

# 2024 Soccer Bulletin 2



## Rules, Revisions, and Interpretations

### PIAA Officials' Staff:

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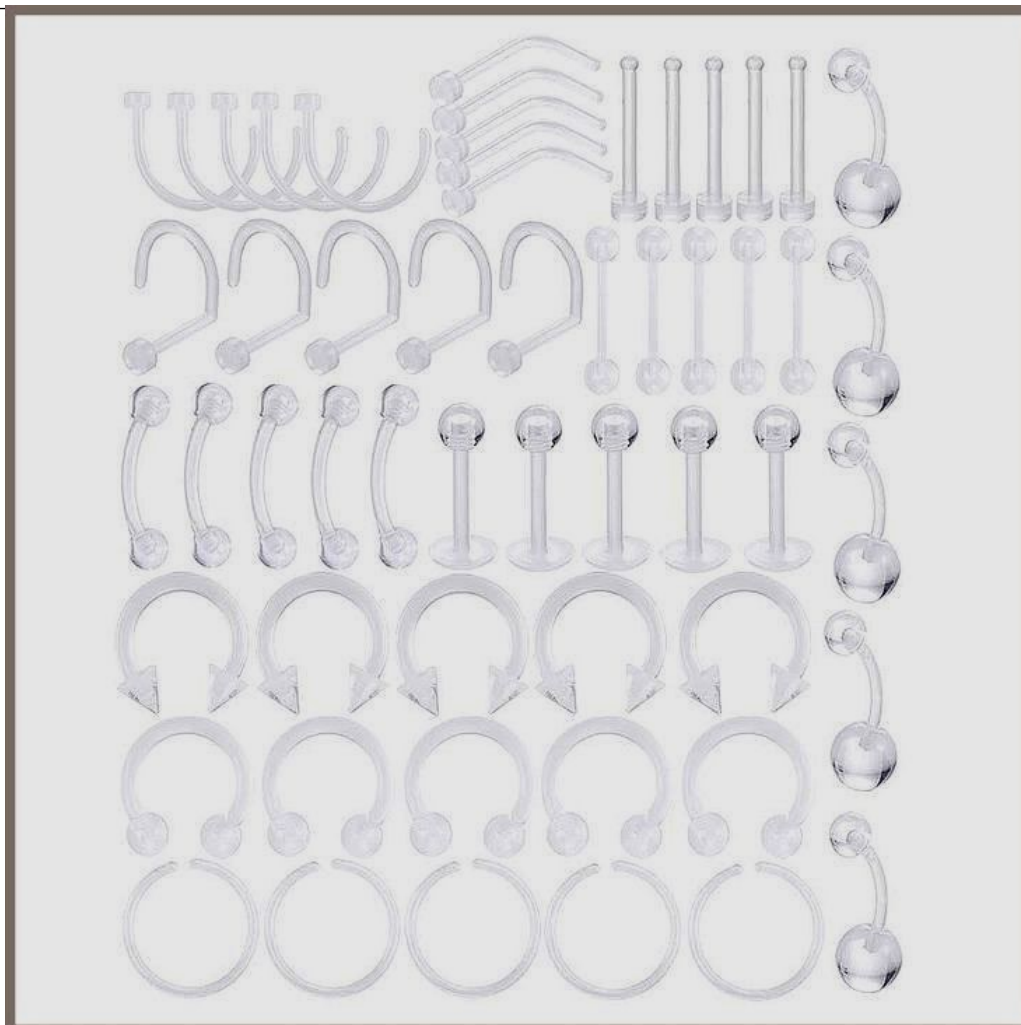
## September 2024

Statewide Rules Interpreter:

Dr. Stanley E. Latta

### Body Piercing Retainers/Hiders

Players have been asking to use body piercing retainers in lieu of their jewelry where they have body piercings. These retainers/hiders are made of a variety of materials; plastic, rubber, glass, silicone, etc. These are considered jewelry and are **ILEGAL and may not be worn**. Players must remove all jewelry and are not permitted to use these retainers. Attached you will find a variety of these types of retainers.



## Concussion Protocol

Several questions have come up regarding what responsibilities do officials have when they suspect a player may have a concussion and is exhibiting concussion type symptoms. Attached to this bulletin is the Protocol that officials should follow if they suspect a player may have suffered a concussion. When following this protocol please be sure to document the time and circumstances surrounding the suspected concussion and if/when the player returned to play.

Concussion Management continues to be a very important point of emphasis in every interscholastic sporting activity. Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as a loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by the appropriate health-care professional.

When sending an athlete out of a contest, the official should advise the head coach that the player is being removed from competition due to the athlete exhibiting concussion like symptoms.

Neither officials, nor coaches, are expected to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the responsibility of an appropriate health-care professional. The game official is not responsible for the sideline evaluation or management of the athlete after he or she is removed from play.

The responsibility of further evaluating and managing the symptomatic athlete falls upon the head coach, appropriate health-care professional or other individual designated by the school administrators.

The official does not need written permission for an athlete to return nor does the official need to verify the credentials of the appropriate health-care professional.

If a player returns to the competition the official should just monitor them in the same manner prior to them being sent out originally.

Those wishing to learn more on this topic can register and attend a course sponsored by NFHS by using this link: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/concussion-in-sports-2>



## Drones

Several questions have come up with regard to the use of Drones in and around the competition surface. Here is the PIAA Policy with regard to the use of Drones. It can be found on page 72 of the Policies and Procedures Handbook:

For the purposes of this policy, a drone is any unmanned aerial device ("UAV"). Drones are not permitted above the competition surface or spectator areas during interscholastic Contests, Inter-school Practices and Scrimmages. Drones may not be used to scout opposing team Practices. Member schools may utilize drones for their own school team practice sessions based upon their local school policies. Persons and/or schools violating this Policy shall be subject to sanctions which may be imposed under Sections 5, 6, 7 and/or 9 of ARTICLE XIII, PENALTIES, of the PIAA By-Laws. Upon timely requests submitted to PIAA, the Executive Director is authorized to grant exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis with any host school/facility local policies.

## Micro Shin Guards/Pads

The use of illegal shin guards is on the rise. Players at the high school level have started to use these micro shin guards on a regular basis. Some of the other rules governing bodies for soccer have relaxed the standards of protective shin guards and as a result the use of these guards is on the rise at the high school level. I am not asking you to change your pregame procedures. You do not need to inspect every shinguard for the NOCSAE seal. However, we need to be proactive about the obvious cases of illegal shinguards, which may include cautioning the coach or player. Here is an example:

