James Byrd MPSSAA Football Rules Interpreter.

Date: 11/20/25

Reference: Clarification - Intentional Grounding & Ineligible's Downfield

There seems to be so confusion on officials ruling on ineligible players downfield when a passer legally intentionally grounds the football. Some of you work games at the NCAA level. The confusion comes when an official has a flag for an ineligible player downfield and the R rules that the passer has legally grounded the ball. At the NCAA level, if the IG is ruled legally, it supersedes IDF. However, this philosophy does not apply to NFHS. I did some research, and some states at the NFHS level have adopted this philosophy. Maryland has not. It is important that as NCAA officials, you must not confuse the different rules and philosophies. If there is a flag for IDF, the offended team will be given the opportunity to accept or decline the foul.

I will take this matter up with the football committee during the off season meetings and determine if this is something they would like to adopt going forward.