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NFHS Ice Hockey Weekly Rule Interpretations

Welcome to week 9 of the 2025-26 NFHS Ice Hockey Weekly Rules Interpretations! If you should have any examples you would like to highlight in the weeks to come, please contact dschuster@nfhs.org.

Rule 7-1 Body Checking (Boys Teams Only)

ART. 1: A fair body-check is one in which a player checks an opponent who is in control of the puck, by using the upper body from the front or diagonally from the front or straight from the side, and does not take more than two steps in executing the check.

ART. 2: In addition, a fair body-check involves intentionally contacting an opponent with the hip or shoulder in all areas of the ice. The defensive player's objective is to gain control of the puck by separating the puck carrier from the puck with a legal body-check.

Rule 7-2: Body Contact (Boys and Girls Teams)

Body contact is allowed. Body contact occurs when both players, attempting to play the puck establish body position and a lane to the puck.

Rule 5-1: No player may charge an opponent. Charging is defined as the action if a player who, as a result of distance traveled, checks an opponent violently in any manner from the front or side. Charging shall also apply if a player skates with more than two strides and jumps into an opponent.

Situation 1: Player A1 is skating up the boards with possession of the puck. B1 angles into A1 and delivers a check from the side. B1's shoulder makes initial contact with A1's upper chest. After the initial contact, A1's head snaps back due to the force of the hit, but B1 never makes contact with A1's head.

RULING: Legal body check.

Comment: This is legal as the check is from the side and does not include any illegal contact, such as with an elbow or to the head and/or neck area.



Situation 2: A1 is skating head down through the neutral zone with the puck. B1 notices A1's head down and takes 3 full strides before violently body checking A1.

RULING: A charging penalty shall be assessed to Player B1.

Comment: More than two strides were taken before a violent hit was made and a charging penalty is warranted in this situation.