

TSSAA Heat Policy Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Q: The TSSAA Heat Policy uses WBGT or Heat Index. Which one should a school go by?**
A: A WBGT monitor measures the current weather conditions at the athletic facility site and gives the most accurate description of the overall heat environment at that moment. The Heat Index is measured by a digital psychrometer using a combination of current temperature and humidity on site. Weather apps (example: WeatherBug) will display the heat index from a monitor that may or may not be located near the school facility. If a school has access to a WBGT monitor (example: Kestrel 5400 Heat Stress Monitor), it should use the monitor to get the WBGT in place of the Heat Index as the WBGT will give a more accurate representation of the heat conditions on site. If a school does not have a WBGT monitor, then a digital psychrometer or a weather app measuring the Heat Index reading should be used.
2. **Q: May a school use a weather app, such as WeatherBug, to get the Heat Index?**
A: Yes, weather apps may be used if a school does not have access to a WBGT monitor or a digital psychrometer.
3. **Q: If the WBGT is above 92.0 or Heat Index is above 104 and football has to practice indoors during the heat acclimatization period, are teams allowed to count that as one of the days towards acclimatization?**
A: If the indoor environment is air conditioned, then no. The intent of heat acclimatization is to place the athlete's body in heat-related conditions so that the body can adjust to that type of climate. An indoor, climate-controlled environment does not produce the same conditions as an outdoor climate. Indoor practice facilities that are not air conditioned but have fans to produce air flow...
4. **Q: If at the beginning of practice the WBGT is in one range, but then rises to the next higher range during practice, what protocol should be followed? Example: WBGT is 89 at the beginning of practice and then 30 minutes later it's 90.5**
A: If the WBGT stays at the higher range for 15 minutes, then the practice restrictions at the higher range shall now be followed. The amount of time already spent in the heat at that point will be applied to the time limit in the higher range. Example: the WBGT has been between 90 and 92 for 15 minutes and the team has already been practicing in the heat for an hour, then outdoor practice is now ended due to the amount of time allowed in that WBGT range.
5. **Q: How long does football have to be outside during heat acclimatization for it to be considered a practice day?**
A: One hour which includes recommended rest breaks as stated in the heat policy.
6. **Q: If a school has an indoor practice space that does not have proper air conditioning during the summer should the heat policy also apply to the indoor space?**
A: A WBGT reading taken in the indoor practice space should be considered when determining which practice protocol should be used based on the heat policy.



7. Q: **If football has been practicing in helmets all summer (except during the dead period) and has documented the players who have been present and wearing helmets during that time, could they start Day 1 of heat acclimatization in helmets and shoulder pads?**

A: If a team chooses to practice outside in helmets only during Thursday and Friday, or Friday and Saturday of NFHS Week 2, they may count those days towards heat acclimatization. Teams must document which players are present for those practices. This would allow players to be in helmets and shoulder pads on the Monday of NFHS Week 3, which is typically the beginning of heat acclimatization.

8. Q: **Do the same requirements for competition apply to Golf matches when WBGT is above 92.0 or Heat Index is above 104? Must have an appropriate health care professional will access to a cold water immersion tub or other rapid on-site cooling method.**

A: Yes, the requirement applies to all interscholastic competitions, including preseason scrimmages and jamborees.

9. Q: **Does Marching Band have to follow the TSSAA Heat Policy?**

A: Marching Band is not a TSSAA sanctioned activity and, therefore, not held to TSSAA's bylaws, policies, or guidelines. The Heat Policy is a best-practice guideline for organized outdoor activities of any kind and schools are welcome to apply it to any of their other extracurricular groups if they wish. Athletic teams must abide by the policy.

10. Q: **"If a school chooses not to play in a game because of an elevated WBGT/heat index is that considered a forfeit?" Especially, as it relates to region matches.**

A: TSSAA would rule this as a "no contest" instead of a forfeit. If time allowed for the game or match to be rescheduled, the schools involved could do that. If not and it was a district or region game with seeding implications, it would be left to the district or region to determine how the game would be viewed for seeding purposes.

11. Q: **Golf carts for golf matches. For instance, if the WBGT/heat index was above 104 and there was no access to a medical provider and a cold tub, golf coaches would say, "well we can use carts, so we can still play."**

A: The policy for conditions when the WBGT is above 92.0 or the Heat Index is above 104 must be followed regardless of access to carts in golf. For the competition to take place, an appropriate health care professional with access to a cold water immersion tub or other on-site rapid cooling method must be present.

12. Q: **Why are these the thresholds? Give the public some education on these temps if there is reasoning behind the thresholds.**

A: The ranges used in the TSSAA Heat Policy are consistent with the most current research and standards that determine the amount of heat the human body can handle before it becomes a dangerous health situation.

