

# Track and Field & Cross Country Rules Changes - 2020

By NFHS on July 09, 2019 [Track & Field/Cross Country](#)

**4-6-5g, 8-6-1e:** Clarifies that a competitor should not be penalized for helping another competitor who is distressed or injured when no advantage is gained by the competitor who is assisting. **Rationale:** The committee believes when no advantage is gained by a competitor helping a distressed or injured competitor, the competitor assisting should not be penalized for exhibiting good sportsmanship.

**5-3-3 & 4, 5-10-6 thru 11:** Clarifies that in the 4x100-meter relay and 4x200-meter relay, and other relays with legs of 200 meters or less, each exchange zone will be 30 meters long. All exchange zones for races in excess of 200 meters will remain at 20 meters. **Rationale:** In the 4x100-meter relay and 4x200-meter relay, and other relays with legs of 200 meters or less, each exchange zone will be 30 meters long. All exchange zones for races in excess of 200 meters will remain at 20 meters. **Note:** *This means that in the 4 x 100 and 4 x 200 there is no longer a fly zone or international zone. An athlete can now run and receive the baton in that area as well as the original passing zone. The entire zone is now legal to pass the baton within.*

**6-2-6:** Clarifies that it is illegal to run backward or in the opposite direction (non-legal direction) on a horizontal jump, pole vault or javelin runway. **Rationale:** This change promotes a more organized and efficient warm-up period. **Note:** *This means that in competition warmups athletes CANNOT run backwards from the pit to get their mark. They should come to the meet with a mark already measured .*

**6-3-2-b-4-a:** This change provides metric measurements for tie-breaking jump-offs for vertical jumps. **Rationale:** The committee established appropriate metric increments for tie-breaking jump-offs in the vertical jumps.

**6-9-5:** The length of long jump and triple jump pits constructed after 2019 shall be at least 23 feet (7 meters). **Rationale:** Clarifies the language of the 2019 rule change for long jump and triple jump pits and ensures pit measurements are within industry standards for safety.

## Cross County :

**8-1-1:** Clarifies cross country course markings. **Rationale:** The reorganization of the rule states that a course should be clearly marked with any or all of the methods listed in the rule.

**8-1-3:** Clarifies cross country course layouts. **Rationale:** This rule change will not eliminate courses that may be used for smaller meets with limited numbers of participants. The additional language provides a recommended minimum distance for straightaways at the start of all meets.

**2020 Editorial Changes 5-11-1:** A relay team shall pass their baton in accordance with the rules.

**Rationale:** Clarifies that a team finishes the race with the same baton that it used at the start of the race. **2020**

**Editorial Changes** 5-1-5, 6-8-10d