



## NEW MEXICO ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION BASKETBALL COACHES' BOX & BENCH DECORUM



### **NATIONAL FEDERATION RULES REGARDING THE COACHES' BOX**

**NFHS Rule 1-13-2:** "The coaching box shall be outlined outside the side of the court on which the scorer's and timer's table and team benches are located. The area shall be bounded by a line drawn 28 feet from the end line towards the division line. At this point a line drawn from the sideline toward the team bench becomes the end of the coaching box going towards the end line."

**Effective 2017-2018,** State Associations may alter the length and placement of the **28 foot (maximum)** coaching box. The box should be from the end line to the 28 ft. line.

- **Rationale:** The restriction of the coaching box penalizes the level of communication between coach and player. Allowing a coach freedom to move within the new box provides a coach more access to coach his/her players.
- **Rule 10-5-1:** "By state association adoption, the head coach may be off the bench in front of his/her seat within the confines of the designated coaching box, as in 1-13-2, to give instructions to his/her players and/or substitutes."
- **Penalty:** "The first technical foul charged directly or indirectly to head coach results in loss of the coaching box privileges and the head coach must remain seated for the remainder of the game, except as in 10-4-4c and d, 10-5-2 and 10-5-3."

### **APPLICATION OF THE RULE – NMAA POLICY**

With the NMAA's emphasis on Compete with Class and the professional and sportsmanlike conduct on coaches, we are asking that all coaches at all levels be mindful of bench decorum. We are asking our officials to continue to professionally communicate with coaches but want them to be able to effectively manage the game through the disallowance of demonstrative or disrespectful conduct of head and assistant coaches.

- 1) **REQUIREMENT OF COACHES' BOX:**
  - a. All schools must have a coaching box in their gym. If one is not painted on the gym floor, the coaching box must be marked off with tape. If a school does not have a coaching box on the floor, the coach is restricted to sitting on the bench for the duration of the game.
- 2) **HEAD COACHES:**
  - a. Note that the head coach is responsible for the conduct of **ALL** bench personnel.
  - b. Head coaches may be standing within the confines of the coaches' box during a game. They may stand in order to coach a player or to address an official. They may only address an official in a professional manner and *cannot exit the box in any situation*, unless beckoned on the floor to attend to an injured player. Any violation of this rule will result in a direct technical foul to the coach and a loss of coaching box privileges.
  - c. A head coach may not designate anyone else to stand in the coaching box. All other bench personnel, other than the head coach, must remain seated.
  - d. A head coach may kneel or squat within the confines of the coaching box during the game.
  - e. If a player receives a technical foul for dunking prior to a contest, the head coach is charged with an indirect technical foul and loses the coaching box privilege. The player is also assessed a technical foul.
  - f. Please keep in mind that the third technical foul (indirect or direct) or the second direct technical foul charged to the head coach results in ejection from the game to the team's locker room or outside the building. After a head coach is ejected, the coaching box is **not** afforded to the assistant who resumes the coaching duties for the remainder of the game.
- 3) **ASSISTANT COACHES:**
  - a. Assistant coaches must be seated during play. Kneeling or squatting by an assistant coach is not acceptable. Under no circumstances should an assistant coach be standing during live-ball play. They may stand during timeouts.

- b. Also, assistant coaches should **not** have dialogue with the officials during a game. Any violation of this rule will result in an indirect technical foul to the head coach and a loss of coaching box privileges.

4) **NFHS RULES CHANGE REGARDING WARNINGS/NMAA POINT OF EMPHASIS:**

Effective with the 2017-18 high school basketball season, **play will be stopped and an official warning will be given to the head coach – and recorded in the scorebook – for misconduct by the coach or other bench personnel unless the offense is judged to be major, in which case a technical foul shall be assessed.** Please note that New Mexico has been using a warning since 2009 (see #5 below).

In addition to misconduct violations related to Rule 10-5, the head coach will be officially warned for the first violation of Rule 10-6-1 regarding the coaching box. Rules 4-48-1 and 4-48-2 will both have a note stating that ***a warning is not required prior to calling a technical foul.***

5) **OFFICIALS' JURISDICTION & PROTOCOL:**

- a. The contest officials have the jurisdiction and discretion to determine whether a coach is violating the rules of the coaches' box. ***Officials should issue an initial warning to the head coach for any violation of the coaching box by the head or assistant coach (see #1 and 2 below). An initial warning is not warranted for egregious acts by coaches.*** Reasons for the issuance of technical fouls relative to coaches' conduct may be any of the following:

1. The head coach is consistently outside of the confines of the coaches' box. Outside is defined as both feet/whole body clearly and completely outside of the box.
2. The assistant coach(es) or other bench personnel continuously stand, squat or kneel in the box. Assistant coaches should remain seated throughout the duration of the contest
3. Disrespectfully addressing an official by questioning the integrity of an official, voicing displeasure about officiating through continual or chronic verbal remarks or other such acts. As a reminder, questions require a response; statements do not. **Officials** should answer valid and professionally addressed questions by coaches. **Coaches** are reminded to ask questions to officials. For example, statements such as "3 seconds," "that's a travel," etc., are not subject to a response by officials.
4. Attempting to influence an official's decision by physically charging toward an official or otherwise threatening an official.
5. Using profanity or other language that is abusive, vulgar or obscene directed toward officials, opponents or anyone else at the game. This is interscholastic sports and inappropriate language is unacceptable.
6. Taunting or baiting an opponent.
7. Objecting to an official's decision by rising from the bench or using gestures. Examples of this would be excessively demonstrating officials' signals (i.e., traveling, holding, verticality) or demonstrating by use of gestures or actions that indicate displeasure with officiating (i.e., the "wave-off," standing with arms extended to sides, etc.).
8. Any member of the coaching staff engages in any activity which incites negative behavior by the crowd.

**Please note that this clarification is being issued in order to bring consistency to the understanding and application of the rule in all areas of the state. Thank you for your cooperation and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office.**