

STUDENT-ATHLETE EXTREME HEAT SAFETY AND PROTECTION

For purposes of this policy, heat guidelines are based on Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) levels developed by an organization or entity whose purpose is to regulate or govern interscholastic athletics programs in the Commonwealth.

Heat-Acclimation and Modification Procedure

The scheduling or cancellation of outdoor athletics practices or games are determined in relation to parameters established in connection with the different WBGT levels and tiers of the heat-acclimation and modification procedures.

The Maggie L. Walker Governor's School Regional Board establishes the following procedures for outdoor athletics practices or games with at least five tiers of procedures based on heat or humidity levels, beginning with the first tier for the lowest heat or humidity level requiring special student-athlete safety and protection precautions and the final tier for the most severe heat or humidity level before the level at which all outdoor athletics practices or games will be cancelled.

Each tier identifies:

- required equipment modifications, if applicable for the sport,
- work-to-rest ratios,
- modification of water break requirements, and
- use of shaded areas for rest breaks

Procedures

Maggie Walker Governor's School Athletic Extreme Heat Safety and Protection Policy is incorporated into the Coaches' Handbook.

Maggie Walker recognizes the potential dangers of heat-related illness and has set guidelines to help prevent these incidents from occurring. A common misconception with heat illness is that it occurs progressively (the athlete gets heat cramps then heat exhaustion then heat stroke). This is not true. While an athlete may appear to be having no problems they can rather suddenly have a heat stroke. It is very important for the coaches and athletes to be cognizant of heat illnesses in order to help the athletic trainers prevent serious injury.

Those with increased risk include:

- Athletes with higher body fat percentages
- Athletes with a previous history of a heat illness
- Athletes who are not properly acclimated
- Athletes who are not properly hydrated
- Athletes using certain medications or dietary supplements

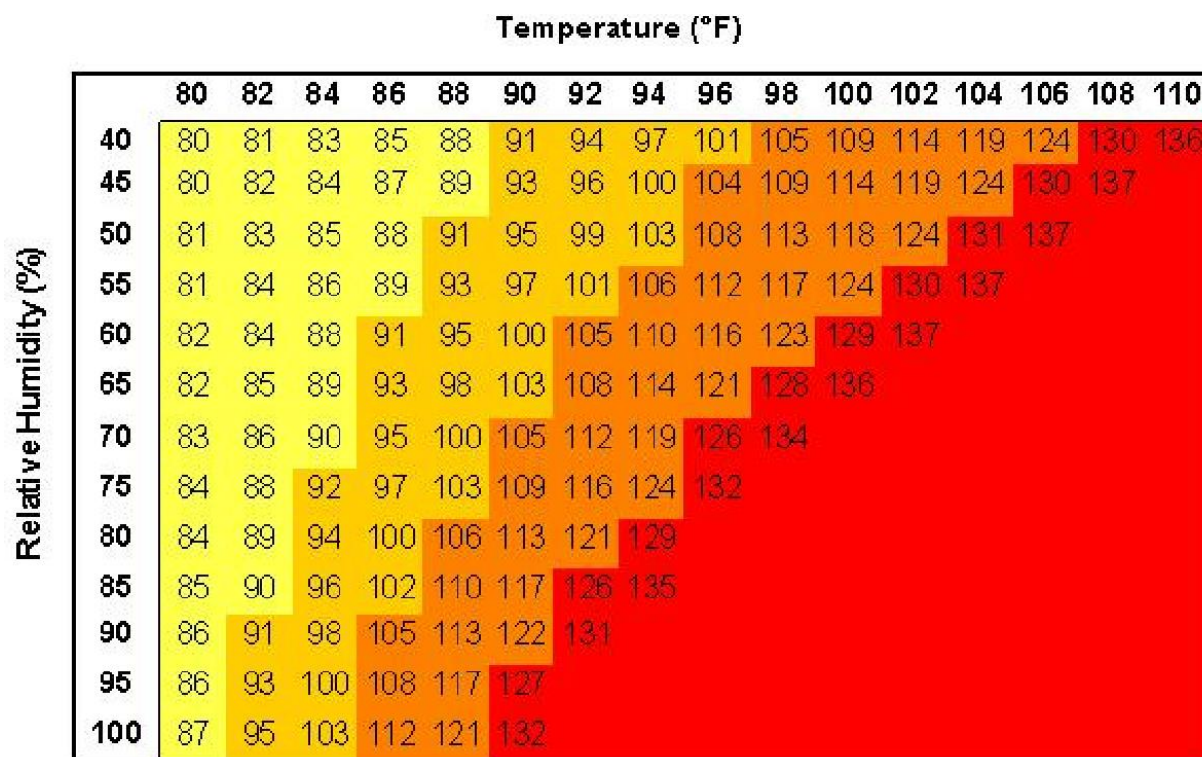
Condition	Heat Cramps	Heat Exhaustion	Heat Stroke
Signs/Symptoms	-Sever muscle cramps in arms/legs, and/or abdomen -profuse sweating	-Moist/clammy skin -dizziness -nausea -increased respiration and pulse -general muscle fatigue/cramps -body temperature from 101-104F	-Hot, dry skin -mental confusion -nausea -temperature of or above 104F -possible loss of consciousness
Management	-immediately stop exercising -consume water or electrolyte drink -stretch the involved muscles	-Immediately stop exercise and move athlete to cool, shaded area -Loosen clothing and cool athlete with wet towels or ice packs -Give athlete water or electrolyte drink -If the athlete is not fully recovered within 30min. seek medical attention -The athlete is not allowed to practice or compete for the remainder of that day	-This is a medical emergency- EMS must be activated because a delay in treatment can be fatal. -Move the athlete to a cool, shaded place -Loosen clothing and cool with wet towels or ice packs. -Fan the athlete with towels or whatever is available -Be careful of cooling the athlete too quickly- especially if a spinal injury is suspected

Preventative measures for heat illness:

1. Ensure proper acclimatization to heat and humidity (gradually increasing duration and intensity of exercise in the heat).
2. Provide readily accessible fluids and advise the athlete to drink as much and as frequently as they like.
3. Frequent rest periods (in the shade if possible) should be allowed.
4. Watch for any significant weight loss in an athlete.*
5. Avoid heavy exertion during the hottest part of the day (1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.).
6. Watch the athletes for any signs of heat illness and care for them appropriately.
7. Athletes should eat appropriate meals with carbohydrates being about 60% of their intake.

8. The athletes should sleep at least 6-8 hours in a cool environment.
9. Wear appropriate clothing made of breathable fabric.

Maggie Walker will also utilize the NOAA's National Weather Service Heat Index and/or Wet Bulb Globe Temperature to assist in determining activity guidelines and rest break guidelines.



Likelihood of Heat Disorders with Prolonged Exposure or Strenuous Activity

■ Caution
 ■ Extreme Caution
 ■ Danger
 ■ Extreme Danger

NOAA NWS Heat Index Zones	Activity and Rest Break Guidelines
Lower Than Caution	Normal Activities. Provide at least three different rest breaks each hour of minimum duration of 3 minutes each during workout
Caution	Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise; watch at-risk players carefully; Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour of a minimum of four minutes duration each
Extreme Caution	Maximum practice time is 2 hours. Provide at least 4 separate rest breaks each hour of a minimum of four minutes each. For Field

	Hockey: all protective equipment must be removed for conditioning activities.
Danger	Maximum length of practice is one hour, no protective equipment may be worn during practice and there may be no conditioning activities. There must be 20 minutes of rest breaks provided during the hour of practice.
Extreme Danger	No outdoor workouts; Delay practices until heat index lowers; Move to indoor facilities

Guidelines for hydration and rest breaks:

1. Rest time should involve unlimited fluid intake (water and/or electrolyte drink)
2. For lacrosse, helmets should be removed during rest period
3. If possible, the site of the rest time should be in a “cooling zone” and not in direct sunlight.
4. When in the extreme caution and danger zones, ice towels and misting fans will be made available. A tarp with emergency ice water that can be easily converted into a cold immersion tool will be available as well.

Cancellation of Athletics Practice or Games

Any athletics practice or game that is scheduled to take place during a time when the WBGT is above the highest tier addressed in the Heat-Acclimation and Modification Procedure, such event will be cancelled.

Hydration and Cooling Space

Each student-athlete is given unhindered access at all times to hydration and a cooling space. The cooling space may be a shaded or air-conditioned area. Ice is made available and provided to each student-athlete and coach at any time there is a WBGT level of 80 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.

Additional Procedures

The executive director establishes:

- parameters for scheduling and cancelling outdoor athletics practices or games in accordance with the heat-acclimation and modification procedure;
- procedures relating to preventing, recognizing, and addressing heat-related illnesses, including dehydration, heat syncope, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke; and
- a process for reporting and investigating any instance in which a student-athlete experiences a severe heat-related illness requiring emergency medical treatment or resulting in death.

Adopted: September 18, 2025

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-271.9.

Cross Refs.:	Pol 2020	School Crisis, Emergency Management and Medical Emergency Response Plan
	Pol 2022	Emergency First Aid, CPR and AED Certified Personnel
	Pol 4091	Student-Athlete Sudden Cardiac Arrest
	Reg 4093	Student-Athlete Cold Weather Policy for Practice and Games
	Pol 6010.1	Community Use of School Facilities
	Pol 6015	Public Conduct on School Property