

# **OSWEGO YOUTH TACKLE FOOTBALL, INC's BY-LAWS**

## **Article I. Name**

The name of the organization shall be Oswego Youth Tackle Football, Inc. hereafter referred to as OYTF. OYTF is a member of the Midwest Youth Big 12 Football Conference, hereafter referred to as MYFC, consisting of eight (8) neighboring organizations.

## **Article II. Overview of Program**

OYTF is governed by a Board of Directors (Board) as well as the MYFC which sets the rules for registration and competition. Illinois High School Association rules are followed with exceptions which have been developed to maintain equality in a learning environment. OYTF consists of six (6) levels which are divided by the age and grade of the players (8U, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>). These sets of teams are titled 'Orange'. 'Blue' will be added if there are enough participants to add another color. Each level has a squad of Cheerleaders associated with it. The age and weight requirements for these divisions are determined on an annual basis by MYFC. Further OYTF is a supporter of USA Football and its' guidance for the game of football.

## **Article III. Purpose and Aims**

- A.** To teach and instruct youth in the basic skills of competitive football.
- B.** To teach and instruct youth in the basic skills of cheerleading.
- C.** To inspire youth to practice the ideals of teamwork.
- D.** To inspire youth to practice the ideals of sportsmanship.
- E.** To develop physical fitness within a safe environment.
- F.** To accept adversity without complaint.
- G.** To respect authority, ones teammates, ones opponents and one's self.
- H.** To develop self-confidence and a feeling of accomplishment.
- I.** To promote responsibility of one's actions.
- J.** To encourage safety, honesty, and fair play.

## **Article IV. Elections, Officers, and Their Duties**

The government of OYTF shall be under the supervision of a Board of Directors. It is required that each Board position will be voted on for approval on an annual basis at the last Official Board Meeting of the season. The last Official Board meeting is held in November but can be moved at the discretion of the current board for any reason any time. All communication must come through OYTF appointed emails.

**ELECTIONS:** The Secretary shall distribute written ballots to all Board members at the last Official Board Meeting. Valid ballots are only those cast privately by current board members looking to be elected for the upcoming season. The Secretary shall collect all cast ballots and two random names will be drawn to help tabulate the results. In a situation where more than 1 person applies for an open position, the winner shall be determined by plurality vote (highest vote getter, not majority vote) for the position. In cases of a tie, the members present shall cast a second ballot containing only the names of the tied candidates. The winner shall be the highest vote getter.

**MEETINGS:** Meetings will be held during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of every month at a location to be determined a head of time. In order to conduct official business it is required that a quorum, which is simply a majority of currently filled Board positions, be present at Board Meetings. Board Members are required to attend nine (9) of the eleven (11) regularly scheduled meetings per year. Failure to do so may result in removal from the Board.

**REMOVAL OF BOARD MEMBER:** In the event a Board Member is not fulfilling their duties as outlined in these bylaws, is found negligent of their role as a Board Member or has brought negative attention to OYTF Board because of their actions inside or outside of OYTF, any seated Board Member in good standing with this organization may recommend to the General Board their removal with specific cause, a super-majority, or 2/3 of the seated Board Members, must be in favor of the Board Members removal. Once a seated Board Member has been removed they will not be eligible to hold another Board position or a Head Coach position within OYTF. Board members will receive a mid-year review (May/June) and mid-season review (September) to ensure they are meeting all expectations.

**VENDOR GIFTS:** All vendor gifts shall be brought to the Board for determination of disbursement.

**The Executive Board of Directors consists of the following Officers:**

- A. President
- B. Vice-President
- C. Secretary
- D. Treasurer

**The Board of Directors includes the following Directors:**

- A. Two (2) Athletic Directors of Football (One Athletic Director representing 'Orange' and one representing 'Blue' when applicable. )
- B. One (1) Athletic Director of Cheerleading)
- C. Two (2) Parent Representatives (One Parent Representative representing 'Orange' and one representing 'Blue' when applicable. )
- D. Sponsorship Manager
- E. Field/Equipment Manager
- F. Fundraising Manager
- G. Two (2) Assistant Football ADs (1 representing 'Orange' and 1 'Blue')
- H. One (1) Assistant Cheer AD

New board members will start on a 90 day non voting probationary period to help acclimate to the board.

**BOARD MEMBER DUTIES:** Can be found on sheet posted on [www.oymf.org](http://www.oymf.org)

## **Article V. Participation, Registration, and Refunds**

**PARTICIPATION:** is restricted to residents of Oswego School District #308 with a 15% allowance for outside district residents.

**REGISTRATION:** Registration will begin on-line where you can pay via credit card. There will also be mandatory, in person fittings. Registration must be paid in full in order to receive any equipment. For the mandatory fittings, the date, time and location are determined by the Secretary. At fittings, Football Players are required to weigh-in and get sized for equipment and jerseys. It is recommended that Football Players wear t-shirts, shorts and socks during weigh-in. At registration, Cheerleaders will be sized for the cheer uniforms and/or warm-ups. A parent/legal guardian of each Participant must provide a photo copy of the participant's birth certificate, grade verification (if required), recent photograph, deposit check and physical as well as any other required forms at the time of registration.

**REFUNDS:** Effective, as of the 2016 season, refunds will only be provided if requested via e-mail and received prior to 11:59pm on April 30<sup>th</sup> of the same year in which payments were received. Refund requests must be e-mailed to the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary of OYTF to be considered. If a refund is requested after 12:00am May 1<sup>st</sup> of the same year in which payments were received the refund **will not** be accepted for any reason. There is no exception to this.

## **Article VI. Basic Policies for All Football Players and Cheerleaders**

The following are basic policies of OYTF in common with those of MYFC.

- A.** All Participants will refrain from using profane language and/or gestures at any time while attending an OYTF Event or Activity.
- B.** All Participants will refrain from use of any tobacco products or consuming alcoholic beverages at any time while attending an OYTF Event or Activity.
- C.** Parent/Legal Guardian must sign in with the Parent Representative or designated Official 45 minutes prior to the start of their game. 8u Parent/Legal Guardian must sign in 30 minutes prior to the start of the 8u Game. Failure to do so will result in the participant not being able to participate until the signature is obtained. The Parent/Legal Guardian must remain on the grounds until the conclusion of their child's game.
- D.** Participants will remain on the same team unless there are enough participants (48) to create a second team. At that time The Board will hold a draft with the coaches, and participants will be redrafted to ensure fairness and parity to both teams.
- E.** Family participants are regulated by the eldest participant's team assignment.
- F.** Family Members of Board Members and Coaches will not be shown special consideration for addition to the program.
- G.** Participants are expected to perform in inclement weather conditions. During Games, OYTF Executive Board and/or MYFC Officials determine when games are suspended and/or cancelled. During Practice, OYTF Board will determine when practice is suspended and/or cancelled by vote. At any time, a Parent/Legal Guardian, at their discretion, may remove their participant from the Field.
- H.** Regarding rules of play:
  - a.** Every participant must have at least seven (7) days of practices, with the first three (3) being in helmets only, prior to being allowed to participate in a game. It is not required that the seven (7) Practices occur in succession. Warm-Ups prior to game are not considered a practice and are not to be included in the required seven (7) days of practice.
  - b.** Every participant must make all practices during game weeks to make sure that the kids are safe on game days. Many coaches change plays or work on their halftime/competition cheer routines each week. Failure to make 2 out of the 3 days of practice leads to the participant being unprepared and possibly endangering the safety of a fellow participant. Failure to excuse the participant 1 hour before practice will count as missed day of practice. Participants missing 2 or

more practices in a week could lead to the participant sitting out a portion or all of the game based on coaches decision. **MINIMUM PLAY RULE** would not be valid for kids who are sitting out because of missing practices during the week.

c. To ensure complete participation and developmental instructional attitudes, the Board has adopted minimum play rule. OYTF Football Players must play a minimum of eight (8) **quality** plays in the regular game with no more than 50% of the minimum play count coming on Special Teams play for game day rosters with 21 or less participants. OYTF Football Players must play a minimum of six (6) **quality** plays in the regular game with no more than 50% of the minimum play count coming on Special Teams play for game day rosters with 22 or more participants. A quality play is considered a play that includes the snap of the football and/or movement of all players on the field. Kicked Extra Point and Kneel-Downs are **not** considered plays and are **not** to be counted as part of the minimum play requirement. Plays will be counted by a Parent Volunteer or an approved Coach if no Volunteer is available or allowed on sideline per MYFC rules, for that Team and monitored by a Board Member throughout the game. In the event that a player does not receive their minimum plays during a regular game, disciplinary action will be taken upon the Head Coach of the Team, at the Board's discretion.

I. Each participant and their Parent/Legal Guardian are responsible for their uniform, its appearance, its maintenance and prompt return of a clean and complete uniform by required turn-in date(s) designated by the Board. Failure to do so will result in being charged the full cost of a set of equipment and/or uniform or deposit check being cashed. Failure to return the equipment and/or uniform to OYTF on designated hand in dates will result in loss of eligibility for the returning participant and the deposit check will be cashed. In the event that reimbursement of the cost of the equipment and/or uniform is not paid in full, or arrangements made to pay in full, prior to December 1<sup>st</sup> of the same year in which payment was made, it is the right of OYTF to utilize the services of a Collection Agency to reclaim the debt.

J. No jewelry of any sort is to be worn by participants at both practices and games. (This is per Illinois High School Association (IHSA) requirements).

K. No profanity or foul language or gestures by participants will be allowed. No taunting or other un-sportsman like activities (i.e. fighting) will be tolerated. Disciplinary action of the player is at the discretion of the Board and the players Head Coach. The OYTF Board will hold final decisions in regards to disciplinary action.

L. Participants must be picked up promptly at the conclusion of practices. It is the Coaches' responsibility to make sure that each participant is picked up at the end of practice. If a participant is not picked up within thirty (30) minutes following the conclusion of Practice/Game, the local Police Department will be contacted and custody will be transferred to the Police Department.

M. Participants are prohibited from using temporary colored hair dye or spray while participating in practices or games.

N. Neither Parents/Legal Guardians nor OYTF Participants from other Divisions will be on the sidelines during a Game. All designated persons on the sideline must have background check and the proper OYTF apparel.

## **Article VII. Basic Policies for Parents/Legal Guardians**

A. All Parents/Legal Guardians and any other adults connected with OYTF must realize that the organization is designed for the benefit of the young people who participate in it. The role of the adults is to teach, encourage and assist the participants.

**B.** Each participant must have at least one (1) Parent/Legal Guardian in attendance at all home or away games for participation eligibility. If a Parent/Legal Guardian cannot be in attendance, a Power of Attorney form must be turned in and notarized. These are good for one (1) game only.

**C.** Participants must be picked up promptly at the conclusion of practices. If a participant is not picked up within thirty (30) minutes following the conclusion of Practice/Game, the local Police Department will be contacted and custody will be transferred to the Police Department.

**D.** All participants must have a parent/legal guardian sign an Adult Code of Ethics, which goes more in-depth on what is expected from Parents/Legal Guardians.

### **Article VIII. Rules Specific to Cheerleading**

**A.** All participants are expected to attend and participate in all practices and games. If attendance is not possible, the coach must be notified prior to the practice or game by a Parent/Legal Guardian. Routines are based on the attendance of all participants and must be significantly altered if the full squad is not present. It will be the Athletic Director's discretion if a participant will be allowed to perform at the Game if she has missed a practice the previous week.

**B.** It is the Head Coach's decision whether turtlenecks will be worn under shells or not or if warm-up pants will be worn under skirts.

**C.** Gym shoes and socks must be worn at all practices. Clean White Gym shoes and socks must be worn at all Games and Competitions.

**D.** During any Game or Competition, only Team Hair Accessories may be worn.

**E.** Cheer Athletic Director will determine Game Practice times of Game Day.

**F.** Due to the safety concerns involved with stunting and tumbling during halftime performances, cheerleaders must be present at 75 percent of practices during the week leading up to a game in order to be eligible to participate in the Halftime performance of the game that weekend. (For four day a week practices, this would mean they need to be present at 3 of the 4 practices. Three days a week would be 2 out of 3 practices.) The participant would still be eligible to participate in the sideline cheers at the game. This is for the safety of the team and participant, and not intended to be a punishment in any way.

### **Article IX. Rules Specific to Football Players**

**A.** Per MYFC guidelines, participants must wear an athletic supporter and protective cup during all practices and games (females excluded).

**B.** Participants may only weigh-in at their designated Official Weigh-In or Half-Time of their game. **No Early Weigh-Ins.** An Official Weigh-In is conducted by the Opposing Teams Athletic Director/Athletic Coordinator or designated Official appointed by Opposing Team.

**C.** Participants will be required to report to their Coach by at least halftime of the game preceding theirs on Game days for the required weigh-in in order to be eligible to participate. Participants holding the 1<sup>st</sup> game of the day are required to report one (1) hour prior to their scheduled start time unless otherwise notified by the Head Coach. Failure to Weigh-In at designated time will disqualify the Participant from play until the participant can be officially weighted at Half-Time of the Participants game.

**D.** Participants who get kicked out of the game for any reason will be suspended for the next game

### **Article X. Rules Specific to Coaches**

- A.** All Coaches must submit an Application to be considered for any Coaching Position. Applications must be submitted annually for the upcoming Season to be considered. Applications are to be filed with the OYTF Secretary.
- B.** All potential Coaches will be screened, subjected to a Criminal Background check and Approved by the Board.
- C.** Each Team must have one (1) person who will be designated by the Athletic Director as the “Head Coach”. This person is responsible for all matters concerning his/her team, its participants, Assistant Coaches, Parent Helpers, Fans and Equipment.
- D.** The Head Coach and Assistant Coaches are required to attend any mandated Coaching Clinics or meetings designated by the Board. All communication to parents from coaches must also include a copy to the appointed Athletic Director as well as to “Parenthelper@oytf.org. Any parent helpers/volunteers who email parents much also include a copy to “Parenthelper@oytf.org”
- E.** The Football Head Coach and Football Assistant Coaches are required to complete the USA Football’s Certified Education Program before July 15<sup>th</sup> of the year in which they wish to coach in order to be eligible to Coach in OYTF. If the Coach was approved after July 15<sup>th</sup>, the Coach will have ten (10) days to complete the training and receive the certification in order to remain eligible to Coach for OYTF.
- F.** Football Specific No Team shall have more than five (5) Assistant Coaches on the Sideline on Game Days for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade level and four (4) Assistant Coaches for 8u through 11U. Stat Sheet is required to be turned into the Athletic Director or Parent Representative at conclusion of the Game and signed by the Parent Volunteer, the Head Coach and a seated Board Member of OYTF.
- H.** All Coaches will receive OYTF By-Laws and Coaching Expectations at the mandatory OYTF Coach’s Meeting prior to the start of the season.
- I.** The Executive Board maintains authority of overall Practice and Game Day Activities and holds the right to immediately suspend a Coach/Parent Helper from the field for cause. If a Coach/Parent Helper is removed the situation will be brought to the Boards Attention.
- J.** All Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Junior Coaches, Team Moms and Parent Helpers are required to read and sign Head Coach/Coach Code of Conduct each season and adhere to the Code of Conduct throughout the Season.
- K.** The Board reserves the right, by Board Majority Vote, to remove or reassign Coaches responsibilities due to inability to effectively perform his/her duties.
- L.** Non-Compete: Coaches agree that their rosters, participants’ emails, and phone numbers are property of OYTF. If a coach decides to leave, they cannot take those rosters with them to solicit their team to come with them via email, phone, or social media.

***The preceding Bylaws were approved by the 2018 Board 1/12/2018***

First Read by Board – January 9, 2018, Second Read by Board – January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Approved 1/12/18