

For Immediate Release

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NOCSAE Summer Standards Meeting Update **NOCSAE ADVANCES FORMAL PROCESS TO DEVELOP** **A YOUTH FOOTBALL HELMET PERFORMANCE STANDARD**

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (August 5, 2020) — The National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) held its first virtual public meeting on Friday, July 24. The Standards Committee addressed updates to athletic equipment safety standards for a range of sports and advanced discussions on the proposed youth football helmet standard and proposed revisions to the performance standard to protect against commotio cordis.

Proposed New Youth Football Helmet Performance Standard

In January 2020, the Standards Committee voted to move forward with developing a football helmet standard specific to youth players. NOCSAE's existing football helmet standard applies to players of all sizes, and helmets that are small enough to be worn by "youth players" are generally tested on a biofidelic head form that is similar to a 50th percentile 10-year-old male.

The development of any new standard begins with a "proposed" new standard which is the first step in a multi-year process to develop and refine performance and test criteria. The standard will remain in "proposed" status for a minimum of twelve months, during which time NOCSAE invites all interested parties to [submit comments, objections and suggestions](#).

At the July meeting, the technical director recommended terminology and test requirements for the proposed **Standard Performance Specification for Newly Manufactured Youth Football Helmets (ND006-20)**. Youth Football is defined as football played by persons who have not yet reached high school, or who are participating in youth football. To provide starting points for comments and discussions, the proposed new youth football helmet standard suggests a weight limit of 3.5 pounds for the helmet, facemask and attachments, and peak rotational acceleration limits of 2,000 radians per second squared (or rad/sec²). As proposed, the drop test criteria will remain the same for the youth helmet as the existing NOCSAE football helmet standard. The technical director also provided a progress update on the development of initial pneumatic ram and impactor head prototypes, and presented and discussed multiple comments and suggestions received from interested parties regarding the proposed new standard. As a next step, the technical director recommended NOCSAE develop a rigorous test plan to examine the system and feasibility of the proposed test standard.

The NOCSAE Standards Committee recognizes there are significant concerns and questions about risks related to youth tackle football shared by diverse stakeholders, as well as ongoing policy discussions across the country about how best to address and manage these risks. However, as long as youth continue to play this sport, NOCSAE believes it has a responsibility to advance the development of a youth helmet football performance standard that is *evidence-based*.

The proposed standard is expected to undergo significant changes in the development process which will likely take several years. A copy of the proposed standard is available for review at this [link](#). More information about the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) recommendations and research studies that informed the proposed standard are available in NOCSAE's [Youth Helmet Football Standard Research and Development Update](#).

Proposed Revisions to the Performance Standard to Protect Against Commotio Cordis

The technical director also provided an update on ongoing efforts to refine the testing process for the **Standard Test Method and Performance Specification Used in Evaluating the Performance Characteristics of Protectors for Commotio Cordis (ND200-20)**. NOCSAE has received significant public input on the testing process and performance criteria, and continues to work with key stakeholders to identify and address proposed revisions to the existing standard. Key areas of focus include identifying a methodology to ensure consistency in the placement of protective products on the mechanical chest surrogate throughout the testing process and refining the impact protocols as they relate to the cardiac load cells. The Standards Committee did not take voting action.

Reaffirmation of Existing Standards

NOCSAE and ANSI protocols require a formal reaffirmation of all standards that have not been modified or revised in five years. The Standards Committee has the option to maintain, revise or withdraw these standards. In accordance with that requirement, the Standards Committee voted to reaffirm two existing standards, including the **Standard Performance Specification for Recertified Football Helmets (ND004-11m15)** and the **Test Method and Performance Specification for Football Gloves (ND019-10m15a)**.

Updates to Existing Standards

The Standards Committee also acknowledged minor modifications to existing standards, including clarifying the ram mass for the **Standard Pneumatic Ram Test Method (ND081-18am20)**.

Potential New Standard for Non-Contact Football Headgear

The Standards Committee continues to evaluate the possibility of developing a new equipment performance standard for head and face protection for flag or touch football and similar sports like 7-on-7. Flag football is currently one of the fastest growing team sports and more youth are playing flag football today than tackle football. Preliminary data suggest that serious head and facial injury occasionally occurs from unanticipated and unintentional contact with other players and impacts with the ground, and that many of these injuries are preventable with appropriate and effective protective equipment. NOCSAE is evaluating the injury epidemiology for head and face injuries in the sport, that might inform headgear and/or faceguard performance requirements.

Update on Certification and Licensing

NOCSAE is the only sports standards organization that mandates third-party certification and specifies the level of compliance that must be demonstrated to receive such certification. Manufacturers must prove that the products they're submitting for certification meet the NOCSAE standard to a 95% confidence level. Certification to NOCSAE standards is managed by the Safety Equipment Institute (SEI), an independent, ANSI/ISO 17065 accredited certifying body. NOCSAE continues to work with Safety Equipment Institute (SEI) to refine and enforce the certification process for all equipment subject to NOCSAE standards, and to take appropriate action to protect the integrity of NOCSAE standards.



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National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment

Commissioning research and establishing standards for athletic equipment, where feasible, and encouraging dissemination of research findings on athletic equipment and sports injuries

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About NOCSAE

NOCSAE, the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment, is an independent and nonprofit standards development body with the mission to enhance athletic safety through scientific research and the creation of performance standards for athletic equipment. Formed in 1970, NOCSAE is a leading force in the effort to improve athletic equipment and, as a result, reduce injuries. NOCSAE efforts include the development of performance and test standards for football helmets, gloves and facemasks, baseball and softball batter's and catcher's helmets, baseballs and softballs, ice hockey helmets, soccer shin guards, lacrosse helmets and facemasks, and polo helmets. NOCSAE is comprised of a board of directors representing stakeholders from a number of groups – including consumer and end users, equipment manufacturers and reconditioners, athletic trainers, coaches, equipment managers, and academic and sports medicine associations. These diverse interests have joined forces in an attempt to arrive at a common goal of reducing sports-related injuries. NOCSAE is a nonprofit, charitable organization supported by individuals and organizations with an interest in athletics. For more information, please visit www.nocsae.org.

