

NEW JERSEY STATE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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2025 Baseball Rule Modifications

Baseball Coaches, Athletic Directors, and Umpires are advised to read all rules carefully and to note the following state-approved modifications:

Rule 1, Section. 4, Article. 4 - For special occasions, commemorative or memorial patches may be worn not to exceed 4 sq. in. They must be worn in a uniform fashion in an appropriate and dignified manner without compromising the integrity of the uniform. The patch must be worn on the jersey. NJSIAA Approval must be secured prior to placing any commemorative or memorial patch on the uniform.

Rule 2, Section 33, Article 1. - Speed Up Rules are adopted in its entirety. Courtesy Runner rules apply to all games; put-out rules are allowed by conference/tournament adoption.

Rule 4, Section. 2, Article. 2 - The game shall end when the visiting team is behind 10 or more runs after 4 ½ innings, or after the fifth inning, if either team is 10 runs behind and both teams have had an equal number of times at-bat.

Rule 4, Section. 2, Article. 4 - (1) A two-hour time limit may be approved for (sub-varsity) games by mutual or conference agreement. (2) The NJSIAA does not approve of suspended games during regular season play. Exception (a): Conference, League, & County tournament play will be permitted to play under the suspended game rule when a winner is needed to advance or crown a champion. Exception (b): A Conference, League or County may utilize the suspended game rule at the end of the regular season to determine a conference or division title. (3) See below for Suspended Game Rule pertaining to State Tournament play; Conferences may adopt for Conference and County Tournament play.

Rule 4, Section 4, Article 1a - A game shall be forfeited to the offended team by the umpire when a team is fifteen (15) minutes late in appearing or in beginning play after the umpire calls "play" at scheduled game time. This may be set aside if the umpire considers the delay unavoidable. Athletic Directors and/or Site Management shall relay pertinent information to game umpires, i.e., the bus has broken down.

Rule 4, Section 5, Article 1. - Protests based upon an official's judgment or misinterpretation (misapplication) of the playing rules will not be honored by the NJSIAA.

Rule 10, Section 1, Article 9 Umpires shall wear the navy-blue pullover shirt or state association adopted shirt (Black Shirt or Light Blue). All umpires shall wear the same color shirt during a game, and if they cannot agree, navy blue will be the default color. All other color shirts are prohibited for high school games in New Jersey. Please refer to the Officials Handbook for additional information.

NJSIAA Baseball Points of Emphasis

Adult Coaches must wear a Helmet in the Coach's Box

Any adult coaching in the first or third base coach's box shall wear a helmet. The helmet may be:

- Tradition hard-shell with a visor and no ear flaps.
- Single ear flap.
- Double ear flap.

No plastic hat liners or inserts may be worn within a cloth hat to meet this requirement.

All baseball officials are required to enforce this policy and shall not start ANY inning until ALL coaches on the field are in compliance with this NJSIAA safety policy

The NJSIAA is highly recommending that all Middle Schools adopt this safety policy for coaches.

Sunglasses

High School baseball is an extra-curricular activity and an extension of the classroom. Coaches are expected to direct their players to wear sunglasses as designed and not as a fashion statement.

Eye Black

Eye Black has been a staple in the sport of baseball since the 1930's. Originally, the first introduction of eye black was a grease substance made out of beeswax, paraffin and carbon to help players reduce glare from the sun. It has evolved to a less messy version as a plastic sticker placed under the eye socket that does not run when wet from perspiration or soils the uniform. The grease version of eye black is now being worn on the faces of the players to try to intimidate and/or taunt an opponent. Wearing eye black in "War Paint" style is a form of intimidation.

NJSIAA strongly recommends that coaches address the proper wearing of eye black with players.

- Only one Straight Line or Strip of Eye Black is permitted under each eye.
 - If a manufactured strip has the maker's name displayed when applied, it is legal.
- Umpires are directed to leave enforcement to the coach and involve themselves only when the eye black is determined to be taunting or derogatory reference to religion, race, sex and other groups.

Bench / Dugout Area

The primary responsibility of officials, athletic directors, and coaches is the safety of participants. This includes adult coaches as well as student-athletes.

NFHS rules require players and coaches to be within the confines of the bench/dugout area while the ball is live. It is recommended that the bench/dugout area be protected by a fence. No one shall be permitted to stand in the open area that serves as an entrance to the bench/dugout area unless protected by a closed gate.

If the bench/dugout area is not protected by a fence, coaches may utilize a temporary protective device, i.e., a batting practice screen, to sit behind. The bench/dugout area may only be extended away from home plate; not toward home plate.

Coaches may not create a dead ball area and sit in front of the bench/dugout area's protective fence even if protected by the backstop fencing.