

 East Carolina Youth Football League Inc.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

**ORGANIZATION**

**Name**

The East Carolina Youth Football League Inc. (ECYFL) provides an organized, full contact football and cheer program for the youth of Eastern North Carolina and surrounding jurisdictions. ECYFL is a non-profit organization within the meaning of the statutes and regulations of the state of North Carolina and the United States of America**.** ECYFL is a League officially chartered by the internationally recognized American Youth Football & Cheer (AYF / AFC).

**Purpose**

The sole purpose of ECYFL is to provide the youth of Eastern North Carolina with organized, adult-supervised, healthy football and cheerleading programs consistent with AYF/AYC rules. In doing so, this organization will constantly promote the ideas of fellowship, community spirit, good sportsmanship and fair play while ensuring that proper training; instruction, safety and equipment are furnished to the participants.

**Organization**

The League is an organization of individual associations throughout the region, bound together with common rules of conduct and play. It is governed by a Board of Representatives (Board). The Board establishes the rules and policies of the League and appoints a commissioner. The Commissioner governs the administration of league policies and rules.

**Membership**

Any recognized organization within the surrounding jurisdictions is eligible to petition for membership in the League. Prospective members must demonstrate and maintain an organizational framework with an elected board, internal policies, and rules consistent with League rules and policies, and a commitment to the League to uphold the rules and standards. Acceptance is contingent on a 2/3 majority vote of current members in good standing.

* New organizations must apply in writing to the board.
* All organizations must include specific geographical boundaries and limits for eligibility in their petition to ensure fair and equitable competition.
* All new Associations shall enter a probation period of not less than **two years** prior to receiving full membership and voting rights on the board.
* All Associations must field at least 3 teams in separate divisions, to be eligible as members of the conference.
* The Board of Representatives of the league, with just cause as determined by the governing by-laws of ECYFL, may terminate a membership by the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board of Representatives entitled to vote per these Bylaws and Rules.
* New organizations will be required to present to the Board or Representatives for review, financial statements, proof of proper tax identification and program recruitment methodology (if) so deemed necessary by the Board of Representatives.

**Overview**

Youth football players (Players) are organized into teams by their respective association in accordance with league rules and policies. A variety of competition classes are available. Team placement is based upon an age matrix and abilities. Teams compete during the regular season based upon a league managed schedule.

* Game play and equipment is governed by the current edition of The National Federation of High School Football Rules (NHSF) as modified herein.
* The League reserves the right to rule on any inconsistencies identified between written League rules and NHSF rules.
* Certain NHSF rules outside of game play and equipment requirements may be considered as guidelines, but not requirements for league play. Other NHSF rules do not apply to the league.
* Inter-league play is governed by East Carolina Youth Football League/League rules.
* Bowl competitions follow special rules established by the league and agreed upon by the participating organizations.

**LEAGUE STRUCTURE**

**Executive Board Overview**

The following shall serve as governance for all members of the Executive Board and the Board of Representatives. No member shall serve a consecutive term beyond (2) years of their appointment, except if by re-appointment and 2/3 vote of the Executive Board. In the event an association is unable to provide a replacement and the sitting member desires to remain in the association’s position on the Board of Representatives, the association must submit a letter with association letterhead signed by 2/3 of the sitting association’s board members approving the continued appointment of said appointee to the Board of Representatives.

**Executive Board**

ECYFL is a youth football and cheerleading league that falls under the jurisdiction of the AYF/AYC and participates in the AYF/AYC Atlantic Region. The day-to-day operations of ECYFL are managed and maintained by an Executive Board.

**Board of Representatives Overview**

ECYFL is a youth football and cheerleading league that falls under the jurisdiction of the AYF/AYC and participates in the AYF/AYC Atlantic Region. All matters concerning rules, governance and matters outside the day-to-day operations of ECYLF shall be governed by the Board of Representatives.

**Board of Representatives**

The League is governed by a Board of Representatives consisting of representatives from each member association. This group is responsible for establishing League rules and regulations within the AYF/AYC as well as setting all fees and fines. The League Commissioner is responsible for overseeing and enforcing league policies and rules. The board is governed by these league By-Laws.

**Association Representation**

Each organization sponsoring teams shall appoint a President and as many assistants as required to direct that organizations football program. Only the association president or their designated representative shall vote on matters placed before the board. Association presidents and their appointed designee shall be identified in writing to the Commissioner.

**MANGAGMENT**

**Appointment of Association Presidents**

Appointment. The President of each Association (Probationary Associations excluded) eligible for membership on the General Board, elected or appointed to said position in accordance with the Association's by-laws, shall serve on the General Board. Each Association (Probationary Associations excluded) shall appoint an Association official (e.g., Vice President or Vice Commissioner or designee) to represent the Association on the General Board if the Association President is unable to attend General Board meetings or otherwise conduct General Board business.

**Removal of Association Presidents**

Upon proper motion of any Board of Representative, the Board of Representative may, upon 2/3 majority vote, remove, for sufficient cause, an Association representative from future participation in General Board meetings or other ECYFL activities. In such case, the affected Association shall appoint another person to sit as a voting member of the Board of Representative.

**Appointment/Appointment Process/Term of Office/Removal of Officers**

Appointment of the Associations (Probationary Associations are excluded) on the Board of Representative shall appoint, upon simple majority vote, the ECYFL Officers. Association Officers may be appointed as ECYFL Officers.

**Qualifications to be considered for Officer Positions**

Each year before the appointment process begins; the Executive Board may develop and publish the minimum qualifications necessary for a person to be considered for an officer position.

**Appointment Process**

From December through January each year upon the conclusion of an associations sitting members term, the Executive Board shall accept nominations from all Associations to fill said appointment for the next term year. At the January Board of Representative Meeting each year, the Board of Representative shall vote by secret ballot to appoint one of the nominees to fill the position.

**(1) Nominating Committee.** The Executive Board may elect to utilize the services of a Nominating Committee to facilitate the recruitment and screening of potential nominees for Officer Positions. In such case, the Executive Board, by no later than the October meeting of the General Board, shall appoint a committee charged with developing a list of nominees.

**Voting Privileges**

Each association shall have only one vote on matters brought before the board. Associations with an excused absence from a League meeting are allowed to email their votes into the entire Board on any proposed changes or rules amendment when possible. In the event that a motion is not carried by a ¾ vote of the Executive Board and Board of Representatives, the motion is dead. A committee may be appointed to study and present findings of the facts of the motion if warranted. The motion may be entertained at consecutive meetings. The exception to the rule is in the event of safety issues. In such a case the motion may be carried to the Executive Board for review, consideration, and vote.

Each member of the Executive Board shall have only (1) vote. In the event that a single association has multiple sitting Executive Board members, decision must be carried by a majority vote.

**Executive Board**

The Executive Board of ECYFL consists of the following:

* Commissioner
* Vice Commissioner
* Football Commissioner
* Assistant Football Commissioners (District)
* Cheer Commissioner
* Asst. Cheer Commissioner
* League Treasurer
* Assistant League Treasurer
* Secretary
* Assistant League Secretary
* Public Relations

**League Commissioner**

The League Commissioner shall have and exercise the authority of the board between meetings in the best interest of the League. This authority shall include the interpretation and enforcement of the league rules and policies, the imposing of penalties for rule infractions set by the Board, and other incidental matters not requiring full board action. The Commissioner shall report all actions under the provisions of this authority immediately by email to the Executive Board and at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the board. The Commissioner is appointed by the Board of Representatives and can be only removed with just cause and a ¾ majority vote of members in good standing. The League Commissioner shall not have the authority to appoint or remove any league official without a ¾ vote of sitting board members in good standing. In the event the League Commissioner is not available, the Vice Commissioner / Football Commissioner, District 1 or 2 Commissioner(s) shall hold the same duties and responsibilities of the League Commissioner. All appointed Executive board members represent the League and are under the direct supervision of the League Commissioner. Any problems that may arise, the Commissioner is first on the chain of command list. When necessary, the Commissioner will assist in the certification of Associations. Any Executive member with knowledge of certification may assist with certification of Associations when deemed necessary.

**League Vice-Commissioner**

In the event the League Commissioner is not available, the Vice-Commissioner shall hold the same duties and responsibilities of the League Commissioner and is authorized to carry out such duties and assignments as may be delegated by the Commissioner. When necessary, the Vice Commissioner may assist in the certification of Associations.

**Football Commissioner**

The Football Commissioner shall assist the Commissioner and serve on various committees as deemed necessary and appointed by the Commissioner. In the absence of the Commissioner or Vice Commissioner the Football Commissioner shall have the same authority as the Commissioner. The Football Commissioner shall be responsible for assisting Association Presidents with the monitoring of coaches’ requirements which includes but is not limited to Concussion certifications, Background checks and any required external memberships as deemed to be required by the board. The Football Commissioner shall be responsible for assisting in the certification of Associations.

**Assistant Football Commissioner**

Assistant Football Commissioner shall support and aide the Football Commissioner as needed for the purpose of ensuring the league and association requirements are being met.

**Team/Association Districts**

Each Association in ECYFL shall be assigned a District as determined by the Commissioner. The district shall be comprised of either single or combined area zip codes or as otherwise determined by the ECYFL governing Board.

**Assistant District Football Commissioners**

Assistant District Football Commissioner shall be assigned a district based on area zip codes or as otherwise determined by the ECYFL governing board. Assistant District Football Commissioners shall be responsible for assisting in the certification of Associations. They may appoint other Executive Board members to assist with certification.

**Secretary**

The secretary maintains a register of members and directors, records the minutes of meetings, is responsible for sending out notice of meetings, issues membership cards, maintains League documentation, and maintains a record of league's activities.

**League Treasurer**

The treasurer signs check co-signed by another officer or director (or as directed by the local league's constitution), dispenses league funds as approved by the board of directors, reports on the status of league funds, keeps local league books and financial records, prepares budgets, and assumes the responsibility for all local league finances.

**Assistant League Treasurer**

Assistant League Treasurer shall support and aid the League Treasurer as needed for the purpose of overseeing league finances. If the League Treasurer is absent or unavailable, the assistant league treasurer shall dispense league funds as approved by the board of directors, reports on the status of league funds, keeps local league books and financial records, prepares budgets, and assumes the responsibility for all local league finances.

**Public Relations**

The public relations officer shall assist the league executive board in disseminating league communication, and when necessary is responsible for posting newsworthy accomplishments and responding to media and public information requests—including and often overseeing difficult or sensitive news stories relating to the league, associations, teams, or players providing the most positive light on a situation possible to promote the league. This officer should possess appropriate public speaking abilities and communicate effectively whether in writing or through speaking.

**Committees**

As needs arise the League Commissioner shall appoint Committees comprised of board members and chaired by a member of the board. Standing Committees, including the Rules Committee, maintain a permanent status. Other committees remain in effect until their task is complete but not longer than 12 months from inception. Each committee shall report progress and status to the full board at each regular board meeting and/or by email as deemed necessary. An example would be a committee to direct the establishment of a League Football Jamboree or League Combine or League Cheer Jamboree

**Scheduling Committee**

There shall be a Scheduling Committee consisting of a representative from each jurisdiction hosting football games for the upcoming season. It is recommended the Scheduling Committee appoint persons to serve as the Master Scheduler and Assistant who will coordinate and develop the game schedule with input from those established jurisdictions. The Scheduling Committee will develop and present a proposed pre-season and regular-season schedule that must be approved by the Executive Board before publishing to the League. Prior to review by the Executive Board, the Association representatives will review and identify any problem areas. Season schedules will generally not be available to Associations for release sooner than 2 weeks prior to the first game.

**Meetings**

Meetings are held at regular intervals with at least 2 weeks’ notice or more when possible. Attendance by each association’s representative is mandatory. If the President cannot attend, an appointed second shall attend on the association’s behalf. Special meetings shall be called by the Commissioner should the need arise.

**Conduct**

The League’s integrity and stature is dependent on all its members upholding the highest level of character and decency. As such, any member determined to be acting contrary to the ideals of the league may be sanctioned and/or suspended. Such sanctions may include reprimands, fines, probations, suspensions, or expulsions from the league as determined by the board. Sanctions must be approved by a ¾ vote of the Executive Board.

**Interface with AYF/AYC**

The League operates in close alliance with the AYF/AYC. The Commissioner and/or Vice Commissioner shall maintain all official League correspondence with AYF/AYC and report to the Executive Board. This league will comply with AYF/AYC Official Rules and Regulations. This rulebook is an addendum to the Official Rules and Regulations.

**Governing Rules**

National High School Federation Rules (NHSF) and AYF/AYC Official Rules and Regulations rules apply to all League games **unless amended by these Official League Rules.** Any questions not covered by the Official League Rules, official interpretation thereof, or any conflict not subject to protest shall be decided by theLeague Commissioner, Vice Commissioner, and/or the corresponding District 1 or District 2 Commissioners at the immediate occurrence. If conflict arises requiring further interpretation or investigation not subject to protest and not written in rules, the Executive Board can convene to render further input/interpretation and if need be, render decision based on 3/4 vote. An Executive Board member can motion and call for a second to request meeting.

**Volunteers**

All persons holding any position of responsibility within ECYFL shall serve as volunteers without remuneration (pay) except contracted sports officials (referees, umpires, scoreboard officials, announcers, photographers etc.)

**Finances**

ECYFL functions on a fiscal year basis. The fiscal year begins on January 1 and runs through December 31 of each year. ECYFL functions primarily through fees collected from Associations/teams, sponsorship donations, and other Executive Board approved fundraising activities.

**MEMBERSHIP RULES & REGULATIONS**

**Associations**

All teams must be sponsored by an association governed by an appointed or elected board or Board of operations or other responsible body. Written association by-laws and a description of the associations governing structure shall be provided to the league as part of the membership requirements. Any subsequent changes to an association’s by-laws or structure shall be submitted to the League. Associations shall be required to enter all players in all sponsored teams in this league within the weight and age limits established within these rules. Organizations or individuals found within Associations to operate contrary to League Rules and violating the integrity of the League, will be subject to consequence. Possible consequences include, but are not limited to fines, loss of home game/s, and forfeiture of play offs, probation, suspensions of violating person or parties or expulsion of person/persons, etc. If the League Executive Board sets consequence, the Association must comply. If an Association is subject to a loss of home games or forfeiture of playoffs, if a first offense, the Association may submit a written request to the Executive Board to pay an agreed upon fine for reinstatement. Subject to agreement, ¾ vote from the Executive Board. Associations shall only be given consideration regarding hosting (Jamboree, Playoffs or Super bowl) games upon successfully completing their probationary period which shall not be a period of more than (2) years from their initial entry. The Executive Board reserves the right to extend this probationary period. The Executive Board must provide written notice to an association if their probationary has been extended giving justification for its decision to extend an associations probation.

**Association Authority**

No Executive Board nor any member of the Board of Representatives shall have input or authority into the affairs of the Association. Upon submission of an Associations by-laws, if it determined that the by-laws lack merit or leave room for any ambiguity, the Association will be asked to amend their by-laws to address the concern. When an Association’s By-Laws are in contradiction to League rules, the Association will be required to amend By-Laws. If the Association does not address the concerns expressed by the Executive Board, the Association will be removed from ECYFL.

**League Intervention**

No Executive Board nor any member of the Board of Representatives shall have any input or authority into the affairs of the Association. However, in the event of Association grievances, upon invitation when (all) parties agree, the League Commissioner or any member of the Executive Board, may serve as a mediator to help resolve the conflict. The Association nor any other parties involved in the conflict shall be obligated to uphold or carry out the suggestion of the mediator “unless” it is determined that the conflict is the result of either party being out of compliance with the League or Association by-laws. In this event, the League Commissioner shall request an immediate hearing with the Executive Board to hear this matter. The Board shall not vote in favor of any party. The vote shall be only to determine whether there has been a violation of the By-laws. The vote shall be a “Yes” or “No” vote siding with the majority vote. Any sitting Executive Board member affiliated with the involved Association shall not be allowed to carry forward a vote on this matter.

In the event a “Yes” vote is determined by the Board, the involved Association and all parties will have a period of no more than (30) days to either become compliant according to by-laws or present to the Executive Board an amended copy of the Association operating rules addressing the issue. Once received, the Executive Board will review. When accepted by the Executive Board, the matter is closed. This process is to be repeated until such time that the Executive Board finds no violation of by-laws. If resolution cannot be met, the Association Board may request a meeting of the entire Board, including the Executive Board and Board of Representatives. If the Association chooses not to amend their by-laws or to resolve the non-compliance and remains non-compliant beyond the (30) day period or the period of time of review, the Association will have their voting privileges revoked for a period lasting no longer than 6 months. If the Association has continued to remain non-compliant for a period lasting longer than 6 months, the association will be removed from ECYFL.

**Representative to the Board of Representatives**

Each organization sponsoring a team shall appoint a President or association representative to represent their association, as described above.

**Attendance at Board Meetings**

Meetings are held at regular intervals. Attendance by each Association’s President or representative is mandatory. This is an Association’s voice and important information concerning League affairs will be disseminated. If the President cannot attend, an appointed representative shall attend on the Association’s behalf. Special meetings shall be called by the Commissioner and/or Vice Commissioner should the need arise. If a member cannot attend, contact the Commissioner, Vice Commissioner, or secretary to notify and to request an excused absence. Regular Board meetings will be announced at least 6 weeks in advance with a reminder email sent 2 weeks prior. Special called meetings may be with shorter notice. Every effort to attend Special called meetings should be made. Each association must be represented at a minimum of two of the regular scheduled meetings one of which must be the official team declaration meeting. Attendance at the team declaration meeting is mandatory and will not be waived. The team declaration meeting shall be held yearly in May or June. Failure to comply with required attendance policy will result in a fine and a forfeiture of the association’s league voting privileges for up to a six (6) month period. Associations failing to attend two (2) meetings without a valid reason– except special called meetings, in succession will lose their voting privilege for one (1) year.

**Boundaries**

Associations from within Eastern North Carolina (Raleigh area East) and Southern Virginia are expected to draw players from their general vicinity and historical origin. In the event a conflict arises regarding boundaries between associations, the Commissioner in alliance with the Executive Board shall have the final authority on the issue. Any player who desires to play outside of their designated area must have a completed Association Player Waiver Request Form. Completed forms must be submitted to the Association to be transferred to for approval. Approved forms will then go to the League for approval in order to be added to a team’s roster. Player Waiver Request Forms **must** be submitted prior to certification. If a child is forced to relocate their residence at any time during the season and they are no longer able to participate with the originating association, they started the season with and moves to a location where they can play with another association. All the proper address, school and any other documentation required by the league must be provided to the Executive Board for review and ruling will be made. The “new” association must also give written consent preceding the request being heard by the Executive Board. If approved, the League Commissioner shall notify the Board of Representatives and an updated roster shall be issued to the teams involved.

**Colors**

Each association shall maintain a consistent set of colors for its teams. Colors of new membership applicants as well as existing associations wishing to change their colors must be submitted in writing and approved by the League prior to purchase and use.

**Registrations**

Registrations for players shall be open to all applicants meeting League and Association eligibility requirements and living within the Association’s established boundaries. Associations establish the player age eligibilities for teams within their organization. Associations are encouraged to promote registrations for all eligible player ages (5 through 15). Currently, the League is not fielding the 13, 14, 15-year-old age group. Associations set their own registration fees not the League.

**Conduct**

The conduct of each Association’s players, coaches, and spectators is the responsibility of that association. The Player, Parent and Coach Code of Conduct is a standard guideline for use and is a requirement for the League and its Association members to maintain order. Failure to abide by codes of conduct must be suspect to consequence.

Violations of ECYFL approved By-Laws and guidelines will result in a one game suspension for first offenses.

Violations of the Coaches Code of Conduct and ECYFL recruiting practices will result in an automatic two game suspension upon the violation being proven and or witnessed.

Repeated violation by player, parent/spectator or coach can result in suspension or expulsion from Association and League events. Each Association will identify and communicate the acceptable conduct required of its members and guests in accordance with Association and League rules and codes of conduct. Associations shall enact a plan to assure proper conduct of its members. An Association enforcement plan should include pro-active investigations by the Association of suspect issues. Associations may seek the assistance and guidance of the League Board if needed for issues related to misconduct of players, parent/spectators, or coaches within their Association, and are encouraged to report disciplinary actions to the League Commissioner and/or Vice Commissioner for advisement and support. The League remains non-intrusive, and Associations are required to handle issues within their Association. Associations with recurring conduct violations requiring disciplinary actions should seek support of the League Board. The League Board retains the right to impose additional sanctions as it deems appropriate in the best interest of the League. Failure to appropriately maintain proper conduct, patterns of reoccurring misconduct or failure to react to unacceptable conduct appropriately may be considered a breach of membership and subject to sanctions of the Association by the League Board.

**Rulings by Football Commissioner/Appeals**

 Alleged violations of the Code of Conduct shall be reported to the Site Manager, who shall relay the information to the Football Commissioner and the Association President. The Association may choose to investigate and rule on issues within their Association. It is recommended that the Association report such to the League. If issues are brought to the Football Commissioner, he shall gather the information he or she deems relevant, rule on the matter, and provide his written ruling to the complainant and respondent in writing (confirmed receipt e-mails; certified return receipt requested mail). Parties may appeal the Football Commissioner's ruling to the Executive Board no later than two business days after receipt of it. The Executive Board shall meet in Special Session to hear the matter, hear witnesses, collect documents etc. The Executive Board shall then rule on the matter. All Executive Board decisions are final.

**Fees, Dues, and Fines**

Each association is required to pay all fees, dues, and fines assessed by the League, and AYF.

* All specified fees and dues shall be paid on or before May15th of the current year. If there are any issues, contact the League Commissioner or Vice Commissioner for advisement prior to deadline
* All other debts and fines due must be paid within thirty days of date of invoice.
* Non-payment or delayed payment of all fees, dues, and fines will result in the association, team, or individual's suspension from League until the debt is paid. In addition, all voting rights of that organization will be suspended until the debt is paid.
* Associations with financial concerns should contact the League Board for advisement prior to deadlines.
* Chronic non-payment of fees, dues, and fines shall prompt a league review of the association and potential extended sanctions including permanent suspension or expulsion from the league.
* For all sanctioned ECYFL games, the home team is required to pay the approved official fees.

**Documentation**

All Associations in good standing remain active members of the League and shall provide and/or update organizational information required by the League each year by May 30th. Associations must re-apply for membership if they have been on probation, under any form of Association Suspension or Expulsion. New Associations must apply for membership. Membership forms are due by March31st of each year. All UYFL fees and League fees must be paid by May 30th of the current year. New Associations documentation must be signed by the Association President or Director of Operations and must include in the documents submitted:

* Documentation must be signed by the Association President and, where appropriate, the ranking official of the association’s parent board.
* Documents shall include but not be limited to: Contact information for the association President and board members including telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, and valid email addresses for contact by the league.
* Associations Roster of Elected Officials
* Associations Bylaws
* Associations Background Check Form or Plan to Obtain Background Check for all Coaches and/or Volunteers (Completed background forms will be maintained by the Association and are required to be submitted for Certification. Forms will be maintained by the League Secretary and must be made available to League Executive Board on request.
* Proof of Insurance
* Intent for team declarations.
* Payment of applicable League Fees (If Association plans to use League 501C #, documentation of planned use. And, if number is used, a financial report must be submitted by January 10th to the League for records.)

**\*Any organization or persons found to have allowed a variance to this rulebook, the rule regulations and the spirit of the rules and regulations without filing and receiving written approval may be suspended or removed from the League permanently. \***

**TEAM POLICIES**

**Mandatory Play:**

All AYF participants MUST play an active role in each game. Unless noted prior to the start of the game, by absence, by injury, or the participant fails to make weight.

All AYF participants MUST play an active role in a minimum number of plays as follows (Except 6U):

* 31 - 36 Players = 4 Plays
* 26 - 30 Players = 6 Plays
* 16 - 25 Players = 8 Plays

**6U Mandatory Play:**

* **18– 36 Players = 4 Plays**
* **15 – 17 Players = 6 Plays**
* **12 – 14 Players = 8 Plays**

The number of plays required is determined by the numbers of players able to participate at the start of each game.

All plays run in the game count this (offense, defense, special teams, & extra pts.). Any penalties resulting in the replay of the down, do not count as plays. Plays that result in a quarterback dropping to his knee or spiking the football with the sole purpose of “playing it safe” or “stopping the clock” will not count as plays.

All participants must receive their minimum mandatory number of plays by the end of the 3rd quarter. Any participant that has not received their minimum plays by the end of the 3rd quarter must enter the game and remain in the game until they have received their required number of plays.

Each team will supply two adults, 18 years of age or older, to monitor the Mandatory Play Rule. Failure to supply two adults as described will be considered a violation of the Mandatory Play Rule and may result in the forfeiture of the game. Each association is responsible for ensuring volunteers are briefed and understand the MPR requirements.

Any person assigned to be a Mandatory Play Monitor must be instructed to be respectful while on the opponent’s sideline or working with the opponent’s volunteer. There is to be no excessive cheering, cell phone use and no coaching of any kind. At any time, the opponent for any reason may ask that the volunteer be replaced. This request must be complied with immediately without question. Failure to Comply will be considered a violation of the Mandatory Play Rule and may result in the forfeiture of the game.

Conferences shall enforce the Mandatory Play Rule. Any team not meeting the Mandatory Play Rule shall forfeit their game. Additional minimum penalties: First offense for the head coach: probation. Second offense for the head coach: suspension for one game and one week of practice. Third offense: suspension for remainder of season. If it is the last game: suspension for the first half of the following season’s games. In the event a suspension should carry over into the next season, the Association that may appoint the offending coach will be obligated to enforce the suspension.

The exception to this penalty is the following: In Conference/League Championship play-off games the penalty is: Head Coach suspended for one game and one week of practice. In the case of the Regional or National play-off games the penalty is: Head Coach is suspended for one game.

Team staff should be responsible for identifying any players that have not (or) are in jeopardy of not meeting their minimum play requirements to the opposing team at half-time and at the end of the 3rd. Mandatory play sheets should be turned into the site manager at the end of every game with the final games score. Failure of teams to comply with this ruling shall result in a loss for the offending team.

**Game Day Fees:**

Referee cost shall be shared ½ by the host and opposing team competing for that specific game. Payment should be made prior to games being played. While the “HOST” team shall be responsible for ensuring payment is given to the referees before game day events have concluded. In the event the visiting team fails to comply with the ruling. The “HOST” team should send electronic communication to the commissioner and copying the “offending” Association that payment was not secured prior the ending of game day events.

Upon which, the offending team must render payment to an ECYFL representative for delivery to the “Host” team no later than 72 hours after the conclusion of the prior week’s games. IF the offending association fails to do so, they shall forfeit their right to “Host” games until payment has been received by the ECYLF representative.

**Team Size**

The maximum number of participants allowed on a certified roster is 36. The minimum number of participants required to certify a roster is 16.

**6U Division Teams The maximum number of participants allowed on a certified roster is 36. The minimum number of participants required to certify a roster is 12. In the event a team falls to or below 10 players. The team will be allowed to add players to their roster up to a max of 16 players.**

**Coaching**

Associations shall strive to provide a qualified coaching staff for each team it sponsors in the League recognizing that an understanding of safety and fundamentals with completed coaching requirements are a minimum requirement. Coaches and support staff shall always conduct themselves with sportsmanship and integrity and exemplify the league values and mission. Recreation league coaches come with differing levels of experience and knowledge. As part of League Codes of Conduct, seasoned veteran coaches are strongly advised and encouraged to work with newer staff to share coaching knowledge and support. Coaches have an important role within the organization. They have a direct impact and relationship with the players on their team. Coaches are important role models and must lead by example on and off the field. Associations may require additional requirements to participate, but the League Coach requirements are as follows:

* Must reapply with the Association each season and complete certification process
* Must pass a national background check each season or have a National Background check within 1 year of game one of current season.
* In addition, All Coaches will complete League and Association training requirements prior to Certification.
* Must complete all required paperwork - sign and conform to the ECYFL and Association Code of Conduct and adhere to all Association and League rules, including parent codes of conduct.
* All coaches must be dressed in appropriate Association or team identifying attire i.e.: team polo, team t-shirt, team sweatshirt or team coat.
* Coaches shall never argue with or berate an Official, League or Association Representative Any Coach that has been convicted of a felony within (5) years must be approved by their Association first and then a request for approval submitted to League Executive Board before being allowed to coach. If approved, said coach is subject to recurring approval from the League governing Executive Board if requested. No incidence of child related, domestic abuse or violence accepted. Associations should police their staff throughout the season.
* Coaches must acknowledge the role and authority of all Officials, League Officials, and Association Representatives. At any time for any reason, if this rule is violated, said coach(s) will be suspended on the spot for any unacceptable conduct. If an Official suspends or expels a Coach or Coaches, the League Commissioner or Vice Commissioner only can consider reinstatement upon request of Association.
* All Coaches are required to complete the following Courses/tasks:
	+ Human Kinetics Coaching Football the AYF Way (if taken previously) The Human Kinetics Football Refresher Course
	+ NFHS Tackle Course

**Head Coaches**

* Must be at least 21 years old. The coaching staff will be under his/her direction and supervision.
* Head Coaches must attend ALL mandatory ECYFL Coaches Meetings to ensure proper understanding of League policies and expectations. If the Head Coach is unable to attend, gives notification to the Executive Board with a valid reason (work, sickness, etc.), an assistant Head Coach must attend. It is encouraged that all coaches attend.
* Head coaches are in complete charge of their players. They are responsible for their own actions or inactions, their assistants’ actions or inactions and the actions of their players.
* Head Coaches are responsible for the actions of their parents and spectators. Seek assistance from your Association if having issues.
* Head Coaches are responsible for the safe return of League and/or Association Field Equipment and Team Equipment/Uniforms by deadline.
* Head Coaches are responsible for security of Team Roster, IDs and Team funds including documentation and must submit by deadline.
* Head Coaches are responsible for reporting all game scores to Association Designee within 8 hours of game.
* Head Coaches are responsible to report all incidents and injuries to their Association immediately. Coaches will never allow a player to play who has any medical concern. Coaches must fill out League incident report, submit to Association within 24 hours to be forwarded to League Safety Coordinator within 48 hours. No player will be allowed to play without clearance from appropriate medical personnel when injury warrants.
* All Head coaches must attend League mandated training. It is recommended at least one assistant coach attend League training in the event he or she is required to stand in during a League Sanctioned game in the absence of the Head Coach. All Coaches are encouraged to attend League training. Associations may require their coaching staff to attend League mandated training and/or additional training.

**Assistant Coaches**

Must be at least 18 years old and have graduated from high school or hold a GED Certificate. They must have a general knowledge of the game of football.

**Coach Trainees**

Must be a minimum of 15 years old and may only carry out the instructions of the Head or Assistant coaches. (With the Exception that 15-year-olds CANNOT be Coach Trainees on 15U squads)

Each Team must have a Coach or volunteer that is the holder of a current Red Cross Certificate in Community CPR and First Aid or its equivalent, in addition all coaches and Red Cross Certified volunteers must attend and complete a course on ayfcoaching.com

**Meetings**

Each association shall organize and conduct coach orientations meetings to highlight coaching requirements for the Association and League. Coach meetings shall review league policies and rules, distribute information from league and associations, and discuss football and player issues affecting the association. Such meetings are one of the most valuable and meaningful aspects of maintaining communication and running good organization.

**Recruitment**

No Head Coach, assistant coach, team parent, or any other association or league official shall knowingly contact, recruit, or otherwise solicit players from another association’s area. Evidence of such actions will be considered a breach of these rules and subject to significant sanctions by the Association and the League. Such actions may result in expulsion from the League.

**Coach Transfers between Associations**

Any Association head or assistant coach that assumed that title and/or performed that function during the previous season cannot transfer to another association without the approval from the League Executive Board through a formal application process. Coaches considering such a move shall apply to the League Commissioner on or before July 15th.

* A Head or Assistant Coach transferring between associations shall not be allowed to carry or transfer rostered players from their previous year’s team onto their new association team other than their own children.
* The coach shall notify his/her Association President of his/her intent to transfer and the prospective transfer Association President. Transfer requests shall include the acknowledgment of both Associations and of the Commissioner.
* The League Commissioner shall respond to the request with a formal approval or denial. Approvals remain contingent on the new Association’s final official roster submissions.
* If the Transferring coach elects, he is still able to assist any transferred players from prior association by way of training and coaching any time “EXCEPT” during / while the player is involved (or) in the game.

**Acceptable Exceptions**

* Transfer is needed as result of a “life-style” change
* An agreement is made between the two associations indicating the number of players that are allowed to move(Number shall include coaches child or those that they hold legal guardianship)

**PLAYER POLICIES**

**Team Rosters**

Associations must have all AYF Required Participant Paperwork collected, complete, and inspected for compliance by August 31. Conferences must certify that their Associations have met this requirement and have a system in place for paperwork and roster certification. A Certified Roster means that all the participants listed on the roster have submitted the AYF Required Paperwork and that all paperwork is authentic and compliant with AYF Rules, and Regulations and the participant fits the criteria established for the specific team level and division to which the Participant is certified including but not limited to the Participants Age/Weight and/or Grade. Conferences must maintain in their possession a copy of the final certified copy of all rosters. Players added to the roster after August 31 must be certified prior to participating in any game but no later than September 15.

The maximum number of participants allowed on a certified roster is 36. The minimum number of participants required to certify a roster is 16. (See minimum number of players required to play a regulation game Section 10 Playing Season/Games)

**Under no circumstances shall a player be placed on two rosters/teams in the same Association, Conference, or any other youth football organization.**

Conferences must receive all their Associations rosters and certify all their player documentation by September 15. Conferences must maintain in their possession a copy of the final certified copy of all rosters. Conferences must then submit all rosters to AYF National Office by October 1.

A rostered player MUST play in 50 % of the scheduled regular season games for the team he/she is rostered on to be eligible for the league/conference playoffs, which are a qualifier for AYF state/regional/national championship tournaments. If a player is found to not have met this criterion they should be removed by the league/conference for participation in the AYF state/regional/national

championship tournaments. The only exception to the 50 % criteria is with documented medical proof of injury or a waiver of special circumstances by the AYF National Football Commissioner in writing.

**Eligibility**

Youth between the ages of 4 and 12 years who fall within the official All-American may participate in the League. All youth shall play in the Age Class for which they are eligible. Players who turn 13 after July 31st are eligible for **12U.**

**Age Certification**

AYF requires that all participants present to their local Association an original record of their birth. AYF strongly recommends the use of state-issued DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) ID cards, certified copy or a notarized photocopy of their original birth certificate or a copy of the birth certificate with a state-issued identification card that requires an original birth certificate (or equivalent) for issuance. These documents shall set forth the date and year of birth and can be a Certificate from the State, County or City Bureau of Vital Statistics, Department of Health, and the

Department of Motor Vehicles, School Certificates or Record of Notification of Birth Registration by the Bureau of Census of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Passports, Military ID cards are also
acceptable. These documents must be presented to the Conference officials for verification and is part of the mandatory player certification process.

NO HOSPITAL CERTIFICATES WILL BE ACCEPTED

The ECYFL has elected to require the Copy of Certificate accompanied by a State-Issued ID, Military ID or Passport.

**Address**

A Player’s primary place of residence, as recognized by the school in attendance, shall establish eligibility for specific association. Each player must play for a team in the applicable jurisdiction in which the player resides unless a waiver has been obtained from the Commissioner. Violations of residency restrictions shall incur severe sanctions of the player, team, and association.

**Penalties**

The integrity of the league and safety of the players on the field during practices and games rely on these player placement rules. Penalties for not following these rules will result in game forfeitures and fines. Sanctions/Suspensions shall also be issued against the association, Head Coach, and assistant coaches of the team found supporting or allowing such activities, where appropriate.

**Over/Underage Player Participation**

The penalty for an over or underage player's participating in League games, when discovered (Whether protested or not) and verified by the Commissioner will result in a minimum forfeiture of all games in which the illegal player participated and that player's suspension from any further league activities for the current season. The team(s) must re-certify with the permanent suspension of the Head Coach, Assistant Coach(s), as well as the possibility of further sanctions and or fines.

**Other Player Infractions**

Penalties for other player(s) infraction not specifically noted here shall be determined by the Executive Board and may include fines of up to $500, forfeiture of games, loss of league voting rights, suspension of teams, and expulsion from the league.

**Player Cuts**

Cutting of players is not allowed in AYF; however, there are certain guidelines that should be met if it becomes necessary to not assign a player to a team. AYF strongly recommends that the coaching staff work closely with these players before the extreme measure of dropping a player take place. AYF believes that the game of football may just be a saving grace for this type of participant.

**A) When dropping a player will be acceptable:**

1. When a participant is found to have signed up as a result of parent or guardian pressure, or he/she tells team management he/she does not really want to play football/cheer.
2. When a participant cannot furnish the required documents to be certified to a team roster, (e.g., Medical, Proof of Birth Date, etc.).
3. When a Participant shows no interest in football/cheer, is disruptive to other participants and the instructions of the coaching staff and becomes a discipline problem.
4. When a Participant does not show up for practices. Participants must have a valid excuse from the parent(s), guardian(s), or a physician.
5. When a Participant attempts to intimidate fellow participants by word and/or physical act.
6. When a Participant is actively a member of another football team or cheerleader squad while actively participating with an AYF team (For dual participation, some exceptions may apply).

**B) When Dropping a Player IS NOT Acceptable:**

1. Excessive team or individual conditioning drills designed to encourage weaker players to quit.
2. Disciplinary actions or assigning individual players’ laps or intentionally placing player(s) in intimidating hitting drills for the purpose of encouraging weaker players to quit.

The aforementioned are not acceptable behavior and coaches who use these or any other tactics to drop weaker players should be immediately dismissed by their local organization, for the remainder of the season and a permanent suspension should be considered.

**Game Day Check-In Procedures**

Prior to any kickoff, all teams will conduct a Team Book check both the home team and visiting team must produce their team book in the following order:

**IN FRONT OF BOOK**

1. Background Check and Coaches Training Affidavits
2. Scholastic Eligibility and Confidentiality Affidavits
3. Proof of Insurance and Risk Management Agreement
4. Concussion Affidavit Form
5. AYF/AYC Insurance Checklist (NOT required if you have Sadler Insurance)
6. Copy of Team/Association Conference Insurance Rider

**Paper Clipped Together:**

1. All coaches, Head & Assistants: Human Kinetics, Coaching Youth Football the AYF Way certificates
2. All coaches, Head & Assistants: NFHS Tackle Course certificates

**Paper clipped together:**

1. All coaches: Waiver/Release of Liability Forms Image Release Forms
2. All participants (IN ROSTER ORDER): Waiver/Release of Liability Forms Image Release Forms

**IN BOOK**

1. TWO COPIES OF THE CERTIFIED ROSTER
2. FIVE COPIES OF THE MPR FORM

**THE ITEMS IN THE SLEEVES WILL BE BACK-TO-BACK (3 SLEEVES PER PLAYER)
SLEEVE 1:** Participant Tracking ID Card and Participant Contract (ID Card use Double sided tape)

**SLEEVE 2:** Emergency Consent Form and Medical Release Form / Sports Physical Form

**SLEEVE 3:** Birth Certificate (certified copy) and Absentee Form (Absentee Form Will Be Placed in Front of Sleeve 1 IF NOT PRESENT FOR NATIONALS)

**IN BACK OF BOOK**

1. Blank Return to Play Form (3 Copies)
2. Blank Absentee Forms (3 Copies)
* All site managers must conduct the Book Check. The Participant Tracking ID Card MUST be Certified by League Official. It will also be filled out for every player present for the Game. (Initials of Site Manger & Code).
* Late arriving players (after the kickoff) **CANNOT** play in the game, they must turn their jerseys inside out or remove their jersey.
* **Only the head coaches or designee and the hosting site manger are allowed in the check in area**
* The site manager shall be the sole determining factor if a player is allowed or disallowed from participating in games. Penalties for a site manager allowing a player to play that has not provided (all) the adequate documentation needed for a player to play will be subject to loss of home games which could include loss of current and next season home games.
* Teams that fail to conduct a Book check will be fined, sanctioned, and possibly suspended by the league
* In the event the hosting site manager chooses not to allow an opposing player to play, and the opposing team disagrees, the opposing team president, Head Coach or board member must call the commissioner of that district to resolve the matter. If the commissioner is affiliated with the host team, then the opposing team president or board member should call the district commissioner first and if not able to resolve, the Vice Commissioner should be contacted.

**The Head Coach shall be responsible to organize and maintain control of their team and fans prior to, during, and after all games. The following procedures and regulations shall be followed by all teams during League sanctioned games and events:**

* Each Team shall arrive at the appropriate field for all scheduled games at least 75 minutes prior to official game time.
* Should any team refuse or is unable to provide an appropriate game day team book, the scheduled game shall be forfeited. The game shall be reported as a 6-0 loss for the team that forfeited. The team that forfeits the game shall be responsible for the entire ref fees.
* In the event a team is unable to field 13 eligible players, the opposing team and the league commissioner must be notified no later than the preceding Tuesday that the scheduled game is to be played. At that time, the Commissioner or designee shall notify the Referee Association to remove game from Saturday schedule. The Commissioner will notify Host Site, all teams and referee representative involved of change in schedule times. Head Coaches and Association President’s with the Commissioner will attempt to reschedule lost game, possibly on a practice night (M, T or Sunday), if referees and host site can accommodate and host team agrees. If necessary, the game may be postponed until the rain date when available. A first occurrence places offending team on probation. A second occurrence can result in loss of playoffs. If the game cannot be made up. The offended team shall receive a win recorded as a 6-0 and the offending team shall receive a loss.
* It is required that each team must have the minimum number of 13 players eligible and able to participate to start a regulation or play-off game. The team that forfeits is responsible for the full referee fees.
* Any team who arrives thirty **(30) minutes** late to the game site (to kickoff time) may be subject to review and sanctions by the League. **The host site shall have the final say as to if the game shall be played**. **But it will be recorded as a 6-0 victory for the offended team**. The Commissioner must be notified of this occurrence.
* All players shall be in uniform and warmed up when captains are called to the field prior to the game start or kick-off.
* Games shall not start earlier than **15** minutes before the official scheduled start time, unless approved by Commissioner or Vice Commissioner.
* A maximum of (8) eight staff with appropriate ID badge (coaches, trainers, team parent, other team staff) shall be permitted in the designated coaching area between the 20-yard lines.
* Coaches shall be easily recognizable by wearing apparel, such as a cap, shirt, sweatshirt, or jacket identifying them with their organization and/or team. Coaches are required to wear appropriate attire. The coaching staff must have their coaches ID in plain sight.
* Team parents, team doctors/trainers, and other individuals, if not members of the eight member staff, must remain outside the field area during the game unless an injury requires their attention at the bench.
* **Spectators must stand behind rope, fence and/or other barrier at all times during the game and are not permitted in the end zone areas.**
* Unsuited Team Players, Mascots, etc. shall remain on the bench or outside the fence during game play.
* No cameras are allowed inside of the perimeter barriers, on the playing field, or on the sidelines by coaches or spectators. Recognized media and press photographers with valid identification may operate inside the barriers if approved by the Site Manager. Identification shall be always worn and visible. (Team photographers are allowed in the box with proper ID)
* There will be no electronic devices from the press box, coaching box, sidelines, or any other position on the field that may be used to relay messages to the coaches or players at any time. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, the use of a cell phone, Blackberry, PDA, computers, tablets, iPads, smart phones, or other messaging device. All Bluetooth earpiece devices are not allowed within the field of play. A coach using a cell phone for emergency purposes must step outside the coach’s box, off the playing field. If it continues, the coach may be asked to leave the field for the remainder of the game. Further disciplinary action may be taken by the Conference
* Following the game and traditional handshakes, the teams shall vacate the field and bench area quickly to allow for the succeeding game. Teams must clean up the area before leaving the sideline.
* The Site Manager or designated assistant shall record the final score as reported by the Officials at the conclusion of each game.
* Any team that refuses to play a league scheduled game, will be subject to fines, forfeiture of said game(s), probation, and possible expulsion from the league. If there is a valid safety concern, notify the site manager.
* Any association that folds one of its teams during the season, will be fined, placed on probation, and possibly expelled from the league
* In the event any association board member or any board member coaches a team(s), while that individual is engaged in the capacity of a coach, they shall only have the authority of a coach, while their teams are playing.

**If a team is running late, it is the head coach’s responsibility to contact the Commissioner, the host site manager or President and team Head Coach they are scheduled to play.**

**Conduct**

The conduct of the players and spectators and parents are the responsibility of the association and Head Coach. Every Association must identify a system and who will monitor activities and when necessary be able to communicate the acceptable conduct required of its players/spectators/parents/staff. This is usually designated for the Site Manager or Designee. If a problem arises, Associations enact an enforcement plan to address and assure proper conduct and behavior is maintained. Failure to appropriately maintain proper conduct or react to unacceptable conduct will be considered a breach of these rules and subject to sanctions by the League.

No parent or spectator will be allowed on the field at any time. This includes the handshake at the end of each game. The sideline will stay clear of all parents and spectators from goal line to goal line. After the game and handshake, parents and staff may create a tunnel for their players to run through while exiting the field. Parents and staff should leave the field area immediately upon completion. Players must clean up their sideline and leave as quickly as possible to allow the other team and staff to take the sideline. Coaches and staff with league approved ID cards and players are the only personal allowed in the team box. If unauthorized personal are in the team box, the officials will issue one sideline warning and inform the head coach. If a second warning is issued, a 15-yard unsportsmanlike penalty will be imposed on the team in question. If a third warning is issued, the person(s) in question will be ejected from the facility by site management.

**EQUIPMENT POLICIES**

**Equipment Standards**

Equipment used by teams and players shall meet the standards National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules unless otherwise noted herein. It is the responsibility of each association to ensure equipment shall be in good order and properly fitted to each player.

* Helmet (with approved face guard and chin strap)
* Mouthpiece w/ keeper strap (intra-oral/fitted) mouthpiece cannot be white or clear
* Shoulder Pads
* Football Pants (with thigh pads & knee pads)
* Hip Pads, Thigh Pads and Tail Pad
* Jersey (with number front and back)
* Four-point chinstrap or two-point chinstrap
* NFHS numbering/position requirements recommended but need not be followed.
* Shoes - Shoes may only have molded cleats.

Proper footgear shall be always worn. A place kicker or punter may not elect to remove a shoe to kick the ball. Metal cleats are prohibited

**Optional Player Equipment**

Additional player equipment is allowed providing it meets the standards noted above and does not pose a threat or safety concern for the players or officials (back plate, rib protector, etc.)

**Illegal Player Equipment**

No player shall participate in any league practices or games with illegal equipment. This includes but is not limited to those items identified in the NFHS rules and anything deemed unsafe by the presiding officials.

**Helmet visors are not allowed according to the NFHS rulebook unless it is completely clear and glass-like. If a visor is slightly tinted and an Official can see the tint on his game data card the visor must be removed. There are no exceptions.**

**Hard Cast Rule**

No athlete is permitted to participate in any league practice or game with a hard cast, splint, brace, or any other protective appliance except when padded and protected in accordance with NFHS rules. Any player wishing to practice or play with such a device must first gain written or email permission from the Commissioner. The approval of the padding and the player’s eligibility for a league game shall be determined by the game Official. The player shall submit a written request to the Game Official prior to the game. The Official may request to see the physician’s statement indicating the Player is cleared to play. Copies of the request and physician’s statement shall also be available for review by the opposing Head Coach.

**Game Uniforms**

All Associations are required to have one consistent, approved, uniform color combination scheme using their colors at the beginning of each season. This should prevent any further issue during the season.

These uniforms shall be worn at all games, home and away. Each Association is also encouraged to have an additional set of contrasting jerseys available for their team’s use should conflicts arise.

* In the event of a conflict in colors between opposing Teams, the Commissioner & Executive Board shall resolve the conflict prior to game day. Home teams shall have the first option to wear their standard colors. If a different jersey with different number is issued due to conflict in colors to a team, a temp roster with the new numbers should be prepare and attached to the certified roster.
* Players should maintain the same jersey and number throughout the season unless the jersey is damaged beyond reasonable repair or lost.
* Jersey numbers shall not be reassigned within a team at any time during the season or play-off games.
* No jersey shall be changed during the game unless deemed necessary by the Game Officials. In the event of such a jersey change both sidelines shall be notified.

**Game Balls**

Official game balls meeting League standards shall be furnished by the home team. The visiting team may elect to use its own ball when on offense providing it is an approved size and material and placing the ball in play will not unnecessarily delay the game.

**Sanctioned Football**

The AYF Sanctioned football manufacturer is Wilson®. AYF strongly recommends using an AYF Wilson football (leather or composite) during the regular season games.

**Football Size**

Instructional 6-9U - Wilson K2

10U - Wilson TDJ
11-12U - Wilson TDJ
13-14U – Wilson TDY

15U – Wilson TDS

**First Aid Kits**

Each team must furnish its own First Aid Kit and maintain the kit at all games and practices. The kit shall include, as a minimum, items to stem and control bleeding of minor cuts/abrasions and reduce the possibility of infection.

**PRACTICE POLICIES**

**Start Dates**

The AYF National Championship playing season may start as early as the fourth Monday in July and extend until December 31 of the current year. Start and end dates of the playing season may be modified for teams playing in regions with severe weather conditions. Written permission by the AYF National Office is required before any such modifications may be made. A later start date may occur for any league.

No Conference shall commence team practice until the fourth Monday in July, with the first week being dedicated to Ten (10) Hours of conditioning ONLY, before full contact is allowed.

**Conditioning/Training Camp**

* Can begin on the 4th Monday in July and it will be for 10 Hours max each week.
* After the first regular season game is played, practice is limited to 6 Hours per week. (First thru end of Season Games Prep time = 8 hours per week, NO EXCEPTIONS)
* MANDATORY 10 MINUTE BREAKS EVERY HOUR ARE REQUIRED BUT ARE NOT COUNTED TOWARD THE PRACTICE TIME. AT A MINIMUM HYDRATION SHOULD BE OFFERED DURING EACH BREAK.
* All players, regardless of when they join the team, must have at least one week (10 Hours) of conditioning before they are allowed to have live contact. Even if a player joins the team after the start of the regular season schedule, the 10 hours of conditioning requirement must be met.
* NFHS heat illness guidelines as regards practice modification, postponement, and cancellation should be followed including the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) chart. A WBGT meter (preferable) or WBGT smart phone app (less accurate) should be readily available and used for decision making. A cold-water immersion tub should be on location.

**Practice/Game Restrictions**

There shall be no “inter-team” practice or games between Teams/Divisions e.g., Pee Wee vs. Jr. Pee Wee, 10U All American vs 11U All American for Practice or Games, this does not prohibit individual fundamental coaching sessions if there is no full contact between players of differing teams/divisions.

The following Drills and Warm-up Exercises are hereby banned from all AYF activities. Leg Lifts,
Neck Bridges, Neck Rolls, Bull in the Ring, Barrel Rolls, and any and all drills and exercises not generally accepted as safe and that may not be reflective of actions that would normally occur during the course of a football game.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rulebooks contain strong language on blocking and tackling. AYF coaches are responsible to be fully informed and abide by all such rules of their state’s governing body (NFHS or NCAA). AYF coaches are also responsible to review these rules every year. In addition to other specific prohibitions in the NFHS and NCAA rulebooks, butt blocking, chop blocking, face tackling or spearing techniques are strictly prohibited. If such techniques or any others forbidden by the NFHS or NCAA rulebooks are taught, the coaches responsible shall be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to probation upon the first
offense and suspension for the reminder of the season upon the second offence. Associations are encouraged to establish their own rules regulations and monitoring of their coaches. Coaches assume all liability for their actions or inactions.

Practice contact restrictions should be implemented per applicable NFHS guidelines or state law.

**Use of Illicit Drugs, Tobacco, or Alcohol Products**

There shall be no use of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol products at any league practice field or game field by any Head Coach, assistant coach, team parent, or any other official, including spectators. The Commissioner is responsible for enforcing this rule. If a Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Parent, or any official refuses to cooperate, he/she will receive a verbal warning on the spot to stop any such activity and explained that continued failure to comply with this rule will result in disciplinary action by the League. After verbal warning, if violator refuses to stop such activity, they should be asked to leave the premises by site management, designee, Association Board or League Board if available. The League expects all participants and guests of the football programs to follow School Board and Park Authority regulations when using these facilities.

**Taping/Recording of Practices and Games**

Minimum scouting rules are as follows: all videotaping is prohibited from the end zone. Scouting of any kind during a team’s practice or warm-up session is strictly prohibited. Any coach, team member or associate found or determined to be scouting another team’s practice will be cause for the immediate suspension of the person involved and the head coach if applicable. The league and will allow scouting of teams during post-season play in the form of video and written reports if the minimum rules listed above are followed:

**Videotaping**

**Shall be allowed only if the videographer is affiliated with a team current playing. All videography staff must be appropriately identified with proper team attire when videotaping within the allotted 5-yard, sideline perimeter. All Drones are STRICTLY PROHIBITED during game days.**

**Any organization found to have allowed a variance to this rulebook, the rules regulations and the spirit of the rules and regulations without filing and receiving written approval may be suspended.**

Videotaping of games is allowed, however it is expressly forbidden for any person(s) to photograph any player that is not engaged in actual game play, unless parental consent has been granted to photograph said player. Photographing team players on associations own team is allowed for picture day purposes. The National AYF photo release form must be signed by each participant’s parent or guardian and attached to the participants registration form. Or the Association may have adopted their own media or technology release form, it must be signed and filed with Registration paperwork.

**GAME POLICIES**

**Governing Rules**

AYF members that have committed to participating in the Regional and National competitions shall follow their state and/or high school governing Rulebook for their regular season games, except where superseded by the Eligibility Requirements found in this Rulebook.

The National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS) except where superseded by AYF, or ECYFL Bylaws will govern, for all inter-conference/tournament games including, but not limited to, Regional and National competitions.

The AYF National Office will determine and be the final adjudicator on all conflicts between locally adopted rules and the Eligibility Requirements. AYF requires that all coaches receive and read this Rule Book, and strongly recommends that the local organizations supply the appropriate state and/or high school rulebook to all its coaches.

Any questions not covered by the Official League Rules, official interpretation thereof, or any conflict not subject to protest shall be decided by the Commissioner and/or Board.

I Major League exceptions to NHSF rules:

* When lined up into a “Victory” Kneel Down formation there will be NO advancement of the ball nor will the defense be allowed to rush the play. The Coach MUST declare the Kneel down to the Officials.The Quarterback must take 3 steps back and take a knee.

**6U**

* Defensive player **CANNOT** lineup over the center and MUST be head up over the offensive Guards and can either be head up over Tackles or Tight Ends on the line.
* All Offense & Defense players on the line to include the tight-end must be in three or four-point stance.
* The Offense is strictly prohibited from running a Quarterback Sneak under center as it is a disadvantage to the defense.
* There is **NO** **blitzing** of any sort. Blitzing is defined as Linebackers or Cornerbacks moving forward before the snap of the ball. Once Ball is snapped all players are free to attack the line of scrimmage.
* Defensive Linebackers and Cornerbacks must be **three (3) yards** away from the line of scrimmage before the snap of the ball. Once the ball is snapped, all defensive players can engage to the ball.
* The offense has (45) seconds to call their play and snap the ball. All infractions of this will be a delay of game call and the offensive team will be assessed a (5) yard penalty.
* All Fumbles are Live
* 6U: There are up to two (2) coaches allowed on the field for offense and defense. Once the offense is set, all coaches must remove themselves fifteen (15) yards behind their deepest player on that side of the ball. One Warning prior to a 5-yard penalty assessed for subsequent infractions. If a coach causes a distraction to opposing players, coaches a player during the active play, or interferes with the play in any way, this will be flagged as an illegal participation penalty and assessed accordingly.

**Special Teams**

During a long snap for purposes of a punt or extra point the center will **NOT** have a defensive player lined head up.

**Kick-Offs**

**6U**

Will start on the 40-yard line NO KICK OFFS

**8U-12U**

Kick-offs will be from the 50-yard line

**Field Goals**

**8U and 10U**

When attempting an extra point kick or field goal, the referee will hand the holder the ball for placement on the kicking block or the ball will be snapped to the holder. The offense shall line up in kick formation; it is not required for the offense to get down in a two-, three- or four-point stance. The kicker must kick the ball when the referee signals ready for play, the defense cannot rush the kick, but they can jump up and down at the line of scrimmage. A missed field goal try cannot be advanced by the defense. If the ball falls to the ground after the ready for play whistle has sounded the play is dead and the kick is no good.

**Punts**

When the line of scrimmage is on the opponents 40-yard line or less the punt will be half the distance to the goal line.

**6U & 8U**

There shall be a 30 yd. walk off from the line of scrimmage resulting in a “turnover-on-downs”

**10U**

The team shall elect to either perform a “unrushed” punt (No movement by either side of the ball until the ball is kicked) or do a 30 yd. walk-off from the line of scrimmage resulting in a “turnover-on-downs”

**12U**

The team shall elect to either perform a “LIVE” punt (meaning the defense is allowed to engage the offense) or do a 30 yd. walk-off from the line of scrimmage resulting in a “turnover-on-downs”

**Scoring Rules**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Touchdown | 6 points |
| Scoring play after touchdown (running or passing) | 1 point |
| Scoring play after touchdown (kicking) | 2 points |
| Safety (awarded to opponent) | 2 points |
| Field goal | 3 points |
| Forfeit | Score of game 6-0 |
| Ties | Declared at the end of regulation |

**6U**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scoring play after touchdown (running or passing) from the 2.5 Yard Line** | **1 Point** |
| **Scoring play after touchdown (running or passing) from the 7.5 Yard Line** | **2 Points** |

**Overtime Procedures**

If at the completion of a regulation game the score is tied, the game will be resolved by using the NHSF overtime procedures.

* A coin flip is performed. The team that wins the flip chooses to start either on offense or defense. Team A wins the toss and chooses to play offense. Team B would be on defense.
* Starting from Team B’s 10-yard line, Team A will attempt to score points. Normal playing rules apply: Team A has four downs to score.
* After Team A either scores or fails to put points on the board, Team B takes over on offense from Team A’s 10-yard line. They now have four downs to score. Once each team has played both offense and defense, the possession is over.
* If one team has more points at the end of the possession, that team wins. If not, another possession starts. Possessions will continue to be played until one team has more points than the other.

**Game Clock Details**

* Four (4) 10-minute quarters
* The clock shall stop after every scored touchdown and shall restart up the first snap of the change of possession.
* Clock stopped only for injuries, timeouts, official timeouts, and change of possession.
* Intermission (Halftime) 10 minutes
* Each team will have three (3) timeouts per half in all AYF games. Timeouts are not charged against a team for injuries or game officials’ timeouts.

**Slaughter Rule**

An intentionally run-up score is occurs when a team continues to pour it on even after the game is in their favor and far out of reach for their opponents. Coaches who practice this are to be disciplined by the local Conference/Association. AYF considers this type of coaching contrary to its purposes.

The AYF lopsided score rule is 35 Points or 5 touchdowns, whichever comes first. Once the score differential reaches 35 points or 5 touchdowns, the game clock will become a running clock and stay a running clock for the remainder of the contest and a win is automatically declared. Once the clock becomes a running clock it can only be stopped for injuries, official or team time outs. It will be the losing team’s preference as to whether they will receive a normal kickoff, or they may choose to take the ball on their own 40-yard line. The winning team is prohibited from running any misdirection, counter, reverses or “trick plays” of any kind, passing, or any play that has been consistently run with success during the game. Skill position starters must be replaced whenever possible. Conferences and Associations cannot limit the winning team to only running between the tackles. Mandatory plays must be completed regardless of the score or game clock. If the winning team does not complete their required mandatory plays, the full force of the mandatory play rules will be in effect.

Conferences are required to investigate/review all reported losses of more than 35 points or 5 touchdowns. Conferences are required to establish their own disciplinary actions for coaches that are determined to have intentionally run-up the score, in all cases an appeal process must be afforded to the coach, unless the coach has signed acceptance of an agreement prior to the start of the season indicated that the conference will not allow appeals of its disciplinary decisions.

**On the Field Coaching**

Once the offense is set, all coaches must remove themselves fifteen (15) yards behind their deepest player on that side of the ball. One Warning prior to a 5-yard penalty assessed for subsequent infractions. If a coach causes a distraction to opposing players, coaches a player during the active play, or interferes with the play in any way, this will be flagged as an illegal participation penalty and assessed accordingly.

The on the Field Coach is allowed to only call plays and not make adjustments. If there is violations to this, the coach will lose the on field opportunity and be removed from the field for the remainder of the game – zero tolerance.

**6U**

There are up to two (2) coaches allowed on the field for offense and defense. (**The 6U Division shall be an “8-Man” football).**

**8U**

Ages 7-8 (1) Coach is allowed on the field the first five games of the season.

**10U**

Ages 9-10 (1) Coach is allowed on the field the first game of the season.

**12U**

Coaches are not allowed on the field.

**Defenseless Player Protection Rule**

Any player or players that intentionally strike, hit, or intentionally target (head hunt) a player after the play (ball carrier) has gone past said player shall be penalized as unsportsmanlike conduct and said player(s) shall be disqualified from the game, for a first offense.

A second offense on the same player(s) during the year will result in expulsion from current game, a one game suspension and probation for the Head Coach.

A third offense said player(s) shall be suspended for the remainder of the year and the head coach shall be suspended. General shoving or pushing, blocking is excluded from this rule unless it is a chop block, block in the back etc. which is illegal shall be penalized as outlined in our rules and regulations and The National High School Federation Rulebook.

The purpose of this rule is to protect a defenseless player that is no longer actively involved in the play and no longer engaging in contact or pursuit of the ball carrier, or lead blocking for the ball carrier.

As administrators and Coaches, we have a responsibility to ensure the safety of our kids and this rule will be **strictly monitored and enforced** from this point forward. Safety is of the upmost importance as well as sportsmanship for the game.

**Schedules**

Team conferences and game schedules are established each season by the scheduling committee based upon the number of teams in each division. Schedules will be provided prior to opening game day of the season, generally beginning the week of the first game. When possible, schedules will be set and will not be modified. Schedules will be modified throughout the season as required for weather issues and if a team folds.

A standard schedule includes a minimum of eight games over an eight-week schedule. Games are scheduled on Saturdays but may be scheduled on weekends or weekday evenings in the event of makeup.

Games lost due to weather and/or other issues will be rescheduled, when possible, but such rescheduling is not guaranteed.

Bowl Game schedules are determined based upon the number of teams participating and time available. Associations are required to play all league sanctioned, scheduled games. Failure to comply will result in suspension and loss of hosting privileges

**Field Assignments.**

Every effort shall be made to assign each Association of four teams or more, four dates to host games at the Association's home field during the regular season where at least four teams of the Association play on its home field.

**Game Field - Host Requirements**

All game fields shall be sponsored by an Association or other responsible body approved by the League. The (Host Site) shall be responsible for maintaining the field in playable conditions and providing certain minimum equipment and support.

**Perimeter Barrier**

All hosting sites for any sanctioned game(s) are required to have border fencing erected at least 10 feet from the sideline, the border fencing must be from goal-line to goal-line in length. Spectators are not allowed past the 20-yard line behind the perimeter. Players, **Coaches and League staff are the only personnel permitted between the sideline and the fencing. League personnel and Coaches must have a league approved ID clearly visible.** Spectators must stay behind the border/fencing and cannot congregate in the end zone area(s) the game officials and site management will enforce this rule.

* 1st violation – Official Warning
* 2ndviolation; unsportsmanlike penalty – 15-yard penalty and spectator ejection from the park.
* 3rd violation – spectator ejection from the park and head coach ejected from the game and 15-yard unsportsmanlike penalty.

**Note:** repeated violations of this rule will subject the association, team, and spectators in question to be investigated by the league for further sanctions and/or fines.

**Field Markings**

Each game field shall be marked in accordance with basic NHSF guidelines. Lines in accordance with NHSF rules shall be provided at five-yard intervals. Yard markers shall be provided to designate the lines at a minimum ten-yard interval. Markers shall be set back two yards from the sideline. Goal lines shall be identified with NHSF approved pylons at the intersection of the goal line and sidelines (minimum of eight pylons per field). Additional pylons, if available, shall be placed according to NHSF rules.

**Field Equipment**

Goal posts shall be provided at each end of the field. The goal posts shall be kept in good repair and at the NHSF dimensions. The posts and any other unyielding devices at or near the playing field shall be protected with appropriate padding.

**Sideline Markers and Chains**

The Field Host Site shall provide the ten-yard markers and down markers (chains) in good repair and checked for accuracy. Sideline markers are required on the home team side of the field.

**Officials**

The league utilizes Crystal Coast Officials or may use other officials at the league’s discretion for its games. In the event an association must use another official’s organization, they shall ensure the Commissioner has all the contact information and that such officials, guarantee to call games outside of Crystal Coast Officials. Any hosting association that fails to secure officials for games will not be eligible to host games. Fees are set by the League Board.

* Any team that fails to pay their official fees shall forfeit the game and be subject to further sanctions and fines, up to dismissal from the league.

**Scoreboards**

Any hosting game site must have an operating scoreboard, unless otherwise stated by the Commissioner.

**Gate Admission Charges**

Fees that may be charged for all league games shall be:

* Adult 18 and up $5.00
* Children 17 and under free
* Please note these are the maximum fee’s that can be charged, a Member Association can choose to charge no fee at all.
* League Players, Cheerleaders, Coaches, League Staff, certified for the current playing year, shall not be charged for admission. Proper League identification badge is required for free admittance.
* All associations that charge a fee for regular season games must notify the Executive Board and Commissioner so that it may be put on the schedule and the Association must send a reminder to notify the association in advance of the fee 2 weeks prior to game day. Site Management should use good judgment in respect to fees for traveling Associations and teams during regular season play.

**Field Personnel – Site Manager**

The Host Site shall provide a Site Manager or Designee and appropriate staff as needed on scheduled game days to maintain order at the field and report to the League.

**Site Manager**

The Site Manager is responsible for oversight of the field, adjoining warm up areas, spectator areas, and access areas. The Site Manager shall complete an official League field report for each day of games scheduled at the field and forward the information to the League or Association Designee to be forwarded to League. Report should include game scores for the day and any incidents during the day. They are the liaison and host for the officials, visiting teams, and fans. The Site Manager shall be responsible for assuring proper roster and ID card exchange between teams prior to each game during weigh ins, and collection of official fees from each team prior to kickoff of the game and/or prior to kickoff of the final game of the day for Associations with multiple teams.

**Chain Crew**

The home team shall provide three (3) responsible people, minimum age of 12 and acceptable to the game officials, to operate the 10-yard markers and the down marker. The visiting team if requested, may elect to provide one or more of the members of this group only in the event the host site is unable to provide adequate staffing on their chain crew. This should be a last resort. These individuals become an extension of the officiating crew and shall devote their full attention to the game. As noted in other sections of these rules, smoking, cameras, cell phones, and other communication devices are not allowed on the sidelines.

In addition, chain crew should not coach from the sidelines. Chain crew may cheer appropriately. Any behavior or activities of the chain crew seen as detrimental to sportsmanship or to game play shall result in the person/s expulsion from the sidelines and possibly from game field for the remainder of the game if warranted. Sanctions if warranted could result against the Association. The Association shall be responsible for replacing any such ejected individuals. Chains will be kept on the home side during all games.

**Conduct**

Site Managers and Head Coaches shall be responsible for the conduct of all players, members of the coaching staff and spectators. This includes the time periods before, during, and after Association & League games and other events. Improper conduct, in the judgment of the game officials, on the part of the players, coaches or spectators may result in penalties, suspension, and expulsion and/or forfeiture of game.

The Association and League may impose additional penalties or consequences as deemed appropriate. Failure to comply with verbal warnings result in person/s being asked to leave premises immediately for the remainder of the game day. Further improper conduct or failure to comply will result in Association staff contacting law enforcement to have individuals removed. If law enforcement contacted, said persons will be suspended from attendance at any League/Association event for a minimum of 10 days. The Officials, League and/or Association will determine if additional consequences or suspension will be imposed.

**Minimum Penalties**

The following are recommended minimum penalties to be enforced for violations of, but not limited to the following rules. Organizations are encouraged to develop written guidelines for disciplinary actions to avoid criticism for selective enforcement, to provide notice to violators and to deter undesirable conduct.

Members found to be lenient on violators may be subject to probation, suspension, or termination of membership.

**Coach/Administrators**

**Cheating**

Permanent suspension. (Roster/Participant Manipulation will be considered cheating)

**Endangerment**

Defined as any deliberate practice of a coach, team, or Association, which placed the health, welfare, and safety of juveniles in jeopardy, or exploits or treats them in such a manner that the juvenile becomes a “tool” of the team.

* First offense: suspension for one game and one week of practice.
* Second offense: permanent suspension.

**Badgering & Incitement**

Badgering or threats directed at game officials and or Inciting fans to display poor sportsmanship:

* First offense: suspension for two games and two weeks of practice.
* Second offense: permanent suspension.

**Fighting by Coaches**

Fighting by coaches of any kind is will not be tolerated. Guidance is that violators be subject to suspension for the remainder of the season and reported to legal authorities.

**Teaching and or encouraging dirty tactics**

* First offense: Suspension for one game and one week of practice.
* Second offense: Permanent suspension.

**Falsifying**

Birth or any other documents to make a participant eligible is grounds for forfeiture of all games in which the participant in question, participated and permanent suspension of the adult(s) responsible for the act and all evidence will be turned over to the local authorities for any criminal prosecution that may be relevant.

**Playing ineligible players.**

Suspension for remainder of the season. League will review status for next season. Suspension may be appealed (if an appeal process exists) to the Conference depending on the nature of the ineligibility.

* When ineligible players are found, all games of which the ineligible players participated in are forfeited and will count in the league standings as such.
* When ineligible players are found, the entire team is ineligible for post-season play of any kind regardless of the number of losses it has suffered for playing ineligible players.

**Fighting by Players**.

* First offense: Suspension for one game and one week of practice.
* Second offense: Suspension and parental/guardian conference.
A player suspended in the Regional Finals will carry over the suspension for the first round of the AYF National Championships. If that suspended player's team receives a first game bye – the player will be suspended for the first half of that game.

**Disrespect for coaches, participants, and game and team officials.**

* First offense: Removal from the game/practice and parental/guardian conference.
* Second offense: Suspended for one game and one week of practice.
* Third offense: Suspension and parental conference.

**Badgering opponents and or teammates by word or act with the purpose of intimidation:**

* First offense: Removal from the game/practice and parental/guardian conference.
* Second offense: Suspended for one game and one week of practice.
* Third offense: Suspension and parental/guardian conference.

**Organizational Offenses.**

In the absence of local rules and regulations regarding the following, it is AYF’s recommendation that the guidelines below be implemented.

**Battery.**

Should any Player, Coach, Administrator, Parent/Guardian, or Fan should strike (hit) a game official, or member of the coaching staff, shall be subject to arrest by local law enforcement agencies, and permanent suspension including but not limited to being banned from all local and AYF events and activities.

**Failure to control parents or fans.** Suspension of the Association from the Conference until the administration of the Association can submit evidence satisfactory to the Conference that the problems have been rectified.

**Failure to control coaches from actions contrary to the health, safety, and welfare of players.**

* First offense: Probation for the entire Association for the season.
* Second offense: Suspension of the Association from the Conference until the Association can submit satisfactory evidence to the Conference that the problems have been rectified.

**Coach Ejections**

Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct by the Head Coach or any member(s) of the coaching or sideline staff shall result in disqualification of those involved. Any person so disqualified by the officials shall be ejected from the permitted facility and prohibited from any further contact, direct or indirect, with the team during the remainder of the game. Said individuals will be on probation. If failure to comply, the officials may require a forfeit of the game and said individuals are subject to permanent suspension/expulsion from the league.

* Such conduct may include, but is not limited to, abusive, disrespectful, or profane language; berating; intimidation; threatening; fighting; physical confrontations, or any other unsportsmanlike acts or conduct before, during or after the game. Any member of the team’s coaching staff so ejected may not return to their coaching position without the permission of the Association and the Commissioner and a minimum two game suspension. Any coach that is criminally charged with an offense, anytime during the season will be suspended until such charge(s) have been resolved in court and the League and Association determines eligibility to return.

 To encourage accountability and a higher standard for all who participate in ECYFL functions, (especially coaches and all volunteers).

**Head Coach is automatically suspended (2) games if ejected:**

* 1st offense: which means the head coach has received 2 official unsportsmanlike penalties in a game.
* 2nd offense: The team of suspended Head Coach will be placed on probation.

 The team of suspended Head Coach will drop one spot in the playoffs.

In order for the team to return the following season, the Head Coach must pay $100 fine and provide proof of training in the area of sports conduct and behavior. Coach must receive approval from Association and League Board before returning the following season.

If any substantiated, substantial infraction occurs by a sitting Executive Board member, the board member will be dismissed from the Executive Board. A thorough investigation will be conducted by the sitting Executive Board members.

**Player Warnings**

Any player exhibiting any form of unsportsmanlike conduct, at the discretion of the game officials, will be sent off the field for a “cool down” period of a **minimum of two plays** after which the player may be allowed to return to the field. This is considered a player’s warning. Player warnings shall not be considered as being ejected from the game.

**Player Ejections**

Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct, at the discretion of the game officials, or a second player warning from the officials shall be cause for player disqualification and ejection from the game. Any player so disqualified by the officials, shall remain on the bench for the remainder of the game with shoulder pads and helmet removed or, if deemed necessary by the officials, ejected from the permitted facility, and prohibited from any further contact, direct or indirect, with the team during the remainder of the game. For failure to comply, the officials may forfeit the game.

* Any player allowed by game officials to return to a game shall not be considered as being ejected from a game.
* A player removed from the game on the final play of the game shall be considered ejected from the game.
* Game officials shall notify Commissioner of any ejections at the conclusion of the contest. Player name and number shall be recorded and submitted to the league along with the game score.
* Any player disqualified/ejected in a league game shall be ineligible for a minimum of one succeeding game. Sanctions may be more severe depending on the severity of the infraction. If any player is a repeat offender, more severe sanctions will be imposed. Player may be suspended for the remainder of the season.

**Spectator Ejections**

Any spectator who uses abusive, disrespectful, or profane language or who otherwise exhibits unsportsmanlike conduct before, during or after any ball game shall be ejected from the permitted facility and could be subject to banning and or criminal prosecution. The site manager or designee, Association officials, League officials or Referee Official has the authority to eject a spectator or parent from the site.

**Game Postponement**

Games will only be postponed in case of inclement weather or extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the Association or League. The decision to postpone games will be made by the Commissioner or Designee. All postponed games, including rain outs, when possible, will be rescheduled and posted on the league website.

**Team Standings**

Team standings will be posted on the league website. Team standings will remain on the website for the season.

**Playoffs & Championships**

Playoffs are provided by the league for the top ranked teams in each division or subdivision. The number of teams advancing to the playoffs will be determined by the number of teams within the division or subdivision.

In the case of ties involving team rankings, they will be broken as follows:

* If two teams tied have played each other during the regular season, the team who won in head-to-head competition shall receive the higher ranking.
* All other Tiebreakers will be handled by Coin Flip.

In the event any team has a forfeited loss and is eligible to participate in post season tournament play, they shall be listed as the lowest seed for their division of play due to the forfeit; regardless of what their season record is.

* Two or more forfeits render a team ineligible for the playoffs!

### Cheating and Special Warning Regarding Rumors:

Any allegations of Cheating or Violations of this rule book or violations of any local rule or regulation should be immediately reported, in writing, to both the Association and/or League Commissioner (and their appointed representatives for dealing with such issues). Associations and Conferences are required to fully investigate all claims and document all investigations. Once an allegation of cheating or a rules violation has been reported to the respective official in writing, Association or Conference, there shall be NO further discussion until it is reviewed, investigated, and acted on appropriately by the Association and/or Commissioner and Executive Board.

Any allegation of Cheating or Violations of this rule book during Post Season Play should be reported in writing to the Commissioner for investigation. Post Season play in tournaments, including AYF, must be communicated to association and commissioner. Given these facts any Organization, individual or group of individuals (which includes any member of the organization) spreading rumors of cheating, special treatment or any other false information whether causing an incident or not during a Local, Regional or National event may be banned from participation in any future Local, Regional or National events for a period deemed reasonable by league.

The act of spreading rumors which is general talk not based on fact will not be tolerated in AYF. Rumors not only hurts your credibility, but it also affects your team and other teams that may become involved in the rumor.

**Game Protest**

The league is formed to foster all tenets of good sportsmanship, conduct, and in the best interest of the sport. Its primary function is to uphold the rules and regulations of this program and to levy fair and reasonable disciplinary action should such be necessary. Protests are an avenue for a Head Coach and Association of an offended team should they believe and have credible evidence that an opponent has violated those rules.

**Protest Committee**

The Protest Committee shall be formed to provide a neutral, unbiased arbitrator for protests. It will be comprised of at least three members. The Commissioner shall chair the committee. The two other members shall be appointed by the Commissioner from members of the Executive Board. The Commissioner may request the entire Executive Board hear the protest.

* Members from Associations participating in a protest shall recluse themselves from the committee for that issue. Those members shall not cast a vote but may speak on the matter. The Commissioner may appoint additional persons from the Executive Board or the Board of Representatives if needed to fill vacancies for individuals who recluse themselves.

**Committee Authority**

The Protest Committee shall be granted authority to convene hearings as required to respond to official protests, rule on any such protests, recommend fees or fines for protests, levy forfeitures of games if a violation is found, and recommend additional disciplinary actions be taken by the League Executive Board, at the direction of the Commissioner.

* Committee may, during investigation, require a letter of confirmation, original birth certificate, copy of physical and player’s report card to verify a Player's identity, address, or other roster information from the Association Representative. In addition, the Committee may request interviews of those involved.
* Committee may, at any time during the regular season, require selected Association to collect all rosters on a selected game day and make available for the Commissioner or Executive Board. A copy will be available for the Commissioner for a roster check. Improper rosters discovered during this review process will be turned over to the League for appropriate disciplinary action of Associations and Teams.

**Valid Game Protests**

Game protests are limited to specific infractions by a Team during a game with the protesting team. These include ineligible Player(s) participating in the game and/or specific roster violations. There is a fee of $150.00 per protest made payable to ECYFL. If the protest is upheld the fee is refunded, if the protest is not upheld the fee is turned over to the league.

* Ineligible Player infractions include but are not limited to those Players not listed on the official roster on file with the League, those without an authorized eligibility card, overage, fraudulent addresses, or falsified records. Players who are supposed to be out on Probation.
* Roster infractions include but are not limited to fraudulent entries, unauthorized deviations from Official Team Roster, and failure to present the proper roster(s) at game time
* Failure to present proper ID card.
* Changing game jersey to hide identity or ineligibility.
* Protests that involve calls made by game officials will not be heard. However, it is recommended that Associations put in writing issues related to Officials and submit to Commissioner and Executive Board.

**Timing**

Protests must be filed with the Commissioner for Rules within 24 hours from completion of game.

**Procedures**

The Commissioner shall receive the specific protest complaint, in writing (email), to the Protest Committee chairman or appointed designate, along with the appropriate fee within 24 hours of the original notification from the end of the protested game. Protests will not be accepted without the fee. The Protest Committee will then establish a hearing date and notify the defendant Association. The defendant Association shall have the responsibility of notifying the affected team’s Head Coach, Player(s), and the Player(s) parents or guardian(s). The hearing will be convened by the Protest Committee to hear both sides of the issue. Both the plaintiff Head Coach and the defendant Head Coach and/or Association Representative shall be present to answer the charges. Any Player(s) involved in the protest must also appear before the Committee. In the event a Player’s weight is at issue, the Committee shall weigh the Player on a league scale during the hearing. Failure of any of these parties to appear before the Committee shall be grounds for findings in the other’s favor. Every effort will be made to ensure all participants can make meeting. The Committee shall make a ruling at the close of the hearing.

**Game Protest Appeals**

Appeals on the decisions of the Protest Committee shall be made in writing to the Commissioners within 24 hours of the protest decision. The Commissioner may approve or disapprove the decision of the Rules Committee which action will be final unless the plaintiff or defendant requests in writing that the matter be reviewed by the Board. If this occurs, the Commissioner will render a final decision in the matter of majority consent. There will be no other appeals.

**Cheer**

**Head Coach**

* Must be 21 years old. The coaching staff will be under his/her direct supervision.
* Head coaches are responsible to attend ALL mandatory ECYFL Coaches Meetings to ensure they have the latest information on League policies and expectations. If unable to attend the Cheer Commissioner/ Vice Commissioner should be noticed and the teams Cheer Coordinator or an Assistant Coach must be present for said meeting.
* As a head coach you are responsible for the actions or inactions of their cheerleaders while at practice, games, and championships.
* As a head coach you are responsible for the actions of parents and spectators. If at any time it becomes a problem reach out to your Association for assistance.
* The head coach is responsible for the security of the team’s rooster, ID’s, birth certificates and any team funds. All documents are to be turned in by the deadlines given by ECYFL.
* Head coaches are responsible in informing their Association of any incidents or injuries. No coach should allow a cheerleader to participate if there are any medical concerns.
* All Head coaches are required to complete League mandatory trainings, certification, and background checks before they’re able to be on the field with any cheerleaders.
* As the head coach you are to ensure that all cheerleaders are treated fairly, taught equally, and make them feel as part of the team.
* The head coach is to ensure that the squad members are safe, safety being their top priority and that First Aid is available. Also, ensure that the emergency contact list is always kept up to date and present.

**Assistant Coach**

* Must be at least 18 years old with some knowledge about cheer.
* Are required to complete all ECYFL mandatory trainings, certification, and background checks before being able to assist with coaching.
* Assistant coaches are under the direct supervision of the Head Coach. The Head coach will delegate the assistant coach duties.
* Assistant coaches will stand in for the Head coach whenever needed, however any decisions will need to come from the Teams Association, Cheer Commissioner/or Vice Commissioner before a final decision is made in the Head coaches absents.
* Assistant coaches are allowed to run practices at no time should the participants be left unattended.

**Junior Demonstrators**

* Junior Demonstrators may only carry out the instructions of the Head or Assistant Coaches.
* All Junior Demonstrators can only work with teams a minimum of 2 years younger than his/her current age.
* Junior Demonstrators cannot conduct a practice.
* Junior demonstrator must between 8th and 12th grade.

**Formation**

* Tryouts are not permitted
* The formation of teams is based on a first come, first-serve participation policy.
* Each child must be afforded the opportunity to cheer regardless of ability.
* All ECYFL required documents must be completed

**Practice Regulation**

* Practices are defined as any gathering of cheerleaders to discuss the subject of cheerleading, demonstrations, exhibits, or exercise and study of cheerleading material.
* Cheerleading practices should correspond with the date set forth by ECYFL season.
* All practices will be limited to no more than 10 hours per week until school begins.
* No team is allowed to practice without a head coach or assistant coach supervision.
* No stunting is allowed on paved areas or without the coach present.

**Game Day**

* The visiting squad shall be introduced and preform first at half time.
* Half time cheers, dances, or stunts will be limited to four (4) minutes per squad.
* At the end of the game, all cheerleaders should line up behind the football team for the purpose of shaking hands with the opposing team and their cheerleaders.
* Cheerleaders will cheer in a designated area assigned by the Site Manager.

**This Revision was approved by the Rules Committee on 30 July 2022**