

# McKinney ISD Athletic Cold Policy

## Introduction:

Cold exposure can be uncomfortable, impair performance and even become life threatening. Conditions created by cold exposure include frostbite and hypothermia. Wind chill can make activity uncomfortable and can impair performance when muscle temperature declines. Frostbite is the freezing of superficial tissues, usually of the face, ears, fingers, and toes. Hypothermia, a significant drop in body temperature, occurs with rapid cooling, exhaustion and energy depletion. The resulting failure to the temperature-regulating mechanisms constitutes a medical emergency.

Hypothermia frequently occurs at temperatures above freezing. A wet and windy 30-50 degree exposure may be as serious as a subzero exposure. For the reason McKinney ISD is developing a cold policy using the wind chill factor not the ambient temperature. Wind speed interacts with ambient temperature to significantly increase body cooling. When the body and clothing are wet (whether from sweat, rain, snow, or immersion), the cooling is even more pronounced due to evaporation of the water held close to the skin by the wet clothing.

Clothing is one of the most important parts of keeping the athlete's body warm. Athletes should dress in layers and try and stay dry. Layers can be added or removed depending on temperature, activity and wind chill. Athletes should layer themselves with wicking fabric next to the body, followed by lightweight pile or wool layers for warmth. Athletes should use a wind block garment to avoid wind chill during workouts. Heat loss from the head and neck may be as much as 50% of total heat loss; therefore the head and neck should be covered during cold conditions. Other extremities should be covered at all times to protect from the wind chill.

## Cold Exposure:

- Breathing of cold air can trigger asthma attack (bronchospasm)
- Coughing, chest tightness, burning sensation in throat and nasal passage
- Reduction of strength, power, endurance, and aerobic activity
- Core body temperature reduction, causing reduction of motor output

## Cold Recognition:

- Shivering, a means for the body to generate heat
- Excessive shivering contributes to fatigue, loss of motor skills
- Numbness and pain in fingers, toes, ears, and exposed facial tissue
- Drop in core temperature; athlete exhibits sluggishness, slowed speech, disoriented

## Chain of Command:

The following chain of command will occur:

## Notification of temperature

- Coaches will obtain weather report from weather.com , using the 75070 zip code.
- The weather report will be taken at 6:30 am for morning workouts, and 2:00 pm for afternoon workouts.
- The wind chill of the day will determine which protocol will be followed.
- Wind chill readings will be taken before teams leave for traveling for competitions, and an hour by hour report will guide our decisions for the event.

## Enforcement of Policies

- Head Coach / Staff Athletic Trainers will monitor time of exposure
- Staff Athletic Trainers will report any violations to the Campus Coordinator
- Campus Coordinator will meet with the Head Coach
- Violations of policies will be reported to the Director of Athletics in writing.

## **High School Athletic Cold Policy: PRACTICE**

### **Wind Chill Factor 33 to 35 degrees (W/Precipitation):**

- 35 minutes of exposure/20 minutes inside (may return outside after 20 minutes)
- 35 minutes exposure/20 minutes inside
- Dry clothing (socks, gloves)
- Athletes must be dressed in warm-ups with extremities covered

### **Wind Chill Factor 32 Degree or Below (W/Precipitation):**

- All activities will be inside
- No outside exposure

### **Wind Chill Factor Under 31 to 32 degrees (Dry):**

- 45 minutes exposure/ 15 minutes inside
- Athletes must be in warm-ups with extremities covered

### **Wind Chill Factor 26 to 30 Degree (Dry):**

- 30 minutes of total exposure to chill factor
- 15 minutes inside for re-warming
- Warm-ups must be worn at all times, extremities covered

### **Wind Chill Factor of 25 degrees:**

- No outside activity
- All work must be inside

## **Junior High Athletic Cold Weather Policies:**

### **Wind Chill Factor 39 to 45 degrees (W/Precipitation):**

- 35 minutes of exposure/20 minutes inside (may return outside after 20 minutes)
- 35 minutes exposure/20 minutes inside
- Dry clothing (socks, gloves)
- Athletes must be dressed in warm-ups with extremities covered

### **Wind Chill Factor 38 degree or Below (W/Precipitation):**

- All activities will be inside
- No outside exposure

### **Wind Chill Factor 35 to 38 degrees (Dry):**

- 45 minutes exposure/ 15 minutes inside for re-warming
- Athletes must be in warm-ups with extremities covered

### **Wind Chill Factor 31 to 34 degree (Dry):**

- 30 minutes of total exposure to chill factor
- 15 minutes inside
- Warm-ups must be worn at all times, extremities covered

### **Wind Chill Factor of Below 30 degrees:**

- No outside activity

## **Cold Policy—GAMES**

- Games to be postponed due to cold weather will be determined on a case by case basis by the Director of Athletics. Postponed games to be re-scheduled will be determined by the Head Coach of that sport as well as the Director of Athletics. A game date will be considered for rescheduling if the wind chill is below 28.

### **School Day Cancellation— full day**

- No travel or practice unless approved by the Director of Athletics or the Principal

### **School Day Early Dismissal—deteriorating weather conditions**

- Practice must be approved by the Director of Athletics or the Principal
- If approved practices should be over at 5:00pm