

Mercy Rule Process - U12 & U14 Open Tier ONLY

Step 1 – Mercy Rule Activated

The Mercy Rule will come into effect immediately when a team gains a lead of 20 points or more.

Step 2 – Mercy Rule Ceases

If, at any stage during the game, the score margin is reduced to less than 20 points, the Mercy Rule will immediately cease to apply.

The leading team may then resume normal defensive play, including full-court defence where permitted under the Rules of Operation.

Step 3 – Mercy Rule Reinstated

If the leading team again establishes a lead of 20 points or more, the Mercy Rule will immediately be reinstated and the requirements outlined above will again apply.

Coaches' Responsibilities

- Coaches are responsible for ensuring their players understand and comply with the Mercy Rule.
- When the Mercy Rule is in effect, the coach of the leading team must ensure their players retreat behind the three-point line in the backcourt and do not apply defensive pressure until the offensive team has advanced the ball into the frontcourt.
- Coaches should use the Mercy Rule as an opportunity to promote player development, sportsmanship, and positive game management.
- Failure to comply with the Mercy Rule may result in the officials stopping play to provide direction. Continued or deliberate non-compliance may result in the coach being issued with a warning and/or a technical foul in accordance with the FIBA Official Basketball Rules.

Officials' Responsibilities

- Officials are responsible for monitoring the score margin throughout the game.
- Once the 20-point margin is reached, or the margin falls below 20 points, officials should clearly communicate to both teams that the Mercy Rule has been activated or has ceased to apply.
- Officials should provide teams with a reasonable opportunity to comply before resuming play.
- Teams are expected to comply immediately following the officials' direction.