



## **Recommendation Regarding Forfeits**

### **October 2020**

Over the last few months, members of staff and the NAC have been evaluating how to treat contests that may need to be postponed/canceled due to COVID. The NAC Executive Committee previously provided guidance around a general concept, which enabled staff to work towards a more detailed internal process. NAC Executive Committee is now being asked to formalize the approach detailed below, which will be used for the 2020-21 academic year across all sports.

### **Assumptions**

Typically, if there is a game contract in place (conference schedules meet this requirement) and one team is unable to participate, the opposing team can either agree to a reschedule or has the option to request a forfeit win from the national office. If the two teams agree to reschedule, they simply adjust the date and move forward without involving the national office or NAC. If the two teams cannot agree to reschedule or simply cancel the competition, for this year an adjusted approach providing leniency is needed due to the widespread and unpredictable disruptions that will occur.

The NAC's prior discussion was to encourage decision-making on the basis of safety of student-athletes and staff and provide leniency to cancel/postpone competitions if needed without fear of forfeits. This is to include a variety of COVID related issues that could factor into such a decision, including COVID outbreaks within a team or campus population, presence of COVID within the local public environment, state or local guidance that discourage competition, transportation or logistical concerns, or any number of situations that could result from COVID.

### **Recommendation**

For 2020-21, any forfeit request that is submitted to the national office will automatically receive the following treatment:

1. Both institutions involved will be contacted to determine the nature of the situation and why the contest was not played.
2. If either institution raises issues that are in any way related to COVID, the NAC will be asked to review the situation to determine if it should be declared a "no contest." If information is presented that shows a reasonable concern or obstacle existed that was in some way related to COVID, a no contest will be granted and no forfeit will be issued. National office staff will seek further information as needed to enable the NAC in its review.
  - a. Neither team will be shown to have a win or loss, and the canceled contest will not count towards any game minimums.
3. If the game did not occur for reasons completely unrelated to COVID, standard procedure regarding the determination of forfeits will occur.