

Ice Hockey Rules Changes - 2025-26

BY NFHS ON June 2, 2025 | RULES CHANGE, ICE HOCKEY

3-8: ART. 8...Electronic devices shall not be used by team personnel or spectators to communicate with on-ice players or goalkeepers during play. No player or goalkeeper shall wear any audio (microphone) or video (camera) device during the game.

RATIONALE: No player participating in the game will be allowed to wear any type of audio or video device to record or transmit audio or video.

5-4: SECTION 4 DUTIES OF THE LINESMAN LINESPERSON

RATIONALE: The NFHS Ice Hockey Rules book has already replaced gender-specific language throughout the book. This specific title now needs to be changed as well. "Linesperson" has transitioned into several of the other rules bodies and hockey organizations and will no longer be gender specific, which now creates consistency in the hockey world.

9-8-4 NEW: ART. 4...A puck on the outside of the goal netting below the crossbar shall be considered in play by both teams. A puck resting on top of the goal netting between the crossbar and goal frame shall be considered unplayable, resulting in an immediate stoppage.

*Note – current Rules 9-8-4 and 5 move to Rule 9-8-5 and 6.

RATIONALE: A puck on the goal netting is covered in all other rules books. A puck on top of the netting creates too many problematic scenarios if it is considered playable (high stick, closing hand, goalkeeper contact, player in goal crease, etc.).



2025-26 NFHS ICE HOCKEY RULES INTERPRETATIONS

Publisher's Note: The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.

Dr. Karissa L. Niehoff, Publisher, NFHS Publications © 2025

NOTES:

- **NEW:** A puck that rests on the outside of the goal cage on the netting should be considered playable. If it is on top of the net (on the shelf), parallel or above the crossbar, play shall be stopped.
- The 3-Rule Comparison Chart for ice hockey can be found on the [NFHS website](#).

SITUATION 1: During play, a goal cage becomes displaced from its proper position. Must play be immediately stopped?

RULING: If there is an imminent or reasonable scoring opportunity in that zone, play must be stopped because a goal scored would be disallowed. Otherwise, play may continue, providing the goal cage can be repositioned without significantly disrupting the focus of the goalkeeper or official. (9-3-3)

SITUATION 2: Team A is controlling the puck, moving out of its defending zone. An official observes that the defensive goal cage is displaced. Shall play be allowed to continue? **RULING:**

Yes, play may continue until Team B gains control of the puck. (9-8-1)

SITUATION 3: The puck is shot onto the outside of the goal cage netting below the crossbar. Opposing players have converged on the puck but have not been able to get the puck off the netting after several attempts. **RULING:** Although by definition the puck is still in play, the referee may stop play to prevent potentially dangerous interaction between the players or damage to the netting. (8-9-4)