

From: James Byrd
MPSSAA Football Rules Interpreter

To: All Officials

Reference: Clarification on the Restricted Area & Team Box

I recently received several calls in reference to the ruling on the Restricted Area/Team Box. As a reminder you can call, email or text me directly when you have a question.

So, in reference to the subject, hopefully I can provide some clarity. During COVID The Football Committee implemented a change to the coaches and team box, which states are allowed to do per NFHS rules. The change was that the Restricted Area and Team Box would be extended to the ten-yard lines. We as officials had no say so or input. Once COVID was over, the Committee chose to continue with the change. During the 2023 summer meeting they again agreed to continue with the extension of the Restricted Area and Team Box. I recommended that the Team Box be moved back to the 25-yard line. After a brief discussion, they agreed.

Prior to the season, I meet with the coaches of the jurisdictions that my board services. In those meetings with those coaches, I explain how I expect officials to enforce the Restricted area. 9-8-3 states that they are allowed three coaches in the Restricted Area. They are to be out of the Restricted Area and in the Team Box when the ball is live. They were reminded that The Restricted Area is the official's work area, and that this area needs to stay clean. By keeping this area clean, it prevents officials from inadvertently running into them and also avoids them receiving a penalty. When it comes to them getting back to the Team Box, I'm asking you to not over analyze this clarification. However, if it becomes a problem then I will support you on any penalties you impose.

Hopefully this clears up any confusion as to how I would like us to deal with this. I know some associations have already met with your coaches and AD's but feel free to share this information with them.

Sincerely,

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