



## **PIAA 35-POINT MERCY RULE**

### **Rule 3-1-2:**

**Running clock:** Upon completion of the first half of an interscholastic football game at any level of competition or anytime during the second half when a team gains a 35-point differential over its opponent, the clock shall be stopped only when an official's time-out is taken, a charged time-out is granted, a period ends or a score occurs. Once implemented, the mercy rule remains in effect, even if the differential becomes less than 35 points.

**Examples on back side of card.**



## **Examples:**

1. Incomplete pass – clock continues to run.
2. Ball carrier goes out of bounds – clock continues to run.
3. First down – stop clock, set chains, start clock on ready-for-play.
4. Ball carrier makes first down then goes out of bounds – stop clock, set chains, start clock on ready-for-play.
5. After a free kick, a punt or any other change of possession – stop clock and start on ready-for-play.
6. After a score – stop clock, remains stopped during the try.
7. Kickoff – start clock when legally touched. If result is a touchback, start clock on ready-for-play.

**Note:** Nos. 1 and 2 above are the primary situations where the clock continues to run.

**When does the clock restart? Generally, whenever it would if any of the stoppages occurred during regular game play.**

1. After an official's time-out – on the ready-for-play.
2. After a charged time-out – on the snap.
3. After the end of the third period – on the snap to start the fourth period or when a free kick is legally touched.
4. After a score – when the subsequent free kick is legally touched.