

**ARTICLE 220
FOOTBALL**

2200. AGE REQUIREMENT

A student under 15 years of age may not participate in an interscholastic contest or scrimmage against the varsity team of another school. This Bylaw may be waived by Section action provided the Section adopts criteria for such a waiver which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. Participant must be at least 14 years of age;
- B. A signed consent statement from the parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver, allowing participation at the varsity level;
- C. A statement from the head coach that the student-athlete has the physical and mental maturity to compete at the varsity level;
- D. A statement of compliance must be forwarded by the principal through CIFSSHome to the respective Section Office verifying that all required documentation has been completed and is on file in the appropriate school office.

<>Record the student's information under the "Forms" tab in CIFSSHome (Football 14 Year Old) as a statement of compliance by your school principal verifying that all required documentation has been completed and is on file in the appropriate school office.
(Revised May 2000 Federated Council/Revised March 2004 Executive Committee/Revised April 2019 Federated Council)

2201. NUMBER OF FOOTBALL PRACTICE DAYS; NO SUNDAY PRACTICE; TEAM CAMPS/OTHER OFF-SEASON ACTIVITIES

- A. There shall be no football games until the team has had 14 days of practice before the first game. Each individual student on the team must have had at least 10 days of practice before being allowed to compete in a game. (The opening date of football practice may be determined by each Section.) No Sunday practice is permitted (See Bylaw 504.M. for exception)
- B. Football teams are limited to two days per week of full contact practice, with no more than 45 minutes of full contact on each of those days during the season of sport. For purposes of this Bylaw, each team's season of sport is defined as the first day of practice, as allowed by the Section, until the final contest for the team. All full contact practices are prohibited in the off-season which includes team camps. Full contact practice is defined by state statute as a practice where drills or live action is conducted that involves collisions at game speed where players execute tackles and other activity that is typical of an actual tackle football game. For the purposes of this Bylaw, refer to the definition of Live Action as defined by USA Football.
(Revised April 2018 Federated Council)
- C. Team camps and other off-season activities are allowable with the following equipment only: footballs, bags, blocking sleds and football shoes.
(Approved April 2015 Federated Council)

NOTE: For policies related to definition of full-contact and allowable in-season, off-season and team camp activities please consult the football section in the blue pages and local Section Bylaws.

The CIF has developed the following regarding full contact football practices:

Allowable Activities During the Season of Sport:

- A team is allowed two days per week of full contact practice, with no more than 45 minutes of full contact on each of those days. This includes live action and thud.
- A team may participate in air, bags/ blocking sleds and control drills at any time unless the Section has implemented more restrictive rules. A team may continue to dress in full pads for practice when conducting any of these drills defined below:
 - Air – Players run unopposed without bags or any opposition
 - Bags/Blocking Sleds – Activity is executed against a bag/blocking sleds, shield or pad to allow for a soft- contact surface, with or without the resistance of a teammate or coach standing behind the bag.
 - Control – Drill is run at assigned speed until the moment of contact with a pre-determined winner. Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet allowing an exit for the ball carrier when one is involved in the drill.

Allowable Activities During the Off-Season:

- No full contact practice is allowed during the off-season. Please consult Section Bylaws for allowable off-season activities.
- For purposes of this Bylaw, the off-season is defined as the team's last football contest of the season until the first day of practice the following school year as set by the Section.

Allowable Activities for Team Camps:

- No full contact practice is allowed during the off-season.
- Team camps are considered practice
- If allowed by the Section, a team may participate in air, bags/blocking sleds and control drills (see above definitions for these activities) while attending a team camp. A team may continue to dress in full pads for practice when conducting any of these drills at a team camp. Please consult Section and School District rules regarding the use of school equipment in the off-season
- For purposes of this Bylaw, the off-season is defined as the team's last football contest of the season until the first day of practice the following school year as set by the Section.

Question: What is the implementation date for this bylaw?

Answer: In order to comply with AB 2127, this bylaw will be implemented immediately.

Question: May teams continue to use Thud as a training drill?

Answer: Yes, However, the time spent in Thud drills is considered full-contact and would count against the team's allotment in both for both days and minutes.

Question: Does unused time carry over to the 2nd day of allowable full-contact?

Answer: No. Teams are allowed 2 days per week of full-contact with no more than 45 minutes on each of those days. If a team does not use the entire 90 minutes of full-contact on one day, it may not carry over those unused minutes to the next day.

Question: Is a team allowed any type of contact outside of the two days per week with no more than 45 minutes on each of those days? Answer:

Yes. A team may still engage in Control drills. See the Policy Page for Bylaw 2201 for the definition of control.

Question: If allowed by the Section, may a team, in the off-season, engage in drills that are not considered full-contact? Answer: Yes. However, no

full-contact practice is allowed during the off-season at any time.

Question: Is full-contact allowed at team camps?

Answer: No. According to AB 2127, team camps are considered practice so full-contact would be prohibited.

Question: May teams attend a full-contact team camp outside of California?

Answer: No. AB 2127 and CIF Bylaw 2201 apply no matter where the team camp is conducted.

Question: May teams attend a team camp that only utilizes activities that are not considered full-contact?

Answer: Yes. Teams may attend a team camp and participate in drills that are not considered full-contact such as Air, Bags/Blocking Sleds and Control.

Question: Are players allowed to attend individual camps and participate in full-contact drills?

Answer: Yes. However, schools should consult their Section and School District (or school) policies regarding the use of school equipment by individuals. Also, schools may not use individual camps to circumvent AB 2127 and Bylaw 2201 regarding team camps.

2202. SCRIMMAGE LIMITATIONS

No individual student shall participate in an interscholastic scrimmage before his/her 10th day of practice for that particular school. Scrimmage is defined as practice where the teams alternate in carrying the ball, downs are not counted, no score is kept and the coaches are on the field directing play.

- 2202.1 A team must complete a minimum of 10 days of practice prior to competing in an interscholastic scrimmage or football carnival. Neither the interscholastic scrimmage nor carnival for the team or an individual, may be on the tenth day of practice. Two or more sessions in one day count as one day's practice for the team or an individual.

<>2203. PHYSICAL CONDITIONING PRACTICE

A high school shall not conduct a physical conditioning practice session during the summer prior to the opening date of authorized football practice, unless so authorized by the appropriate Section. The start date for fall football practice, for each individual school, will be determined according to the following formula:

<>2203.1 Week 0 Games – The first official day of football practice is July 27, 2026. The period of July 27 – July 31 will serve as a five-day acclimatization period (Bylaw 503.K(1)) for prospective members of a high school team.

<>2203.2 Week 1 Games – The first official day of football practice is August 3, 2026. The period of August 3 through August 7 will serve as a five-day acclimatization period (Bylaw 503.K(1)) for prospective members of a high school team.

<>2203.3 During the first three days of the acclimatization period practice or testing activity of July 27 through July 29 (zero week) and August 3 through August 5 (week 1), helmets shall be the only protective equipment student-athletes may wear. During the next two days of practice or testing activity of July 30 through July 31 (zero week) and August 6 through August 7 (week 1), helmets, and shoulder pads shall be the only protective equipment student athletes may wear.

Participants shall not engage in more than one on-field practice per day during the five-day acclimatization period. On-field practices shall last no longer than two hours. The acclimatization period may include various facets of football training (teaching techniques, chalks talks, pass patterns, etc.) but MAY NOT include any body contact such as tackling or blocking. During acclimatization there will be no equipment used such as blocking or tackling dummies, pads, etc. Student athletes may practice in full pads on the sixth day of practice or testing activity.

2203.4 All conditioning sessions will be held at the schools regular practice field. No workouts will be permitted at beaches, mountain resorts, or military sites.

QUESTION: When will schools be allowed to fit equipment?

ANSWER: Schools may fit equipment prior to the conditioning period as long as it is during the summer and not during the dead period. Uniforms may not be issued prior to the conditioning period.

2203.5 Schools will be permitted to issue uniforms and equipment on the first day of conditioning after which a time may be designated for individual and team photos. No conditioning in any type of uniform will be permitted.

<>2203.6 The first official day of practice in full pads **cannot** occur before:

Week 0 Games – Saturday, August 1, 2026

Week 1 Games – Saturday, August 8, 2026

2203.7 The two-week dead period is mandatory.

2204. SPRING FOOTBALL PRACTICE/JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Eighth and ninth grade students from an elementary, middle or junior high school may not take part in the Spring football practice at the high school (See Bylaw 303 for multi-school exception). A high school coach may not conduct a football practice session at a separate junior high school.

2205. NUMBER OF GAMES LIMITATION

A high school football team of any classification or name shall not play more than two (2) games in any eight (8) day period. A continued game under National Federation football rules shall not be considered in this limitation.

2206. TIE-BREAKER SYSTEM

A. Each Section is authorized to establish a tie-breaker system for regular season football games and Section playoff football games.

(Revised October 2017 Federated Council)

2206.1 The "25-Yard Tie Breaker System" is authorized for use in the Southern Section for playoffs as follows:

2206.11 Respective leagues have the option of adopting the plan for use.

2206.12 If adopted, then all ties within that league must be resolved with the "25-Yard Tie Breaker System" for playoffs.

2206.13 If adopted, the plan may be used for the varsity, junior varsity or frosh-soph levels, or any combination of these levels.

2206.14 By mutual consent, the plan may be used for non-league contests.

2206.15 The "25-Yard Tie Breaker System" will be used for all levels of CIF Southern Section playoff contests, including the Championship game.

2206.16 The "25-Yard Tie Breaker System" may not be used beyond the last allowable regular playing date to determine entry into the playoffs.

2207. OFFICIAL NATIONAL FEDERATION AUTHENTICATION MARK

Only balls with the National Federation authentication mark shall be used in the sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, flag football, football, lacrosse, soccer, softball, volleyball and water polo.

(Revised to include lacrosse November 2000 Federated Council/Editorial May 2023)

2208. MERCY RULE

At the conclusion of the third quarter or any point thereafter, if there is a point differential of 35 or more points, a running clock shall be instituted for the remainder of the game regardless of the score. The game clock shall stop only for a score, a free kick following a fair catch or awarded fair catch, a charged team timeout, a coach-referee conference or an officials' timeout. This Bylaw applies to all levels of play.

(Approved May 2011 Federated Council)

2209. JERSEY COLORS

In all football games played between member schools of the CIF Southern Section, the host team shall wear dark-colored jerseys, and the visiting team will wear white jerseys. If a team has only one set of jerseys, it will be its responsibility to notify opponents in sufficient time in advance of any scheduled contest in order that proper arrangements can be made to make certain that both teams have contrasting colored jerseys.

2210. OFFICIALS ASSIGNMENT PRACTICE

2210.1 The officials for all football games played between Los Angeles Section and Southern Section schools must be appointed by the Los Angeles City Supervisor of Athletics when the game is to be played at the Los Angeles Section schools and by the Southern Section Commissioner of Athletics when the game is to be played at the Southern Section school.

2210.2 By action of the CIF Southern Section Council, FIVE officials will be assigned to all eleven-man Varsity football contests.

2211. LENGTH OF QUARTERS

The length of the quarters in football games shall be twelve (12) minutes at the varsity, junior varsity, sophomore, Soph-Frosh and freshmen levels. Quarters may be shortened only by mutual consent of both competing schools.

2212. NATIONAL FEDERATION RULES

All football games in the CIF Southern Section will be played under the National Federation rules unless otherwise provided herein.

2213. ORGANIZED TEAM PRACTICE

Organized team practice shall be interpreted as meaning the association of a coach with potential team members for the purpose of learning or practicing the skills of football.

2213.1 See Rule 2203 to determine the start date for organized before and after-school team practice.

2213.2 All football practice sessions should be conducted on the campus or regular home practice field of the school holding the practice.

2214. SCRIMMAGES

A school is permitted one interscholastic scrimmage (at all levels) which may not be held until a team completes a minimum of 10 days of practice prior to the scrimmage. (See Rule 2202)

- 2214.1 The interscholastic scrimmage (or carnival) must be held prior to the first game of the regular season.
- 2214.2 An interscholastic scrimmage is a training session where the teams alternate in carrying the ball, no score is kept, and the coaches are on the field directing play.

QUESTION: Are there other parameters one should be aware of with regard to an interscholastic scrimmage?

ANSWER: An interscholastic scrimmage is defined as a training session in which students from more than one school participate, any aspect of play is exercised and no score is kept. Only students regularly enrolled in public and private CIF member school, grades 9-12, shall be permitted to participate in a scrimmage. Alumni shall not be permitted to take part other than the one allowable contest where noted in specific sports.

- 2214.3 Officials may be used.
- 2214.4 Two (2) or more teams may participate.
- 2214.5 Interscholastic scrimmages may be held at night by mutual agreement of the two participating schools.
- 2214.6 Schools are not permitted to charge admission to the scrimmage.

2215. CARNIVALS

All district or league carnivals must be sanctioned by the Commissioner.

- 2215.1 Such carnivals must include four or more schools from one league or one school district.
- 2215.2 Officials may be used.
- 2215.3 Each team will be permitted to participate in a maximum of two regulation 12-minute periods.
- 2215.4 Admission may be charged, but net receipts may not go to the participating schools. Profits shall be donated to worthy charities or placed in the league treasury to benefit all schools in the league.

<>2216. STARTING DATES FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC CONTESTS/"0" WEEK CONTEST

No interscholastic contests (non-league or league) may be scheduled prior to August 21, 2026. For information regarding scheduling of a contest prior, refer to the following guidelines:

<>2216.1 If a school chooses to schedule a "0" Week contest, bye week practices must be conducted as follows:

The bye week is from Monday through Saturday. Practices must be conducted without pads. Players are allowed to wear helmets during the bye week, similar to the first three days of the fall conditioning period. (See Rule 2203.3 for further clarification.)

QUESTION: What medical coverage is required for regular season football contests?

ANSWER: The host school shall designate and provide a medical practitioner for all regular season (non-league and league) football contests.

2217. MAXIMUM TEAM CONTESTS

A football team will be permitted to play no more than 10 football games during the season, not including CIF Southern Section playoffs. 8-man football teams will be permitted 9 games.

<>2218. END OF COMPETITION

All competition must end on or before Friday October 30, and Saturday, October 31, for 8-person schools.

QUESITON: Are contest(s) at any level allowed after the submission of league entries?

ANSWER: No, once the league entries have been submitted no other contest(s) are allowed to be played. See last allowable contest date on the sports calendar.

2219. SUMMERTIME RULES/SUMMER DEAD PERIOD/SPORTS CAMPS

Refer to Blue Book Bylaw 1223 for specific information on Summertime Rules/ Summer Dead Period/ Sports Camps

2219.1 It should be noted that in football only, the following is applicable as part of the high school program.

- a. High school students participating in summer football practice may wear the following type of clothing or uniform: (1) football shoes; (2) "T" or sweat shirts; (3) trunks or sweat pants; (4) protective equipment for the ears and head. (Football or other hard plastic helmets will not be permitted because of the hazard to other players.
- b. The following equipment will be permitted during summer football practice provided it is used in a safe and sane manner: (1) air dummies; (2) stand-up dummies; (3) two or seven-man sleds; (4) tackling dummies; (5) blocking aprons.
- c. There shall be no live tackling at any time.

2219.2 A student with further high school eligibility may participate during the summer on a touch or flag football team. No CIF Southern Section restrictions shall be placed upon the personnel composition of such a team. A high school football coach may, as an individual, coach such a team.

QUESTION: Can protective gear such as shoulder pads, helmets, etc., be furnished by schools for use at private or public schools or camps?

ANSWER: No. Uniforms or any type of school equipment may not be used.

2219.3 A student with further high school eligibility may attend and participate in football activity at any public recreation, private football school or camp. A member of the football coaching staff from the school which the student attends may serve as an instructor at such a camp. A private football camp is defined where there are students from three or more schools in attendance and the camp is not being run by a high school coach who has students in attendance. A team contact camp is defined as a camp in which high school players utilizing helmets and pads participate along with their high school coach(es). Participation in team contact camps is prohibited.

2220. OUTSIDE COMPETITION BY AN INDIVIDUAL

Refer to Article 60 for specific guidelines.

2221. COUNTING A TIE GAME

A regulation *called* game with a tie score shall be counted as ½ game won and ½ game lost for each team.

2222. PLAYOFFS

Refer to Article 35 (Playoffs) for details regarding playoff information. (Specific information will be contained in sport preview booklet and playoff information bulletins.)

2222.1 The holding of night rallies or bonfires in connection with CIF Southern Section football games is prohibited. It is recommended that they not be permitted in connection with league or practice contests.

2222.2 A licensed medical doctor or the primary health provider designated by the home team as team physician or team doctor shall be in attendance at all playoff games. The fee shall be paid from the gross game receipts.

2222.3 Prior to each CIF Southern Section football playoff game there shall be a mandatory exchange of four game films/tapes between the competing schools. If a school entering the playoffs has not filmed/taped any of its games, it should communicate that fact to the Commissioner prior to the beginning of the playoffs. Each coach will have his choice of any four of his opponent's game films/tapes. These film/tapes will be unedited and shall include all plays as originally filmed/taped. In addition to the mandatory exchange, it shall be permissible for either coach to secure from other sources any game film/tape of his opponent that he may desire to view for the purpose of preparing for his next playoff game.

- 2222.4 The initial mandatory film exchange will take place immediately after pairings are released. Subsequent film exchanges will be made by 12:00 noon the day after each playoff game. The coaches shall make the return exchange of film/tapes the night of their playoff game.
- 2222.5 Any violation of the mandatory film/tape exchange rule (refusal to cooperate) should be reported at once to the CIF Southern Section Office. Such violation may subject a team to disqualification from the playoffs.
- 2222.6 The 25-yard tie breaker system may be used by leagues in order to determine entry, not priority, of their schools for playoffs so long as it is provided for in the league constitution and the competition is held no later than the last allowable regular playing date.
- 2222.7 The persons assigned to the "chain crew" responsible for marking down and distance on the field, shall be responsible adults.