



MEMORANDUM

March 12, 2026

VIA EMAIL

TO: NCAA Division II Football Conference Commissioners, Directors of Athletics, and Head Coaches.

FROM: Ty Halpin,
Director of Championships.

SUBJECT: Division II Update: Coach-to-Player Helmet Communication approved.

This communication serves as notice that the Division II members of the Playing Rules Oversight Panel voted to approve the permissive use of coach-to-player (C2P) communication, effective with the 2026 season. This action is being taken out of cycle to permit institutions that choose to utilize this technology time to prepare for the upcoming season.

Below are several questions that have been asked regarding this technology:

- 1. Is one team permitted to use the coach-to-player helmet technology if the other team does not use it?** ANSWER: Yes. This is a permissive rule, like the use of tablets on the sidelines for in-game video.
- 2. If both teams are using coach-to-player helmet technology and one team's system fails, what happens?** ANSWER: From a NCAA playing rules perspective equity in this space is not part of the rule. So, the team with a system that remains operational can continue using its system. Some conferences in other divisions have created policies that address this for conference games and that is a possibility here.
- 3. If the home team has a conference policy that restricts the use of the C2P technology, is the visiting team permitted to use it?** ANSWER: Yes. In non-conference games, the playing rules permit the permissive use of C2P technology.
- 4. Is the 15-second communications cutoff mandatory?** ANSWER: Yes. To use the coach-to-player helmet rule, part of the rules requires communications to stop with 15 seconds remaining in the play clock.
- 5. Who is responsible for managing the 15-second cutoff?** ANSWER: Home team conference policy will dictate what position manages the cutoff, if a policy exists. Depending on the technology used, a cutoff switch may be housed either in the press box (with the play clock operator) or field level. If the home team is using the technology, it is recommended that the cutoff switch be managed as part of the game/play clock timing crew and there be coordination with the visiting team to ensure consistent application of

the rule. If the visiting team is using the technology but the home team is not, the home team has the option to manage the cutoff switch or have the visiting team manage it.

6. **Will this technology be permitted in the NCAA postseason?** ANSWER: Yes. This is a permissive rule and may be used by either team for all NCAA games.
7. **Can an institution or conference adjust the rule (e.g., eliminate the cutoff switch)?** ANSWER: No. The rules are mandatory for institutions and conferences that choose to utilize it, including the cutoff. Conferences may choose to restrict the use of C2P for their institutions, but may not adjust the rule.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact Ty Halpin (thalpin@ncaa.org) or Steve Shaw (sdshaw.cfo@gmail.com). Thank you for your attention to this document and good luck this season.

TH:pa

cc: NCAA Division II Football Rules Subcommittee members
NCAA Division II Football Committee members
NCAA Division II Playing Rules Oversight Committee members