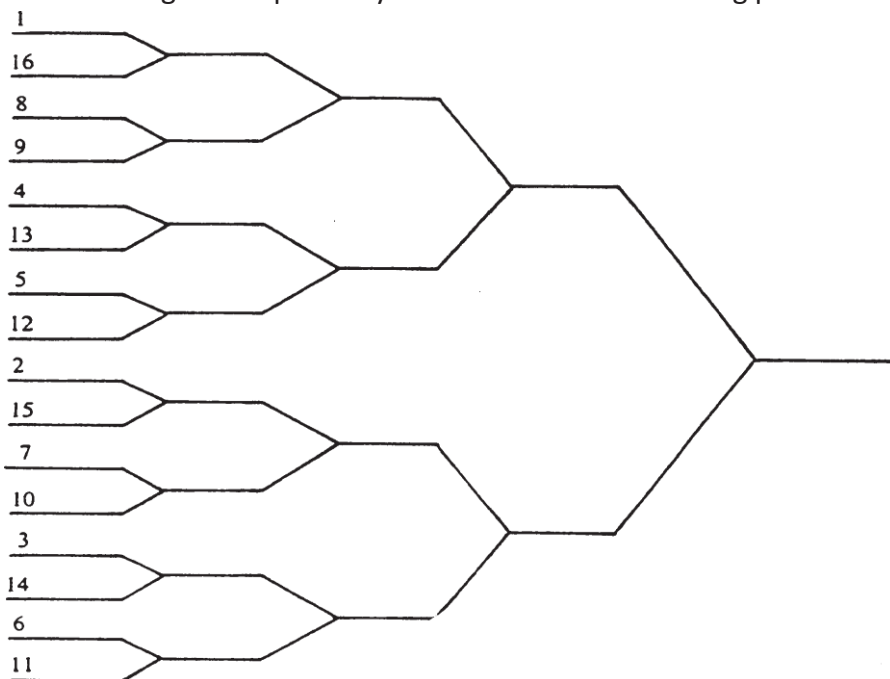
	AAAA	AAA	AA	A
For winning against	15	12	9	6
For AAAA Tying	7.5	6	4.5	3
For AAA Tying	7.5	6	4.5	3
For AA Tying	7.5	6	4.5	3
For A Tying	7.5	6	6	3
For each game won by a defeated opponent	1	1	1	1
For each game tied by a defeated opponent.	.5	.5	.5	.5
For each game won by a tied opponent.	.5	.5	.5	.5
For each game tied by a tied opponent.	.25	.25	.25	.25
For each game won by a winning opponent in its class or higher	1.5	1.2	.9	.6
For each game tied by a winning opponent in its class or higher	.75	.6	.45	.3

WVSSAC FOOTBALL PLAYOFF

In 1990-91, the following Football Playoff Procedures were recommended by the Football Coaches' Committee and adopted by the Board of Directors.

I. FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD ROUND GAMES:

- A. The following pairing will be used for all classes: Numbers indicate final regular season standing as computed by the WVSSAC football rating plan.



B. WVSSAC FOOTBALL PLAYOFF SITE STANDARDS

1. FIELD:

- Field surface must have proper drainage.
- Surface shall be in a safe and playable condition in late season. It must have a grassy surface without extensive rough spots. Excessive use lessens safety and playable conditions. It is suggested that activities in excess of 15 events on most grass fields is probably too much.
- The field may not be used for practice (unless artificial surface) other than a run-through on the night preceding regular season games. Practice by activities which include bands or other teams as well as other events must be limited to this standard.
- Unanchored team benches must be provided, and these benches shall be at least 4 yards from the sideline.
- A field barrier, whether permanent fencing or temporary structures, **should be no closer** to the out-of-bounds lines than 5 yards. This field barrier shall have controlled access to permit teams and bands to enter the playing area but must be constructed in such a way that fans cannot enter the playing area. It is preferred that team access be separate. E
- Field markings must conform to Rule 1-2. This includes sidelines, end lines, yard

- lines, pylons, field yard-line markers, properly padded goal posts and team box areas (which shall be a full 6 feet from the sideline). **A 4-inch-wide broken restraining line 6 feet outside of and around the playing field is required. Goal line shall be white.**
- g) Field lights must be operable and of sufficient illumination for night games.
 - h) An operable electric score board must be available.
 - i) An operable 40/25 second field clock.
 - j) An operable on field microphone.
2. **SPECTATOR SEATING:** (18" per occupant) AAAA & AAA – 3,500; AA – 2,500; A - 1,500
 - a) Seating includes that provided for bands, including band seating inside field barrier.
 - b) Seating to be included in total shall only include elevated seats. It is recommended that these seats be elevated at least 3 feet above ground level.
 - c) Handicapped seating must be considered and, if at field level, removed at least 5 yards from any field boundary.
 - d) Seating must meet all local safety standards and have safe and easy access and egress.
 3. **DRESSING ROOMS:** These must be separate and accessible for both teams.
 - a) **AAAA & AAA** must have adequate space/storage for a minimum of 60 players. **AA** must have 50 adequate spaces and **A** must have 40 adequate spaces. Space for coaches must be considered.
 - b) Adequate shower and restroom facilities shall be included. Recommendations are: AAAA&AAA shall have a minimum of 10 operable shower heads, AA 8, and A 6.
 - c) Restroom facilities for players shall be available (at least semi-private).
 - d) A suitable writing surface must be available for coaches of both teams. (Examples: chalkboard, dry eraser board, etc.)
 - e) A separate and private dressing facility must be provided for game officials with adequate accommodations including showers and restroom facilities.
 4. **PRESS BOX:** This structure shall be high enough to give timers and score board operators a clear view of the entire field. Adequate electrical outlets must be available.
 - a) Space shall be provided for press and radio/TV.
 - b) Assistant coaches shall be separated from their opponents and space for film crews must be available.
 - c) AAAA & AAA should have minimum space for 18 personnel, AA -15, and A -12.
 5. **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE:** On-field medical assistance must be available for both teams.
 - a) Sideline areas may be set aside for these personnel within the team box.
 - b) A plan for transport to a nearby hospital must be considered.
 6. **PUBLIC REST ROOMS AND CONCESSIONS:**
 - a) Easily accessible to spectators.
 - b) Rest room commode/urinal combinations for each sex; numbers suggested are: AAAA & AAA -8, AA -6, A- 4. Portables are permitted to accommodate large crowds.
 7. **PARKING:** It is recommended that parking areas be lighted.
 - a) On-site parking for teams, bands, and officials must be provided.
 - b) Spectator parking must be adequate. Appropriate security must be provided if spectator parking is inside same enclosure as field.
 - c) Handicapped parking shall be considered.

8. SECURITY:

- a) Adequate security must be available for spectators, players, and officials.
 - b) A security person should accompany officials to and from their dressing room.
 - c) Uniformed security is necessary with at least one possessing powers of arrest.
 - d) Must have a weather emergency plan.
- C. All games in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd rounds will be played at the approved home site of the highest rated team. If the home site is not approved, the game will be played at an approved site selected by the highest rated team subject to the approval of the WVSSAC office. If necessary, the Executive Director may send a committee to inspect the site.

NOTE: PENDING*: SCHOOLS LISTED AS (PENDING)* MUST RECEIVE FINAL APPROVAL BY THE WVSSAC PRIOR TO THE STATE FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS.

1. **Facilities meeting criteria for all classes:** APPROVED: *Bluefield, Bridgeport, Brooke, Buckhannon-Upshur, Cabell Midland, Chapmanville, Doddridge County, East-West Stadium, Elkins, Frankfort, George Washington, Gilmer County, Grafton, Greenbrier East, Hampshire, Hedgesville, Herbert Hoover, Huntington, Hurricane, Jefferson, John Marshall, Keyser, Laidley Field, Lewis County, Martinsburg, Mingo Central, Morgantown, Musselman, Nicholas County, Nitro, North Marion, Oak Glen, Oak Hill, Parkersburg, Parkersburg South, Point Pleasant, Preston, Princeton, Ripley, Riverside, Roane County, Robert C. Byrd, St. Albans, South Charleston, Spring Mills, Spring Valley, Tyler Consolidated, University, Washington, Wheeling Island Stadium, Winfield, Woodrow Wilson.*
 2. **Facilities meeting criteria for AA-A:** APPROVED: *Clay-Battelle, Greenbrier West, Independence, James Monroe, Liberty (R), Lincoln, Logan, Magnolia, Man, Midland Trail, Moorefield, Petersburg, Poca, Ravenswood, Ritchie County, River View, Scott, Shady Spring, Sherman, Sissonville, South Harrison, St. Marys, Summers County, Tolsia, Wayne, Weir, Williamstown, Winfield, Wyoming East, Westside.*
 3. **Facilities meeting criteria of Class A only:** APPROVED: *Buffalo, Calhoun County, Cameron, East Hardy, Meadow Bridge, Mount View, Pendleton County, Pocahontas County, Richwood, Tucker County, Tug Valley, Valley(W) (needs approval)*, Wahama, Webster County, Wheeling Central Catholic (Wheeling University), Wirt County.*
- D. If the home site is not listed in the approved sites, the host school may select from the list above. The listed sites are categorized according to their meeting the standards as set forth in Item 2. The home school wishing to use another facility should make the necessary arrangements prior to attending the playoff meeting on Sunday prior to the first-round games.
- E. If the participating school cannot secure an adequate game site, the **WVSSAC** will select the playoff site.
- F. In first, second, and third round games, the highest rated visiting schools shall select the date and time of game. If a conflict exists and mutual agreement cannot be reached, the WVSSAC will set time and date. Night games will start at 7:00 p.m. Day games, including the Friday following Thanksgiving, will start at 1:00 p.m. or 4 p.m.
- G. If the visiting school does not feel that the home site meets the criteria as set forth in Item 1-2, a protest, with cause, must be filed no later than 6:00 p.m. on the Sunday preceding the playoff game. The Executive Director will then select a committee composed of one
(1) Board of Control member (Chairman) and two (2) members from the WVSSAC

Football Coaches' Committee to inspect the playing site and make a report with recommendation to the Executive Director of the WVSSAC. This report with recommendations is due no later than 6:00 p.m. on Monday preceding the playoff game. The school filing the protest will assume all costs involved in performing the inspection if the protest is denied.

II. CHAMPIONSHIP:

A. All championship games will be played on the same weekend and the same game site.

	2026	2027	2028	2029
A	Saturday, 12:00 noon	Saturday, 7:00 PM	Friday, 12:00 noon	Friday, 7:00 PM
AA	Saturday, 7:00 PM	Friday, 12:00 noon	Friday, 7:00 PM	Saturday, 12:00 noon
AAA	Friday, 12:00 noon	Friday, 7:00 PM	Saturday, 12:00 noon	Saturday, 7:00 PM
AAAA	Friday, 7:00 PM	Saturday, 12:00 noon	Saturday, 7:00 PM	Friday, 12:00 noon

III. ADMINISTRATION:

NOTE: *The administrator / game director must be in attendance at all playoff meetings.*

The WVSSAC will appoint a game director for each game site and the director will administer the game according to the regulations of the WVSSAC. His/her duties include:

- A. Provide participating schools with any necessary information not included in this manual.
- B. Engage statisticians and provide them with WVSSAC forms. The host school is responsible for reporting game results to wire services.
- C. Provide competent timer, scoreboard operator, announcer, chain crew, and (2) ball persons.
- D. Make arrangement for managing concessions.
- E. Arrange to have emergency personnel available at game site.
- F. Secure ticket sellers and takers.
- G. Assign dressing rooms to the teams and game officials.
- H. Make necessary arrangements for marking field in accordance with National Federation Rules.
- I. The host school will furnish the equipment and the chain crew.
- J. Each school will be permitted fifteen (15) passes for cheerleaders.
- K. The WVSSAC will supply tickets for first, second and third round games. The winning school will then have tickets available to sell immediately. The game director will have the tickets for the second and third round games.
- L. Ticket prices will be \$8.00 per person for the First, Second and Third Rounds. Ticket prices for the Football Championships will be \$10.00 per person. Book tickets (4 games) for the four championship games will be \$36.00 per person.
- M. The WVSSAC will provide programs for all playoff games. In order to assist in preparing a program, it is necessary that each school submit roster, school information and schedule with game results on-line. Information will only be accepted on-line. Pictures and team page ads can either be e-mailed (Anna.Brown@wvssac.org) or brought to the initial playoff meeting on Sunday week 19. Instructions for submitting them online were included in the coaches packet.
- N. Please inform teams and bands where their buses should be parked and the location of the dressing rooms as well as seating arrangements for the fans.
- O. It is the responsibility of the host school to provide adequate police protection.
- P. Each game director will be paid \$125.00 deducted from gross receipts.
- Q. Each game director will appoint a media coordinator to coordinate media coverage and needs. A local representative of this profession would be ideal to handle this area.
- R. Only handheld signs, worded or displayed in good taste, are acceptable. The use of confetti,

shredded paper, amplified noise makers and cannons is prohibited. Refer to the Spectator Support Information printed in the Interscholastic.

- S. It is recommended that electrical outlets be provided for sideline heaters, and if heaters are provided for the "home" school, that this same service be made available to the "visitor." If heaters are too close to sidelines or present a safety hazard, then they should not be provided. If visitors provide their own heater/s they must not be a safety hazard and must have the host's permission.
- T. **WVSSAC POLICY ON FILMING:** Participating schools are permitted to video tape a competition for coaches analysis and review; schools must adhere to current WVSSAC and NFHS rules regarding the use, exchange and distribution of the video recording including in-game usage.

Positions for school camera operators and equipment are assigned by the WVSSAC and/or Game Director. For Final Site events, any RF signals used by school for the purpose of video recordings must be coordinated in advance of the competition with the WVSSAC Media Partners (NFHS Network and/or MetroNews) to ensure the school does not interfere with the television/video stream coverage.

Accredited working media members (including videographers and photographers) must secure proper credentials from the WVSSAC or host school and are subject to all WVSSAC media credential policies.

Non-media Individuals who wish to secure access to WVSSAC Events for purposes of gathering video (or photos) must secure a commercial content license from the WVSSAC (subject to fees and available space). The commercial content licensee must adhere to WVSSAC intellectual property policies and commercial content policies.

Video streaming rights must be secured from the WVSSAC (subject to fees and available space) and adhere current television/video media right policies.

The copyright for all video secured at a WVSSAC Event is owned by the WVSSAC.

- U. It was recommended that home administration provide the visitors with a time schedule to make sure that the game starts on time and that the field is cleared five (5) minutes prior to the game of all pre-game activity.

IV. GAMES PROCEDURES:

- A. The home management is responsible for flag presentation and the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner.
- B. Teams are to leave the playing field 15 minutes before game time and return promptly at five minutes before kick-off time. Upon returning to the playing field, the captains will participate in the tossing of the coin.
- C. No team will enter the playing field for pregame warm-up earlier than 1 1/2 hours before the game time. Players will be allowed to walk the field if field conditions permit. No equipment and/or implement of the sport will be permitted during the walk-through.
- D. There can be no practice on the home field anytime during the week of the game unless the field has artificial playing surface.
- E. Sideline Passes will no longer be distributed from the WVSSAC. Distribution will be at the discretion of the game administrator.
- F. Length of halftime shall be 20 minutes.
- G. Bands: Members of the school band (Rule 127-5-2.1) in uniform of the two participating schools shall be admitted to the game free. Only members of the school band shall be permitted to

- H. The team designated as the home team will wear dark colored jerseys and the visiting team will wear white colored jerseys. The team finishing the highest in the final WVSSAC rating will be considered the home team for all levels of playoff competition.
- I. Each participating school shall present two (2) legal footballs for game use as per Rule 1- 3(1-2-3) to the referee at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled kickoff.
- J. ***The NFHS APPROVED Wilson GST or Wilson GRT football shall be used in a playoff game. Schools cannot use a product from another company.***

Championship: 5%

The cost of filming playoff games will not be included as a game expense item.

VI. OFFICIALS:

- A. Officials will be assigned to each game by the WVSSAC. Each official will be paid **\$100.00** for working the contest. Two cars will be allowed .31 per mile round trip travel expense.
- B. The officials will be selected by the WVSSAC, and host game director will be notified.
- C. Officials will accept game assignments through Arbiter Sports. Officials will be paid through Arbiter Pay. Officials must set up Arbiter Pay account in order to receive payment for games worked.

VII. RADIO - TELEVISION - PRESS:

- A. There will be no delayed or live televising of any championship football game(s) unless approved by the WVSSAC and/or Board of Directors. If any person(s) or TV station requests a delayed taping, please direct them to the WVSSAC office. The fee for delayed broadcasting or viewing is covered in the TV Contract. Request for a live telecast must have prior approval from the Board of Directors.
- B. Any radio station desiring to broadcast any game, live or delayed, in the first three rounds must contact the game director to secure permission to broadcast. For championship games contact METRONEWS.
- C. When broadcasting facilities are limited at the site of the game, the two stations representing the two participating schools shall be assigned the two best facilities, and each school shall designate what radio station is to be given this preference. This is left to the discretion of each individual school that participates in the playoffs. After the first two selections are made, the third best facility should be occupied by a station representing the host school. Thereafter, choice of facilities shall be filled in order of request. A maximum number of three passes any be provided for any authorized radio station.
- D. All requests for space should be done through the game director.
- E. The Board of Directors reserves the right to discontinue broadcasting of any station at any time in the event that such broadcast is considered by the Board to be in poor taste or incompatible with educational dignity or propriety of the high schools of the State of West Virginia. During the game or tournament, there shall be no political, tobacco, liquor, or malt spirit advertising. There shall not be any destructive criticism of the tournament game or game officials and their decisions either directly or indirectly.
- F. The rights to any future use for commercial purpose(s) of any video tapes or radio broadcasts connected with these playoffs are reserved by the WVSSAC.

WVSSAC FOOTBALL PLAYOFF SITE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of School _____ Date _____

1. Applying for following type site: (Refer to Playoff Manual) **All Classes** **AA/A** **A only**
2. Seating Capacity (permanent seats - 18" per occupant)

A. Home Side _____ **B. Visitor Side** _____ **C. Total** _____

3. **Playing Area:**

A. Drains properly (approximately 1/4 per foot slope from center to sideline)

Yes _____ No _____

B. Does any team use your field as a practice area?

Yes _____ No _____

C. Do field and markings conform to Rule 1-2-(1-8), National Federation Rules?

Yes _____ No _____

D. Is field and participants area separated from fans?

Yes _____ No _____

E. Is fence or barrier at least five (5) yards from playing area?

Yes _____ No _____

F. Are adequate benches available for each team?

Yes _____ No _____

G. Are benches at least four (4) yards from sideline and free standing?

Yes _____ No _____

H. Is your turf in safe and playable condition for late season play?

Yes _____ No _____

I. Are field lights operable and of high quality for a night game?

Yes _____ No _____

4. Is an on field microphone for the officials in operable conditions? Yes _____ No _____

5. Is an electric scoreboard and a 25 second field clock in operable condition? Yes _____ No _____

6. Are there separate and accessible dressing and showering facilities for both teams?

Yes _____ No _____ State number you can accommodate:

Home _____ **Visitor** _____

7. Are there separate and accessible dressing and showering facilities for officials?

Yes _____ No _____

8. Are there adequate press box facilities? Yes _____ No _____

9. Is adequate spectator parking available? Yes _____ No _____

10. Do you have a medical / weather emergency plan? Yes _____ No _____

11. Are restrooms of adequate size and available for home and visitors?

Yes _____ No _____

12. Once a site has been approved, schools/facilities will not have to annually submit the Request to Host/Football Playoff Site Form unless site conditions change.

Signed _____ Principal _____ School _____

EMAIL/SEND TO: Chris Wells, Assistant Executive Director
chris.wells@wvssac.org
WVSSAC
2875 Staunton Turnpike
Parkersburg, WV 26104

WEST VIRGINIA SECONDARY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES COMMISSION



2875 Staunton Turnpike, Parkersburg, WV 26104-7219

TELEPHONE: 304-485-5494
FAX NUMBER: 304-428-5431

E-MAIL: wvssac@wvssac.org
WEB SITE: www.wvssac.org



BULLETIN

TO: Principal, Athletic Director, Football Coach
FROM: Chris Wells, Assistant Executive Director
DATE: Fall 2026
SUBJECT: Football Playoff Site - Visitors Facilities Report

Since you were the visitors in the first, second, and/or semi-final game, we would appreciate your response concerning the home school facilities.

Round: _____ Class: _____

Home Team: _____ vs Visitor: _____

I. Name of facility: _____

II. Does it meet WVSSAC specification of an "approved playoff" site as specified in the
WVSSAC Football Playoff Manual?

Yes

No

☐☐

III. If the answer is no, please list the area(s) not meeting requirements:

IV. Comments:

Person Completing Form

Name of School Reporting

Reimbursement will be withheld until this form is submitted to the WVSSAC.
Email: chris.wells@wvssac.org

2026 Football Bulletin

WVSSAC Football Game Shortening Rule:

Re: NFHS Football Rule 3-1-2

NEW: 42 Point Differential at Halftime or in the 3rd Quarter, game shortening procedures will take effect for the remainder of the contest

Beginning with the start of the 4th period if a 35-point differential has been reached the clock operator will keep the game clock running except for the following situations:

- Clock stopped for an injured player
- A charged Team timeout is awarded
- There is a change of possession
- There is a score
- For a try after touchdown
- Any extended delay

When these instances occur, the **Referee** will face the clock operator and give the Stop the Clock signal (**signal 3**).

When the clock is stopped for any of the above reasons the clock will start on the Ready-for-Play by the Referee. The **Referee** will face the clock operator and give the start the clock signal (**signal 2**).

The game clock will run during the following:

- Incomplete legal or illegal forward pass
- Runner goes out of bounds
- For Penalty Administration including delay of game fouls
- When a first down is gained with no change of team possession
- When there is a change of possession and the team that had possession at the beginning of the down has possession at the end of the down.

Game officials will use all normal mechanics within the Game Shortening Period. The remainder of the 3rd and/or 4th period will be under this rule even if the differential is lessened.

NFHS Rule 3-1-3 may still may be utilized. "A period or periods may be shortened in any emergency by agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee. By mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee, any remaining period may be shortened at any time or the game terminated."

Larry McCloy

WVSSAC

Football Clinician

2026

WVSSAC 20-YARD LINE OVERTIME PROCEDURE

REGULAR SEASON OVERTIME PROCEDURE

Regular season high school football games, which are tied at the end of regulation time shall be continued by using the 20-yard line overtime procedure. Overtime periods will be played until a winner is determined.

Overtime for middle schools will be played until a winner is determined. No overtime will be played in JV Games. *PSK shall not be used in overtime periods.*

PLAYOFF OVERTIME PROCEDURE

The 20-yard line overtime procedure shall be used, and a winner shall be determined.

PROCEDURE:

Modify the 10-yard overtime procedure in the Rules Book to have Team A put the ball in play at their 20-yard line, 1st and 10. A first down may be gained, and Team A shall continue to attempt to score.



SCOREBOARD

TIME: 00:00

PERIOD 4

HOME: 7

VISITORS: 7



Revise National Federation 2026 Football Rules Book - pages 87-90.

1st & 10 from the 20-yard line procedure will be used in WV for OT procedure (unless moved by penalty).

A three-minute intermission shall precede the first overtime period. All other overtime periods shall be preceded with a two-minute intermission. Team captains come out to begin each OT period. The overtime is considered as an extension of the 4th period.

Only 1 coin toss will be conducted prior to the 1st overtime. If a 2nd overtime is played, the loser of the coin flip from the 1st overtime, will have choice to begin the 2nd overtime. No more coin flips will take place no matter how many overtimes are played.

Larry McCloy,
WVSSAC Football Clinician
June 15, 2026