

Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc.

2020-2021 Wrestling Bulletin 2

Rules, Revisions, and Interpretations



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JANUARY 2020
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MASK JURISDICTION

PIAA officials DO NOT have jurisdiction in regard to whether entire teams and/or individuals are to be wearing masks. Wrestlers reporting to the table with or without a mask does not interfere with determining whether a wrestler is legally equipped.

All mask wearing is based on the Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Coverings along with Section 3, Exceptions to Covering Requirement. Wrestling officials' jurisdiction in regards to mask wearing is only during wrestling. The mask will be treated identically to a head gear for purposes of stopping the bout.

MASK Q & A

- **Question:** If a wrestler is presented on the mat without a mask during a dual meet and the other team refuses to wrestle that person, what happens? This is an individual bout not an entire dual meet. What happens?

ANSWER: Schools must communicate prior to matches and determine what is agreed upon ahead of time regarding mask wearing and whether or not they will wrestle the match. Example - If Team A has an athlete with an exemption to not wear the mask, that should be communicated in advance to Team B. If they agree not to wrestle the match (entire team competition) due to this, then it is a No Contest.

However, if Team A sends a wrestler with an exemption out to wrestle, say at the 145 weight class, and Team B refuses to wrestle the athlete with the exemption, then Team B forfeits that bout at 145 and the Team A wrestler gets a forfeit (and Team A gets the points toward the team score). If Team B would send a wrestler out and then withdraw the wrestler, Team A would get the points toward the team score and then that Team B wrestler is disqualified for improperly being withdrawn from the bout by NFHS Rules (can't wrestle up a weight class since he withdrew).

The disqualified wrestler is eligible for the next contest wrestled by the school (disqualification is not for unsportsmanlike or flagrant misconduct), but not for the remainder of the current contest. Communicating well in advance of the matches/contests is critical in all instances.

MASK Q & A CONTINUED

- **Question:** What type of mask is legal/acceptable?
Answer: Return to Competition Guidelines provide that the wearing of a face mask is legal. It does not indicate what face mask may be used. That is at the discretion of the wrestler and/or school. The mask would still be subject to the "Special Equipment" provisions and could be ruled illegal if found to be dangerous to the wrestler and/or their opponent.
- **Question:** Surgical masks may have wire that is found to be sharp and easily pokes through.
Answer: See above regarding the legality of any special equipment.
- **Question:** Is a gator considered an acceptable face covering or does it have to be a mask?
Answer: Yes. Face covering means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face.
- **Question:** Is a protective wrestling mask with covering over the mouth opening acceptable?
Answer: Yes.
- **Question:** Does a face mask have to be attached to the headgear? (following hair covering rule)
Answer: No.
- **Question:** Matching color, solid color, or limited pattern/image allowed?
Answer: No. If image is unsportsmanlike, it could be prohibited.
- **Question:** Are logo restrictions consistent with the current rule concerning the number of logos and size?
Answer: Yes. Manufacturers' logo would be limited to 2¼ square inches. However, school logos do not have to meet this same criteria.
- **Question:** Is a wrestler allowed to take a timeout to change masks due to becoming too wet?
Answer: Yes, being considered the same as head gear & special equipment, this would be official's time to correct. It would only be considered part of injury timeout if deemed excessive. Meaning done multiple times for a competitive advantage.
- **Question:** May a wrestler start a bout wearing a mask and remove it during a stoppage?
Answer: Based on Section 3 of the Department of Health Face Covering Order a wrestler may make that decision.
- **Question:** Is it an official's judgment on a wrestler pulling a mask down on purpose to avoid a wrestling situation?
Answer: It is an officials' judgment no different than any other penalty if used for a competitive purpose.
- **Question:** What happens if a wrestler has a medical note exempting them from wearing a mask during exercise because of a medical condition and then has to wrestle a team or opponent that they are only allowed to compete against masked opponents?
Answer: Communication between the competing schools is critical in this situation well in advance of the competition in order to avoid any type of confusion surrounding this situation.
- **Question:** It seems post season this year will be a problem as there needs to be winner for advancement purposes?
Answer: Postseason would provide that if a wrestler that does not wrestle for any reason, they will forfeit the contest.

At this time, coaches and officials must follow the Governor's Masking Order which requires face coverings to be worn while inside a building unless an exemption is exercised under Section 3 of that order.

FACE COVERING TIME STOPPAGES AND SAFETY CONCERNS

- Face covering time stoppages and safety concerns:

- Time stoppages during initiated action:

We will follow identical procedures for when an ear guard becomes misplaced:

- If the mask is misplaced, the referee is authorized to stop the match as follows:
 - in the neutral position, when no takedown is in progress, the match may be stopped as soon as the mask is displaced;
 - if the wrestler is being placed at a disadvantage because the misplaced mask is covering the eyes, nose, mouth or is causing choking, the match shall be stopped so that the proper adjustment may be made; or
 - in all other situations, the referee shall stop the match only when there is no significant action taking place. It shall be restarted as the same procedure as following an out of bounds.

- What if a wrestler's shows blood?

- Safety Issues:

- It could be difficult to see a bloody nose of a wrestler who is taken directly to the back in a pinning combination.
RESPONSE: An official cannot call what is not viewed or otherwise seen. Once viewed, the official is to treat the situation identically to any blood situation.
 - Situation- A wrestler that has braces would be required to wear a mouth guard + mask + the mask to protect an injury would certainly impede their breathing.
RESPONSE: The Q&A from DOH provides the same conclusion and example that a mask would not need to be worn if the wearing of a mouth guard inhibits breathing. Permitted through section 3 of the PA Face Covering Order, if accepted by the school.

[Link to Secretary of Health Order](#)