



# GRAYHAWKS FOOTBALL & CHEERLEADING

## Severe Weather Policy

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### Purpose

The safety of all Grayhawks players, cheerleaders, coaches, officials, and spectators is our top priority. This policy outlines the procedures to be followed in the event of thunder or lightning during any Grayhawks Football game, practice, or outdoor event.

### Monitoring Weather Conditions

All **Grayhawks coaches and team officials** are responsible for monitoring weather conditions on game and practice days. Weather should be tracked through reliable apps, radar, or local forecasts before and during outdoor activities.

If the **host facility (school or field)** has its own lightning detection or weather safety policy, that policy will take precedence.

This policy is reviewed annually with all Grayhawks administrators, coaches, and volunteers.

### Evacuation and Safer Areas

Each game site should have a clear **evacuation plan** identifying nearby **safer areas** and the estimated time needed for everyone to reach them.

#### Designated Safer Areas include:

- Substantial buildings with plumbing and wiring (such as a school, gymnasium, or fieldhouse).
- Fully enclosed metal vehicles (cars or school buses).
- Note: Convertibles, golf carts, and open shelters do not qualify as safe areas.

If severe weather strikes **before** a game or practice begins, the **site manager or host organization** will decide whether to delay or cancel.

If thunder or lightning occurs **after** an event has started, the **lead official** (for games) or the **head coach** (for practices) will make the decision to suspend play.

When one Grayhawks event is suspended due to thunder or lightning, **all outdoor activities at that site must also be suspended.**



## GRAYHAWKS FOOTBALL & CHEERLEADING

### Severe Weather Policy (continued)

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#### If Caught Outdoors Without Shelter

If safe shelter cannot be reached immediately:

- Seek **low ground** and avoid tall objects or open fields.
- **Do not** take cover under trees or near metal structures.
- Avoid bleachers, fences, goalposts, and standing water.

#### Mandatory Lightning Safety Procedures

If **thunder is heard or lightning is seen**, the following steps must be taken:

**1. Suspend all activity for at least 30 minutes.**

Everyone must vacate the field and move to a designated safer area immediately.

- Announcements should be made over the public address system (if available).
- A list of nearby safer areas should be clearly posted or communicated before each event.

**2. Wait 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder or flash of lightning** before resuming play.

**3. Reset the 30-minute clock** each time thunder is heard or lightning is seen again.

Example: If lightning is seen at 7:00 PM and again at 7:25 PM, play cannot resume until **7:55 PM** at the earliest.

#### Resumption or Cancellation

Once conditions have improved and the required wait time has elapsed, the **lead official (for games)** or **head coach (for practices)** will determine if it is safe to resume play.

If conditions do not improve, the event will be **postponed or canceled** for safety reasons.

#### Summary

- At the **first sign of thunder or lightning, stop play immediately.**
- **Clear the field and stands** — no exceptions.
- **Wait 30 minutes after the last strike or rumble** before returning.
- **Safety first, always.**