

# Baseball Rules Changes - 2024

By NFHS on July 18, 2023

## **RULE: 1-6-1 (NEW) SECTION 6 (Player Communication Equipment - WRISTBANDS)**

**ART. 1 . . .** Any wristband with defensive shifts/offensive plays/pitching choices or game directions attached shall be considered non-electronic equipment and is permitted as long as it is a single, solid color. For pitchers, it may not contain the colors white, gray or be distracting. It does not have to match the color of the uniform or the sleeves worn underneath the uniform. It shall only be worn on a player(s) wrist or forearm and pitchers shall wear it on their non-pitching arm.

**PENALTY:** The umpire shall issue a team warning to coach of the team involved and the next offender(s) of that team will be ejected along with the head coach.

**Rationale:** Clarification. With the increase in popularity of these style of communication systems, confusion has been realized when the players wear them other than on their arm. This change will prohibit these types of products from being worn other places.

## **RULE: 1-6-2 (NEW) SECTION 6 (Player Communication Equipment - ELECTRONIC)**

**ART. 2 . . .** One-way electronic communication devices are permissible from the dugout to the catcher while the team is on defense for the purpose of calling pitches. When using the electronic communication device, the coach cannot be outside the dugout/bench area.

**PENALTY:** The umpire shall issue a team warning to coach of the team involved and the next offender(s) of that team will be ejected along with the head coach.

**Rationale:** This rule allows for a team to utilize an electronic device for the purpose of calling pitches from the dugout. The device would only be able to be one-way, meaning the player cannot use an electronic device to respond or communicate back to the coach. Various technologies, earpiece, electronic band or a smart watch could be used giving teams several options at varying costs. No other player would be able to wear or use this device nor would the coach be able to communicate with any other player using electronic communication.

**RULE: 3-2-5 (NEW) SECTION 2 COACHING (Use of ELECTRONIC Equipment)**

ART. 5 . . . A coach may use a one-way electronic communication device to communicate to the catcher for the purpose of calling pitches. Coaches may not use electronic communication device(s) to communicate with any other team member while on defense or any team member while on offense. When using the electronic communication device, the coach cannot be outside the dugout/bench area.

**PENALTY:** The umpire shall issue a team warning to coach of the team involved and the next offender(s) of that team will be ejected along with the head coach.

**Rationale:** Allows for the coach to communicate with the catcher using an electronic communication device for the purpose of calling pitches.

**RULE: 10-2-3h SECTION 2 UMPIRE-IN-CHIEF – (Forfeiting a Game)**

h. Forfeit the game for prescribed infractions by ~~spectators~~, coaches, players or team/bench personnel.

**Rationale:** Umpires have jurisdiction over the confines of the field, players, coaches and team/bench personnel. If there are issues with spectators, it is the responsibility of game management to deal with spectators and to ensure that the facility is safe for all involved.

**RULE: SUGGESTED SPEED-UP RULES DELETED (Rule 3 – After 3<sup>rd</sup> Out Is Made)**

Rules 1 and 2 remain the same.

~~#3 Following the final out in any inning, the ball shall be given to the nearest umpire. The plate umpire shall give the ball to the catcher. The base umpire shall place the ball on the pitcher's plate.~~

**Rationale:** This is a NFHS Softball rule book mechanic that needs to be deleted from the NFHS Baseball rule book.