



CIF FOOTBALL MERCY RULE:

The FOOTBALL MERCY RULE WAS APPROVED by the CIF Federated Council for statewide adoption, for both regular and post-season contests, starting with the 2011 season. The rule is in accordance with NFHS Football Rules 3-1-2 and 3-1-3.

1. During the 1st three quarters, by mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee, a “*running clock*” may be used if the point differential between the two teams reaches 35 or more;
2. If at the start of the 4TH QUARTER or at any time during the 4TH QUARTER, the point differential is 35 or more points, a running clock shall be used for the remainder of the contest;
3. Once the “*running clock*” is in effect during the 4th quarter, it shall remain in effect for the balance of the contest, even if the team that is behind subsequently scores to make the deficit less than 35 points;
4. The “*running clock*” will be administered as follows:
 - A. The game clock will start with the snap or legal touch of a free kick on the first play following the establishment of the pertinent point differential, and continue to run uninterrupted when:
 - A 1st down is awarded to either team, including following a change of possession;
 - The ball or runner is out-of-bounds;
 - A legal or illegal forward pass is incomplete;
 - A play results in a touchback;
 - An inadvertent whistle occurs;
 - During all penalty enforcements.
 - B. The game clock shall be stopped for:
 - The end of a period;
 - A score (including touchdown; try; field goal; safety);
 - The free kick following a fair catch or awarded fair catch;
 - A charged team time-out;
 - A coach-referee conference;
 - An official’s time-out (injury; equipment; 1st down measurement; other, as required).
 - C. Following a stoppage for any reason in B. above, the game clock will start when the ball is next:
 - Marked ready-for-play; or
 - Legally touched on the free kick following a score, a fair catch or awarded fair catch

**APPROVED BY CIF
FEDERATED COUNCIL
MAY, 2011
IMPLEMENTATION FALL 2011
in effect for
all regular season and post season play**