

The 24-Hour Rule

From time to time, coaches will encounter challenges from parents, guardians or spectators. Regardless of a coach's level of experience, these moments can be difficult and potentially intimidating. To prevent and manage such exchanges, CVAC supports the use of the *24-Hour Rule*.



A well-known protocol in club sports, the *24-Hour Rule's* purpose is to prevent heat-of-the-moment exchanges directed at coaches from parents / guardians and / or spectators. Essentially, parents / guardians, spectators are asked to wait at least 24 hours from the time of an athletic event before discussing with the coach any matter related to coaching decisions made during the match. After the 24-hour period has passed, a conversation may be made respectfully in writing to the coach with the athletic director and/or principal cc'd.

How it works:

Any adult wishing to discuss a coaching decision from a match must wait 24 hours before doing so. If they choose to share a question or concern, they must put the issue respectfully in writing and submit it to the appropriate parties (coach, athletic director, principal). Coaches are encouraged to seek advice from their athletic director and/or school administration prior to responding in written form.

Be Proactive:

Schools (administrators and athletic directors) should assess their particular situation. If they feel the *24-Hour Rule* would support a more positive extra-curricular experience for all involved, their teams should promote the *24-Hour Rule* on relevant documents – team forms, school websites, parent and player agreement forms, etc. It would also be discussed at the team meeting held with parents and players prior to the start of each season.

Even with the *24-Hour Rule* in place, there is the possibility that a parent/guardian or a spectator will still approach a coach in a heat-of-the-moment situation. Coaches might find it helpful to follow these steps: Stay calm. Don't respond in kind.

Inform the adult that the school/team follows the 24-Hour Rule. Remember that non-parental spectators may not be aware of the 24-Hour Rule.

Politely but assertively use the script below:

- a. Stay calm. Don't respond in kind.
- b. Inform the adult that the school/team follows the 24-Hour Rule. Remember that non-parental spectators may not be aware of the 24-Hour Rule.
- c. Politely but assertively use the script below:
 - i. *I can tell you are upset. This isn't the best time to discuss this. We follow the 24-Hour Rule at our school. You can find more information about this rule (on our school website, in our parent / player agreement)*
- d. Walk away. Do not extend the encounter.
- e. Consider/Decide whether your athletic director or school administration should be contacted.