

## **NOGSL Severe Weather, Notification, & Rescheduling Procedures**

### **SEVERE WEATHER**

Since the average distance between successive lightening flashes is approximately 2-to-3 miles, anytime that lightning can be seen, or thunder heard, the risk is already present. If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators shall evacuate to available safe structures or shelters.

**Thirty-Minute Rule** — Once lightning or thunder has been recognized, competition shall be suspended until at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard to begin or resume a contest. **Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count should reset the clock and another count should begin.**

### **WHO DECIDES?**

Once a match has begun, the referee is responsible and has the authority to suspend a match for reasons of safety. In the case of youth soccer matches where youth referees are assigned, adult coaches and managers are strongly encouraged to assist the referee with this decision to suspend a match for safety reasons. This does NOT mean that coaches should attempt to influence a referee to continue playing through questionable weather conditions. This statement means that adults should make the referee aware of imminent danger and to more quickly reach a decision to suspend a match. Referees are focused on the field of play and may not be aware of the lightening observed by coaches and spectators.

Prior to the start of a match, the home club administrators, and/or coaches of both teams may confer and reach a decision that a match will not be able to be started or completed. If a decision can be reached early, then the referee assignor should be notified immediately by the club administrator to insure that the assigned referee can be notified in a timely manner. If the referee is already on site, then the referee should be included in the discussion and final decision.

### **WHEN TO DECIDE - HOW LONG TO WAIT?**

Some weather-related decisions are “no-brainers”. Eg., It is an early April Saturday, and there are 6-inches of snow on the ground with another 6-inches predicted over night. Hey, cancel the game and make some proactive phone calls.

Most spring-time weather events sneak up on us. Yes, we usually know that there is a chance of inclement weather, but we’re never quite sure if the weather will or will not bring severe weather elements, or just some wind & rain. And yes, these soccer games can be played in the rain.

For most events, you will need to travel and make an at-the-field decision. Let’s face it, travelling 10 or even 30 minutes to a field is no big deal, as compared to travelling out-of-state only to turn around and return home because of weather/field conditions. So, buckle down and just get to the field!

Once you are on-site, how long to wait? While there is no simple answer for this, all reasonable efforts should be made to play the scheduled match. Even if that means waiting an hour past the scheduled start time. If it becomes obvious that waiting will cause the game to progress past daylight and into darkness, then use common sense and cancel the match. If the match was suspended after starting, you should certainly wait as long as possible to resume – this is especially true when teams travel from long distances, and also when games are close, ... so as to provide fair opportunity to both sides to play a complete match.

Remember the 30-minute rule. Don’t rush and risk safety just to restart a match!

### **WHAT ABOUT GAME RESULTS?**

If the game has not started, or has only progressed into the first half, then the match can be rescheduled.

If the game has begun, and was suspended at half-time or during the second half, and the match cannot be safely resumed, it will be considered a complete game with the score/result recorded as such.

## NOTIFICATION

When a match cannot begin, or is suspended due to weather conditions, the following personnel should be involved and/or notified.

<u>This person</u>	<u>Contacts this person</u>	<u>Why?</u>
Home coach	Home club administrator	Should be in direct contact to confirm decision to not [start] play, or not resume a match. And to discuss reschedule options.
Home coach	Away coach	To inform of game cancellation.
Home coach	Home team members	To inform of game cancellation.
Away coach	Away team members	To inform of game cancellation.
Away coach	Away club administrator	To inform of game cancellation and discuss reschedule options.
Home club administrator	Referee assignor	To inform assigned referee of cancellation.
Home club administrator	NOGSL Administrator	To inform of game cancellation and discuss reschedule date (when known).
Home club administrator	Away club administrator	Review decision and discuss reschedule options.
Referee assignor	Referee	To inform of game cancellation - If prior to game time, and prior to referee departure for the field.
Referee	Referee assignor	To inform of game cancellation. – If referee was already present at the field and spoke with the coaches.

## COMMON SENSE

This situation requires some patience. And while it is recognized that every team will have a few people who lack this quality, it is appropriate to do all that is reasonable and safe, to see that the game can be played on the scheduled date.

Please be sure to notify anyone who is involved. It is better to over-communicate regarding these situations.