

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE  
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



## NEWS RELEASE

### **New Rule on Free-Throw Lane Violations Approved in High School Basketball**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (June 8, 2016) — A new rule regarding free-throw lane violations in high school basketball has been added for clarification. Players occupying the marked free-throw lane line spaces cannot enter the free-throw semicircle until the ball touches the ring or the free throw ends.

Rule 9-1-3h was one of five rules changes recommended by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Basketball Rules Committee at its April 20-22 meeting in Indianapolis. The changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

After reviewing the entire free-throw process, the committee approved the addition to Rule 9-1-3 in an effort to make the rule easier to understand and to create a safer environment for the free-throw shooter.

“This new rule was approved by the committee in order to reduce rough play,” said Theresia Wynns, NFHS director of sports and officials and liaison to the rules committee. “Part of what we had observed over several seasons was pushing and the displacement of the free-throw shooter after he or she shot the ball. The new rule will hopefully stop rough play.”

In addition, the Basketball Rules Committee added Rule 1-20 regarding non-playing personnel – such as cheerleaders – on the court during a short time-out. The new rule states that “non-playing personnel shall remain outside of the playing area during a 30-second or

less time-out during the game. Non-playing personnel shall stand outside the free-throw lane lines extended toward the sidelines throughout the game.”

By formalizing awareness of the standards set for non-playing personnel, game officials are able to direct non-playing personnel to an appropriate place outside the playing court.

“The main reason for this additional rule is to minimize risk for everyone,” Wynns said. “Whether a cheerleader or a photographer, having restrictions will help with the overall safety of those near the playing area.”

In addition to these new rules, the rules committee reduced the time to replace a disqualified or injured player from 20 seconds to 15 in Rule 2-12-5. The committee believed that the amount of time presently given is too long and allows for gamesmanship to be displayed.

“After coaches have seen a player get injured or foul out, they already have an idea of who they want in the game as a replacement,” Wynns said. “But they tend to use that time for other reasons, so lessening the time will help uphold the principle of the rule.”

The rules committee also removed restrictions pertaining to player equipment. All extra apparel is permitted to have one logo according to Rule 3-5-6. Last year the committee simplified the color requirements to be consistent on all sleeves, tights, wristbands and headbands. Adding the compression shorts to this rule will assist officials in simplifying enforcement of the uniform rules.

A complete listing of the basketball rules changes will be available on the NFHS website at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org). Click on “Activities & Sports” at the top of the home page, and select “Basketball.”

According to the 2014-15 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey, basketball is the third-most popular boys sport nationwide with 541,479 participants and third-most popular girls sport with 429,504 participants. In terms of school sponsorship, it ranks No. 1 for both boys and girls with 18,072 schools for boys and 17,653 for girls.

**1-20 NEW: Non-playing personnel**, e.g., spirit participants, media, shall remain outside of the playing area during a 30-second or less time-out during the game. Non-playing personnel shall stand outside the free throw lane lines extended toward the sidelines throughout the game.

Rationale: Making officials aware of the standards set for the spirit participants allows the official to manage them when they may not be in an appropriate place.

**2-12-5: Sound a warning signal to begin the 15 seconds** (maximum) permitted for replacing a disqualified or injured player, or for a player directed to leave the game.

Rationale: The amount of time presently given is too long and allows for gamesmanship to be deployed.

**3-5-6: Undershirts** shall be a single solid color similar to the torso of the jersey and shall be hemmed and not have frayed or ragged edges. If the undershirt has sleeves, they shall be the same length. See 3-6 for logo requirements.

Rationale: This would now allow all extra apparel that is worn to have one logo. Last year we simplified the color requirements to be consistent on all sleeves, tights, wristbands and headwear. This would be one more step to assist our officials in simplifying the enforcement of the uniform rules.

**Delete 3-5-7:** (*Compression shorts shall be a single solid color similar to the predominant color of the uniform; the length shall be above the knee. Undergarments shall not extend below the pants/skirt. See 3-6 for logo requirements.*)

Rationale: This rule is no longer needed and would simplify the enforcement of the uniform rules for our officials. Compression shorts will be added to rule 3-5-3.

**9-1-3h NEW: Players occupying marked free-throw lane line spaces** may not enter the free-throw semicircle until the ball touches the ring or until the free throw ends.

Rationale: The addition of this information makes the rule complete and easy to understand.