



# ASK ~ TELL ~ REMOVE

## Handout:

National Federation of State  
High School Associations



### Rule 1 The Field of Play

Art. 1 There shall be a designated specific area for each team's bench, separated by an official area for entering substitutes, scorer and times. This area shall be at least 10 feet from the touchline.

Art 3. The team areas shall extend from 10 yards on each side of the halfway line for a distance of 20 yards, and each area shall be marked by a solid line. Coaches, bench personnel-team members shall be restricted to the team area.

Section 6 spectators' Area. Spectators shall be confined to areas at least 10 feet from the touchline, team/official area and goal line. No one shall be permitted directly behind either goal unless seated in bleachers.

1.6 Situation. Ask the home team management to tell the spectators to remain 10 feet behind the touchline, goal line and /or team/official area, or game may be terminated. –

Ruling: Legal (5-3-2e: Rule 5 “ [The referee shall]...have the authority to suspend play or terminate the game whenever the elements, spectators or other causes require.

***See over for suggested escalation to solve encroachment issue.***



## **SPECTATORS ARE ENCROACHING**

**Early correction is best.** Before it gets worse. As part of pregame walk around field- see if spectators are gathering too close. “You are too old for this age group.” Or “I don’t want some player sitting in your lap.” Ask them politely to move well back. Far side officials checks before kick-off, if needed asks politely again before starting game.

Game underway & it is an issue-confer with site administrator if present - and certainly Coaches, enlist their help in moving folks back. If that is not successful, try to NOT abandon the game. Do try to get game played. However if the encroachment is unsafe or unsporting; if it affects game or referees’ focus, then have the Administrator and Coaches deal with the people. You avoid confrontation:

### **Suggested escalation mode:**

#### ***NEVER-NEVER PHYSICALLY PUT HANDS ON SPECTATORS***

#### **Go to Coaches/Administrator: (Note may be singular or plural)**

{ ASK } “You need to please ask these spectators to get back. The players’ safety needs the space. It is dangerous for players & referees, if spectators remain where they have been standing.”

#### **If encroachment is repeated or unabated: Stop Game**

{ TELL } “We are not getting their cooperation, Coach.

Tell them we will have to ask them to leave the field unless they retire 10 feet away right now.”

#### **If still no improvement: Stop Game**

{ REMOVE } Last resort: “They have to go, Coach. The game will be suspended until they do.

You have to remove them ...or this game will terminated.”

*After exhausting every remedy, ask Coaches to make their own report. Leave the field. Call /email your assignor. Notify AD’s of teams involved. Make a memorandum, outlining steps you took, for file & MIAA, if appropriate.*