



1. Preamble

- 1.1. Based on the policies and recommendations of government agencies, national and provincial sport organizations, and the leagues we serve, there appears to be a consensus that an Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) of '7' or higher poses a significant health risk, and is not a suitable environment for outdoor football activities.
- 1.2. The policy will apply to all outdoor activities undertaken by the EFOA except for CJFL, USports, and CFL games, where the policies of those organizations will take precedence.

2. General

In order to protect the health and well-being of our membership, and to avoid our members being unreasonably inconvenienced, the EFOA commits to the following:

- 2.1. The EFOA will not dispatch officials to any scheduled contests if the AQHI is '7' or higher and not forecast to improve.
- 2.2. Already being at or en route to a game does not compel EFOA members to participate if the AQHI at the venue is '7' or higher. Games may be delayed/shortened by a reasonable amount, but officials will not remain on standby indefinitely.
- 2.3. EFOA members who are dispatched to a game will be compensated regardless of whether that game is cancelled by the teams/leagues involved, or our involvement is withdrawn in accordance with this policy.
- 2.4. All decisions made by the EFOA and its members will be based on the most current AQHI data obtained from the following sources:
 - Pre-game/Forecasting data will come from the [Detailed Forecast](#) tab on the Government of Alberta website here: <https://airquality.alberta.ca/map/>.
 - Site-specific data will be taken from [Purple Air](#) using data from the monitor closest to an affected facility.
- 2.5. The EFOA commits to fully support its members in any decisions made regarding air quality, and encourages officials to err on the side of caution. Decisions communicated by the Referee to the teams are final, and any concerns about these decisions should only be expressed via a league representative to the EFOA President directly.

3. Pre-Game Monitoring:

- 3.1. When air quality is potentially a concern, the EFOA will monitor the current and forecast conditions for all venues with scheduled games that day.
- 3.2. If the AQHI in a given community is '7' or higher 2 hours before the scheduled kickoff and not forecast to improve by game time, a communication will be issued from the EFOA President, Assigner, or their designate to our members and the affected league(s) stating that conditions are hazardous and our officials are not to work the affected game(s).

- 3.3. If the AQHI is less than '7' 2 hours before kickoff, OR is '7' or higher but forecast to drop by game time, AND there has been no direction from EFOA leadership to the contrary, members will expect games to go ahead but must continue to monitor the situation.

4. Game-Time Monitoring

- 4.1. Officials will continue to monitor conditions using data from the closest monitor to the site of their game(s) as shown by [Purple Air](#).
- 4.2. If the AQHI does not improve or worsens such that it is '7' or higher when the officials meet with coaches before the game, the Referee will inform the head coaches of both teams of the situation and that the officials will not be taking the field until conditions improve.
- 4.3. In situations where air quality is of concern but a game goes ahead, officials should continue to monitor conditions both at halftime and between games (as required).

5. Delays/Suspensions:

- 5.1. When a game is delayed, officials will return to the dressing room and monitor the situation for up to one hour until:
- Conditions improve.
 - The teams/league cancels the game.
 - Further direction is provided by the EFOA.
- 5.2. Conditions will not be considered to have improved unless Purple Air shows the real-time AND 30-minute average AQHI are BOTH less than '7'.
- 5.3. If conditions improve within one hour of the scheduled start time, officials will work the game. The teams/leagues involved will decide if a full game is to be played, or whether the game will be shortened or the format modified (ex. "Jamboree"-style controlled scrimmage).
- 5.4. If the reported conditions have not improved within one hour then the game will be considered unplayable. Officials not scheduled for any other games may depart. If this is the first game of a doubleheader, then the same process outlined in Section 4 will be followed for that game. Officials will not participate in any version of a game, modified or otherwise, that does not start within one hour of the scheduled kickoff.
- 5.5. Should conditions worsen and the game is suspended by the teams/league, or the AQHI has increased to '7' or greater at halftime, officials will delay returning to the field and monitor the reported conditions. If conditions have not improved within one hour of the start of halftime or other suspension of play, the game will be considered to be unplayable.
- 5.6. Any game that is delayed because of the reported AQHI and subsequently suspended a second time will be considered unplayable.
- 5.7. Any game(s) that are modified or deemed unplayable based on the above must be reported to the EFOA by the Referee at such a time a decision is made using the reporting tool [HERE](#).

6. Cancellations:

- 6.1. Any games cancelled by the teams/leagues must be communicated in writing to the EFOA no less than 2 hours before the scheduled kickoff. Cancellations made less than 2 hours before the game will be billed in full, including mileage costs (as applicable).
- 6.2. For games outside of the normal EFOA operating area, a decision will be made in advance of how much notice is required. At a minimum, any cancellations by the teams/leagues must come no less than the estimated travel time to the venue plus one hour.
- 6.3. Any games cancelled part-way through (ex. at halftime) will be billed in full.
- 6.4. Officials scheduled for a doubleheader that is cancelled less than 2 hours prior to the first game will be compensated for the first game only.
- 6.5. Rescheduling of cancelled games is the prerogative of the teams/leagues, and not to be discussed or coordinated with the officials at the field. Requests for officials for rescheduled games must be directed to the EFOA Assigner.

7. Miscellaneous

- 7.1. The EFOA assumes no responsibility for the conduct of the teams/leagues as it pertains to air quality, nor will we enforce any policies but our own, and only for our own members.
- 7.2. The EFOA shall not be liable for any costs incurred by leagues, teams, venues, or any other parties as a result of this policy.
- 7.3. Any games, modified or otherwise, that are played without officials as a result of this policy are done so at the sole risk of the participating teams/leagues. Neither the EFOA nor any of its members shall be held responsible for any injuries or incidents that occur as a result of games moving ahead without officials on the field.

8. References

- [Football Alberta Air Quality Policy](#)
- [Air Quality Policy Guide - SIRC](#)
- [Guiding Document - Understanding Air Quality - SIRC](#)
- [Alberta AQHI Summary - Environment Canada](#)
- [About the Air Quality Health Index - Government of Alberta](#)
- [AQHI Map - Government of Alberta](#)
- [Purple Air - Map](#)