

NKCA Baseball – Heat Index Guidelines

The guidelines below are based on recommendations published by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) for participation in sports activities during periods of extreme heat. These guidelines will be in play to address concerns as NKCA continues to review / adjust future guidelines.

The two values that will be considered when modifying or canceling games are air temperature and relative humidity. The combination of these two elements reflects the heat index. NKCA will rely on the heat index reading that is updated hourly by the National Weather Service. Because the heat index does not consider wind and direct sunlight, NKCA may add to the stated heat index on sunny and/or still days. Likewise, NKCA may subtract from the stated heat index on cloudy and/or windy days.

Zone 1 – Heat index of 65-80 degrees. In this range, the participant is in very little danger from heat and no special measures will be considered.

Zone 2 - Heat index of 81-98 degrees. In this range, coaches will be encouraged to take extra steps to protect their players by making sure they keep them hydrated and are encouraged to frequently rotate players within the rules of the game and practices.

Zone 3 - Heat index of 99-105 degrees. In this range, coaches are encouraged to implement the following: all measures taken in Zone 2; teams are encouraged to ensure water coolers are stocked for their team/spectators; teams are encouraged to rotate catchers out after no more than 2 consecutive innings. If it is a practice day, coaches are encouraged to keep players well hydrated and to take frequent breaks.

Zone 4 – Heat index of 106 to 114 degrees. In this range, NKCA will implement the following for games: all measures taken in Zones 2 and 3; the length of games will be modified according to the schedule below.

- 6U – 8U games will be reduced by 15 minutes (no change in time for Coach Pitch, still 50 min).
- 9U – High School games will be reduced by 25 minutes.
- If it is a practice day, coaches are encouraged to reduce the time of practice, take frequent breaks, and keep players well hydrated by having them drink water.
- The league will communicate with the umpires as to the active zone level and the umpires will communicate to the coaches in the event there is a modification to or cancellation of the game.
- To ensure games are not extended beyond an acceptable time, the termination time rule will still be in effect.
- As to the timing of the zones – for the purpose of determining the direction of the game, the zone will be set at the start of the game but could move zones up only. For example, if the heat index increases during the game while in zone 3, the league will communicate with the umpires a move to zone 4 is necessary. If the heat index decreases during the game while in zone 4, we will not move to zone 3.
- When playing a double header (straight or split), NKCA will allow time in between games to ensure teams have rest/hydration, etc. before the next game starts with the goal of starting the 2nd game at game time

Zone 5 - Heat index 115 and above. In this range, NKCA will cancel all games and practices until the heat index returns below 115. In the event of a game cancelation, notifications will be sent via the NKCA website and will be indicated as such in the master and team schedule.

As weather forecasts can change hour to hour, games will play until the league makes the decision on day of game. Teams should assume games will play as scheduled until a cancellation occurs and teams are notified.