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Title: Participant's Safety Policy

1.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Safety of participants is of paramount concern to Football New Brunswick (FNB). In order to deal with safety related situations that may arise and to protect its players, coaches, officials and other volunteers it is imperative that each member organization of FNB have a set of policies and procedures in place to deal with safety related issues.

According, the Board of Directors (BoD) of FNB, mandate the presidents of each of their member organizations to prepare and implement policies and procedures covering aspects of the sports not contained or covered adequately in the appropriate rule book(s). These policies and procedures should include but are not limited to Adverse Weather, Field Conditions, and Travel. If such plans do not exist, the organization shall follow the FNB policies and procedures. Member organizations policies and procedures may be more restrictive than FNB policies and procedures but may not expose participants to greater risks.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 Each member organization must have policies and procedures and / or guidelines for the protection of players, coaches, and other volunteers under their authority.
- 2.2 These plans should include but are not limited to Adverse Weather, Field Conditions, and Travel.
- 2.3 It is recognized that FNB is responsible for specific events that fall directly under FNB jurisdiction (as opposed to a member organizations jurisdiction). As such FNB will prepare and utilize policies and procedures for the above situations.
- 2.4 It is understood that other safety related policies that require more detailed procedures may not be included in this policy.

- 2.4.1 For concussion and return to play policies, please refer to the Football New Brunswick Concussion and Return to Play Policy.
- 2.4.2 For Emergency Action Plans, please refer to [Football Canada's Emergency Action Plan Guidelines](#).
- 2.4.3 For helmet and equipment standards, please refer to [Football Canada's Purchasing and Maintaining Football Equipment handbook](#)

3.0 PROCEDURES

3.1 Adverse weather

- 3.1.1 Lightning – In the event of lightning during any on field activity (practice, games, etc.), the activity shall be stopped and all players, coaches, volunteers and officials are to immediately move off the field to a safe area. The activity cannot resume till there is a period of 30 minutes free of visible lightning.
- 3.1.2 If play cannot resume within 90 minutes from the time play is stopped the game shall be suspended. The outcome of the game shall be referred to the member association for resolution or if the jurisdiction of the game is directly under FNB, the decision on the outcome of the game shall be referred to FNB.
- 3.1.3 Other adverse weather – In there event of other adverse weather, the following procedures shall be adhered to:

For a scheduled game or scrimmage involving officials

- 1. Prior to the start of the game or scrimmage. – The referee shall notify the coaches that the adverse weather has created an unsafe playing environment and the game shall not be played.
- 2. After the game or scrimmage has started - The referee shall notify the coaches that the adverse weather has created an unsafe playing environment and the game shall be stopped.
- 3. If play cannot resume within 90 minutes from the time play is stopped the game shall be suspended. The outcome of the game shall be referred to the member association for resolution or if the jurisdiction of the game is directly under FNB, the decision on the outcome of the game shall be referred to FNB.

For other activity (practice, competition, etc) not involving officials

1. The head coach or designate shall make a decision if in his (or her) opinion the adverse weather has created an unsafe environment, the activity shall be stopped. The safety of the participants is paramount; when in doubt sit it out!

3.2 Field Condition

The term "Field Conditions" shall be interpreted in this context to include a playing field, gym or other location where a football related activity is taking place.

- 3.2.1 For activities under the control of an official the Referee shall determine, as per the appropriate rule book, if in his (or her) opinion the field conditions are safe for play. If in the opinion of the Referee, the field condition is such that it creates unsafe environment the game shall not be played. The game may be modified to make it safe or if that is not possible the game shall not be played. If during a game the referee becomes aware of a condition that is unsafe the game shall be stopped, the unsafe condition shall be rectified, the game modified to make it safe or the game shall not continue.

For activities (practice, competition, etc) not involving officials

- 3.2.2 The head coach or designate shall make a decision if in his (or her) opinion the field conditions are safe. If in the opinion of the head coach or designate, the field condition is such that it creates unsafe environment the activity shall not be attempted. The activity may be modified to make it safe or if that is not possible the activity shall not be attempted. If during an activity the head coach or designate becomes aware of a condition that is unsafe the activity shall be stopped. The safety of the participants is paramount; when in doubt sit it out!

3.3 Travel

FNB recognizes that activities (games, practices, competitions, etc.) under its jurisdiction often involve teams, players and coaches traveling.

- 3.3.1 Scheduled games and practices will normally be held in the event of inclement weather conditions, i.e. rain, wind or cold.
- 3.3.2 A committee (composed of the FNB president, the FNB Technical Director and a member of the Board of Directors of FNB) will be responsible for determining if activities should be cancelled due to extreme weather conditions. The committee will consult with weather information sources, affected teams and officials as they deem appropriate.



- 3.3.3 Extreme weather conditions would include a forecast of lightning, freezing rain, heavy snow, very heavy rain, very high winds or a combination thereof.
- 3.3.4 Activities may also be postponed by if the host field becomes unavailable (usually due to unfit field conditions).
- 3.3.5 In the event of a cancellation – a representative of the committee (referenced in #2 above) will personally advise the teams involved and the official's liaison as early as possible to avoid initiating any associated travel. All teams will provide the committee with a contact person.
- 3.3.6 In the event of a game postponement, FNB will endeavor to reschedule the activity (if possible) at the earliest opportunity, subject to the availability of teams, fields and officials.
- 3.3.7 It should be noted that parents make the final decision as to whether it is safe for their child to travel to an activity.

3.4 Darkness

- 3.4.1 Activities under the jurisdiction of FNB shall cease within 20 minutes of sunset as determined by Environment Canada or earlier unless sufficient artificial light is available to allow the activity to be continued safely. This procedure does not restrict a referee from stopping a game or scrimmage for unsafe playing conditions due to insufficient lighting at any time.

3.5 2 A day Restrictions

- 3.5.1 FNB's primary focus is player safety. Current data has proven the majority of injuries occur during practice. FNB is following the lead of NCAA, CFL, and Football Canada who currently limit the amount of practices and contact during a day/week.
- 3.5.2 Therefore, FNB will mandate that all programs including high performance may only conduct 1 full contact/full gear practice per day.
- 3.5.3 Teams may conduct a second practice with reduced contact that focuses on technical and tactical development. This practice may have a limited "thud" period but must not have full tackle or full blocking where players are going to the group. The second practice provides coaches and players an opportunity to focus on Safe Contact techniques. It is imperative the level of contact is communicated to players and coaches prior to the event. The second practice should be conducted in uppers or helmets.



3.5.4 The new reduced contact practice policy will require coaches to change their traditional approaches in an effort to:

1. Protect Players long term health
2. Reduce opportunities for head injuries
3. Reduce opportunities for overuse injuries
4. Provide more opportunities for proper technical instruction
5. Provide more opportunities for schematic coaching
6. Promote Safe Contact Principles
7. Provide more opportunities for coaching Special Teams

3.5.5 For more information please refer to the NCAA Document researching [Practice Contact for Student Athletes](#)

3.6 Air Quality Policy

3.6.1 Purpose

1. The purpose of this Policy is to inform athletes, parents, and coaches regarding air quality, and to give direction for Member Organizations, game officials, and team officials when outdoor air quality is poor.

3.6.2 Application of this Policy

1. Specific individuals have responsibilities when air quality is poor. These individuals include:
 - a) Leaders of Member Organization
 - b) Game Officials
 - c) Team Officials
2. The Air Quality Health Index in New Brunswick can be [found here](#)

3.6.3 Information Regarding Air Quality in Relation to Football Activities

1. The individuals listed in section 3.6.2 should be aware of health risks associated with physical activity amid poor air quality and should use the following guide for participant safety:
 - a) If the AQHI value is "3" or below; continue with practices and games as normal.
 - b) If the AQHI value is "4-6"; continue with practices and games while adding the following adjustments:

- i. Reducing intensity
 - ii. Reducing duration
 - iii. Providing extra breaks
- c) If the AQHI value is "7-10+"; reschedule practices and games to a different day or find alternative indoor facilities.
- 2. It is recommended that the individuals listed in section 3.6.2 check weather and environmental factors on game and practice days, including:
 - a) Current weather forecasts
 - b) Forest fires in your region
 - c) Local stubble burning
 - d) Sudden and dramatic changes in wind strength or direction
 - e) Proximity to major roads or highways or industrial areas