Football Rules Changes - 2026

Tue Apr 15 2025

1-5-3c(9) – The committee has approved the wearing of play cards on both the forearm/wrist and belt areas of the body.

9-4-7 – The committee approved new rules language that no player may use the hand(s) to slap the opponent's head.

Rules Reminders:
1-5-1d(5)a - 4, 5 (NEW) — Committee clarifies and restricts attachments on tooth and mouth protectors, effective with the 2026 season.

1-5-2d (NEW), 1-5-3c(6) — Arm sleeve specifications developed to guide manufacturers, players and coaches effective with the 2027 season.

2026 Football Editorial Changes

1-1-8; 1-5-1d(5)a - 4, 5; 1-5-3a(2); 2-15-1; 2-32-6; 3-5-7g; 4-1-3; 5-3-1; 8-2-2; 8-2-3; 8-2-4; 8-2-5; 9-4-3p; 9-8 PENALTY; 10-4-2; 10-4-2b; 10-4-4a; 10-5-3; SIX-PLAYER RULES DIFFERENCES; NFHS OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS.

2026 Football Points of Emphasis

1. Flagrant and Unsportsmanlike Fouls
2. Helping the Runner
3. Sideline Management and Control
4. Identification of the NFHS Authenticating Mark on Game Balls