



**April 1, 2026**

## **NFHS Boys Lacrosse Weekly Rule Interpretations**

### **Personal Foul – Contact with the Head/Neck**

**Coaches** have an important role in creating safe environments for players by the way they teach players on the offensive and defensive side of the field. Coaches should instruct players to:

- Avoid all physical contact with an opponent's head or neck. This includes use of the stick and any part of the body (head, elbow, shoulder, etc.).
- Control their contact and make legal contact while also not allowing any contact that may slide up towards the head or neck area of an opponent.
- Not initiate contact with an opponent using their own head or neck (spearing).
- Not body-check a player in a defenseless position.
- Not target a player by taking aim at the head or neck of an opponent.
- Not enter the crease with the intent to block a shot without goalkeeper equipment.
- Always properly wear helmets, chin straps, and tooth and mouth protectors.

**Officials** have the responsibility to enforce penalties when any of the above actions are taken that might intentionally or unintentionally put a player at risk of injury. Set the tone early by penalizing contact made to the head or neck area or contact initiated with the helmet. The penalty for these fouls shall be suspension from the game for one to three minutes (non-releasable), depending on the official's judgment of the severity and perceived intent of the personal foul. Officials should not be hesitant to appropriately penalize any and all contact to the head or neck area and contact initiated with the helmet.

**SITUATION 1:** A1 body checks B1 with initial contact on B1's shoulder. A1's check then slides up into B1's head/neck area. **RULING:** A one-minute non-releasable foul. **COMMENT:** An excessively violent violation or an intentional slide up the head and neck area may result in a longer non-releasable or an ejection. Players shall not make indirect contact to an opponent's head and/or neck. (5-4-1)

**SITUATION 2:** A1 attempts to check B1's crosse but instead A1's crosse: (a) makes slight contact with B1's head or neck; or (b) strikes B1's head or neck area. **RULING:** (a), no foul; (b), slashing (not contact to the head/neck), a one-minute releasable foul. **COMMENT:** In (a) this is considered a brush. In (b), If the slash was excessive, violent or uncontrolled, it could be penalized as contact to the head/neck and A1 would serve at least a two-minute non-releasable foul. (5-4-2)

**SITUATION 3:** A1 posts-up in front of the goalkeeper with A1's back to the goalkeeper. Before or as a pass arrives to the player, the goalkeeper jumps out and illegally body-checks or cross-checks A1 in the back of the neck or head area. **RULING:** A three-minute, non-releasable penalty for a check to the head/neck area (may result in an ejection). (5-4-6)