



COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC

PANTS AND KNEE PADS

One of the important rule changes for 2018 is in **Rule 1-4-4-d**, regarding the knee pads. The rule was changed in 2017 to take effect in 2018: **the pants and knee pads must cover the knees.**

There has been a strong effort to emphasize this change—with teams, coaches, and conferences, as well as with the coordinators and officials. A poster illustrating legal and illegal equipment has been sent to every team. Coordinators have discussed this with coaches and teams, with the media, and at clinics and workshops. Because of the focused attention to the change and the long lead-time for it to take effect, no one should be surprised by this new rule.

Our job is to enforce the rule. We encourage you to be firm and diligent in making certain that the rule is strictly enforced. There must be no exceptions.

Here is the process to be followed, as prescribed by rule:

- If a player tries to enter the game with pants that do not cover the knees, he must not be allowed on the field.
- If a play is about to begin and an official sees a player whose knees are not covered, he should be sent from the field. The game clock should not stop and the play clock should not be interrupted; the player must simply be made to leave the field.
- If after a play is over an official sees a player who played the down with uncovered knees, he must be sent from the game for at least one down and may not return until the equipment is legal. The player does not need to miss a down if the team takes a charged timeout, but he may not be allowed to re-enter the game until his equipment is legal.

If all officials begin the season by strict and fair enforcement of the rules, this rule will quickly become a non-issue. Start officiating this with the first play of the first game. We know that all officials are committed to this effort. We stand ready to assist in any way we can.

Steve Shaw
Secretary-Rules Editor, NCAA Football Rules Committee

Rogers Redding
National Coordinator of Football Officials

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