

Rule 19 – Eligibility and Transfer

1. Philosophy:

The philosophy of the transfer rule emphasizes that participation in interschool athletics is a privilege for students who meet the established standards of qualification set by the association. The residence and transfer standards are essential to ensure fair and equitable athletic competition, maintain educational priorities, and deter recruitment. Additionally, the standards support the educational philosophy of balancing school choice and that athletics should not overshadow academics while reinforcing the importance of the family unit in a student's life.

2. Definitions:

Transfer: A “transfer” occurs when a student previously enrolled in a secondary school, leaves to enroll in a new one.

Fourth-Year Transfer: A “Fourth-Year Transfer” is a student-athlete who transfers for the first time after their third season of eligibility in a specific sport they participated in during the 12 months preceding the transfer.

Third-Season of Eligibility (in a specific sport): The completion of a third season in a specific sport designates the student as being in their fourth year for eligibility purposes.

Start of Practice Date: “The Start of Practice Date” is the first day of practice for each sport, as set forth annually in the IHSAA Sports Calendar.

Contest Start Date: The “Contest Start Date” is the first day of contest for each sport as set forth annually in the IHSAA Sports Calendar.

Transfer Due to Verified Claims of Bullying (General Waiver and Hardship Condition, (rules 17-8.1 and 17-8.3)): Indiana's anti-bullying statute requires schools to adopt discipline rules that prohibit bullying and include provisions for education, parental involvement, intervention, and detailed procedures for investigating and responding to bullying incidents. The statute also mandates reporting bullying incidents and provides guidelines for training school employees and volunteers on bullying prevention and reporting policies. (Ind. Code §20-33-8-13.5)

The IHSAA does not hold school investigations to determine whether a student was bullied. A transfer due to verified bullying claims occurs when a school, after investigating a bullying complaint, determines that the proper action to remediate the complaint is an alternative placement or a school transfer.

Maximum Number of Contests: The “Maximum Number of Contests” for each sport is outlined in the IHSAA Member School By-laws, rule 50.

3. First-Time Transfer:

Students are entitled to one transfer during the first six semesters after their initial high school enrollment, provided that the transfer occurs on or before the *Start of Practice Date* of the sports season in which the transfer occurs. A student transferring for the first time will maintain full eligibility provided the transfer is not the result of undue influence (rule 20-2).

First-time transfers that occur after the *Start of Practice* for the sports season in which the transfer occurs will be subject to a Thirty (30) day non-contest period (or $\frac{1}{2}$ the Maximum Number of Contests in that sport, whichever is less).

4. Second and Subsequent Transfers:

Students who transfer for a second or subsequent time will be subject to the regulations set forth by the IHSAA Member School By-laws regarding all IHSAA-recognized sports in which the student participated during the 12 months preceding the transfer. The student's participation status—whether limited, full, or ineligible—will be determined in accordance with the IHSAA Member School rules.

Second or subsequent transfers that occur after the *Start of Practice* for the sports season in which the transfer occurs will be subject to a Thirty (30) day non-contest period (or $\frac{1}{2}$ the Maximum Number of Contests in that sport, whichever is less).

A student who transfers a second time from their original school (the school the student established initial promotion eligibility) ("Sending School") to another school ("Receiving School") and subsequently returns to the Sending School shall be granted full eligibility to participate in athletics.

5. Transfers Involving Non-Member Schools:

Student transfers involving nonmember schools will be subject to the regulations set forth by the IHSAA Member School By-laws regarding all IHSAA-recognized sports in which the student participated during the 12 months preceding the transfer. The student's participation status – whether limited, full, or ineligible – will be determined in accordance with the IHSAA Member School rules.

6. Transfers Occurring After the Start of Practice:

Students who transfer after the Start of Practice Date will be subject to a Thirty (30) day non-contest period (or $\frac{1}{2}$ the Maximum Number of Contests in that sport, whichever is less).

7. Fourth Year Transfers:

Fourth Year transfers, as defined above, are subject to a Thirty (30) day non-contest period (or 1/2 the Maximum Number of Contests, whichever is less) in each sport in which they participated during or after their third year of eligibility, during the 12 months preceding the transfer.

8. General Application:

- a. This Transfer Rule applies to all athletes at all levels of participation (not just varsity athletes) and applies to all IHSAA recognized sports in which the student participated during the 12 months preceding the transfer. Transferring students may participate in all other sports, as outlined in the exceptions under rule 19.
- b. The non-contest period will begin on each sport's Contest Start Date. For students who transfer after the Contest Start Date, the non-contest period will begin on the enrollment date. Students may participate in all team activities except contests during the non-contest period.
- c. When calculating the non-contest period using the Maximum Number of Contests, IHSAA will round down to the nearest whole number if the number of contests is not divided evenly. For example, if the Maximum Number of Contests were 15, then the calculation for a Senior Transfer (15 divided by 2) would be 7.5 and rounded down to 7 contests.

9. Enforcement:

The IHSAA oversees student transfers in collaboration with Member Schools. To facilitate this process, the IHSAA has established an online Transfer Reporting System. When a student transfers, both the sending and receiving schools must input the necessary information into the Transfer Reporting System and provide a recommendation regarding the student's transfer in accordance with the IHSAA Member School rules.

Timeline

January 16, 2025, Board Meeting (Review Transfer Change)

January 28, 29, 30, 2025, Virtual Meetings with the Member Schools.

February 21, 2025, Board Meeting (Board Vote)