



YOUTH FOOTBALL AND CHEER FEDERATION

OFFICIAL GAME PLAYING RULES **11-Man Fall Tackle Football**

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Youth Football Federation
Established 2010

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Article I: General and Administrative

Section 1: Playing Rules

Playing rules are to be the same as the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), with the exception of those items specifically noted within this document, as ratified by the Federation's Operations Governance Council (OGC). During national competitions the playing rules as set forth by the National Federation of High School (NFHS) shall prevail, unless specifically documented as differing from such as determined by the applicable national affiliate.

All football coaches, parent representatives, athletic directors, cheerleader coaches/coordinators shall be familiar with and abide by all rules, regulations, and interpretations of the League and its leadership. All organization/team Owners/CEOs/Presidents must meet with their coaching staffs to ensure they are aware of all Federation rules.

Section 2: Mandatory Player Check-In

All eligible football players are required to check in prior to participating in every regular and post season game. The following provisions should be followed by each participating member and player:

- A. Mandatory Player check-in must be held 30 minutes prior to the scheduled game time.
- B. Team Registrar(s)/Team Mom(s) must be available at the field entry gate to check-in any late-arriving players through the 1st quarter of the game.
- C. After the 1st quarter of the game, further late-arriving players will be allowed to check-in during the half-time only, which is the last opportunity for the day.
- D. All players must check-in prior to taking the field. In the event that a legitimately registered player participates in a game without checking in, the applicable organization/team will be assessed a \$100 fine payable to the Federation prior to the next week's game.

Section 3: Protests, Rulings, and Penalties

In the event of a protest regarding the violation of any provisions of the Federation Official Game Playing Rules, the Office of the Federation Commissioner may consider all facts associated with the alleged violation to determine the validity of said violation and the resultant penalty to be imposed. The penalty may range from an official sanction from the Federation, which may include fines, up to and including game forfeiture. In rare occasions, immediate membership termination may also be considered.

Section 4: Weight Restrictions

The following restrictions have been employed with the Federation as a safety measure to avoid injuries due to oversized ball carriers and receivers on the lowest age division levels. Most of the applicable players are 1st time players and may be vulnerable to oversized ball carriers.

Definitions & Provisions

1. Ball Carrier - Players who may, through normal play, catch, carry, and/or advance the ball while in play. Only eligible offensive ball carriers may lineup in a position that could potentially carry the ball. Ball Carrier weight restrictions only apply to offensive positions, and include only QBs, RBs, WRs
2. Tight-End - Players who must line up tight to the internal linemen and directly on the line of scrimmage.
3. Ball Carrier and Tight-End weight restrictions do not apply to any defensive positions.
4. Defensive players of any size may recover turnovers and advance the ball, regardless of weight.
5. Punters and Place-Kickers are exempt from the weight restrictions with the exception that any punter and/or place-kicker who are over the ball carrier restriction may not advance (run or pass) the ball in any situation.

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If there is a fumbled snap and such a player recovers the ball while standing, they may not advance the ball in any way.

Position Weight Restrictions

Division	Ball Carrier	Tight End
Freshmen 6U Traditional Division	75.0 lbs.	80.0 lbs.
6U Pure-Age Division	75.0 lbs.	80.0 lbs.
All Other Age Divisions	Unrestricted	Unrestricted

Players meeting the Tight End Weight restriction are not allowed to line up in the back field or at Wide Receiver unless also meeting the Ball Carrier Weight Restrictions.

Section 5: Players Moving Up

1. Players are allowed to move up to the next higher age division under the following provisions:
 - A. This provision only applies to players that are within 1-year of the next upper age division. (For example [traditional], a player must be 10 yrs old to move from the JV/10U division to the Varsity/12U division). (Another example [pure-age], a player must be 10 yrs old to move from the 10U division to the 11U division).
 - B. A player will be able to play up on the next level if granted permission by the Parent and supported by organization's/team's leadership. A waiver must be signed by a Parent & the applicable organization's President.
 - C. Once a player has been registered to play on the next higher level he/she will be unable to move down to a lower level for his/her remaining tenure in the Federation.

Section 6: Dual Participation

All 12U and 13U Players are allowed to participate on their middle school football teams simultaneously while playing youth football within the Federation.

Article II: Equipment and Uniforms

Section 1: Mandatory Equipment

Each player must have the following minimum equipment:

1. National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) approved helmet and shoulder pads.
2. Football pants with thigh, hip, tail (butt), and knee pads.
3. Game Jersey issued by Team/Organization (no duplicate jersey numbers on the field at the same time nor is switching jerseys allowed).

Helmets must include a proper facemask, chin strap, and mouth piece with strap. Face masks must be made of molded plastic with rounded edges. Players must use rubber cleats.

Prescription eyewear or protective eye gear shall only be worn if constructed with a non-shattering material or contact lenses. Clear or colored visors may be worn by players only if player eyes can be clearly seen by game officials and sideline personnel. Dark visors require a prescription from a duly licensed physician, optometrist, or ophthalmologist.

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Section 2: Prohibited Equipment / Items

1. Metal screw-in cleats and steel spikes are strictly prohibited. Violations of this rule can result in a 15-yard personal foul penalty and/or suspension from game play.
2. The use of “stickum”, grease, oils, or other slippery substance is strictly prohibited from use on any part of the uniform or person of a player. Violations of this rule can result in a 15-yard personal foul penalty and/or suspension from game play for each occurrence noted.
3. Coach-to-Player headset communications are ALLOWED offensively and defensively to only one player on-field at a time.

Section 3: Team Uniforms

Teams should choose colored jerseys (non-white) that will appropriately distinguish them from any other team’s jersey color. Teams may have white jerseys if two jerseys (one white, one colored) are available for the team. Resolutions should be made by the Federation's Executive Board. Commercial logos and/or signs are allowed on team jerseys. Player names on the back of jerseys must be the player’s legal name or alternative name in the event of a name change (typically occurs due to a divorce or other family matter). Nicknames are NOT allowed.

All team staff (Presidents, Coaches, Team Moms, etc.), who need to be on the sidelines, must wear an appropriate team uniform (including a team shirt and league badge) that is distinguishable from all other attendees. No street clothes shall be permitted. [Exception: Team members also serving as Federation officials]

Section 4: Official Game Balls

All game balls must be made by Wilson or Nike, and be made of leather or composite leather. Rubber balls are not permitted under any circumstances. The usage of an illegal ball may result in game forfeiture and/or fines.

Effective for the 2023 Fall Season, all game balls must be made by Wilson or Nike, and be made of leather only.

AGE DIVISION	Game Ball Size
Traditional Freshmen (6U) and Sophomore (8U)	Wilson K-2 or Nike Pee Wee
Traditional Jr. Varsity (10U)	Wilson TDJ or Nike Junior
Traditional Varsity (12U)	Wilson TDJ or Nike Junior (Optional Wilson TDY / Nike Youth)
Pure-Age 6U, 7U, and 8U	Wilson K-2 or Nike Pee Wee
Pure-Age 9U and 10U	Wilson TDJ or Nike Junior
Pure-Age 11U and 12U	Wilson TDJ or Nike Junior (Optional Wilson TDY / Nike Youth)
Sr. Varsity (13U)	Wilson TDY or Nike Youth

- Any traditional varsity or pure-age 11U/12U team may optionally use a bigger Wilson TDY football while in possession of the ball (on offense).
- No other footballs are authorized for play in the Federation. All game balls must be presented to the referees prior to the start of game play for inspection.

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Article III: Divisions of Play

The Youth Football Federation has developed a program to better fit the needs of new, emerging, and developing organizations/teams, as well as experienced, existing teams. We have expanded our football program by organizing two distinct conferences of play, our Traditional Conference and our Pure-Age Conference. Both Conferences will have their own playoff system and championship events at the end of the season.

Section 1: Traditional Conference

Our Traditional Conference is structured for existing organizations and teams as well as new member organizations that are competitive and developing within the “traditional” youth football age divisions.

Structure:	Four (4) Age Divisions Freshmen (6U), Sophomore (8U), Jr.Varsity (10U), and Varsity (12U)
Age Determination:	July 31st
Org/Team Criteria:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expectation of 80-100 players total.• Must have all four (4) traditional age division teams. [Exceptions granted by the Commissioner only.]
National Affiliation:	Champions receive an automatic bid to the UYFL National Championship Tournament or other selected national affiliate.

Any circumstances that warrant immediate modifications will be addressed by the Federation Commissioner.

Sub-Section 1A: Division I (Traditional)

Division I is structured for existing member organizations/teams and new member organizations that are considered competitively strong on several age division levels. Some individuals have used the term “elite” to describe these organizations, but it applies only to the competition level.

Structure:	Two Conferences - American & National Balanced (Competitor Strength & Geographically)
Team Criteria:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing organization/team, contending on multiple levels, minimum 80 players total.• New organization/team that is formed from an existing & competitive team and a substantial number of players are moving to the new team.
Transition to Division II:	Any organization that cannot exhibit a sufficient level of competitiveness on most levels, and/or cannot maintain the minimum number of total players may be considered to move to Division II.
Playoffs:	4 Playoff Teams per Conference (each age division) (Total 8 Playoff Teams) Championship Game → Federation Super Bowl (formerly Houston Metropolitan Area Championship)

Any circumstances that warrant immediate modifications will be addressed by the Federation Commissioner.

Sub-Section 1B: Division II (Traditional)

Division II is structured for new and emerging member organizations/teams, as well as organizations/teams that are more developmental in nature as a result of a limited pool of athletes in which to pull from in their operational areas. This will provide an opportunity for those participants to have an increased level of success on the field.

Structure:	No Separate Conferences (unless there are more than 10 teams/organizations in the Division)
Team Criteria:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New organization/team, never operated competitively.• New or existing organization/team that is set in an area that is not dense in available athletes.
Transition to Division I:	Any organization that exhibits a high-level of competitiveness on all levels may be considered to move to Division I. Any organization/team that has more than two of its levels make it to the championship game shall be considered to move to Division I.
Playoffs:	6-8 Playoff Teams Championship Game → Bayou City Bowl

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Any circumstances that warrant immediate modifications will be addressed by the Federation Commissioner.

Section 2: Pure-Age Conference

Our Pure-Age Conference is structured for organizations/teams that can support the demands of having seven different age divisions. This conference is structured to better fit the landscape of most national championship events held across the country.

Structure:	Seven (7) Age Divisions 6U, 7U, 8U, 9U, 10U, 11U, and 12U 13U Optional Division
Age Determination:	July 1 st
Org/Team Criteria:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expectation of 140-180 players total.• Must have all seven (7) pure-age division teams. [Exceptions granted by the Commissioner only.]• A mix of individual teams can be accepted to play on the same game schedule together.
National Affiliation:	Champions receive an invitation to the YNC National Championship Tournament.

- *Divisions of play are subject to be adjusted under extraneous situations.*
- *All Age Divisions are required for organizational participation OR include individual teams filling in the missing slots. This is in support of ensuring all teams have a full season. Exceptions may be granted by the Federation Commissioner ONLY.*
- *Organizations may participate in the event that additional teams can be acquired to fill any missing age divisions (Pure-Age Conference Only).*
- Any circumstances that warrant immediate modifications will be addressed by the Federation Commissioner.

As of 2021, the Federation’s Governance Council granted the Commissioner the authority to determine the playing structure as needed as the league grows or contracts without needing another vote of the Governance Council to modify the Official Game Playing Rules.

Section 3: Flag Conference

Our new Flag Conference is structured for organizations/teams to have some level of game experience and to keep younger players within their organizations. This is an “unofficial” division of play structured for players ages 4 to 5 years old only. Games would likely be played during the week at central locations. Be advised that a separate Playing Rules Document for this division will be developed and maintained by the Federation.

Article IV: Practice Guidelines

The Federation has limited policies regarding team practice sessions. New Practice Guidelines are going into effect with the 2022 season to accommodate the many new pre-season competition events and tournaments that are happening as early as June/July.

The following guidelines are in effect for Federation Members/Teams:

- Spring Camps may start as early as March 1st on weekends only.
- Team Practice Sessions may begin as early as June 1st.
- All member teams may operate the structure of their practice sessions at their discretion. The Youth Football Federation will no longer mandate any other practice restrictions, including the start of full-contact practice.

With this updated practice guideline, the Federation still encourages all member teams to remain cognizant of safe and reasonable practices within their organizations. All players should have a reasonable amount of conditioning time and receive proper coaching to prepare for any full-contact practice sessions or scrimmages.

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Article V: Game Play

Section 1: Scheduling & Length

All regular season and playoff games shall be played on a Saturday or Sunday, unless otherwise required to make up games.

The regular season schedule shall be a minimum of 8 games, and a maximum of 10 games for all divisions. An Opening Day/Jamboree Game, if played, shall not count as a regular season game. Games postponed due to inclement weather or emergency situation such as an approaching hurricane, tropical storm, or terrorist alert conditions shall be rescheduled or cancelled by the Federation Commissioner.

All regular season and playoff games will consist of four equal quarters. Game times and length for each division shall be as follows:

Game Times	Quarter	Divisions
10:00AM to 11:30AM	8 Mins	6U Traditional
11:30AM to 1:00PM	8 Mins	8U Traditional
1:00PM to 3:00PM	10 Mins	10U Traditional
3:00PM to 5:00PM	10 Mins	12U Traditional
5:00PM to 7:00PM	10 Mins	13U Optional

Game Times	Quarter	Divisions
9:00AM to 10:30AM	8 Mins	6U Pure Age
10:30AM to 12:00PM	8 Mins	7U Pure Age
12:00PM to 1:30PM	8 Mins	8U Pure Age
1:30PM to 3:00PM	8 Mins	9U Pure Age
3:00PM to 5:00PM	10 Mins	10U Pure Age
5:00PM to 7:00PM	10 Mins	11U Pure Age
7:00PM to 9:00PM	10 Mins	12U Pure Age

- Halftime breaks shall be equal to the quarter length for each division.
- The Federation Commissioner may adjust game times as warranted by factors known and/or unknown, such as competing events, special events, holidays, local activities, etc. All game times will be published on the YFF Game Schedule.
- *13U Games may optionally be held on Sundays at an available field, hosted by the Federation or by a participating member team.*

Section 2: Game Officials

Licensed adult officials will be provided by the Federation to officiate all League games. During all games, the Referee or Head Official will have the authority over all actions on the playing field, including the sidelines. Their decisions will be binding to all concerned and they will have final authority. The officials may take required action, including ejection of persons from the game or stadium area. A Federation representative and/or security shall carry out the removal decisions of the officials.

Section 3: Authorized Sideline Personnel

The following personnel will be allowed on the sidelines during games:

1. **Coaches and Staff:** Each team is allotted a total of twelve (12) adults and a maximum of three (3) minors (ages 9+ years old). These persons must be serving in the capacity of coach, team mom, medic, and/or water person.
2. **Cheerleaders and Staff:** All cheerleaders and staff are permitted on the sidelines, however should take all reasonable steps and precautions against interfering with game play and avoiding potential injury.
3. **Chain Crew:** Chain crew members are required to be 13+ years old. The visiting team must furnish two (2) people, and the home team must provide one (1) person to operate the chains and down markers along the sidelines. Chain crew members are not permitted to use a mobile phone, Bluetooth earpieces, or other communication devices or send any type of hand gestures while working the chains. Additionally, chain crew members are not permitted to wear headphones or earpieces of any kind. Any unsportsmanlike conduct by any member of the chain crew will result in a penalty of fifteen (15) yards against the offending team.

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Payments to chain crew members are optional and at the discretion of the affected organization Presidents. EACH ORGANIZATION/TEAM MUST SOLICIT AND PROVIDE CHAIN CREW VOLUNTEERS. CHAIN CREW MEMBERS WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO BE REGISTERED AS STAFF MEMBERS.

4. **Press:** Any person(s) with press credentials may enter the sideline area. All press must be in an area that will not interfere with the coaches, players, or game officials.
5. **Administration:** The President/CEO (top organization/team leader) of each organization/team.

Section 4: Federation-Specific Playing Rules

1. Clock Operations

- A. **Game Clock:** The game clock shall operate as a normal football game clock in accordance with NCAA regulations regarding clock operations.
- B. **Play Clock:** All Divisions - 30-seconds after ball set. The new NCAA rule in 2018 implementing a 40-second play clock after TDs, PATs, FGs, and after kickoffs will NOT be used by the Federation.
- C. **Clock Stoppage:** The clock will be stopped for timeouts, penalties, and injuries. The clock will also be stopped for positioning the ball and player lineup for a kickoff or free kick after a score. The game officials may call an officials timeout at their discretion.

2. Kicking/Punting Game

- A. **Kickoffs:** All divisions will kick-off from the 40-yard line, with the receiving team lined up on or on the opposite side of the 50-yard line. ALL KICKOFFS SHALL BE EXECUTED BY THE KICKING TEAM USING THE RECEIVING TEAM'S ELIGIBLE GAME BALL.

FAIR CATCHES ON KICKOFFS: The new NCAA Rule in 2018 regarding fair catches is NOT in effect. Fair Catches made in the field of play shall be placed at the spot. Fair Catches within the end zone area shall be placed at the 25-yard line.

- B. **Punting/Field Goal Kicking:** Punting is not mandatory for any division under any circumstances. No defensive player is allowed to line up directly over the long snapper. Players may line up in the gaps around the center and may engage the center.

On punting/field goal situations, the offensive team must still satisfy normal offensive positioning rules (minimum 7 on the line, maximum 4 in the backfield), as the offense can be planning a fake punt, so normal ball carrier and TE restrictions remain in effect and should be enforced as written regarding ball carriers and tight ends.

- C. **Kickoffs - 6U Division Only:** Kickoffs to be conducted normally at the start of the game and at the start of the 2nd half. Otherwise, the ball will be simply placed at the 30 yard line. Regulation play regarding kickoffs will be in effect for the 4th quarter.
- D. **Punting - 6U Division Only:** At all times during game play, the offensive team has the option of going for it, punting, or having the ball placed 30 yards downfield. In the event that the resultant ball placement ends up within the defender's 10-yard line or beyond the goal line, the ball shall be placed at the 10-yard line.

AGE DIVISION	Must Announce Intent to Punt/Kick	Fakes Allowed	Rushing Allowed
6U, 7U, and 8U Divisions	Yes	Not Allowed	Not Allowed
9U, 10U, 11U, and 12U Divisions	No	Allowed	Allowed
13U Division	No	Allowed	Allowed

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- E. **Protected Kicks/Punts - 6U, 7U, and 8U Divisions only:** During all protected kicks, including field goals, PATs, and punts, there will be a time allotment of seven (7) seconds to get the kick off after the snap from center. Afterward the ball will be blown dead. The referee must visibly count-off the seven (7) seconds. Additionally, all snaps must be executed from a typical kicking or punting formation (3-8 yards between center and holder or punter).
3. **Extra Points (PAT):** The ball will be placed on the 3-yard line.
- A. Extra points will be awarded as follows:
- Kick through the uprights - 2 points
 - Run beyond the goal line - 1 point (includes a pass in the field of play and run into the end zone)
 - Pass into the end zone - 2 points
- B. **6U, 7U, and 8U** divisions may not rush the kicker in the event a kick attempt is made. No fake kicks are allowed.
- C. **9U, 10U, 11U, 12U, and 13U** divisions may rush the kicker in the event a kick attempt is made. Fake kicks are allowed.
- D. No defensive player is allowed to line up directly over the long snapper. Players may line up in the gaps around the center and may engage the center.
4. **Overtime:** Overtime is not allowed during any type of pre-season/exhibition game. Overtime is REQUIRED during any type of regular season or post-season game, and will be conducted as follows:
- A. Each overtime period will provide an offensive opportunity for each team. There are no provisions for sudden-death overtime.
- B. The ball will be placed at the 15-yard line.
- C. Each team will have four (4) downs to score. No first downs can be earned, other than by a personal foul penalty against the Defensive team.
- D. On an accepted penalty against the Defense, the Offensive team shall be able to replay the down.
- E. In the event of a turnover (interception or fumble), the ball shall be called dead, and not returnable.
- F. The team with the most points at the conclusion of any overtime period will be the winner of the game.
5. **On-Field Coaches:** Only the 6U Division may have coaches on the field during game play. Each team is allowed two (2) coaches on the field. The coaches on the field are restricted from interfering with or physically maneuvering any player after the offensive huddle is broken. In the event an official determines that a coach interferes with the normal play of the game, that team will be subject to an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty of fifteen (15) yards. If any team receives three such infractions during the course of one game, the Head Coach will be removed from the field of play and assessed another penalty. There are no provisions to replace the Head Coach on the field of play during the applicable game.

All on-field coaches must remain behind the active play to avoid confusing or causing an intimidating situation for players. Coaches on the offensive side of the ball must stand at least 10 yards behind the line of scrimmage and may not run behind or with players as play progresses. If a long-gaining play is in process, the offensive coaches may only proceed down the field at least 20 yards behind the ball, AND not between or next to any defensive player and the ball. Coaches on the defensive side of the ball must stand at least 15 yards behind the line of scrimmage. Defensive coaches are responsible for staying out of the path of play and must remain at least 20 yards behind the ball on all long-gaining plays.



6. **Fields:** Games will be played on a regulation football field. The only provision for non-use of a regulation football field depends on availability, and the field must be a minimum of 80 yards long x 40 yards wide.
7. **Team Introductions:** Team introductions are only permitted by a team at the beginning of their Homecoming game or the beginning of each post-season game.
8. **Minimum Play Rule:** The Federation will NOT enforce any minimum play rule or standard. It is, however, desirable that each and every child plays during each game. As a guideline, each player should play a minimum number of plays based on the total number of players on the team roster. Special teams (Kickoff & Kick Return) plays count toward this guideline. Non-compliance will not result in fines, game forfeitures, or any other sanctions from the Federation.
9. **Other General Playing Rules:**
 - A. **BLOCKS BELOW THE WAIST** - Per the new NCAA rule change in 2018, The offense will not be allowed to block below the waist when the block occurs more than 5 yards beyond the line of scrimmage. Additionally, other than the interior linemen, all blocks below the waist must be from the front.
 - B. **LEAPING** - Per the new NCAA rule change in 2018, it is a violation to leap over any player on all kicking plays (punts, field goal attempts, and extra point kick attempts).
 - C. **PENALTY ENFORCEMENT ON FG & XPs** - Per the new NCAA rule change in 2018, on successful field goals, penalty enforcement will be the same as on made extra points. Namely, all personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls by the defending team will have the option to be enforced on the ensuing kickoff.
 - D. Players must enter and exit the field between the 20-yard lines.
 - E. Coaches and Staff are required to stay between the 25-yard lines during game play.
 - F. All coaches and other personnel are prohibited from entering the field of play beyond the numbers on the field or beyond 10 yards of the sideline during timeouts or injury breaks. The only exceptions shall be coaches caring for an injured player [after notified by officials] and the 6U Division on-field coaches.
 - G. All teams must have at least 11 players on the field to play a scheduled game. If the required number of players is not available within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, the offending team will forfeit the game.
 - H. In the 6U Division, it is not allowed to line up a nose guard directly over the offensive center. Any defensive formations with a nose guard in the 6U Division must line up the nose guard to either side of the offensive center with a minimum of 1-2 feet in distance. A linebacker or defensive back may line up directly over the center position, but must be a minimum of 3 yards off the line of scrimmage.
 - I. Team rosters should be available from the Federation's registration/weigh-in process. Teams are not required to provide a roster prior to the game, however, teams may want to provide an updated roster if a player is not active for the game due to injury or other personal issues that may prevent him/her from participating on a given game day.
 - J. Federation Executive Board Members, OGC Members, or game officials may call a game if severe weather conditions persist for an extended period of time. The general guideline is that games will proceed on schedule in the event of rain, however, if lightning is seen in the area, all on-field activities will be halted (temporarily (30 mins) until any dangerous conditions pass or for the remainder of the game/event).



10. **Mercy Rule:** At any time in the 4th quarter of any regular or post-season game, if there is a difference in score of 40 points or more, the game clock shall run continuously through the end of the game. The game clock will only be stopped for timeouts and player injuries.

Section 5: Records & Reporting

Game scores should be reported by the Owner/CEO/President of the home team (or designate) to the Federation Commissioner or other designated Federation official. Scores should be reported via text message or e-mail immediately after the conclusion of each game (generally within 15 minutes of the game ending).

Article VI: Post Season / Standings

Section 1: Standings

All league standings (all divisions) will be maintained by the League office and posted on the League's website. Standings will be maintained for each conference and/or division separately.

Section 2: Playoffs and Seeding

The following will apply for each division regarding the playoffs:

1. Federation Football Championships will be determined by a playoff of the top six (6) or eight (8) teams in each conference from each age division. The total number of playoff teams will be determined by the Federation Commissioner, based on the number of teams in the league, any special circumstances, and available funding.
2. Playoff seeds will be determined at the end of the regular season play in the following precedence:
 - o Best Conference Record (Divisional Record if Divisions) (as determined by winning percentage)
 - o Head-to-Head regular season match-up(s) of tied teams (may include more than two teams), as determined by winning percentage
 - o Best overall record (as determined by winning percentage)
 - o Tie-Breaker - Coin Flip
3. Playoff Brackets will be set as determined by the Federation Commissioner.

Section 3: Post-Season Competition - Regional, State, National & Open Tournaments

The Federation shall designate representatives to officially sanctioned Regional, State, and National Championship competitions. The designated representatives may be the Champions or Runner-Ups from each age division and/or an All-Star team as designated by the Commissioner's Office.

The Federation shall determine any open events we may participate in and support. Any restrictions shall be determined at an appropriate time during/after the regular season.

Article VII: Conduct & Sportsmanship

Section 1: Use of Tobacco and Alcohol

Smoking, chewing tobacco, drinking alcohol and/or use of illegal drugs by anyone on the sidelines, stands, and/or facility parking areas is strictly prohibited. Anyone under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol may be suspended from all Federation activities until a review and decision by the Executive Board.



Section 2: Physical Altercations

1. Anyone involved in a physical altercation on/near the playing field shall be subject to immediate ejection from the field and/or stadium.
2. All altercations are subject to review by the Federation officials, who may levy fines and other penalties up to and including lifetime bans from Federation activities.
3. Anyone involved in an altercation due to self-defensive means only to avoid injury from an attack or involved in attempting to mitigate the issues may be exempt from this rule if evidenced by notable parties or Federation officials.
4. These same provisions shall also apply to persons in the stands and other areas of the facility.
5. "In the event of fighting, each incident will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Commissioner's office, and penalties will be harsh for at-fault parties."

Section 3: Abusive Language & Gestures

1. No coach, player, or spectator shall use abusive language toward other coaches, players or officials or should they indulge in any conduct, which might incite players or spectators against officials.
2. No coach, player, or spectator shall use gestures or engage in acts that provoke ill will; Penalties will be determined at the discretion of the officials. They have the option to call the game and offenders will have lost the game. Violators will also be subject to penalties imposed by the Federation Executive Board.

Section 4: Threats

1. Any and all individuals on any property where Federation activities are scheduled and/or occurring are prohibited from making any threat of physical harm.
2. Anyone threatening any Federation official, coaches, parents, or kids with firearms or any other lethal weapons shall be permanently banned from the Federation. No appeals shall be granted on this type of issue.
3. The Federation maintains a ZERO-TOLERANCE for the unlawful possession and/or use of firearms and other lethal weapons during Federation sponsored events and activities.

Section 5: Use of Enhancements

1. The use of energy enhancing drinks or supplements are strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to substances containing high amounts of caffeine and/or herbal additives to increase performance or endurance.
2. Coaches found to be encouraging such use or allowing use of such substances are subject to immediate and/or permanent expulsion from Federation activities.

Section 6: Use of Loud Music, Noise, Etc.

Loud music/noise from DJs, bands, drumlines, other amplified music, etc. shall be restricted to periods in which there is a break in play, for example, during a timeout for any reason and generally when the game clock is not running. However, the restrictions also apply when the game clock is not running AND a team is in a formal huddle, and/or the ball is put into "ready-to-play" by the game referee.

From the NCAA rule book:

"Persons subject to the rules, including bands, shall not create any noise that prohibits a team from hearing its signals (Rule 1-1-6)."



Article VIII: Rules/Document Amendments

Section 1: Reviews

This document shall be reviewed, amended, and/or approved by the Rules Committee, with final ratification for implementation by the Operations Governance Council (OGC) every year prior to the start of the regular season.

Section 2: Amendments

Playing rule changes are proposed, debated, approved, or denied in the meeting of the Federation's Rules Committee. Proposals must be approved through the Rules Committee to be presented to the entire OGC for final consideration and approval at or prior to the July Federation Meeting.

Any proposed amendments outside of the normal review process shall be made in writing or via e-mail to the Federation Commissioner. Such proposals must be submitted allowing a minimum of 14 calendar days prior to a scheduled Federation Meeting for internal League deliberation, discussion, fact-finding, etc. The proposed amendment(s) can be presented, debated, and voted upon at the next meeting. A simple majority vote of the OGC is required for passage of any rule changes as written within this document. The deadline for proposing any playing rule changes is June of the competition year.

The Federation Executive Board retains the right to institute mandates at any time that will carry the force of Rule as if documented within this document. Any such change should involve maintaining the safety of participants, coaches, officials, and parents and/or maintenance of the integrity of the game and Federation standards.

Section 3: Appendixes

New rules may be added or changed via the addition and approval of appendixes to this document with reference. All appendixes to this document are subject to the same reviews, amendments, and approvals as the entire document.

Article IX: Savors Clause

It is not the intent of the Youth Football and Cheer Federation of America, Inc. to violate any laws of the City of Houston, Harris and surrounding counties, the State of Texas, or the United States Government that may conflict with the set rules, laws, and procedures that govern the Federation or any of its activities where rules may deviate for the purpose of fundraising, or other purposes.