



## MEMORANDUM

February 27, 2026

### VIA EMAIL

TO: NCAA Division III Football Conference Commissioners and Head Coaches.

FROM: Ty Halpin,  
Director of Championships.

SUBJECT: Status of Coach-to-Player Helmet Communication.

The Division III members of the Divisions II and III Football Rules Committee are sharing this communication as an update regarding Coach-to-Player technology.

This document is intended to provide an update regarding coach-to-player helmet communication (C2P) for Division III football competition. In short, the use of this technology for the 2026 season is permitted in Division III football. This proposal was approved in February 2024 and approved by the Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) for a fall 2026 effective date.

In preparation for the 2026 season, several questions have been asked of the Division III members of the DII/III Football Rules Committee, including:

- 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](mailto:thalpin@ncaa.org)) or Steve Shaw ([sdshaw.cfo@gmail.com](mailto:sdshaw.cfo@gmail.com)). Thank you for your attention to this document and good luck this season.

TH:pa

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