

Great Ohio Youth Football Conference (GOYFC)
GENERAL RULES
REVISED VERSION AS OF December 19, 2018
ALL OTHER VERSIONS WILL NOT BE USED

Section I- Official Rules:

1. The rules adopted by the Ohio High School Athletic Association shall govern play in the football games, except in situations specified by these general rules or in the League Rules.
2. The League Board shall consist of one member from each community involved.
3. Every other February members should be elected to serve two-year terms in the offices of President and Vice President. The rest of the Board will be known as Board Members.
4. An official League meeting cannot be held with less than 1/3(one-third) of the members present.
5. All League rules and changes must be voted on by a majority of the Members of the Board.
- 6a. A player can play for any district in which he/she chooses as long as he/she does not live in a participating district in the Greater Ohio Youth Football Conference. If a team is found to have a player playing for them that does not abide by this rule, that team will forfeit its entire season.
- 6b. All rostered out of district players that leaves a Greater Ohio Youth Football Conference (GOYFC) program must sit out a year before they can play for another Greater Ohio Youth Football Conference program unless they get a signed Player Transfer Form to league President.
7. Out of district players that participate in the GOYFC and have moved from their original program is permitted to play at the program from which they came providing it is on a continual basis. At the point the child misses a season, he must return to the program that he lives in the district of (this does not include injured players that have to sit out for a year. However, they must be on the roster and weigh-in for that season.) The Board must be notified of all players. If the Board is not notified this child will be considered an ineligible player.
8. Players can wear visors, they must be clear and made of polycarbonate material. The penalty for breaking this rule will be that the child cannot play until the visor is removed from the helmet. Any repeat offense will require the head coach to receive a one game suspension for allowing the visor to be worn.

9. Background checks for all coaches and board members of each organization background check should go back 5 years and search for and not be limited to: any assault charge/conviction, domestic violence conviction, weapons conviction, child abuse and/or endangerment conviction, drug possession and/or intent to distribute conviction, and sexual violence or rape conviction.
10. No player in the GOYFC is permitted to play for another team or in another league during the season (regular season and playoffs until their team is eliminated or season ends). If a player is caught in violation of this rule, they will be immediately ruled ineligible for the remainder of the GOYFC season and any GOYFC game they participate in after being ruled ineligible will be forfeited.
11. League Fees – Beginning with the 2016 football season, each GOYFC team will be required to pay a non-refundable annual league fee of \$400 due by July 1st of each upcoming season. The league fee will cover the costs of league website, badges for coaches, the referee assigner's fee, and the costs of trophies for the Super Bowl winners and coaches. Failure to not pay the league fee by the defined date will result in:
 - a. Payment received 7 days late will result in the loss of 1 home game
 - b. Payment received 14 days late will result in the loss of 3 home games
 - c. Payments received 21 days late will result in the loss of remaining home games and hosting a playoff game

Section II-Coach, Player, Spectator and Parent Behavior:

1. **Obnoxious Behavior:** The GOYFC encourages players and coaches to bring families and friends to be fans and spectators. This is a family-oriented program. Therefore, if a player, coach or spectator becomes unruly or obnoxious in his or her behavior and harasses, intimidates or ridicules the coaches, players or referees, he or she will be warned once by the referee or coach. If he or she persists in such offensive behavior, the offender will be removed from the game or the referee may reward the game to the offended team by forfeiture. Any coaches involved in such unsportsman behavior will be up for review by the Board for suspensions.
 - a. **Threats and Physical Contact of Referees** - any physical/harmful contact or threat (verbal and/or non-verbal) to an official that is reported by the official will result in the immediate suspension of the coach for the remainder of the season. If a physical assault occurs and the coach is the instigator, he has committed a felony in the state of Ohio and the GOYFC will work with law enforcement to bring the parties to justice. If 1) a referee threatens physical violence against a coach or 2) a physical assault occurs against a coach and the referee is the instigator, the referee will be terminated for the remainder of the season.
 - b. **Conduct Fines** - if a coach is ejected from a league game, the member organization of the coach will be fined \$100. Each subsequent ejection of any coach from that organization will be an additional \$100 (so \$200 for the 2nd offense, \$300 for the third, etc.). After the 3rd coach ejection the member organization will be referred to the disciplinary committee for further action. All

payments need to be received the Friday before the upcoming game. If not paid, the team of the coach will forfeit the next game.

2. **Good Sportsmanship:** All coaches, players and referees are expected to uphold the principles of good sportsmanship while associated in activities of the League program. Each head coach is expected to follow these principles and to respect each team he plays by not running the score up on his opponent. Per High School Rules, anyone working the chains will not do any coaching, yelling or talking from the sidelines while working the chains. It is the home team's responsibility to put together a chain crew. No use of electronic devices by onfield and sideline personnel during the game. If you have to use/answer the phone you must leave the field. We want all communities to respect each other and compete in a sportsman-like manner. No one may use profane language, drink alcohol, use tobacco or fight while on any team's home game property. A player must not show disrespect for his coaches, other players, the officials, workers in the concession stand or the League. A warning may or may not be issued first, depending on the nature of the offense. Violations of this rule will be reported to the Board who will take appropriate disciplinary action. This includes coaches, players, spectators and parents. Actions may include suspension. First time suspensions will be for the remainder of that game and the next League or League play-off game. Second time suspensions will be for the rest of the current League season and Play-off season. The President of the League can request the Board to review the case of anyone under suspension.

3. **Probation and Rules Infractions:** If it is determined that an association has broken the rules of eligibility as determined by the League, that association will be placed on probation for a period of three years. If it is found that the same association has broken the rules in that three-year period, it will be removed from the League immediately. If a team is new to the League and automatically on a three-year probation and they break the rules, they will be removed on the first violation.

4. **Coaching Staff on Sidelines and Team Uniforms:** Each team may have only seven (7) adults on the sidelines. One (1) head coach and six (6) assistant coaches (including trainers and team moms). The water boy should be a student or player. These persons must be indicated on the Official Team Roster. No player associated with any team shall be on the field or bench unless wearing the team jersey. Coaches should have a hat or team shirt and I.D. pass on their outerwear to signify that they are on the coaching staff. Failure to limit the coaches to seven (7) will result in an unsportsman-like penalty of 15 yards.

5. **Coolers:** No coolers are allowed to be carried into games by fans. No outside food or drinks are to be brought into any complex, except for team snacks brought in by the team mom. All team coolers must be left at the home fields concession stand until the time they are needed. **THIS INCLUDES CUPS OF COFFEE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

6. **Admission:** Regular games \$4.00 adult
\$1.00 students ages 6-12

Children 5 and under are free

Play-off games \$4.00 adult
\$1.00 students ages 6-12
Children 5 and under are free

Super bowl games \$5.00 adult
\$2.00 students ages 6-12
Children 5 and under are free

Make-up games: Free admission after ½ time of the 6th grade game

Section III-Preview Games, Procedures, Protests, Time Limits:

1. **Forfeit Time:** Forfeit time for all Leagues is fifteen (15) minutes after scheduled game time. Forfeit shall be declared when there are less than the minimum of eleven (11) players of a coach's team present to play. Officials shall not permit coaches to hold up the start of the game while waiting for additional players when at least eleven (11) are present for play.
 - A. All games must be made up within seven (7) days. At the point that they are not made up within that time period it will be decided by the League when the game will be made up.
 - B. A game will resume where it ended: Clock, down, distance, spot of ball, score and quarter.

2. **Warm Up Period:** The official may shorten or completely eliminate the Warm-ups by teams if such practice delays the game beyond its normal starting time. If the first game of the day extends beyond its normal time period, the official may proceed into the second game immediately upon completion of the first game with no warm-ups or field practice. In such cases, coaches should be prepared to warm-up their teams on the sidelines, but not in the vicinity of the game still in progress.

3. **Protests:** Officials decisions are final in all judgment calls. Correct procedures for placing a game under protest for a non-judgment call consists of:
 - A. At the time of the infraction, "Time-Out" must be requested.
 - B. Notify the officials and a Board Member that a protest is being lodged.
 - C. Protest fee of \$100.00 is given to a Board Member or head coach. Fee is refunded if protest is won, forfeited if protest is lost and goes to the team that was challenged.
 - D. After a protest has been lodged with the officials and Board member, both head coaches will be brought to center of field and informed that the game is being played under protest. Excessive delays in the game by either team will be cause for forfeiture by the offending team.
 - E. Protest will be written and given to the Board with five (5) days of the infraction.
 - F. Information such as an ineligible player does not require a protest. Pointing out an infraction to the Board Members and verification of the same is an

automatic forfeiture. However, the Board will hold a meeting to decide a protest or ineligible player.

4. **Time outs:** A head coach must ask the officials for the time out when the coach wants to confer on an interpretation of the rules. No one may call a time out in such a way as to interfere or influence the play on the field. Only the officials may call time out. Only the head coach or team captain may ask officials for clarification of the rules. During any discussion, all members of both benches shall remain in their respective positions.
5. **Game Length:**

1 st and 2 nd Grades	Eight (8) minute quarters
3 rd Grade	Eight (8) minute quarters
4 th Grade	Eight (8) minute quarters
5 th Grade	Eight (8) minute quarters
6 th Grade	Eight (8) minute quarters
6. **Official Game:** Pre-season games will not count in the Official Standings of the League. They are played to give game experience to the players and to get the community involved.
7. **Change in the Order of Games:** The order of games can be amended given that the presidents of each participating organization agree to the time changes. The home team president must then notify the league president by noon Friday prior to the game of the change in order.
8. **Ties:** There shall be no ties. Ball will be placed on the 20-yard line and each team will get a possession/drive. Officials will explain the procedure. On the second attempt to break the tie, the ball will be put on the 10-yard line and game will continue until there is a winner. At the end of regulation play (4 quarters) if the score is tied, both teams will enter an overtime period until the tie is broken. Timeouts from the regulation period will not carry over. Each team will be provided 1 timeout per overtime period. Timeouts not used in the previous overtime period will not accrue to the next timeout period.
- 9.
10. **League Rules Exempt Kickoffs in Games:** For Kindergarten through sixth grade the ball will be spotted on team's own 35-yard line to start play and after each score.
11. **Safety:** After a safety, ball is placed at opponent's 45-yard line.
12. **No Coaches Allowed Pass the 25-Yard Line:** Also, no fans along sidelines if at all possible, they must be at least 10 feet from the sidelines.
13. **Ball Sizes:** Game ball must be a Wilson, Under Armor, or Nike ball (leather or composite). If a team is found using a ball that is not a Wilson or Nike of the appropriate size per grade according to the League Rule, they will be charged a 15-yd unsportsmanlike penalty for each infraction (this will happen every time during the game that the unauthorized ball is used).

K-1 and 2nd Grade K-2

3 rd Grade	K-2
4 th Grade	K-2
5 th Grade	TDJ
6 th Grade	TDJ

14. **Forty (40) Point Rule:** There cannot be more than a 40-point differential during a game. These points include defensive points. The team that is down by 40 points cannot create points to create a forfeit. (I.e. Safety). Once a team has incurred a greater than 40-point differential both coaches will be called in front of the League Board for review. The coach that incurred a greater than 40-point differential can be suspended for one game. If a second occurrence happens by that coach, he/she will automatically be suspended for the remainder of the season with no review from the League Board.

13a. Prior to the 4th quarter if a team is up by 25 points, the head coaches may mutually agree in the presence of 2 officials working the game (1 of the officials present must be the "Head Official" for that game) to go to a running clock.

13b. If at the start of the 4th quarter a team is up by 25 points, the clock becomes a running clock through the end of the game.

15. **Punting Grades K-4:** The punt is a walk-off of 25 yards and a 15 second clock run off. A punt can be declared from anywhere on the field. You can only pin your opponent to the one (1) yard line. However, after the ball is spotted anywhere inside the 25-yard line and a punt is declared the ball will go back to the 25-yard line to begin play. **ONCE THE ONFIELD COACH DELCARES TO THE OFFICIAL TO PUNT THAT DECISION CANNOT BE CHANGED.**

16. **Punting Grade 5:** The team can punt from anywhere on the field. No rushing the punter, absolutely no contact with the center. If there is contact it is a 15-yard penalty and automatic 1st down. The kicking team will not be allowed to release down-field until the ball is kicked. There will be no fake punts at this level. It will be the responsibility of the 5th grade coaches to be sure that the officials are versed in the application of this rule before the game begins. There will be absolutely no quick kicks. There are no walk-offs.

Once a punt has been declared the offensive team, the defending (punt return) team cannot rush the punt. In addition, the punt return team must have 9 players within 3 yards of the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. They can have a maximum of 2 players deeper than the 3 yards beyond the line of scrimmage. The intent of this rule is to eliminate the unfair advantage of allowing the punt return team to set-up a wall prior to the ball being punted.

17. **Punting Grade 6:** The team can punt from anywhere on the field. The play is live except that there will be no contact with the center. The penalty will be the same as listed above. There are no walk-offs.

18. **Field Goals and Extra Points:** Field goals will be treated the same as a punt. The play is live except that there will be no contact with the center. The penalty will be the same as that listed for punting. If the ball is thrown overhead wherever the ball is picked up is where the field goal is punting from. In Grade 6 the holder can have his knee on the ground and the ball still be considered a live ball. In Grade 5 players cannot move until the ball is kicked. A team can pick up a fumble or interception on an extra point and run it back for two (2) points.
19. **No Blitzing the "A" Gap in K1:** Defensive players lined up in the "A" gaps must be in a 3-point stance. Players blitzing the "A" gaps must be lined up 2 yards deep and cannot approach the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped.

Section IV-Players and Practice:

1. **Roster Limits:** If an organization is splitting, they must have enough players to split at each grade level (15 kids per team). If they do not have enough players to split (maximum of one team per organization), they should have the number by the next year. If they do not, then this would be reviewed by the Board after the first year to decide what action to take. A player can move up a grade if there are less than thirteen (13) players on a roster. Each coach must notify the opposing coach prior to the game starting. Failure to do so will mean that you have ineligible players on your squad, and you will forfeit the game. You will also need to provide the other team with a copy of the roster from the team that the player is coming up from and his original paperwork from their folder or the player cannot play up that day.
2. **Eligibility:** Players will be placed on a team according to their grade in school subject to the following age restrictions:
 - A child on the K-1 team cannot turn 8 before November 8th.
 - A child on the 2nd Grade team cannot turn 9 before November 8th.
 - A child on the 3rd Grade team cannot turn 10 before November 8th.
 - A child on the 4th Grade team cannot turn 11 before November 8th.
 - A child on the 5th Grade team cannot turn 12 before November 8th.
 - A child on the 6th Grade team cannot turn 13 before November 8th.
 - No 7th Grade players

Players may play up a grade level. Once that player goes up, he must stay up with that grade and cannot come back down. A player that plays up must have the associated form completed and filed with the league to track the player. A player that plays up is limited to playing 1 year per grade with the exception of 6th grade where a player that played up can play 6th grade twice. For example, if a 5th grader plays 6th grade football, he can then play 6th grade the following season. This does not apply to a 6th grade player that played 6th grade and is retained in 6th grade the following season. That player is not eligible to play.

No player may play down a grade level even though they are not restricted from that by age. The penalty for using an ineligible player will be forfeiture of the

games played with said player. The player will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season and suspended from the following season. The player will not be allowed to continue the season playing for the correct grade level. Each child shall have a copy of his/her report card or a statement from the school on its letterhead that he/she attends verifying the grade he/she is in. All players must have a state ID and photocopy of the state ID must be in the team book.

2a. Beginning with the 2016 season, an eligibility exemption may be granted.

1. The exemption is as follows: A player will be allowed to play down (down from their perspective grades, for example a 5th grader playing 4th grade) which will be determine by the player's age as follows:
 - If a player is 6 years old and in the 2nd grade, and his birthday is after September 1st, he can play K-1
 - If a player is 7 years old and in the 3rd grade, and his birthday is after September 1st, he can play 2nd grade
 - If a player is 8 years old and in the 4th grade, and his birthday is after September 1st, he can play 3rd grade
 - If a player is 9 years old and in the 5th grade, and his birthday is after September 1st, he can play 4th grade
 - If a player is 10years old and in the 6th grade, and his birthday is after September 1st, he can play 5th grade
 - This does not apply to 7th grader players
2. Conditions of exemptions
 - Each organization is provided 5 exemptions for the entire organization that need to be designated by the 2nd weigh-in and are not transferable or can be taken accessed during the season
 - Each team with an exemption is limited to a maximum of 2 on a team
 - Exemptions are a granted on a yearly basis, if a player requires an exemption for the following year it, if granted will count again the organization's total of 5
 - If a team is found to exceed the limit of exemptions, the game the player played in is forfeited and that player that exceeds the total may be forced to the appropriate team per league rules
 - League members are not obligated to use the exercise the exemption
 - Exemptions must be designated on the team's roster form
 - Not exemption will be granted after the 2nd weigh-in
3. There will be a maximum of 5 exemptions per organization and no more than 2 exemptions will be allowed on any one roster/team in that organization.
4. There are no circumstances, including this exemption, that allow 7th graders to play in this league. **No 7th graders.**

5. Players are only allowed to play 1 year per grade, any exceptions need to be brought to Board's attention and approved.

3. **Sign-ups:** All teams (K-1 through 6th) must require copies of birth certificates, report card, state ID, and pictures in game jerseys for all players which must be presented along with the official rosters at the official weigh-in. These copies must be with the coaches at every game. Each community shall set their own sign-up times. Sign-ups will be cutoff after the date of the second weigh-in. No child can be rostered or play after the second weigh-in regardless. An extension can be given to a team or organization for a short period of time. This must be done on a year-to-year basis. The extension can be for no more than two (2) weeks.

4. **Official Roster:** An official roster listing the child's name, jersey number, date of birth, and weight must be turned into the League's President before the first official weigh-in. At weigh-in all player paperwork must be turned in. If any paperwork is missing the player will not be allowed to weigh-in. If a player misses both weigh-ins, he/she will not be able to play. Any player that does not supply a birth certificate, state ID, and picture by the end of the second weigh-in cannot play. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** An updated current league roster form needs to be completed and provided before the team weighs in. Failure to do so comply will prohibit the team from weighing in.

5. Weight Limits: K-1	72 lbs. in the backfield
2 nd Grade	87 lbs. in the backfield
3 rd Grade	102 lbs. in the backfield
4 th Grade	117 lbs. in the backfield
5 th Grade	132 lbs. in the backfield
6 th Grade	No weight limit

*******Child will have one (1) opportunity to step on the scales and will not receive a second opportunity*********All players must be present at the official weigh-ins.** (See Section IV, #5). A player that does not meet the above weight requirements may line up on the line of scrimmage and catch a pass **down field**. He may not line up in the backfield and be eligible. An overweight child can line up from tight end to tight end. All organizations (new/probationary) must have representation for EACH grade at the first weigh-in.

6. **Record Ties:** All League ties will be determined by the League Directors at the next League meeting and based on the following criteria:

- Head to Head competition
- Points against
- Points for

7. **Coaches on the Playing Field:** K-1 and 2nd grade may have two (2) coaches on the field from each team. Coaches must be five (5) yards deeper than the deepest man behind the offensive and defensive lines after the quarterback is under center.

There will be no talking once the center touches the ball from the defensive or offensive coaches. 3rd and 4th grades may have one (1) coach on the field from each team. Coaches must be five (5) yards deeper than the deepest man behind the offensive and defensive lines after the quarterback is under center. There will be no talking once the center touches the ball from the defensive or offensive coaches. 5th and 6th grades will not have any coaches on the field.

8. **Officials:** There will be two (2) officials for the K-1 game. There will be three (3) officials for the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th grade games. **Note: Game can proceed with two (2) officials if necessary.**
9. **Referee Payment:** Per league by-laws, the home organization is responsible for payment to all home game officials/referees. If a team does not show up (team must exist and have a roster), the home organization will get reimbursement from the “no-show” organization for that game’s referee expenses. The no-show organization must reimburse the host organization before they can play their next league game. Referees fees are \$45.
10. The head assignor of referees for the league will be paid \$1 for each game assigned. The total amount is to be divided equally and paid by league members who played that season. Failure to provide payment will result in loss hosting home and/or playoff game(s).
11. **Books:** Each team will have 2 books, the book they turn into the league will be the official book (the league will keep) and they will have a copy they can keep. The book in the possession of the league will be used to verify and address an issue. Books will be checked prior to the game. The request must be made at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the game and the books must be checked prior to the game starting. If a team asks to see your book, you must let them see it. All late players have to check in with the other team’s head coach prior to entering the game. All team moms have to check at the book check are picture to verify that it is the correct player and the seal. They can check for report card and birth certificate after they have verified the players, so that the teams can go back to practicing. A team mom must put the organization on notice that they will be checking the books. Book check must be done with players lined up in numerical order with their helmets off.
12. All coaches and team moms must have a Concussion Certificate in the team book. If there is not a form, they will not be permitted to be on the field.
13. Coaches with valid coaching pass can get into any league member’s field free even if their teams are not playing.
14. **Player Transfer Rules:** Once a player is rostered with a member organization, he/she cannot play for another team within league the following season unless they complete the Player Transform and have it signed by the organization president involved in the player transfer. If the Player Transform Form is not filled out and/or

provided to the league, the player will not be allowed to leave to join the new member organization.

Section V-Rule Changes and New League Members:

1. The Board may add, delete or alter any rule at anytime. All coaches affected by the changes will be notified of those changes by the President before they become effective.
2. Any new member community, who joins the Greater Ohio Youth Football Conference must have a regular size football field, bathrooms and scoreboard with clock.
3. In case of emergencies, an alternate location may be used, and/or the time and score may be kept by the officials on the field.
4. All home fields must have men's and women's bathrooms.
5. New Teams will be put on a three (3) year probation period.
6. New teams will get league board voting privileges only after 2nd weigh-ins and all team rosters have been approved by the board.

Section VI- Playoffs and Trophies:

1. The teams that host the Superbowl will supply a winner's trophy and a runner-up trophy for each grade level. The winner's trophy will be a four post and 31 inches in height. The runner-up trophy will be a three post and 26 inches in height.

Teams hosting the Superbowl must notify the Board 30 days prior to the Superbowl of the site where it will take place.

Playoff and super bowl sites must meet the following criteria: super bowl host teams must secure a **stadium** for super bowl games. Stadium venues must have bleachers, a working scoreboard with clock, bathroom facilities, and accommodations that remove spectators from the sidelines. All playoff sites must also have bleachers, a working scoreboard with clock, bathroom facilities, and accommodations that remove spectators from the sidelines

These rules have been reviewed and approved by all members of the Greater Ohio Youth Football Conference.