



Hamilton Youth Athletics

Lightning and Inclement Weather Policy

Hamilton Youth Athletics believes in providing a safe experience for all participants. HYA Program Directors are responsible for monitoring the weather and will make decisions regarding whether games should be played, suspended and resumed or cancelled. It should be noted that in any situation the parent/guardian has the right for their athlete not to participate.

Recognition

Since the average distance between successive lightning flashes is approximately two to three miles, ANYTIME that lightning can be seen or heard, the risk is already present. Weather can be monitored using the following methods:

- **Monitor Weather Patterns** – Be aware of potential thunderstorms by monitoring local weather forecasts the day before and morning of the competition, and by scanning the sky for signs of potential thunderstorm activity
- **National Weather Service** – Weather can also be monitored using small, portable weather radios from the NWS. The NWS uses a system of severe storm watches and warnings. A watch indicates conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area; a warning indicates severe weather has been reported in an area, and everyone should take proper precautions. Any thunderstorm poses a risk of injury or death even if it does not meet the criteria for severe weather. Therefore, anytime thunderstorms are in the forecast (even if it is only a 20 percent chance), event organizers shall be at a heightened level of awareness to the potential danger of lightning.

Management

- **Evacuation** – If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators shall evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. During stoppage of play due to lightning, everybody must go to their vehicles and wait for decision by HYA. Coaches only may go to concession area where decisions will be made regarding game status. The sheltered area next to the park is not considered a safe zone and should not be used during inclement weather.
- **Thirty-minute rule** – Competition or practice shall be suspended once lightning has been recognized or thunder is heard. It is required to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming practice or competition. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10-12 miles away from the area. This significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes. **Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.**

Other Reminders:

- Games may be cancelled because of excessive rain and wet fields.
- Games are normally not cancelled because of heat, but games may be shortened and water breaks will be given.
- Cold weather game decision will be evaluated depending on the duration of cold air and wind chill.
- For updated information please use the following methods:
 - HYAKids.com - Under Field Status,
 - Facebook.com/HYAKids, or
 - Sign-up to receive text messages by texting the message in quotes to 81010
 - a. 2015 Baseball - "@hyabb15"
 - b. 2015 Softball - "@hyasb15"
 - c. 2015 Fall Soccer - "@hyafsoc15"