

LAW OFFICES
HODSON, JONES & PENNOCK, LTD.
140 SOUTH POPLAR STREET
P.O. DRAWER "U"
CENTRALIA, ILLINOIS
62801

WHAT TO DO WHEN AN ACCIDENT OR INJURY OCCURS

As officials we are required to make decisions on the rules. However we must also know what to do when an accident or injury occurs during the game.

It is impossible to prevent all accidents and injuries during a contest that we are officiating. Sports place participants at a greater risk of being injured. Therefore, we as officials must take all steps necessary to ensure the safety of the athletes and it is critical to be prepared when something does go wrong. Here are a few steps to take in the event an accident or injury occurs in one of your games.

WHEN AN ACCIDENT OR INJURY OCCURS:

Seek medical attention - Every accident should immediately be assessed for severity. If in doubt call the doctor out. It is better to err on the side of safety and involve medical professionals when an injury has occurred. Enlist the help of other personnel, such as trainers or school administrators to help assess the situation so that you may act quickly.

Record everything - you should make written notes of any witnesses to the injury, including their names, phone numbers, and enough contact information that will allow you to contact in the future if needed. If there are ambulances or other emergency services rendered and security officers present, record the names of all agencies involved as well. Keep written records of all serious injuries that occur during contests that you officiate. If you are sued in the future or alleged to be liable for the injuries, you will need to have good documentation to prevent a bad judgment in Court. Record the injured person's name, the nature of the injury, how it happened, and the response. Also record anything of note before or after the injury regarding the contest and actions of players. Write down the information as soon after the injury as possible. Maybe even in the locker room after the game.

Media response - If a serious injury happens, expect the media to ask someone for a statement. You should defer to the school's athletic director, principal, or other person in charge of the facility that night. Try not to make any statement. A good way to avoid the situation, is to indicate that you are not allowed by the IHSA or other governing agency to comment on any contest in which you officiated.