



RULES OF PLAY

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TRI COUNTY YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Rules of Play

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TRI COUNTY YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE
2018 SEASON

TRI-COUNTY YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES OF PLAY

These rules are for use in all football games. These rules are coordinated with national rules established by the National Alliance Athletic Association.

PRACTICES

- No practices can be held prior to the last **Monday** of July.
- Players are not allowed to wear pads or take contact until after their first two (2) practices. However they are to wear their helmet & Mouth Guard.
- **Practices are not allowed to run over four (4) hours per week.** This includes any organized gathering that pertains to your team.

FIELD & GAME BALL

- Regulation football field. Only authorized youth footballs will be used. (COMPOSITE LEATHER K2/Peewee (D1), TDJ (D2) & TDY (D3) or equivalent sizes) No other footballs allowed.
- Hometown President must call Visiting President to verify game schedule.
- **DIVISION 1** – All teams must use the same flags (adjustable Velcro belts or clip on belts). They must be a different color from your pants and all are the same color.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- A regulation team shall consist of 11 players.
- All players must have a starting position on either offense or defense and play the majority of plays in that position of that team. If the practice requirements are not met, the coach has discretion to determine playing time as they see fit. **INCLUDING PLAYOFFS!**
- At the beginning of the season if you start with 11 or more players on your team and you fall below 11 players during the season, the other team does not have to follow with the number of players on the field. If you start with nine (9) or ten (10) players at the beginning of the season then the other teams must follow with your start number at the beginning of the season. If you start with ten (10) and you show up at a game with nine (9) players, the game shall be nine (9) vs. ten (10)
- You must have nine (9) players to field a team.
- When a team reaches a total of 32 or more players, they must split into two (2) separate teams by way of draft to create ample learning time for each individual with an Executive Board of Directors Member Present.

PLAYERS RULES

- **Injuries and Casts** – Players will be allowed to play with cast's or any kind of hard protective device providing it is sufficiently padded, the player must have a doctors medical release, and must be approved by the officials. All casts and waivers must be presented prior to the start of a game to the head official.
- If a player is hospitalized for any reason during any games and Playoffs, the player's parents/guardian must sign a release form and/or have from the doctor to resume play. This note must be given to the Hometown President.
- **ANY** profanity by a player will result in suspension from the game, by referee only.

LENGTH OF GAME

- **Division 1** – The field will be shortened to have the end zones at the 25-yard lines. The games shall consist of four **12 min. quarters**, with a non-stop clock and with a **5 min. half time**. The clock will run straight through play except for time outs called by the Head Official and/or team. Each team will receive one (1) timeout per half.
 - Teams will change field ends at the half. If the team winning the pre-game toss elects to kick, they will automatically receive in the second half. There will be no deferring.
 - Head Coach must be present at the coin toss.
- **Division 2** – The games shall consist of four **7 min. quarters** with a **7 min. half time**.
 - Clock will be run under high school rules with the following exceptions:
 - A down ball due to fumble – ball is dead but the clock will continue to run.
 - A spiked ball by the quarterback is not a fumble, it is an incomplete pass. The clock will be stopped, but the quarterback's arm must rotate forward for it to be an incomplete pass.
 - Teams will change ends at the half. There will be no deferring.
 - Head Coach must be present at the coin toss.
 - Three (3) time outs per half, of one (1) min. duration with no carry-over of time outs to the second half. When a one (1) min. time out is called, the referee will blow the whistle 30 seconds before the ball is to be put into play. Be prepared, time will be enforced.
- **Division 3** – Will follow Division 2 rule with the exception of a down ball due to fumble – ball is live and the clock will continue to run.

SCORING

- Touchdown – 6 points
- 2-point conversions try from the 3-yard line.
- Field Goal – 3 points will use holder and say DOWN-SET-HUT, On HUT, Defense can rush.
 - **Division 1 & 2** - If the attempt on a field goal is a missed attempt, it is a dead ball and is spotted at the line of scrimmage.
 - **Division 3** – If the attempt on a field goal is a missed attempt, it is a live ball. If attempting an extra point, the ball is dead.
- Safety – 2 points when the offensive team tries to advance the ball from behind the goal line and the offensive player is stopped before that player crosses the goal line.
 - **Division 1 & 2** - If on the fourth down the ball is fumbled in the end zone, 2 points will be awarded.
 - **Division 1 & 2** - Team scoring the safety would receive at the 40 yard line (similar to a kick off)
- **Division 3** – If the ball is recovered in the end zone by the defense a touchdown will be awarded. If the ball is recovered in the end zone by the Offense it is a Safety and 2 pts will be awarded. If the ball is fumbled out of bounds in the end zone it is a safety and 2 pts will be awarded. Kick-off will occur on the 45 yard line as normal with the team scoring the safety receiving the ball. Either punt or tee may be used.

KICK-OFF

- **Division 1** – there are no kick-offs: instead, the ball is placed at their 40-yard line
- **Division 2** – there are no kick-offs; the ball is placed at their 35-yard line
- **Division 3**

- Kick-offs are to be kicked from the 45-yard line of the kicking team. At least 5 players of the receiving team must be on the opposite 45-yard line for the kick-off. Out of bounds kick-offs are put into play at the receiving teams 40-yard line. No choice is allowed, either team.
- The ball is live on kick-offs. On-side kicks will be allowed with the exception of no overloading of players to one side of the field (equal amount of players on each side of ball). Must maintain normal kick-off procedures. The Referee will be instructed to have a quick whistle on all fumbles.

OFFENSIVE FORMATIONS & RULES

- Division 1 is limited to 1 formation,
- Division 2 is limited to 2 formations.
- Division 3 is limited to 3 formations.
- All head coaches must submit their offensive formations in paper form to head official at coin toss.
- A split-backfield and an I-backfield are considered the same formation, can be used as 1 formations.
- At least 7 offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. The formation must include Center, Left Guard, Right Guard, Left Tackle and Right Tackle.
- At least 2 players must be in the backfield, which includes the quarterback.
- A player is in the backfield if they are one yard or more from the line of scrimmage
- There shall be no more than 3 players in the backfield, excluding the quarterback.
 - Stiff-arming to the body only. Penalties: to the head and face mask, down at the spot of foul, 10 yard penalty from the point of infraction.
 - **Division 1:** No stiff-arming. Slapping or pushing at the arm of hand of an opponent is interpreted as stiff-arming as well as covering the flag with your hand.
- Unlimited substitution is permitted whenever the ball is not in play
 - **Goal Line** (inside the 10 Yard Line)- Inside the 10 yard line you may have unlimited number of down linemen.

STANCE

- All but the quarterback and receivers on the offensive team must be in a three point stance, running backs & flankers can be in a 2 or 3 point stance before the snap of the ball.
- Defensive line players must be in a three or four point stance within maximum of one (1) yard out from the furthest down lineman/wingback; the backfield players are allowed to stand straight up but cannot move until the ball is snapped.
- Defensive and Offensive backfield players may use any formation as long as they are SET BEFORE THE SNAP of the ball and that they are at least three (3) full yards off the line of scrimmage.

BLOCKING

- At least one of the blockers feet must be on the ground when the contact is made.
- Flying blocks are not permitted.

DEFENSIVE FORMATIONS & RULES

- There must be a minimum of six (6) down lineman in a three (3) or four (4) point stance on the line of scrimmage, and within one (1) yard out from the furthest down lineman/wingback.

- There can only be a maximum of 6 on the line of scrimmage excluding the player covering the Wide Receiver.
- No player may line “head up” on the center, they can only be in the center-guard gaps and cannot pinch in the center.
 - **Division 1**-Must run a 6 down linemen front with the nose tackles lined Head Up on the offensive Guards, and must make contact with the guard prior to making contact with the center.
- All Defensive Players over the weight limit must be in a 3 point stance at all times and must be on the line of scrimmage at all times. They may not play Linebacker, Safety, Corner, etc.
- **NO BLITZING.** (A forward or sideways motion by a defensive player during the snap of the ball) All players must be set before the ball is snapped including the player in motion. This also includes players running on and off the field. Only movement away from the ball in the defensive backfield (when running off the field) will be accepted. – **ZERO TOLERANCE!**
- The use of hands by defensive and offensive players will be allowed. Penalties will be enforced.
 - **Goal line** (within the 10 Yard Line) – Linebackers can roll up to 1 yard off the line of scrimmage in a 2 or 1-point stance, but may not cover the center.

DOWNING THE BALL CARRIER

- When any part of the body hits the ground besides the hand: the ball carrier is down.
- When forward motion has stopped, the ball is placed where the forward motion has stopped, this is known as forward progress. This is at the Referee’s discretion, leaning on the side of caution.
- **NO Horse Collaring!** (Dragging the runner down by the back of his shoulder pads in a backwards motion; this does not include the jersey).
 - **FLAG DIVISION 1 –**
 - Players **MUST** make an attempt at the flag first. If you make contact with any part of your body (including the helmet) before an attempt at the flag, this will be considered a tackle and penalties will apply. This is at the referee’s discretion.
 - Once a flag is successfully pulled, the defensive man should hold the flag up at once.
 - If a player catches or intercepts a pass, or in any legal manner receives the ball and does not have both flags showing, they shall be considered down at the spot he/she received the ball.
 - If the flag falls off of a ball carrier, the play is deemed ended where the flag has hit the ground.
 - Intentionally pulling flags from the players who do not receive the center snap will constitute an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

ADVANCING THE BALL

- By regular football tactics.
 - **Division 1 & 2**-A team shall have 40 seconds between downs to put the ball in play. Time starts when the referee signals to put the ball in play.
 - **Division 3** will have 30 seconds between downs to put the ball into play. Time starts when the referee signals to put the ball in play.
- The ball is put into play by center snap. A player other than the center must clearly have the ball by handoff in his/her possession before the ball can be advanced.
- No diving – diving or lunging over the line of scrimmage or goal line is prohibited. **At the end of each play a player must return the ball to the closest referee.**

- **Division 1 & 2** - No fumbles. Ball is down at point of grounding except on punts. Possession is retained by the same team, (this is to prevent piling on). A turnover may occur by interception or a stripped/fumbled ball **that has not hit the ground**. For the turnover to be valid the ball must not have touched the ground (Dead ball) and the player must have made a forward motion to establish possession and definite control of the ball.

YARDS AND DOWNS

- Four downs are permitted to advance the ball 10 yards from the original line of scrimmage.

FORWARD PASS

- Only one forward pass may be thrown on each down, but any number of laterals or backwards passes are permitted.
- Any player except the passer, center, guards and tackles are eligible to receive a pass, unless they have an "X" on their helmet.
- A forward pass may be thrown from any point behind the line of scrimmage.
- On the forward pass, only one offensive player may touch the ball on succession.
 - **FLAG DIVISION 1** – Any illegal contact with the quarterback while attempting to pass will be ruled, "Roughing the Quarterback". They may go for the flag but cannot run into or hit the quarterback in any way.

PUNTING

- When a team intends to punt, they must so designate by telling the referee before they get to the line of scrimmage. The referee will call out to the defensive players.
- Each team must have at least 8 players on the line of scrimmage.
- There will be no hike on the punt; the ball will be handed to the punter by the referee.
- The punter must then say; "Down, Set, Hut" and punt the ball.
- The punter may be in motion and kick the ball on "Hut", but not before.
- The defense may rush when the punter says "Hut". This will give the punter time to punt the ball considering a blocked punt is like a fumble, and a fumble is a dead ball except in Division 3 a blocked punt is a live ball.
- A team may also elect to take a 20-yard "mercy" punt. The ball will be advanced 20 yards and turned over. If you are on their side of the 50-yard line, you must go for it or punt the ball as listed above. This is NOT an automatic turnover on 4th Down, you may choose to still go for it on either side of the 50 yard line.
 - **FLAG DIVISION 1** – There are no punts: instead, the ball is advanced 10 yards and changes possession, unless the ball is inside the 50 yard line, you have to go for the first down.

FOREIGN SUBSTANCES

No player may use stick 'em, Pine tar, etc. To help hold onto the ball.

BACKFIELD WEIGHT LIMITS

- **Division 2 weight limit is 98lbs.** Subject to change each year.
- **Division 3 weight limit is 118lbs.** Subject to change each year.
- These weights are set without gear when he/she steps on the scale.
- Players must weigh in with a minimum of shorts on.

- Anyone over this weight limit must have an “X” on the back of their helmet.
 - **The “X” must 3” X 3” and in a contrasting color to the helmet.** This means any player over the weight limit with an “X” cannot carry the ball or play in the backfield, offense or defense.
- Any player over the weight limit is NOT eligible for a pass or allowed to advance the ball. If a player does not make weight at the weigh-in, he/she is not eligible for the entire season and cannot be reweighed for the year. This will not change regardless of weight loss or weight gain.
- For all divisions, special considerations for players desiring to play outside their designated age group must be brought to the Board of Directors for a vote.
- Any player who chooses to play down a division lower than their designated age group may not play in a position eligible to advance the football (i.e., running back, quarterback, etc.) Request to play down must be submitted to the Board in writing for approval.

RUN-AWAY GAMES

- For the sake of the children, a coach knows when he has control of the game.
- Embarrassment and humiliation will not be tolerated.
- When the score reached a difference of 21 or more points, we will go to a straight running clock, starting in the second half.
- The clock can only be stopped with a time out **from the team behind**, score or an injury on the field.
- The team with a 21 point advantage **WILL NOT** receive any timeouts.

OVERTIME

If, after the end of regulation time, there exists a tie in the score, overtime shall be played as follows:

- **Division 1** – No overtime, game ends in a tie ball game.
- **DIVISION 2 & 3** –
 - Captains and Head Coach of the teams will meet at mid-field for a toss of the coin with the visiting team calling.
 - The winner of the coin toss may choose offense or defense
 - The ball will be placed at the 10 yard line and the offensive team will have four (4) downs to score from the ten (10) yard line. Extra point attempts will be allowed.
 - At the completion of a score or the completion of four (4) downs without a score, the ball will be replaced at the ten (10) yard line and the opposing team will be given four (4) downs to score.
 - If the game remains tied at the end of overtime, the game is officially over and declared a tie ball game.
 - Playoffs are the exception to this rule, teams will repeat until a winner is declared.
 - If there is an interception/fumble recovered by the opposing team, that team’s try for a score is complete. There is no run back for a touchdown.
 - Penalties will be applied in overtime play in the same way they are applied during regular play.
 - Each team is allowed only one time-out in overtime. Regulation time-outs do not carry over.

UNIFORMS & TEAM NAMES

- No rude or nasty names will be allowed. This will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- All players must wear regulation football helmets, mouth guards, shoulder pads and pants with pads.

- Shoes – Metal cleats or screw in metal cleats are not allowed. They must have rubber cleats with plastic tips.
- Jersey's must be tucked in (Division 1 only)
- **Mouth guards must be ATTACHED to the facemask.** If not, the player will not participate until they have a mouth guard attached. If the mouth guard is not in the mouth at the time of the snap it will be a penalty. Helmets must be properly buckled. If it is not, the official is to stop the game on an official's time out for equipment repair until it is buckled. If the buckle or helmet needs repair beyond a simple buckling of the helmet, the player must leave the field to get it fixed. The clock will start on the official's signal.
 - **FLAG DIVISION** – flags must be worn hanging down the hip and along the leg. They must be hanging loose, fully extended, and may not be knotted or tucked in the pants, pockets, or inside out. The flag belt may not be inside the belt loops on the pants; the excess belt hanging down must be tucked into the pants. Tampering of flags will result in FORFEIT OF THE GAME.

COACHING

- The Maximum number of coaches on the sideline are as follows, D1 – 6, D2 – 5, D3 – 4, this does not include Team Moms and/or Dads. Which each team is allowed 2 in any combination as long as they are acting like Team Mom and/or Dad's and not coaches.
- Division 1 is allowed two (2) coaches on the playing and **in the huddle** with the players.
- Division 2 is allowed one (1) coach on the field and **in the huddle** with the players but must remain a minimum of ten (10) Yards on the backfield at all times. Once the offensive huddle has broken the defensive coach must be 10 yards behind the linebacker and once the ball is snapped, he/she may not direct his/her players.
- Division 3 is allowed one (1) **offensive** coach on the playing field but **must remain ten (10) yards off the huddle.** A player will report back to the coach for the play call, the coach cannot call the play in the huddle. The coach is not allowed in the huddle unless a problem arises amongst players. Coaches cannot say anything to the players after the play starts. Head Coach must declare at the coin toss if they will be coaching from the field or the sideline and cannot change their decision during the game.
- In Division 3, no coach is allowed on the field for defense they must stay inside the box on the sideline.
- The Head Coach is responsible for the physical and mental well being of all children while entrusted to his/her care, all injuries must be reported to the home towns President. The Head Coach is also responsible for the conduct of Assistant Coaches.
- Coaches will not use abusive, profane, or degrading language, or insulting remarks in the presence of anyone connected with the game (in practice or in games).
- All Coaches will conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times.
- All Coaches will not engage in acts of violence.
- All Coaches will emphasize the importance of being good students as well as good athletes.
- All Coaches will accept decision of the Game Officials in the field as being fair and called to the best ability of the Game Officials. This does not mean a coach cannot question a call in a proper manner.
- All Coaches will not criticize an opposing team, its players, coaches, or fans by words or gestures.
- All Coaches are responsible for the conduct and control of his/her team's fans, announcers, chain crew, and spectators.
- No Coaches will use drugs, alcohol, or tobacco (including chewing tobacco) in any form on the field while participating in any games or practice.
- Should Head Coaches or their Coaching Staff violate any TCYFL by-laws, playing rules, or directives, they can be subject to immediate disciplinary measures by the TCYFL board of directors.

UNFAIR ACTS

- No team shall repeatedly commit a foul on purpose.
- No team shall commit any act, which in the opinion of the referee, tends to make a travesty of the game. The penalty for any of the above “Unfair Acts” shall be at the sole discretion of the referee, including awarding a score, or in the event of repeated fouls, the game may be **forfeited**.

PENALTIES

LOS – Line of Scrimmage POI – Point of Infraction | POI – Point of Infraction

(LOSS OF 5 YARDS)

1. Offside – LOS
2. Intentional grounding of pass (also loss of down) – LOS
3. Delay of game (not holding flag by defensive player) – LOS
4. Violation of punt rules – LOS
5. Illegal procedure – LOS
6. Illegal motion (all players, offense & defense, must be set before the ball is snapped, no matter where they are on the field. Defensive movement away from the ball (running off the field) will be accepted – LOS
7. Violation of sideline restrictions (coaches and non-playing members cannot be on the field or on the end zone) Exception: Division 1 & 2 coaches – LOS
8. Guarding Flags – LOS
9. 12 or more players on the field or in the huddle – LOS
10. Mouth guard not in mouth – LOS
11. Illegal substitution – LOS
12. Holding – LOS
13. Illegal Formation - LOS

(LOSS OF 10 YARDS)

1. Pass interference defensive team (automatic first down, no added yards) – LOS
2. Illegal use of hands or arms (to the head or face) – LOS
3. Division 1 – Tackling, referee may rule touchdown if in the judgment the tackle prevented a touchdown – POI or LOS whichever is more severe.
4. Unnecessary roughness – LOS
5. Flying Blocks – LOS
6. Stiff arming to the head or face mask – POI
7. Forward pass interference (offensive team) – LOS
8. Roughing the quarterback: Division 1 – any contact with the QB while attempting to pass without attempt to grasp the flag. Division 2 & 3 – Hitting the QB after the pass has left his/her hand. – Automatic first down – LOS
9. Horse Collaring (Dragging the runner down by the back of his shoulder pads)- POI
10. Profane language – may also result in immediate disqualification – LOS
11. Clipping/illegal block in the back; if the player turns their back towards the block, it will not be considered a clip, this is up to the discretion of the referee – POI
12. Face masking – POI
13. Unsportsmanlike conduct – may also result in disqualification or loss of game – LOS
14. Throwing the ball at the referee in an unsportsmanlike manner, arguing with a referee or celebrating after a score in an unsportsmanlike manner – this a referee judgment call.

(LOSS OF 15 YARDS)

1. Blitzing (ZERO TOLERANCE) – LOS

CHEERLEADING

No practices can be held prior to the last **Monday** of July. **Practices are not allowed to run over four (4) hours per week.** This includes any organized gathering that pertains to your team.

UNIFORMS

- When standing at attention, apparel must cover the midriff and if they are wearing skirts they must wear spandex or shorts under their skirts.

CHEERS

- Cheers must be of good taste. They cannot be degrading, rude or vulgar in any manner.

CONDUCT

- Must show good sportsmanship and support the teams in a positive manner

STUNTING

- ALL rules MUST be followed according to the (NFHS) National Federation of High School's Spirit Rules Book and the (WACPC) Wisconsin Association of Cheer/Pom Coaches. Utilize both of these websites for education and rules.
- Teams are ONLY allowed to go as high as a Thigh Stand unless they can demonstrate to the Cheerleading Representative on the TCYFL Board of Directors that they have the proper knowledge of Cheer Safety and Cheer Stunting Rules.

COACHING

- Head Coach is responsible for the safety and wellbeing of her/his team, including the assessment of performer readiness.
- Must be in attendance and accessible at all practices, games and spirit activities.
- The Head Coach must report any and all injuries sustained by members of his/her team immediately of at least within twenty-four (24) hours of the injury to the home towns' president.
- Coaches will not use abusive, profane, or degrading language, or insulting remarks in the presence of anyone connected with the game (in practice or in games).
- Will conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times Will not engage in acts of violence.
- Emphasize the importance of being good students as well as good athletes.
- Accept decision of the Game Officials in the field as being fair and called to the best ability of the Game Officials. Not to criticize an opposing team, it's players, coaches, or fans by words or gestures.
- Each Coach is responsible for the conduct and control of his/her team's fans, announcers, chain crew, and spectators.
- There will be no use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco (including chewing tobacco) in any form on the field while participating in any games or practice.
- Rule books may be obtained through your HS Cheer Coach or the website below www.wacpc.com or www.nfhs.org