

# **New Mexico Young America Football League Rules**

**Approved with Amendments**

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# New Mexico Young America Football League Rules

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>NMYAFL Objectives.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Article I: Organization.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Section 1.    The League	
Section 2.    Divisions	
Section 3.    Districts	
Section 4.    Teams	
<b>Article II: Registration Requirements.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Section 1.    Registration and Team Rosters	
<b>Article III: Players.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Section 1.    Eligibility	
Section 2.    Retention of Eligibility	
Section 3.    Player Agents and Enforcement	
<b>Article IV: Coaches.....</b>	<b>10</b>
Section 1.    Head Coaches	
Section 2.    Team Assignments	
<b>Article V: Schedules.....</b>	<b>12</b>
Section 1.    Practice	
Extras: Safety	
-Lightning Rules	
-Field Conditions	
Section 1.1.  Sanctioned YAFL Camps	
Section 2.    Scrimmages	
Section 3.    Regular Division Schedule	
Section 4.    Playoff Schedule	
Section 5.    Unauthorized Schedule	
<b>Article VI: Equipment.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Section 1.    Cost Effective Equipment Use	
Section 2.    Required Equipment	
Section 3.    Optional Equipment	
Section 4. <b>Optional Player/Team Supplied Equipment</b>	
Section 5.    Altered Equipment	
Section 6.    Lost equipment	
Section 7.    Equipment Return	

## **Article VII: Playing Rules.....17**

- Section 1.** Commissioners
- Section 2.** General Rules
- Section 3.** Seasonal Conference, Playoff Seeds and Tie Breakers
- Section 4.** Post Season Games and Traveling Teams

## **Article VIII: Financial Issues.....23**

- Section 1.** Solicitations
- Section 2.** Photographers
- Section 3.** Concessions
- Section 4.** Insurance Requirements

## **Article IX: Conduct and Guidance.....25 for NMYAFL Coaches**

### **Ethics for Coaches**

- Section 1.** No Alcohol, Tobacco, or Drugs
- Section 2.** No Profanity
- Section 3.** No Financial Benefits
- Section 4.** If barred/suspended no YAFL activities
- Section 5.** Improper Conduct by Coaches
- Section 6.** Complaints of Coaches Conduct will be in Writing
- Section 7.** Teams will be represented at Coaches Council Meetings
- Section 8.** 10% Rule (Players who quit)
- Section 9.** Coaches Selection Committee Rulings  
may be appealed to BOD
- Section 10.** Appeal Procedures/Hearings/Grievances

## **Article X: Acts of Suspension/Disbarment.....29**

- Section 1.** List of Acts for Suspension/Disbarment

## **Article XI: Amendments.....30**

### **Appendixes:**

- A. Age and Weight Chart .....31**
- B. Coach's Code of Conduct and Ethics.....32**
- C. Sportsmanship Policy .....34**
- D. Zero Tolerance Policy .....36**
- E. Coaches Selection Cmt Operating and Coach Guidelines.....38**
- F. NMYAFL Rules and Sanctions.....44**
- G. NMYAFL 8 Man Football Rules.....52**
- H. NMYAFL Flag Football Rules .....59**
- I. Official's Signals.....70**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The following rules, regulations and appendixes are required to be followed and complied with by all Board of Director (BOD) members, staff, coaches, parents, players, league officials and anyone representing or participating in any league activity.

## **NMYAFL OBJECTIVES**

The objectives and purposes, for which this New Mexico Young America Football League (NMYAFL) is formed, are as follows:

- To engage in teaching and encouraging participation in the sport of American football and cheerleading.
- To assist in combating juvenile delinquency by promoting the physical and emotional well-being of young people by interesting them in participating in the sport of American football and cheerleading.
- To further SPORTSMANSHIP and the importance of physical activity in their lives.
- To organize and manage competitive games and exhibits.

Every effort is to be made to apply pressure to every player to perform and excel in their respective classroom. While playing time restrictions with parents' written consent may be acceptable, each player, parent and coach should be working towards the goal of hard work and discipline of the child in the classroom. Education of our children is a priority, and once the player reaches NMAA participation levels, it is a rule that minimum academic performance be realized. Let's assist in developing good habits, and positively affect these great young minds as well.

## **ARTICLE I: ORGANIZATION**

### **Section 1. The League**

The League is the basic unit of organization and is the highest authority. A league is the instrument through which team memberships are chartered by NMYAFL Headquarters. A league when applying for a charter must prepare and submit to NMYAFL Headquarters a map of the area in which the league operates and upon which the boundaries of the league have been drawn. When incorporating, a league must prepare and submit to NMYAFL a constitution and by-laws consistent with all rules, regulations and policies of NMYAFL. A league is comprised of lower echelons.

### **Section 2. Divisions**

NMYAFL is divided into seven distinct divisions, Mite, Pee Wee, Rookie, Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Varsity/Senior.

### **Section 3. Districts**

All players should be assigned to a team in the division, in the high school district in which the player resides at the time of registration or January 1 of the current year, whichever is later. Players that did not participate in NMYAFL the previous fall season may be assigned to the team of their choice subject to availability.

Returning fall football players may choose to change teams under the following guidelines:

- The team registration process must be complete
- Player must be registered for the current fall season before the request to move will be accepted
- Out of District Transfer Request forms must be completed and submitted at the NMYAFL Office
- The requested team must have space to allow your transfer
- Must be moving from and to an existing team from the prior season with a minimum number of players as determined by the BOD
- Transfer requests will be considered until the close of business on April 30th
- A request is not a guarantee
- Request must be approved before the move will be made

### **Section 4. Teams**

- a. Teams shall be assigned to districts in accordance with guidance established by the BOD.
- b. All NMYAFL districts shall be identical to the established high school districts. As such, all teams in a district shall have the same name and colors as the high school district. In the event two or more teams are established in a single high school district, the Executive Director (ED) shall designate the name and colors of each additional team.
- c. Each team shall have at least one of the following Team Mother/Team Father, Team Coordinator/Manager and any other representative required by the League. The names of these people will be provided to the League by completing the online contact form and must submit to and pass the league background check. Additionally, these persons must be issued a badge by the NMYAFL office.
- d. All teams are required to have at least one parent meeting with the Head Coach and assistants before the first practice. The Head Coach is required to discuss all NMYAFL rules and policies included in the League Rules at the parents meeting. The Head Coach shall also distribute the League Rules and Regulations and any other policy handout, as may be determined by NMYAFL, at the first parents meeting.
- e. All teams shall have a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 23 players. A team may be expanded at the league's discretion.
- f. If a team in any division does not have the minimum number of players required to form a team, then the League, at its sole discretion on a day or various days designated as Team Consolidation Day, may distribute the players registered in said district to other teams in other districts within the same division. Team Consolidation Day shall be determined solely by the President or his designee.
- g. If a team in any division has more than 23 players, those players added to the roster after 23 may be used to create an expansion team in that division. This is at the sole discretion of the League. The

League will make every attempt to keep a player in his neighborhood, residential area and high school district; however, the League cannot guarantee this.

## **ARTICLE II: REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Section 1. Registration and Team Rosters**

A player shall not be eligible to play in a regular season game until he/she has completed the registration requirements.

Registration consists of the following:

- a. Valid proof of age/Birth Certificate and a valid proof of current residency.
- b. Full payment of registration fee or satisfactory payment as approved by the League.
- c. Completed required weigh-in.
- d. Release signed by parent/guardian and player.
- e. The BOD shall establish registration dates.
- f. The League makes all decisions regarding player assignments to teams.
- g. Any registration collected by any coach shall be submitted to the league as soon as possible.

\* NOTE \* All cheerleading teams must be registered and affiliated with the Young America Cheerleaders. Non-approved youth cheerleading teams may not coordinate or perform at NMYAFL/YAC events or games.

## **ARTICLE III: PLAYERS**

### **Section 1. Eligibility**

In order to be certified on a team roster, a player shall qualify as a candidate under these eligibility requirements. No player shall play in a regular season game until he/she has been properly certified.

- a. Parental Consent. A player shall furnish a written release and statement of consent from his/her parents or legal guardian (signature of parent/guardian on the Registration Form fulfills this requirement).
- b. Age Requirements. A player shall be eligible for any Division in which he/she can qualify. A player's eligibility by division shall be determined by the age of the player on August 31<sup>st</sup>.
- c. A player shall have attained a minimum age as specified in Appendix A.
- d. A player who attained the age of fifteen on or before August 31<sup>st</sup> of the current calendar year and/or is in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade or higher will not be eligible to participate with NMYAFL.
- e. Weight Requirements.  
Spring and Fall tackle players must weigh-in at the time of equipment issue or as specified by the BOD. The official weight will be the weight recorded by the League at equipment issue, or other time as the league may determine (BOD). An appointed League member will conduct all weigh-ins. Coaches will not be allowed to weigh in players assigned to their team. Players will be moved up or down a division if their weight is within the weights listed in the NMYAFL Age/Weight Divisions Chart (see Appendix A).
- f. Residency Requirements.  
All players should be assigned to a team in the high school district in which the player resides at the time of registration. Exception: those players meeting Article I, Section 3. Should a registered player provide proof (prior to start of season) or change of address in accordance with applicable school district rules, the child may be moved to new team, as allowed by the League taking into consideration registration date, registration number, verification of address change as per the Albuquerque Public School guidelines on transfers.
  - a. All players shall provide the League with proof of their correct place of residency in order to satisfy the above requirement.
- g. Waive Up.  
A player may waive up into a higher age division. The Head Coach of the team receiving the waived player, the parents of the waived player and the league must all approve the waived player in writing. Thirteen-year-old players who do not meet the minimum weight requirement may be waived up ONLY with written permission by head coach, parent or guardian of child and the League. Failure by head coach to allow child to play up cannot be appealed by parent. All fourteen year olds must play in the Senior Division unless otherwise placed by a Player Agent.
- h. Waive Down.  
A player who is moved up due to weight or any player who may not possess the needed athletic ability may later be evaluated down upon request and evaluation by an appointed league official. Players are evaluated no sooner than the second day in pads. A representative appointed by the President will be assigned to evaluate the player in question. Request for evaluation shall be either in writing, email, or facsimile and proof that the parent/guardian has been notified of this request is required. Having an evaluation does not guarantee placement down, and several evaluations may be necessary to determine whether or not the player should be moved down. Evaluations that result in a waiver down are to be in writing and are good for current season only. Written documentation must be kept in league file, as well as head coach file, with evaluator's report. Challenges to any player waived down shall be handled by President of the league on a case by case basis with the decision reported to the BOD. There are no appeals in this matter.

## **Section 2. Retention of Eligibility**

Once certified on a team roster, a registered player shall meet the following requirements in order to retain eligibility: Retain parental consent, maintain sound physical condition, and have properly completed a Player Registration Form, and consideration paid in full.

Protected Player Status. When a player is moved out of the district where the player lives for purposes of consolidation, that player is then considered to be a 'protected player' on that team. A 'protected player' during the following year then may choose to register onto the team he was consolidated onto, or he may delay registration until after the team registration period thereby forfeiting his protected player status. Once his protected player status is forfeit he may or may not be able to play on his previous season's team depending on space available but he does gain the opportunity to request an Out of District transfer in accordance with the guidelines in Article I, Section 3. This ability is based on their registration number which may or may not subject that player to further consolidation, as our league operates on a first come first serve basis.

## **Section 3. Player Agents and Enforcement**

- a. The President of NMYAFL may appoint a Player Agent or other League Representative in order to determine player eligibility and enforce eligibility rules. The player agent or other authorized League Representative shall be responsible for registering and certifying players.
- b. The Player Agent or League Representative may receive and investigate all complaints. The Player Agent or League Representative shall refer complaints regarding coaches to the CSC and shall report all other complaints directly to the President.
- c. The player eligibility and participation in the League may be revoked by the assigned Player Agent and/or BOD if it is determined that a player has falsified information on the Player Registration Form or documents used to verify the information contained on the registration form.
- d. If the BOD determines after an investigation that the coach of the team in which an ineligible player participated, had prior knowledge of the player's ineligibility, then the BOD shall discipline said coach, up to and including suspension, or dismissal.
- e. If an ineligible player has participated in a game(s), the game(s) in which the ineligible player participated in may be forfeited at the discretion of the BOD taking into consideration the totality of circumstances.
- f. In the event that a player's eligibility has been revoked, there shall be no refund of any fees, registration or otherwise.

## **ARTICLE IV: COACHES**

### **Section 1. Head Coaches**

- a. All first and second year head coaches shall be required to attend the First and Second Year Coaches Orientation Meetings prior to the first practice of the football season.
- b. All head coaches shall be ASEP/PACE/USA Football certified and take CDC/NFHS concussion training before the league will issue them the required Coach's Badge.
- c. All head coaches shall be at least 21 years old prior to the beginning of the first day of practice.
- d. All head coaches shall supply the league with a team sponsorship fee determined by the BOD by the first game of the current season.
- e. The Head Coach is responsible for the following:
  1. Issuing equipment, fitting, correctly and properly, each and every player on his team. Turning in all of his/her team's issued equipment. Equipment turn-in will be conducted by the head coach and his/her assistants at a mandatory final practice or at a time designated by NMYAFL that will be held no later than seven days after the team's final game. The head coach and/or the head coach's assistants are required to be present in order to supervise the return of equipment. If the Head Coach, through his/her best efforts, cannot obtain equipment from a player, the Head Coach is required to advise the NMYAFL staff of the missing equipment. Violations of this rule may result in ineligibility for future NMYAFL participation.
  2. The replacement cost of any equipment which has been altered. (See Article VIII, Section 4), (NMYAFL will advise of replacement cost).
  3. Secure and return, on the first business day, all NMYAFL equipment of players who have quit in order that team records and office records may be kept current and accurate.
  4. Ensure sidelines at practice fields, and games are kept clean and free of all litter.
  5. Help provide the best possible league by participating in the entire League's efforts; attending Coaches Council Clinics, equipment issue/return, etc., and support our Young America Cheerleader (YAC) programs.
  6. Attendance at all Coaches Council Meetings is mandatory, and a representative from each assigned team shall be in attendance.
  7. Responding to NMYAFL upon request or the team's parents with a financial statement weekly and upon request. A financial statement consists of a balance sheet, receipts of what has been purchased for the players, and past and current bank statements and copies of sponsorship monies donated to the team. The Football Head Coach is responsible for both football and cheerleading financials.
  8. Notifying the league immediately if any improper or suspicious financial activity is discovered, or suspected.
  9. Notifying the league of any contact information changes, email address changes, all phone number changes. All coaches must be able to be contacted by phone and email.
  10. Ensure that all coaches pass the background check and obtain badges to signify they have complied. Head coaches will also ensure that Team Moms/Dads also pass the background check. All individuals who have direct contact with players/cheerleaders must possess and display their badge to any League official whenever requested. Badges must be displayed in the bench area.
  11. All Head Football Coaches must submit a candidate for the team cheerleading head coach as part of their Coach Application. All Head Cheer Coaches will go through the YAC Coaches Council selection process. Head football coaches are required to attend all YAC Cheerleading Competitions with all the coaches and players. Coaches who fail to attend cheer competitions will be subject to penalties per the CSC.
  12. The Head Coach must submit game reports by Tuesday each week following a game.
- f. No head coach will be allowed to coach for more than one team during any NMYAFL season.

## **Section 2. Team Assignments**

- a. The Coaches Selection Committee (CSC) shall select and assign head coaches for each team within the League taking into consideration prior coaching experience, references, complaints, and any other information which the CSC deems appropriate.
- b. All team assignments are subject to withdrawal for cause by the CSC
- c. Team Assignments to all head coaches are not final until:
  - 1. Team is filled with the minimum number of players.
  - 2. Final approval of the Executive Committee of the BOD.
  - 3. Head Coach passes a criminal background check. (Asst Coaches, Team Moms, Team Dads, Team Managers are required to pass the same background check.)
  - 4. Any team originally assigned to a returning NMYAFL head coach who is not USA Football certified on or before the appropriate date may be reassigned to a USA Football certified coach at the discretion of the CSC.
- d. Cost is determined annually.
- e. Head Coaches are allowed two out of district coaches on their respective teams. This out of district transfer of coach applies to:
  - 1. Coaches who pass criminal background check and are accepted by receiving head coach.
  - 2. Registration and registration number is valid and conforms to NMYAFL Rules and Regulations.
- f. There is a team lifetime limit of two, out of district transfers, for the head coach of the team under this rule if the head coach does not use his/her personal option. When the Head Coach is assigned to a different team the team lifetime limit starts over. The Executive Director and President must both approve all transfers. There are NO APPEALS

## **ARTICLE V: SCHEDULES**

### **Section 1. Practice**

- a. The first authorized practice session for each season will be as established by the NMYAFL BOD.
- b. **First week of the Fall Season practice restrictions:**
  - 1) During the first two days of practice, helmets, pants with pads and mouthpieces are the only issued equipment permitted to be worn by the players. No other issued equipment shall be worn by the players during the first three days of practice. Physical contact (hitting) between players shall not be permitted during this period.
  - 2) On the third day of practice the players may wear full pads, however, physical contact (hitting) between players shall not be permitted.
  - 3) Contact between players in pads may commence only on the fourth day of practice.
- c. Other practice guidance:  
Any and all players added to the roster or arriving after the first day of practice shall not participate in full contact until their third day, or at the coach's discretion, with the exception of first year players.
- e. All Players participating in physical contact will be required to wear the protective equipment specified in these rules. Non-Registered players are not allowed to be involved in practice.
- f. At no time shall a player with pads be allowed to participate in physical contact between players without pads.  
No practice session will exceed two hours in duration and shall end no later than 8:00 P.M. or sundown. Disciplinary sessions are not allowed after the two-hour practice.
- g. The maximum number of practices permitted by the League is as follows:
  - 1) First two weeks - six per week with Sunday off.
  - 2) Third week until end of regular season play four per week.
  - 3) All Divisions four days per week.
  - 4) Playoffs through Championships add one more day (coach's option).
  - 5) Only one practice session per day is permitted.
  - 6) No Sunday practices are allowed without the express consent of the League President or the Executive Director.
- h. A minimum of three team water breaks per practice session are required. Water is not to be withheld for any reason at any time ever by league rule. If water is not available on a practice field or game field, the Head Coach is required to furnish water, or require players to bring their own. Withholding water will not be tolerated, and may subject a coach to immediate dismissal. During times of high heat index, players shall be allowed to have water at will. Common sense and plenty of water will protect the players in NMYAFL.

- i. Any contact drill or exercise is PROHIBITED if:
  - 1) The players start off directly more than ten yards apart.
  - 2) A player is forced to complete a drill or exercise without an exit.
  - 3) An exercise or drill results in an extension of the player's thigh to an angle of more than 90° for reasons other than stretching (such as duck walk).
  - 4) It requires a player to start with his/her back turned to the other player in a contact drill.
  - 5) It requires the player to put his/her weight on his/her neck in any manner. No neck bridging to stretch neck muscles, at any time.
- j. Practice field rules:
  - 1) Teams will submit a request and receive permission to play at a park of their choosing. Coaches should move practices a few yards each day at each park to prevent overuse of grass.
  - 2) Teams will not park in driveways, one ways, or break traffic laws or rules. Use extreme courtesy at all times.
- k. Lightning Safety (30-30) Rule:

When one or more players (hereinafter "team") have gathered for a practice situation or preparing to enter into a practice situation, and lightning is spotted, a head coach, assistant coach, team official or supervising parent shall count the number of seconds from the time the lightning is seen until thunder is heard. (Flash-Bang Method) If the time elapsed is less than 30 seconds, the practice shall immediately cease and all helmets shall be removed. The team shall find safe and appropriate shelter immediately and remain there for at least 30 minutes. If the lightning has not completely ceased after the 30-minute period a new 30-minute monitoring period must be started. Once a 30-minute monitoring period is started an individual or any part of the team shall not start practice before the expiration of the 30-minute period.
- l. Practice fields are to be examined daily for foreign articles that could harm players or cheerleaders such as needles, glass, rocks, sticks, sharp objects, unclean objects, holes, wires etc.... No team shall practice within 15 yards of a fixed structure such as trees, poles, fences, cars, water hydrants, buildings, walls, sprinklers, chairs, cots or tents. Pertaining to sanctioned games: Tents or chairs at fields, determination shall be by NMYAFL commissioners and/or referees.
- m. No ladders on sidelines. Ladders in end zone safely back ten yards from the playing field or at discretion of a field commissioner. Owners of ladders assume full responsibility for any accidents or issues regarding ladders they bring to fields to film or scout. Fields are to be kept free of trash, water bottles, and after practice dinner trash. Neighbors of parks and fields are to be treated with courtesy and respect at all times.

### **Section 1.1 Sanctioned YAFL Camps (High School Sponsored)**

The BOD defined YAFL camps as High School sponsored/insured camps open to all NMYAFL ages where fundamentals are being taught. Camps must be advertised, in advance and sponsored by the respective high school to comply. Individual Team Camps are strictly forbidden. A team camp is where players, who normally would not get together, meet and work out with coaches or non-coaches to practice, view video, run plays, condition, or chalk talk, or as our rules specify. If a team gets together informally, or with the intent to circumvent the rules or spirit of these rules, the BOD may take action against the Head Coach or team to correct the behavior, subject to the provisions of our rules. Practicing prior to the official published start of the season will not be tolerated. Failure to abide may result in coach being ineligible to coach in NMYAFL and may include forfeiture of games.

### **Section 2. Scrimmages**

- a. One controlled scrimmage is allowed per week with an opponent in the same division. A controlled scrimmage although not a "practice" shall count as one practice session as specified by our rules with the two-hour limit, etc. Driving time does not count. All scrimmages must be held in the same division. Scrimmages between teams from different divisions are strictly prohibited. Notification of scrimmages

must be made no later than 24 hours prior to the scrimmage at the League office. Scrimmages between teams are not practices (but count as a practice) therefore scouting of scrimmages is allowed. Regarding scouting: scripting, filming, and watching another team practice by anyone affiliated by, or to any other head coach for any reason is strictly prohibited. Scouting someone's practice will not be tolerated, and is cause for removal as head coach as well as the person asked, recruited or communicated with to execute such request. The Head Coach is ultimately liable for the conduct of his parents, fans, assistant coaches and players.

- b. Controlled scrimmages may be held on the first Saturday of the season. Notification of what team and when must be made to league office.
- c. Scrimmages may be held on Tuesday or Wednesday. If a team has a bye, that team may practice on that Saturday said team has the bye, no longer than two hours.

### **Section 3. Regular Season Schedule**

- a. The League shall adopt a regular schedule of games for each division, subject to the following requirements:
  - 1. A period of two full days shall elapse between regularly scheduled games for a given team.
  - 2. The regular schedule shall limit a given team to no more than eight regular season games, exclusive of playoffs, championship and post season games. The League reserves the right to add games to schedule.
  - 3. Sunday and night games may be scheduled with the prior approval of the League and any night game must be completed and/or terminated no later than 10:30 P.M.
  - 4. A game that is canceled or terminated for any reason, except forfeiture, prior to completion of half of the game, will be rescheduled at the discretion of the League and shall not count against the maximum number of scheduled games authorized or number of practices allowed. The rescheduled game shall be completed starting where the game left off. If a game is canceled due to weather or other emergency and if such game has completed one half, the game is over and the score is final. Exception is when there is a tie; the game shall be as if it ended in the first half. At the discretion of the League said game will be played from the beginning and completed at earliest available time, notwithstanding the rules.
  - 5. All teams in a given conference must be scheduled to play the same number of conference games. The League reserves the right to add or amend games to schedule or change times whenever needed.

### **Section 4. Playoff Schedule**

The League shall adopt a playoff schedule of games for each division, subject to the provisions of these rules.

### **Section 5. Unauthorized Schedule**

Under no circumstances may a NMYAFL team/affiliate participate in a game or scrimmage game, which is not arranged by, through and/or with the knowledge and consent of the League.

## **ARTICLE VI: EQUIPMENT**

### **Section 1. General**

It is the policy of the League to achieve maximum player protection while maintaining cost effectiveness. As such, the League may spread the higher initial cost of quality equipment over many seasons of reliable wear in an attempt to abide by the League's policy.

### **Section 2. Required Equipment**

Unless otherwise specified herein, all players shall wear the following items at all times during practice sessions and games. The League shall supply the following items:

- Helmet, helmet pads and face guard (must be returned at end of season)
- Shoulder Pads (must be returned at end of season)
- Hip pads and tail bone pad (must be returned at end of season)
- Thigh Pads (must be returned at end of season)
- Knee Pads (must be returned at end of season)
- Chin Strap
- Jersey (game only)
- Pants
- Mouthpiece (All mouthpieces including prescription must be attached to the helmet and must meet the specific requirements of the NFHS Football Rules)

The player shall supply the following:

- Socks
- Shoes (sneakers or shoes with rubber non-detachable cleats) No metal or baseball cleats allowed
- T-shirt must be worn under shoulder pads

### **Section 3. Optional Equipment**

The following items are optional and may be supplied by the player:

- Individual players may purchase and use helmets and shoulder pads of their choice provided they meet the safety standards specified by NFHS and are also individually approved by NMYAFL. The individual approval process is an annual requirement.
- Forearm pads
- Rib pads
- Hand pads
- Elbow pads
- Neck pads
- Athletic supporter and cup

### **Section 4. Optional Player/Team Supplied Equipment**

- Teams may purchase and use helmets in colors other than white. These helmets must meet the safety standards specified by NFHS and be individually approved by NMYAFL. The approval process is an annual requirement. Teams are cautioned that failure to plan for and provide a uniformly colored helmet for each player could result in the suspension of the Head Coach.

### **Section 5. Altered Equipment**

League equipment shall not be altered in any fashion, including helmet painting. Head coaches are financially liable for replacement costs if equipment is altered. All teams will use only those helmet decals that are supplied by the League or those that meet league approval. If any player alters his/her face mask, and does not return helmet in original issued condition, helmet will be accepted and any aftermarket face mask/visors will be forfeited upon return.

### **Section 6. Lost Equipment**

All lost or stolen equipment will be replaced at the player's expense.

**Section 7. Equipment Return**

The Head Coach will collect all equipment following the team's final practice after the team's final NMYAFL sanctioned game, or as deemed necessary at a time determined by the League. It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to make sure that all equipment is returned (see Article IV, Section 1, E). Equipment turn-in will be conducted by the Head Coach and assistants at a mandatory final practice that will be held no later than seven days after the team's final game. The Head Coach or the Head Coach's assistants are required to be present in order to supervise the return of equipment. If the Head Coach, through his/her best efforts, cannot obtain equipment from a player, the Head Coach is required to advise the NMYAFL staff of the missing equipment.

**IMPORTANT**

Parents are ultimately responsible for returning equipment to the League. Collection proceedings will be initiated plus a late fee will be assessed as approved by the BOD if equipment is not returned by December 1st of each year.

## **ARTICLE VII: PLAYING RULES**

### **Section 1. Commissioners**

The President of NMYAFL may appoint Commissioners or other League representatives in order to assist in the enforcement of the playing rules and other rules proscribed herein.

- a. Commissioners or other League representatives may:
  - 1) Assist the President in administration of all rules and regulations.
  - 2) Supervise use of equipment and coaching techniques.
  - 3) Visit practices periodically to determine that all rules and regulations are being followed.
  - 4) Have the authority to designate aides.
  - 5) Maintain records as directed by the BOD.
  - 6) Be bound by the League rules.
  - 7) Receive and log minimum play sheets completed by the League office on Friday before games and deliver the minimum play sheets to head coaches before every game.
  - 8) Ensure coaches police sidelines after their game.
- b. The Commissioner has the authority and the responsibility to see that League rules are upheld and that coaches and other League participants conduct themselves in accordance with NMYAFL League Rules. Board members are automatically commissioners and officials of the League.

### **Section 2. General Rules**

- a. Officials:
  - 1) The League shall arrange for the appearance of two to four qualified officials at each scheduled regular season game when possible. If less than two appear, the game will be postponed until proper number of officials appears or rescheduled at the discretion of the League.
  - 2) Qualified officials should be registered collegiate, high school, junior high school or independent officials.
  - 3) The NMAA Officials Association shall be provided with a current copy of NMYAFL rules and regulations by the League.
  - 4) The League shall decide rate, type and responsibility for the payment of officials.
  - 5) Officials shall provide stopwatches.
  - 6) Four qualified officials and a qualified time-keeper, if possible, will be provided for each playoff and championship game.
  - 7) Head coaches will rate the officials each week. A Board member shall communicate the results to the appropriate official's association contact person.
- b. Participant and Coach Ejection or Disqualification:
  1. Participant Ejection - When a participant is ejected or disqualified from any contest or game for unsportsmanlike conduct by a uniformed game official, that player is automatically suspended from the next contest/game.
  2. Coach Ejection - When a coach is ejected or disqualified from any contest/game for unsportsmanlike conduct by a game official, the coach is required to sit out the next game. Coach's badges will be confiscated by field commissioners upon ejection and verbal notification given to the League President, or his/her designee, within 24 hours of the game. The badge shall be delivered to the League President or his/her designee within 72 hours of the completion of the game. The League President, or his/her designee, shall hold the badge until completion of the prescribed penalty or until the CSC reviews the issue.
  3. There is no appeal of these types of ejections.
- c. Game Ball:
  1. The game ball shall be a good grade of rubber/composite with the following specifications:
  2. Mighty Mite: Mighty Mite Ball
  3. Pee Wee, Rookie: Pee Wee Ball
  4. Freshman, Sophomore Divisions: Junior ball or similar
  5. Junior Division: Youth Ball or similar
  6. Senior/Varsity Division: Official Size Ball or similar

7. The Commissioner will provide a satisfactory game ball.
8. A decision of the head game official is final in matters involving the acceptability of a given ball for game purposes.

d. Playing Field:

1. Both teams are responsible for the following:
2. The first scheduled game on a game day each team shall help setup the required field equipment for all subsequent games.
3. Keeping sidelines free from trash and policing field after each game,
4. The last scheduled game on game day both teams shall prepare field equipment to be picked up by NMYAFL personnel for storage.
5. A hundred yard field shall be acceptable for all divisions, except as approved by the league.
6. When playing on an 80-yard field, major penalties shall be 10 yards instead of 15 yards. When playing on a 100-yard field, major penalties shall be 15 yards.
7. All fields shall be equipped and marked in accordance with National Federation Standards, orange or red flags may be used to mark the end zones as long as both end zones are the same.
8. The bench area (reserved area) is reserved for players, coaches, team statisticians and staff. The remainder of the sidelines is reserved for the crew operating the yardage chain and marker. All other individuals must be at least three yards back (where field allows) from the playing field during the game. Coaches shall identify reserved area individuals at the Commissioner's request.  
\*NOTE\* NMYAFL also provides a safe area known as the Spirit Box for cheerleaders to perform, which is free of obstacles, coaches, spectators and players, which will be designated by the League.
9. Only one statistician and/or one team videographer/photographer during the game are permitted in the bench area and on the remainder of the same team sidelines. During the playoffs, Head Coaches must identify these individuals prior to the game. These reserved area individuals must agree to stay off the field and back five yards from the sideline. No loitering in the end zone during Semi-final and Championship games whatsoever. These individuals may follow the team as it moves up and down the field. They will be identified to any league official by the Head Coach, upon request. Ladders, benches, scaffolding (composite, steel, wooden or hard plastic cones) are banned from the sidelines for safety purposes. Only soft plastic cones and breakable tape or like material are allowed for marking the bench area. Failure to follow safety rules may result in head coach suspension.
10. The bench area shall extend from the 20-yard line to the 20-yard line when playing on an 80-yard field: between the 25-yard lines on a 100-yard field. Coaches are not permitted to move beyond the bench area while a game is in progress, unless otherwise specified by the rules. The bench area shall be defined by painted lines or by each team's own marking equipment such as soft cones and tape.
11. All games in each division shall be played on the same field, unless rescheduled by the President of NMYAFL or an appointed Commissioner.
12. On 80-yard fields, the receiving team will line up on the 40-yard line (midfield) and the kicking team on the 30-yard line. When a kick off goes out of bounds before the receiving team touches the ball, the receiving team has the option of taking the ball 25 yards from the point of the kick or at the point where the ball went out of bounds.
13. Any team in the Mighty Mite, Pee Wee, and Rookie division may have one coach on the playing field during the game. This coach may join the huddle and call plays, but must retreat ten yards behind the last player, as soon as the huddle breaks. Both coaches must cease instruction, talking, signaling or manipulation once the quarterback goes under center or the offense goes set. It is the responsibility of the coach to help keep the game running smoothly and not impede the clock. As soon as a team achieves a 21 point lead, the coach must leave the field, while the losing coach may remain. As soon as the score is less than a 21 point differential the winning coach may return.

14. When any team gains a 35-point lead, in the fourth quarter: The clock will run continuously except on: change of possession, official or team time-out.
  15. The home team will be on the east (north) side and the visitors will be on the west (south) side. The visiting team is required to change jersey color if a color conflict occurs per NFHS rules however game officials are the ultimate authority in this matter. NMYAFL will supply game vests. Regarding color conflicts, all coaches are required to follow Ethics and Sportsmanship standards, (i.e. changing into a custom jersey to force an opponent to wear a vest/pinnie is unsportsmanlike). YAFL jersey takes precedence.
  16. The chain gang will be located on the Visitors side of the field and staffed by the Visitors.
  17. During games, parents are restricted to stay in the area five yards back from the sideline and inside the goal line. No parents, fans, spectators of either team currently playing are allowed to be in the end zone area. Scouting is still allowed in the end zone area. Many teams warm up in this area, and that is permissible. Each team shall remain on their sidelines unless otherwise directed by the Uniformed Game Official or NMYAFL Commissioner.
  18. Absolutely NO SCOUTING from behind a team's sidelines, all scouting must be done in the end zone. Proper etiquette must be observed by persons scouting to not disturb, distract or otherwise detract from the game. Scouting is optional for all teams. Violations of this rule by head coach, assistant coach or any team member may result in suspension or removal the Head Coach.
- e. Time: Quarters shall be 10 minutes long on a stop and go clock for all divisions. NMYAFL follows game time management set forth by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Rules.
1. Intermissions:
    - a. Between the first and second quarter; third and fourth quarters two minutes. Time between the two quarters shall be allowed as official conference time.
    - b. Between second and third quarters (half time) - 15 minutes. Three minutes must be allowed for proper stretch and warm up.
    - c. One coach is allowed in the huddle during intermissions.
  2. Time Outs:
    - a. All divisions are allowed three time outs per half in accordance with the NFHS Rule Book.
    - b. During any charged time out, one coach per team will be allowed on the field in the huddle. Discussion with officials during these time outs is discouraged. Non-coach water personnel are allowed to disseminate water during timeouts and injury timeouts.
  3. In the Mighty Mite, Pee Wee and Rookie division, a coach from the sideline is allowed to enter the huddle during a time out, with the coach that is on the field and confer with the coach and/or the players. Should the team be under the 21 point lead rule, then only one coach is allowed on the field to confer with the players.
  4. Scoring Values:
    - a. Touchdown - 6 points
    - b. Point after touchdown - 1 point for run or pass, 2 points if kicked (PAT)
    - c. Safety - 2 points
    - d. Field goal - 3 points
    - e. Forfeit - offended team wins by 1-0.
  5. Close kick option: (applicable to point after kick in the Mighty Mite, Pee Wee, Rookie, Freshmen and Sophomore) Coaches have the option of requesting that the ball be placed 3 yards from the goal posts on the PAT (Point After Touchdown). The team must kick, if this option is exercised. If the close kick option is not chosen, a team may either kick or run. In the event of any defensive penalty, the kicking team may re-declare their option. If the Close Kick option is once again chosen and the penalty is accepted, the ball will be placed the same distance from the end line as it would have been placed from the goal line after the acceptance of the penalty.
  6. All PAT and Field Goal attempts are considered live ball- i.e. K can decline an encroachment call if PAT or Field Goal are successful. K may also accept the defensive penalty and decline the spot.

7. Game Tie Breakers: The tiebreaker rule of the NFHS Rule Book will be in effect for all NMYAFL regular season, playoff, and championship games. After the first tiebreaker period, the ball shall be placed one yard closer to the goal line for each successive overtime period.
8. Players:
  - a. The free substitution rule is always in effect. The National Registration system of numbering players according to their team position is not mandatory in NMYAFL.
  - b. All players will play in a predetermined minimum number of plays each and every game (six plays per each half of each game), unless physically unable, bleeding or restricted for disciplinary reasons. Head coaches must notify a league commissioner of any player not playing, or for disciplinary reasons before their scheduled game, in writing. Plays involving penalties will not count toward the minimum play requirement unless the down is not replayed. Ex: If the down is replayed due to acceptance of a penalty, then the play in which the penalty occurred does not count toward the minimum play requirement. The League office will submit a complete roster to the game Commissioners before each game. Included with the roster at the end of the game is to be a complete accounting of plays participated in by each player on the roster (only number of plays up to the minimum number need to be shown). This roster must be signed by the Head Coach and the Team Dad and submitted to the Commissioner immediately after the completion of the regular scheduled game. A coach's failure to comply with these required plays may mean loss of game by forfeiture. The Commissioner will submit a full report to the CSC or the BOD for any complaint received that a coach has violated this rule. An interview of the Head Coach by the CSC, after receipt of this report, is mandatory. Reports of this nature are taken very seriously, even resulting in suspension of coach.
  - c. The minimum play requirements are set at six plays per half for all divisions.
  - d. During the game, if a player is bleeding from any part of his/her body, the player must be removed from the game until the bleeding is stopped and any open wound or abrasion has been properly covered and/or treated. Blood stains on clothing must be rinsed out before participation is once again allowed. Game and or league officials are the ultimate authority on this. Injured, bleeding or hurt players are not subject to the minimum play requirements since safety is the League's first concern.
9. Parent Behavior:

Parents must act in a proper manner. Foul language, demeaning, derogatory, critical, negative comments will not be tolerated by NMYAFL. The League reserves the right to remove any spectator, fan, relative, passersby who conducts himself/herself in an inappropriate manner around NMYAFL participants, parents, or on the sidelines at games, scrimmages or practices. NMYAFL also reserves the right to remove fans for the use of alcohol, drugs, using foul language, abhorrent behavior or inciting violent behavior. NMYAFL has a ZERO tolerance policy regarding parent's behavior and the League supports its coaches.
10. Protest and Penalties:

Uniformed Game officials are the highest authority during any game and there is absolutely no grievance procedure nor are there any appeal processes where uniformed game officials are concerned.

## **Head Coach Information on Pre & Post Seeding and Tournament Format**

### **Section 3. Seasonal Conference Determination, Playoff Seeds and Tie Breakers**

- a. The preseason conference determination process adopted by the NMYAFL board will involve splitting the league into a two tiered format. This split will be done based on the results of the playoffs of the prior season. The tiers will consist of an American and National Conference. The conferences will be split evenly for divisions of 20 teams or less. The split for larger divisions follows: **22 teams-split 10 American and 12 National**

**24 teams split 10 and 14**  
**26 teams split 12 and 14**  
**28 teams split 12 and 16**  
**30 teams split 14 and 16**  
**32 teams split 16 and 16**

The American Conference will consist of all eight first round playoff winners and the divisional playoff semi-finalist. In the event more teams are needed for the American conference they will be selected from the divisional playoff quarterfinals. Additional teams will be selected from the next highest remaining seeded teams in the divisional playoff bracket. Final conference selections cannot be completed until the league determines the total number of teams per division.

The National Conference will consist of all teams not selected for the American Conference from the playoffs and all teams that did not make the prior season playoffs.

The preseason conference seeding will follow the process already in place with the exception that now the seeds will only be separated into the north or south sides of their respective conferences.

- b. The BOD resolved that a "Parity" non-conference scheduling process should be adopted after the preseason draw is completed, the schedule should be four or five conference games (depending on the size of the Division) with the remaining non-conference games played against teams of close to equal seeding in another conference. For instance, in a large division having 24 teams, the #6 seeded teams will play in non-conference schedule of the following: #6 seed, #5 seed and #4 seed from a different conference then play all of the other five teams within their conference for the balance of the season. The schedule for the #1 seeds will be the mirror image of the #6 seeds. The #1 seed will play the following non-conference teams from a different conference: #1, #2 and #3. The board believes by scheduling through this process, lower seeded teams will have a better opportunity to play in highly competitive games while the higher seeded teams will also play non-conference games vs. tougher opponents. This schedule should make for an overall better experience for all kids in the league. This process will work identically in a 15 or 16 team Division that has only two conferences. Obviously, this process will not work in the Mighty Mite or Pee Wee Divisions and as such, those two divisions should not be affected by the draw rule change. The board also resolved scheduling teams that only played non-conference opponents within their American or National groupings (i.e. vertically playing non-conference opponents only) so no cross conference games would be played except when the post season starts, then cross conference games will be played as determined by the reseeding format and as described by the Super Bowl and Divisional Championship brackets.
- c. The post season playoff reseeding will be done by the Competition Committee, comprised of NMYAFL board members or others as appointed by the President of the League, after the final regular scheduled game of the season. The Competition Committee also reserves the right to meet and determine postseason reseeding on the Sunday immediately following the final regular scheduled game of the season or as determined by the BOD. Notification of rulings will be published on the web site as soon as practical and reasonable.

The post season reseeding format for the playoff Super Bowl Championship will work as follows: the eight teams as reseeded in each division using the eight team conference format, whenever there are enough teams in the division, National 1 will play American 8, National 2 will play American 7, and so on with the following seeding placement to be followed. Where there are any ties or disputed seeding the Competition Committee will resolve the situation using the following criteria and it will be weighted:

1. Conference
  2. Head to head
  3. Overall
- If still tied a coin flip shall be executed.

**Section 4. Post Season Games and Traveling Teams Must:**

- a. Invite all original participants who are on NMYAFL roster who completed the regular season and any playoff games.
- b. No team affiliated with NMYAFL shall be permitted to practice or play any post season games nor is permitted to travel out of the city in which the League is located without the express written consent of the Executive Director, for definition purposes, staying overnight constitutes traveling.
- c. Any person participating in post season practices, games and/or traveling with the consent of the League, shall comply with all NMYAFL Safety Rules and any other requirements established by the Executive BOD. NMYAFL will require teams to submit a release of all claims and application for equipment use. Failure to complete above requirements will result in cancellation of all post-season travel and play. Coaches who neglect to follow these rules risk suspension, disbarment, and/or being banned.
- d. Only head coaches are allowed to apply to take their team traveling. The NMYAFL Executive Director will approve or disapprove head coach's request. Your request to travel must be declared on or before the first week of playoffs for your division.
- e. Gain written permission to invite other players currently registered in NMYAFL from the league office, prior to practicing with these players (This would only be done to fill in any spots opened by players not electing to participate)
- f. Notify League office of intent to travel and invite ONLY players who are currently registered, in same division as traveling team. Non registered players are forbidden to participate. No Exceptions.
- g. Notify the NMYAFL office in the event of injury to any registered player, or any other significant material issue regarding the team immediately, by phone or fax, within 48 hours.
- h. Any postseason banquets, award ceremony or the like shall be handled with all players in mind. No player may be excluded.

## **ARTICLE VIII: FINANCIAL ISSUES**

### **Section 1. Solicitations**

- a. The League does not wish to cause hardship or embarrassment to any parent/guardian or player. The League also does not want to keep any individual from participating in the League as a result of unnecessary expenses such as colored helmets, game jerseys, wind breakers, socks, water bottles, helmet decals, special practice jerseys, etc. As such, except as provided herein—The MAXIMUM contribution a team is permitted to request is \$28.50 per football participant and \$35.00 per cheer participant total value per child in any combination of cash, services and/or products. Parents should contact NMYAFL if they are required to contribute in excess of this amount. A head coach and/or his or her staff may ask players and/or parents of players to volunteer to help raise additional funds for his or her team. Asking for additional funds above and beyond the maximum mandatory contribution is to be done strictly on a volunteer basis, and at no time shall it be a requirement to raise additional funds to be able to participate on any team.
- b. Notwithstanding the above, the League authorizes individual pictures (in addition to the Mandatory League pictures), treats, banquet expenses and trophies, but such contributions shall be considered voluntary. No child may be excluded from any gifts the team decides to purchase. Reason and care are to be used in determining size, cost, and extravagance of such awards.
- c. Team fundraising is defined as solicitation of funds or engaging in profit making activities to obtain funding or benefits for all members of your team including coaches. Team fundraising may only begin after team consolidation and head coaches have received his/her final roster. Head coaches will ensure that no team fundraising shall take place prior to team consolidation. Any head coach found in violation of said rule may be investigated by the CSC and disciplinary action will be taken. All fundraising activities must have strict adult supervision to provide for the safety of all players and cheerleaders. Helmet drives are strictly prohibited. Helmet drives are defined as having players, cheerleaders or parents use any helmet, container or like device to ask for donations in vehicular traffic, sidewalks, shopping center parking lots, or any similar type area. No fundraising is allowed that would cast a poor image on NMYAFL. The League will determine if such fundraising is in poor taste and will be the final judge.
- d. Soliciting for team sponsorship is defined as a head coach soliciting local businesses, colleagues, friends, family, etc. for sponsorship money for his/her team. A head coach may begin soliciting sponsors after he/she has been awarded their team by the CSC. A head coach may utilize his/her staff (assistant coaches, team managers, team moms, team dads) in assisting him/her in soliciting for sponsorship. At no time shall any player/cheerleader participate or be present while the head coach or his/her staff is soliciting for sponsors. Including any player/cheerleader that is a child of the head coach or his/her staff. NMYAFL has no direct or indirect affiliation or involvement with its head coaches or his/her staff when it comes to soliciting for sponsors. NMYAFL does recommend to its coaches to use the utmost respect and honesty when it comes to matters of soliciting for sponsors so as not to cast a poor image on themselves, their team or NMYAFL.

### **Section 2. Team Financial Management.**

- a. Each team shall have a separate checking account for the team with the team name on the account. The account shall be used for all team purchases for both football and cheerleading but the Head Cheer coach has the option of opening a separate account. Two signatures shall be required on the checking account and one signature shall be the head coach and the other signature shall be a parent or guardian of a team member who shall not be related by marriage or family to the head coach.
- b. All financial records shall be available for inspection at any time by any team parent upon request. Senior and/or Varsity teams must close their checking accounts and equally distribute all remaining funds to the team. In cases where the Senior/Varsity Head Coach intends to continue coaching, the account may remain open with the minimum amount required by the bank.
- c. Bank statements and receipts must be made available within 48 hours upon request.
- d. Financial statements must be made available to the parents of your team upon request. Financial statements will show all money raised and money paid out when and to whom. Due care will be

exercised. Coaches, failure to voluntarily provide your financial statement is subject to immediate suspension by CSC.

### **Section 3. Photographer**

All teams shall schedule and use the League appointed photographer. For the purpose of clarification - the Head Coach must bring his entire team (football and cheer) to the photo session determined by the League Photographer.

### **Section 4. Concessions**

Only League-approved concessions shall be permitted at the game fields.

### **Section 5. Insurance Requirements**

A valid excess medical insurance policy for all football players will be in force prior to the first practice session. Personal insurance, State coverage, New MexiKids, Insure NM will remain primary coverage for accidents and injuries since league insurance is considered excess medical, and in the scope as defined by the policy issued to NMYAFL. Any league required releases must be signed prior to the first practice.

## **ARTICLE IX: CONDUCT AND GUIDANCE FOR NMYAFL COACHES**

A coach is a representative of the League and has a special responsibility to parents and players associated with the League. As a representative of the League, a coach performs many functions, which include, but are not limited to, role model, instructor, advisor, mediator, and counselor. In all functions, a coach should be competent, honest, and understanding and should endeavor to attain the highest standards of honesty and good sportsmanship.

The relationship between coach and player in large part determines whether the League will be able to accomplish the established objectives. Coaches more than any other individuals make our program succeed or fail. The coach controls many, if not all, situations in which parents and/or players/participants may be benefited or harmed. A coach may be relieved or suspended of all coaching duties if a coach's actions are deemed detrimental to a player, team or the League.

The League is charged with the responsibility of obtaining head coaches for each team. The Head Coaches in turn select assistant coaches and assume responsibility for those coaches. The League is interested in protecting and promoting a youth's participation in the League. As a result of the foregoing, the League has established the Code of Conduct and Ethics for all NMYAFL coaches. It is mandatory to abide by Code of Conduct and Ethics, failure to do so may result in not being considered for a coaching assignment, whether head coach or assistant.

### **Section 1.**

Head coaches, assistant coaches, team dads, team moms, representatives, parents, fans, and/or any other individual affiliated with NMYAFL are strictly prohibited from consuming any alcoholic beverages/products, illegal drugs, or tobacco products on any practice field or game field before, during or after practice sessions, games or other team related functions, such as fundraisers or banquets. This rule shall apply even where a city ordinance permits consumption of alcoholic beverages in city parks. Any person in violation of this rule is subject to suspension or any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the BOD.

### **Section 2.**

Profanity, physical abuse, verbal abuse, striking, hitting or kicking of any individual is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated by the League. Complaints of this nature are serious and will be investigated immediately, and any coach accused of any of these actions shall be temporarily suspended from coaching until an investigation can be conducted. Any accused coach must meet with the CSC in order to determine what disciplinary action, if any, shall be taken, up to and including suspension or any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate.

### **Section 3.**

It is strictly prohibited for any person to directly or indirectly receive financial benefits, or compensation or offer to pay to anyone financial benefits or compensation for participation as a coach or player within the League. While sponsoring a player is allowed, using sponsorship to encourage a child to play out of district is not allowed, nor is, back stacking, ghost enrolling (registering a child knowing his/her intentions are they will not play, allowing the coach to pick up additional players or reducing his/her roster).

### **Section 4.**

No person barred/suspended from NMYAFL shall be permitted to participate in NMYAFL activities. Any head coach that knowingly takes as an assistant, a person who has been barred/suspended from NMYAFL, and is found in violation of this rule is subject to removal as head coach.

### **Section 5.**

One of the coach's functions is to teach proper respect for authority. Therefore, a coach must act with proper restraint in all of his/her actions toward the NMYAFL, its BOD, individuals and toward game officials. Any

improper conduct by a coach towards any individual or game officials shall be cause for removal as a coach and may be subject to prosecution as New Mexico State Law allows. All head coaches are also responsible for the actions of their respective assistant coaches and parents of the players. They are also responsible for any and all misconduct by anyone on their sidelines before, during and/or after a game, including, but not limited to taunting, fighting and verbal abuse of officials. These actions could result in suspension of the head coach and ineligibility of the team for post-season play. The league will assist the Head Coach with contest sidelines in the event fans are out of control.

#### **Section 6.**

All complaints by players, parents/guardians, coaches and league officials regarding misconduct or violation of the league rules by a coach shall be presented in writing to the CSC. Abuse, neglect or unsafe practices, or violations of Section 1 & 2 will be acted upon by league officials immediately or as soon as reasonable for the protection of the child with the complaint to be followed up in writing. The CSC shall notify coaches, as soon as possible, of any written formal complaint filed against them. If a coach is charged with an offense that would cause possible removal, the coach will be notified of the nature of said complaint immediately and followed up in writing. Failure to respond to the CSC may result in removal as a coach. Complaints may require a coach to have a meeting with the CSC. This meeting will be held as soon as reasonable for both the coach and CSC or any member or representative thereof as stipulated by the CSC Chair. All complaints against a coach must be submitted and filed in writing with the league office no later than December 1st of the current season for the complaint to be investigated and any action taken against a coach. All complaints will be acted upon by the league by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the Current season. The complainant needs to realize that the longer they wait to file a complaint the less likely the league can do a proper investigation.

#### **GRIEVANCES/DISPUTES RESOLUTION CONSENT TO WAIVER OF LITIGATION, BINDING ARBITRATION**

All grievances against any coach, player, Officer, NMYAFL Official must be submitted and filed in writing with the league office. Complaints or grievances against coaches must be submitted in writing and addressed to the CSC. All other grievances must be submitted in writing and addressed to the NMYAFL League BOD. The league must investigate the complaint within 15 days of the filed complaint. All complaints against a coach, player, officer or NMYAFL Representative must be submitted and filed in writing with the league office no later than December 1<sup>st</sup> of the current season for the complaint to be investigated and any action taken against a coach, player, officer or NMYAFL Representative. All allowed appeals of final determinations by the NMYAFL BOD shall be submitted to binding arbitration in accordance with league regulations. Players, parents, guardians, or any one participating in any fashion with NMYAFL knowingly consents to waiving any rights to avail them to the civil court system and accepts as the sole remedy for dispute resolution binding arbitration in accordance with applicable NMYAFL regulations.

#### **Section 7.**

All teams will be represented at the monthly meeting of the Coaches Council. It is the Head Coach's responsibility to make certain that a representative from the coach's assigned team is in attendance at the Coaches Council meeting. The President of the Coaches council has discretion in matters of attendance.

#### **Section 8.**

A Head Coach will report in writing to the League Office/Executive Director when a player quits or is injured due to a related league activity. It is the opinion of the League that if more than 10% of any team's members quit or are injured during the season; the Head Coach may be called upon by the CSC to give an explanation of the causes of such occurrences. In the event of injuries, any time a player is removed by medical personnel a report will be made to NMYAFL with diligence and timeliness.

## **Section 9.**

All rulings by the CSC are subject to appeal to the NMYAFL BOD (the appeal process is defined in Article III, Section 10, below). The President of the NMYAFL will decide whether to hear such appeals.

## **Section 10.**

Within 48 hours after notice of a decision, which adversely affects an appellant, the appellant may request a hearing by the BOD. The request must be in writing and made to the President of the League, such request having been received if delivered to the League office. The appeal request must contain the original decision, the basis of the appeal and relief sought from the BOD. The President determines whether or not a hearing needs to take place and the time and place for such hearing of the appeal. The President may at his/her discretion elect not to hear an appeal.

## **HEARINGS**

The President or if unavailable the next highest officer of the BOD present will preside at the appeal hearing. Immediately after the hearing is called to order, any Board Member electing not to vote on the appeal will so declare his/her position, but this will not affect his/her ability to question the participant(s) or to participate in the discussion prior to a board decision.

If a decision being appealed was made by a committee chairperson, said chairperson shall be in attendance and will present a summation of the facts and information, which led to the decision being appealed. The appellant will then present his/her summation of the facts and information, which forms the basis of the appeal hearing. The presiding officer of the hearing can waive this rule if the situation warrants.

After the opening remarks of both parties, the person on whose complaint the committee's decision was based, witnesses for the appellant and/or any other interested individuals, if available, may make a statement at the discretion of the presiding officer. Witnesses designated by the parties may speak only after being called upon by the presiding officer. After all witnesses have been heard, the Board members may question any or all individuals who testified at the hearing.

When the presiding officer determines that all relevant information to the appeal has been obtained, he/she will dismiss the person(s) making the appeal and all witnesses. The BOD will discuss the issue and try to reach a decision. The presiding officer, or person appointed by the presiding officer, will attempt to notify the person making the appeal within 24 hours of the BOD's decision.

The options available to the BOD are as follows:

- (1) Overturn the committee's decision.
- (2) Uphold the decision.
- (3) Invoke a lesser or greater penalty.
- (4) Not reach a decision, the committee's original decision will remain in force.

The presiding officer will announce the final decision of the BOD. Within 10 calendar days of receipt of the final decision of the BOD, the appellant may petition the BOD for review of its decision. Any petition for review must be presented in writing, addressed to the President of the League, and received by the League office. At the sole discretion of the BOD, and only upon a majority vote, the decision may be reviewed and modified. No additional evidence will be taken or considered during this final step of the appeal process.

## **GRIEVANCES/DISPUTES RESOLUTION CONSENT TO WAIVER OF LITIGATION, BINDING ARBITRATION**

All grievances against any coach, player, officer, NMYAFL official must be submitted in writing to the NMYAFL office. Grievances against coaches must be submitted in writing and addressed to the CSC. All other grievances must be submitted in writing and addressed to the NMYAFL BOD. Only written grievances will be acted upon (see Article III Section 6). Designated Uniformed Game officials are the

highest authority during any game and there is absolutely no grievance procedure nor is there any appeal process where game designated game officials are concerned. All allowed appeals of final determinations by the NMYAFL BOD shall be submitted to binding arbitration in accordance the league regulations. Players, parents, guardians, or any one participating in any fashion with NMYAFL knowingly consents to waiving any rights to avail them to the civil court system and accepts as the sole remedy for dispute resolution binding arbitration in accordance with applicable NMYAFL regulations.

The Arbitration Committee shall be assigned by the President of the NMYAFL or the next highest officer and may include at least two different age division coaches, one non-interested party, and/or member of the local community. The committee will consist of an odd number of members. Arbitration committee members may not include any member of NMYAFL from the same division or district as the person requesting arbitration. The arbitration panel from which the president or other designated officer shall choose from will typically consist of NMYAFL or YAC Coaches with at least three years of experience in NMYAFL.

## **ARTICLE X: ACTS OF SUSPENSION / DISBARMENT**

### **Section 1. General**

Any player/participant, member, coach, parent/guardian, official or other individual associated with NMYAFL upon majority vote of the NMYAFL BOD, after a hearing, may be suspended for any period as determined by the BOD, if he/she is found to have committed any of the following acts:

- a. Violation of any of the rules proscribed herein.
- b. Consuming alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs while in the presence of NMYAFL members.
- c. Committing any unsportsmanlike act, such as taunting or fighting.
- d. Any unauthorized use of funds within any organization of the League.
- e. Striking, physically abusing and/or verbally abusing any player/participant, coach, assistant coach, commissioner, league official, game official, parent/guardian, or spectator.
- f. Using profane language or abusive language, whether at practice, on the field of play, or as a spectator.
- g. By directly or indirectly receiving financial benefits or compensation or offering to pay to anyone financial benefits or compensation for participating as a coach or player/participant within the League.
- h. Committing or having committed any act that reflects unfavorably upon the League, up to and including being convicted of a misdemeanor or felony regarding any crimes against children. Domestic Violence, Drug or Alcohol related charges, Embezzlement, repeated offenses as determined by the BOD.
- i. Withholding player registrations with consideration (payment), to enhance, change, and alter a roster is a violation of NMYAFL rules. Registrations filled out, signed and payment made must be turned in next business day to NMYAFL.
- j. Violation of any rules or policies listed above will be prosecuted as New Mexico State Law allows.
- k. Using or conspiring to use ineligible players in a practice, scrimmage game, season game or participation in a post season tournament.
- l. Consistent violations of league rules not listed in this section.
- m. This section does not apply to disqualification of coaches, or players or others by designated Uniformed Game Officials.

## **ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS**

The rules, regulations and appendixes set forth in this official booklet can be changed or modified by a majority vote of the BOD. Changes or modifications are first considered by the Rules Committee and its recommendations made to the BOD for action. Nothing in these rules are meant to conflict with City, County, State, or Federal Law.

# Appendix A

## Age and Weight Chart

<b><u>MITES</u></b>	<b><u>PEE WEES</u></b>	<b><u>ROOKIES</u></b>	<b><u>FRESHMAN</u></b>	<b><u>SOPHOMORES</u></b>	<b><u>JUNIORS</u></b>	<b><u>SENIORS</u></b>
7yr olds 128lbs	7yr olds 129lbs & up	8yr olds 136lbs & up	9yr olds 141lbs & up	10yr olds 146lbs & up	11yr olds 156lbs & up	12yr olds 161lbs & up
Or Less	8yr olds 135lbs or less	9yr olds 55 - 140lbs	10yr olds 60 - 145lbs	11yr olds 70 - 155lbs	12yr olds 86 – 160lbs	13yr olds 106 & up
	9yr olds 54lbs or less	10yr olds 59lbs or less	11yr olds 69lbs or less	12yr olds 85lbs or less	13yr olds 105lbs or less	All 14yr olds

A player's eligibility by division shall be determined by the age of the player on August 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

# Appendix B

## Coach's Code of Conduct and Ethics

### Conduct

The coach shall ensure that assistant coaches, team dads, moms, representatives, parents, fans, and/or any other individual affiliated with NMYAFL do not consume any alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or tobacco products on any practice field or game field before, during or after practice sessions and/or games or other team related functions.

The coach shall not use profanity, or physical/verbally abuse any individual.

The coach and any person associated with his team shall not receive any financial benefits for participation in NMYAFL.

The coach shall ensure that no person barred/suspended from NMYAFL shall be permitted to participate in NMYAFL activities.

The coach shall act with proper restraint in all of his/her actions toward the NMYAFL, its BOD and any individual in particular, to game officials. All head coaches are also responsible for the actions of their respective assistant coaches and parents of the players. They are also responsible for any and all misconduct by anyone on their sidelines before, during and/or after a game.

The coach shall not criticize players/spirit participants in front of spectators, but reserve constructive criticism for later, in private, or in the presence of team/squad members if others might benefit.

The coach shall accept decisions of the game officials and judges on the field and in competitions as being fair and called to the best ability of said officials.

The coach shall not criticize an opposing team, its players, spirit participants, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or by gesture.

The coach shall emphasize that good athletes strive to be good students and that both are physically and mentally alert.

The coach shall not "pile it on"; not encourage their team to get a commanding lead and raise the score as high as it can. In these instances, every effort shall be made to let all players play.

The coach shall not permit an ineligible player or spirit participant to participate in a game or practice.

The coach shall not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.

The coach shall uphold all rules and regulations.

The coach shall not strike any member, coach, player, parent, official, spectator or participant.

## Ethics

The function of a coach is to educate kids through participation in athletic competition. A program should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student-athlete should be treated as though he or she was the coach's own, and his and her welfare should be uppermost at all times.

The coach shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student athlete and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

The coach shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with student-athletes, officials, YAFL administrators, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of illegal drug, alcohol and tobacco use.

The coach shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

The coach shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, parents and supporters and administrators.

The coach shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

Before and after contests, coaches for the competing teams should meet and exchange cordial greetings to set the correct tone for the event.

## Appendix C

### Sportsmanship Policy

The New Mexico Young America Football League (NMYAFL) wants to make our sports league an enjoyable experience for everyone. To help create this positive environment we established a “Sportsmanship Policy” that everyone in the league is required to acknowledge and uphold.

#### Parents/Guardians/Spectators

- ☐ I will provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in sports at NMYAFL. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials, at every game, practice or Event.
- ☐ I will place the emotional and physical wellbeing of my child ahead of my desire to win.
- ☐ I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all. I will avoid “coaching” from the sidelines or stands.
- ☐ I will treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
- ☐ I will help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching, participating in team events and help maintain the fields.
- ☐ I understand the following items/actions are not tolerated at NMYAFL sponsored activities:
  1. No Alcoholic products, Smoking, illegal drugs, or Use of profanity.
  2. No unsportsmanlike comments towards staff, coaches, officials, parents, spectators, children and players.
  3. No derogatory yelling, verbal threatening, or physically attacking a league official, coach, parent or child.
  4. No entering the field of play without permission of the Head Coach, or League Official.
  5. No mistreatment of property or facilities to include equipment, fields and buildings.
  6. No negative or derogatory cheering / yelling at anyone.
  7. No yelling at the other team’s players or coaches by parents, players, spectators or coaches unless it is to cheer them on.

## **All League Coaches**

- ☐ I understand as a coach that I am responsible for my player's parents, family, and friend's sportsmanship behavior.
- ☐ I understand that the game officials are here for the kids, the game and are the highest authority during a game. I will not question their calls or make unsportsmanlike comments towards the officials. I understand that the league provides guidelines for the head coach to address officials. I will not approach an official during or after a game to question their calls but only to get an interpretation of the rule.
- ☐ I understand that as a coach I should provide guidance to this policy to team members, parents, family and friends that attend NMYAFL sponsored activities to include games and practices.
- ☐ I understand that if I or any member of my team or spectator who fails to follow the items listed above could be ejected from the property. The Field Referee or the League Commissioners will make the ruling in accordance to NFHS or League rules.
- ☐ I understand that as a Coach I must display good sportsmanship toward other coaches, parents and players. After every game all coaches and players will shake hands with the other team (coaches and players).
- ☐ I understand that as a coach if I am ejected that I must leave the complex immediately. I understand that as a coach I will be suspended for a minimum of one game and up to permanent suspension from the league depending on violation of league rules or policy.

**At NMYAFL our children come first...together we will have NO TOLERANCE for anyone treating officials, coaches, players or parents with poor sportsmanship behavior.**

## Appendix D

### Zero Tolerance Policy against Abuse

The league is committed to providing a safe environment for its members and participants, and to preventing abusive conduct in any form. Every member of this organization is responsible for protecting our participants and ensuring their safety and wellbeing while involved in sponsored activities.

To this end, we have established the following guidelines of behavior and procedures for our staff, volunteers and participants. All members of this organization, as well as parents, spectators and other invitees are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines.

1. Abuse of any kind is not permitted within our organization. This means we do not tolerate physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents or spectators.
2. Physical and sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, striking, hitting, kicking, biting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, unwanted physical contact, any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited within our organization.
3. Emotional abuse or verbal abuse is also prohibited. These include, but are not limited to such forms of abuse as: yelling, insulting, threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior, or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.
4. We are committed to providing a safe environment for our players, participants and staff. We do so by appointing all coaches, officials and volunteers – and anyone else affiliated with our organization – as protection advocates. Every member of this organization is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward our members by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling or spectator.
5. Buddy System: We recommend that every activity sponsored by our program put a Buddy System in place. Each youth participant should be assigned a buddy during sponsored activities. No child should go anywhere – to the bathrooms, locker rooms, or other location – without his or her buddy.
6. To further protect our youth participants, as well as our coaches, officials and volunteers, we strongly advise that no adult person allow him/herself to be alone with a child or with any group of children during sponsored activities. In particular, we recommend that coach or other adult members of this organization:
  - Do not drive alone with a child participant in the car
  - Do not take a child alone to the locker room, bathrooms or any other private room
  - Provide one-on-one training or individual coaching with the assistance of another adult or the child's Buddy

- If you must have a private conversation with a youth participant, do it within view of others, in the gym or on the field, instead of in a private office
- Coaches and other adult members of this organization should not socialize individually with the participants outside of sponsored activities
- Supervision/Chaperone ratio: We recommend that for any sponsored activity, the ratio of adults to youth participants be 1:8 – one (or more) adults for every eight children, with a minimum of two adults for every activity.

When traveling overnight with youth participants, children should be paired up with other children of same gender and similar age group, with chaperones in separate but nearby rooms.

We want to empower our children to trust their feelings and let them know that their concerns, fears and hopes are important by listening to them. Open communication between children and parents, or between children and other adults in the organization may help early warning signs of abuse to surface.

We encourage parents to become as active as possible in sponsored activities, games, practices and other events. The more the parents are involved, the less likely it is for abusive situations to develop.

We will respond quickly to any and all allegations of abuse within this organization. This information will be communicated to the authorities for investigation and will be reviewed by the organization's directors. The alleged offender will be notified of such allegations promptly.

Any person accused of sexual or physical abuse may be asked to resign voluntarily or may be suspended by the board until the matter is resolved. Regardless of criminal or civil guilt in the alleged abuse, the continued presence of the person could be detrimental to the reputation of the organization and could be harmful to the participants. A person who is accused but later cleared of charges, may apply to be reinstated within the organization. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his/her former position.

We promote good sportsmanship throughout the organization and encourage qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants, coaches, officials and volunteers. We advocate building strong self-images among the youth participants. Children with a strong self-image may be less likely targets for abuse; similarly, they may be less likely to abuse or bully others around them.

# Appendix E

## Coaches Selection Committee Operating Guidelines Coaches Selection Guidelines

### I. Coaches Selection Committee Operating Guidelines

#### A. Purpose

An official committee to review and select coaching candidates for each team fielded by NMYAFL; such a Coaches Selection Committee (CSC) will review all applications and will, by the criteria as specified in these Selection Committee Operating Guidelines and the Coaches Selection Guidelines, select who the coaches will be. These applicants will also be subject to NMYAFL's background check criteria.

#### B. Code of Conduct

**Failure to strictly adhere to these codes of conduct will be grounds for dismissal from the Coaches Selection Committee**

1. Members of the CSC shall not permit personal feelings, prejudices, national origin, or friendships influence their decisions.
2. Members of the CSC shall obtain information in a professional and courteous manner.
3. Members of the CSC shall maintain the utmost strict confidentiality of all information that it receives or discusses.
4. Members of the CSC are strictly prohibited for any reason to directly or indirectly receive any financial benefits or compensation or offer to pay to anyone financial benefits or compensation for participation as a coach or player within the league.
5. If any member of the CSC is found to be guilty of violating any of the NMYAFL rules the CSC member will be dismissed from the CSC.
6. Members of the CSC shall abide by, uphold and enforce all NMYAFL rules at all times.

#### C. Coaches Selection Committee Members

**All persons being considered for the CSC members shall be subject to NMYAFL's background checks criteria prior to becoming a member.**

1. **The Coaches Selection Committee will consist of the following members and serve from date of appointment through December of the current football season:**
  - a. Chairman of the CSC (appointed by the NMYAFL Board President)
  - b. Vice-Chairman of the CSC shall be selected by the Chairman of the CSC and approved by the NMYAFL Board
  - c. A Minimum of 5 experienced NMYAFL football coaches (appointed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the CSC). Coaches must have served a minimum of 3 years as a coach in NMYAFL and be in good standing with the league.
  - d. The total number of CSC members shall be an odd number including the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and all members.

## **2. CSC Chairman Duties:**

- a. Keep records of the applications submitted and a record of the coaches interviewed.
- b. Once a coach is awarded a team, the application and any pertinent information is submitted to the NMYAFL staff for filing. League paid staff will make a file for each coach.
- c. Provide a file with the interview information will be created for coaches not awarded and will be kept at the NMYAFL office for appeal purposes or in case another team needs a coach.
- d. A listing of awarded coaches is submitted to the NMYAFL Board of Director's at the regularly scheduled monthly meetings.
- e. The Chairman will prepare a listing of all coaches assigned with contact numbers by date determined by NMYAFL, which will be posted in the NMYAFL web site for all members to access.
- f. All Head Coaches for teams will be assigned three weeks prior to the season starting with the exception of last minute team formations by the league and in this case the CSC will find and assign a coach as soon as reasonably possible.
- g. The Chairman will provide a report to the BOD at all Board meetings regarding selections or any issues regarding coaches.
- h. If a coach appeals a CSC's decision the Committee Chairman will have all documentation to the Board of Director's regarding the reason and basis for such decision prior to the meeting. The Board will allow the committee at least one week to prepare this documentation before the appeal is heard. All appeals will be followed according to Article III, NMYAFL Rules.
- i. The Chairman will attend all NMYAFL Board meetings or ensure Vice-Chairman is present.
- j. At the end of the NMYAFL football season the CSC will convene and review all Head Football Coaches that had issues with the league during the season. The CSC will determine whether there is enough evidence to meet with coaches and inform such coaches of what their chances are for being awarded a team the following football season.
- k. Investigate complaints regarding coaches of NMYAFL as soon as they become known. Notify the person that the complaint has been brought against. Take necessary actions in determining if any sanctions or suspensions are deemed necessary.
- l. When any issues regarding the mistreatment of a player by a coach, parent or any other person, immediately notify the coach, parent or any other person who being accused of the mistreatment
- m. Abide by, uphold and enforce the CSC Code of Conduct and NMYAFL League Rules
- n. May serve as field commissioner.

## **3. CSC Vice-Chairman Duties:**

- a. Will fill in the absence of the chairman and fulfill duties assigned to such position.
- b. Will help in assigning coaches and preparing required documentation for appeals.
- c. Ensure Head Coaches submit Assistant Coach names and background checks are done.
- d. Help chairman during season in reviewing league complaints regarding head coaches and assistant coaches.
- e. Help Chairman in ensuring all coaches follow league rules and policies.

- f. Help Chairman in keeping records of Head Coaches or Representatives attending Coaches Council Meetings for future assignment of teams.
- g. Attend NMYAFL Board meetings as requested by CSC Chairman.
- h. May serve as field commissioner.

#### **4. CSC Committee Member Duties:**

- a. The CSC will meet to assign coaches using the criteria set forth in Coaches Selection Guidelines prior to start of the football season
- b. Set up and interview coaches.
- c. Will help notify all coaches of coaching appointment.
- d. Help locate coaches for necessary teams.
- e. Ensure all Head Coaches and assistants get background checks.
- f. Meet as required to investigate coaches regarding violations of NMYAFL policies and rules.
- g. When NMYAFL member complaints regarding coaches are brought to your attention. Contact the Chairman of the CSC immediately. If complaints are in writing, forward any and all documentation to the Chairman of the CSC. Help with the investigation.
- h. When any issues regarding the mistreatment of a player by a coach, parent or any other person, immediately notify the Chairman of the CSC. These complaints do not need to be in writing. Help with investigation.
- i. Convene as requested by Chairman during the season and at end of season to review issues with coaches that need to be addressed before next season.
- j. May serve as field commissioner.

#### **5. Complaints / Disciplinary Actions / Appeals**

- a. All complaints by Players, Parents, coaches or any other person concerning the code of conduct of a coach shall be submitted in writing to the CSC. The exception to this shall be abuse, neglect, unsafe practices or violation of Section 1 & 2 of Article III of the NMYAFL League Rules.
- b. Complaints regarding Profanity, physical abuse, verbal abuse, striking, hitting or kicking of any individual, and in particular a youth is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated by the league. Complaints either in writing or verbal in this nature are serious and will be investigated immediately. Any coach accused of any of these shall be temporarily suspended from coaching until an investigation can be conducted. Per Article III, Section 2 of the NMYAFL League rules.
- c. Disciplinary Actions of violations of the NMYAFL league rules shall be dealt with by the CSC according to Article III and IV of the NMYAFL League Rules.
- d. All Rulings of the CSC shall be subject to appeal to the NMYAFL BOD per Article III, Section 9 and 10 of NMYAFL Rules.

## **II. Coaches Selection Guidelines**

### **A. Coaching Applicants Requirements**

1. All coaches will be expected to follow all NMYAFL rules.
2. All coaches will fill out a complete Coaches Application Form by the date established by NMYAFL. The purpose is to identify who wishes to coach, some pertinent background information and which team they would like to coach in the coming year. There will also be a section dealing with screening coaching applicants (NMYAFL's background check) to ensure the integrity of the coach and to protect the league and the players who play football. If NMYAFL does not receive qualified applicants by the deadline established by the league the CSC will solicit for coaches to fill those vacancies.
3. All Head Coaches must be 21 years old prior to the first day of practice. Assistant Coaches must be 18 years or older before the first day of practice. Individuals under 18 years old may be trainers and must have an Assistant or Head Coach supervising their activities at all times.
4. All Current coaches and new applicants are to provide a copy of certificate of completion of either the PACE or ASEP course completion. The Certificates shall be placed in each coach's file.
5. All Current coaches and new applicants are to provide a copy of certificate of completion of USA Football level one and level two. The Certificates shall be placed in each coach's file.
6. All Current coaches and new applicants are to provide a copy of certificate of completion of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Heads Up: Concussions in Youth Sports online training. The Certificates shall be placed in each coach's file.
7. A Head Coach returning to the same team and with no written complaints or issues with NMYAFL will be awarded the team and may not be interviewed unless the coach does not submit an application by the deadline, then he/she will be interviewed. All returning Head coaches are encouraged to help with mentoring new incoming coaches.
8. All returning Head coaches, Assistant coaches, Team Moms and Team Dads will be required to attend a group orientation. This orientation will be to sign contracts, review Code of ethics, review new league policies, and go over expectations of coaches, parents and players.
9. In some cases where a returning coach is not offered a coaching position, solicitation of new coaches may be required in order to ensure the league has enough coaches and the open positions in question will not be offered to these coaches who the league has determined should not return as a coach. Head Coaches will be notified of coaches that are not allowed to coach.
10. All other applicants will be interviewed using the Coaches Selection Criteria and teams awarded accordingly. A Head Coach with the most seniority as a NMYAFL Head Coach may be given priority over other applicants but will have to interview.
11. Coaches being interviewed will be required to provide an outline of a season plan, coaching philosophy, practice plan and goals to the CSC prior to final selections.
12. All First and Second year coaches will be required to attend League Certified Orientation Training before season starts and will be encouraged to participate in a mentorship program.
13. Coaches must know that all team assignments are subject to withdrawal for good cause by the CSC or if a team is not filled with minimum players.
14. Before any coach is officially assigned and awarded a team NMYAFL may opt to test each coach in various aspects of NMYAFL to ensure that each coach is properly prepared to face the many obstacles and issues that may arise during a football season. The test will be the same for each coach and this will

be given to all coaches both incumbents and new coaches and must be passed in order to be awarded a team.

## **B. Coaches Selection Criteria**

- **The most important criteria is the ability to coach youth players in a positive and ethical manner.**
- Coaches will be interviewed by a minimum of two CSC members using a standard questionnaire developed by the CSC addressing the following.

### **1. Organization / Philosophy**

- a. Does the coach have the ability to raise the \$650 team sponsorship? How will this be done?
- b. Keep paperwork up to date to include financial records? How will new coach keep such paperwork?
- c. Can the Coach Communicate effectively with parents, coaches, players, officials and league staff?
- d. Does the coach understand the role as an instructor?
- e. How will a coach manage the team, practices and game day?
- f. What is the coach's knowledge of League and game rules?
- g. Does the Coach understand and implement the coach's code of conduct?
- h. Does a coach demonstrate teamwork?
- i. Does a coach project a positive image?
- j. How does the Coach motivate players?

### **2. Participation Level / Time Commitment**

- a. Does the Coach attend the coaches meetings?
- b. Has the Coach attended any coaches' clinics?
- c. Is the coach involved in League activities or an ambassador for the league? How?
- d. Does the Coaches personal life and Profession allow him to make the time commitment to coaching?

### **3. Fundamental Knowledge**

- a. Is the coach ASEP/Pace Certified? Any other certifications?
- b. Does the coach have knowledge to teach fundamentals?
- c. Does the coach understand safety concerns?
- d. Does the coach have the ability to teach kids at all levels in NMYAFL?
- e. Can the Coach demonstrate the proper teaching skills?
- f. Does the coach know all the facets of the game?
- g. Does the coach understand youth football?

- h. How does the coach strive to improve?
- i. Does the Coach have a system to teach; offense/defense?

#### **4. Background Checks**

- a. **If an applicant for a head or assistant coaching position has issues in his/her law enforcement background check dealing with DUI, domestic violence, child endangerment or abuse, whether convicted or pending the applicant will not be allowed to coach until all issues are dismissed and or addressed by NMYAFL.**
- b. **Violation of league rules can be grounds of not being allowed to coach.**

**League By-laws and Rules will take precedence in case there is a conflict with these standard-operating guidelines.**

## Appendix F

### NMYAFL Rules Violations and Sanctions

Article	Rule	Class
<b>II Section 1G</b>	Coaches do not have the authority to place any player on any team, nor shall any coach promise to place a player on any specific team. Coaches will not withhold a player's registration.	1
<b>V Section 1b</b>	1st week of practice: 1st 2 days of practice will ensure only helmets, pants with pads and mouthpieces are the only worn equipment by players. Physical contact (hitting) between players shall not be permitted.	7
<b>V Section 1b</b>	3rd day full pads but physical contact (hitting) between players shall not be permitted	7
<b>V Section 1c</b>	Any and all first year players added to the roster or arriving after the first day of practice shall not participate in full contact until the third day.	6
<b>V Section 1e</b>	Non-registered players are not allowed to be involved in practice.	1
<b>V Section 1d</b>	At no time shall a player with full pads be allowed to participate in physical contact between players without full pads	1
<b>V Section 1f</b>	No practice session will exceed two hours in duration and shall end no later than 8:00 PM or sundown. Disciplinary sessions are not allowed after the two hour practice.	6
<b>V Section 1</b>	No Head Coach will exceed the number of practices as per Article V. Section 1. Or Start practice before the approved date per Article V Section 1.	3
<b>V Section 1f</b>	Practices are not to be held within 15 yards of any fixed object.	6
<b>V Section 1i</b>	A minimum of 3 water breaks per practice session required. Water is not to be withheld for any reason at any time ever. Coaches are required to furnish water at games or practice or require players to bring their own.	3
<b>V Section 1i</b>	Prohibited Contact drills as per V. Section 1	6

<b>V Section 1j</b>	Head Coach is responsible to submit a request and receive permission to play at a park of their choosing to the League Office. Teams will not park in driveways, one ways, or break traffic laws or rules.	7
<b>V Section 1k</b>	Lightning Safety Rule	5
<b>V Section 1l</b>	Practice fields are to be examined daily (before each practice session).	7
<b>V Section 1.1</b>	Individual Team Camps are strictly forbidden. Practicing prior to the official published start of the season will not be tolerated.	1
<b>V Section 2</b>	Scrimmages will be held as per Article V Section 2.	3
<b>V Section 5</b>	Under no circumstances may a NMYAFL team/affiliate participate in a game or scrimmage game which is not arranged by, through and/or with knowledge and consent of the league.	3
<b>V Section 7</b>	It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to make sure all equipment is returned. Equipment turn-in will be conducted by the Head Coach and assistants at a mandatory practice that will be held no later than seven days after the team's final game. If the Head Coach, through his/her best efforts, cannot obtain equipment from player the Head Coach is required to advise the NMYAFL staff of the missing equipment.	1
<b>VII Section 2B</b>	Participant Ejection - When a participant is ejected or disqualified from any contest or game for unsportsmanlike conduct by a uniformed game official, that player is automatically suspended from the next contest/game.	4
<b>VII Section B</b>	Coach Ejection - When a coach is ejected or disqualified from any contest/game for unsportsmanlike conduct by a game official, the coach is required to sit out the next game. Coach's badges will be confiscated by field commissioners upon ejection and verbal notification given to the League President, or his/her designee, within 24 hours of the game. The badge shall be delivered to the League President or his/her designee within 72 hours of the completion of the game. The League President, or his/her designee, shall hold the badge until completion of the prescribed penalty or until the CSC reviews the issue.	5
<b>VII Section D</b>	The first scheduled game on a game day each team shall help setup the required field equipment for all subsequent games.	7
<b>VII Section D</b>	Keeping sidelines free from trash and policing field after each game,	7

<b>VII Section D</b>	The last scheduled game on game day both teams shall prepare field equipment to be picked up by NMYAFL personnel for storage.	7
<b>VII Section D</b>	Only one statisticians and/or one team videographer/photographer during the game are permitted in the bench area and on the remainder of the same team sideline. During the playoffs, Head Coaches must identify these individuals prior to the game. These reserved area individuals must agree to stay off the field and back five yards from the sideline. No loitering in the end zone during Semi-final and Championship games whatsoever. These individuals may follow the team as it moves up and down the field. They will be identified to any league official by the Head Coach, upon request. Ladders, Benches, Scaffolding (composite, steel, wooden or hard plastic cones) or devices are banned from the sidelines for safety purposes. Only soft plastic cones and breakable tape or like material are allowed for marking the bench area. Failure to follow safety rules may result in head coach suspension.	7
<b>VII Section D</b>	Any team in the Mighty Mite, Pee Wee, and Rookie division may have one coach on the playing field during the game. This coach may join the huddle and call plays, but must retreat ten yards behind the last player, as soon as the huddle breaks. Both coaches must cease instruction, talking, signaling or manipulation once the quarterback goes under center or the offense goes set. It is the responsibility of the coach to help keep the game running smoothly and not impede the clock. As soon as a team achieves a 21-point lead, the coach must leave the field, while the losing coach may remain. As soon as the score is less than a 21-point differential the winning coach may return.	7
<b>VII Section D</b>	During games, parents are restricted to stay in the area five yards back from the sideline and inside the goal line. No parents, fans, spectators of either team currently playing are allowed to be in the end zone area. Scouting is still allowed in the end zone area. Many teams warm up in this area, and that is permissible. Each team shall remain on their sidelines unless otherwise directed by the Uniformed Game Official or NMYAFL Commissioner.	6
<b>VII Section D</b>	Absolutely NO SCOUTING from behind a team's sidelines, all scouting must be done in the end zone. Proper etiquette must be observed by persons scouting to not disturb, distract or otherwise detract from the game. Scouting is optional for all teams. Violations of this rule by head coach, assistant coach or any team member may result in suspension or removal the Head Coach.	5

<b>VII Section E</b>	All players will play in a predetermined minimum number of plays each game (six plays per each half of each game), unless physically unable, bleeding or restricted for disciplinary reasons. Head coaches must notify a league commissioner of any player not playing, or for disciplinary reasons before a scheduled game, in writing. Plays involving penalties will not count toward the minimum play requirements unless the down is not replayed.	5
<b>VII Section E</b>	The roster must be signed by the Head Coach and Team Dad and submitted to the commissioner immediately after the completion of the regular scheduled game. A coach's failure to comply with these required plays may mean loss of game by forfeiture.	5
<b>IV Section 1 a</b>	All first and second year head coaches shall be required to attend the First and Second Year Coaches Orientation Meetings prior to the first practice of the football season.	7
<b>IV Section 1 b</b>	All head coaches shall be ASEP/PACE/USA Football certified and take CDC/NFHS Concussion training within 12 months of the team assignment. Provide Certification to the League.	7
<b>IV Section 1 c</b>	All head coaches shall be at least 21 years old prior to the beginning of the first day of practice.	1
<b>IV Section 1 d</b>	All head coaches shall supply the league with a sponsorship fee, by the first game of the current season.	6
<b>IV Section 1 e</b>	Head Coach is responsible for Equipment fitting, assisting, issuing, and return of equipment.	7
<b>IV Section 1 e</b>	Ensure sidelines at practice fields and games are kept clean and free of all litter.	6
<b>IV Section 1 e</b>	Head Coach/Representative are to attend Coaches Council Meetings.	6
<b>IV Section 1 e</b>	Responding to NMYAFL upon request or the team's parents with a financial statement weekly and upon request.	5
<b>IV Section 1 e</b>	Notifying the league of any contact information changes, email address changes, all phone number changes. All coaches must be able to be contacted by phone and email.	7
<b>IV Section 1 e</b>	Ensure that all coaches pass the background check and obtain badges to signify they have complied. Head coaches	1

	will also ensure that Team Moms/Dads also pass the background check. All individuals who have direct contact with players/cheerleaders must possess and display their badge to any League official whenever requested. Badges must be displayed in the bench area.	
<b>IV Section 1 e</b>	All Head Football Coaches must submit a candidate for the team cheerleading head coach as part of their Coach Application.	5
<b>IV Section 1e</b>	The Head Coach must submit game reports by Tuesday each week following a game.	6
<b>IV Section 1 f</b>	No head coach will be allowed to coach for more than one team during any NMYAFL season.	1
<b>VIII Section 1 (a)</b>	Asking for additional funds above and beyond the maximum mandatory contribution is to be done strictly on a volunteer basis, and at no time shall it be a requirement to raise additional funds to be able to participate on any team.	6
<b>VIII Section 1 (b)</b>	No child may be excluded from any gifts the team decides to purchase. If a coach withholds from any child because they believe the parents did not fund raise or contribute they will be in violation of league rules	6
<b>VIII Section 1 (c)</b>	Head coaches will ensure that no team fundraising shall take place prior to team consolidation. Any head coach found in violation of said rule may be investigated by the CSC and disciplinary action will be taken.	6
<b>VIII Section 1 (d)</b>	At no time shall any player/cheerleader participate or be present while the head coach or his/her staff is soliciting for sponsors.	6
<b>VIII Section 2 (a)</b>	Each team shall have a separate checking account for the team with the team name on the account. The account shall be used for all team purchases for both football and cheerleading but the Head Cheer Coach has the option of opening a separate account. Two signatures shall be required on the checking account and one signature shall be the head coach and the other signature shall be a parent or guardian of a team member who shall not be related by marriage or family to the head coach.	6
<b>VIII Section 2 (d)</b>	Financial statements must be made available to the parents of your team upon request. Financial statements will show all money raised and money paid out when and to whom. Due care will be exercised. See also Article III Section 3 of these rules for further guidance. Coaches failure to voluntarily provide your financial statement is subject to immediate suspension by CSC.	6
<b>IX Section 1</b>	Head coaches, assistant coaches, team dads, team moms, representatives, parents and fans and/or any other individual affiliated with NMYAFL are strictly prohibited from consuming alcoholic beverages.	4
<b>IX Section 1 (cont)</b>	Head coaches, assistant coaches, team dads, team moms, representatives, parents and fans and/or any other	1

	individual affiliated with NMYAFL are strictly prohibited from consuming illegal drugs.	
<b>IX Section 1 (cont)</b>	Head coaches, assistant coaches, team dads, team moms, representatives, parents and fans and/or any other individual affiliated with NMYAFL are strictly prohibited from consuming tobacco products.	7
<b>IX Section 2</b>	Profanity towards any individual is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated by the League. Complaints of this nature are serious and will be investigated immediately, and any coach accused of such actions shall be temporarily suspended from coaching until an investigation can be conducted. Any accused coach must meet with the CSC in order to determine what disciplinary action, if any, shall be taken, up to and including suspension or any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate.	6
<b>IX Section 2 (cont)</b>	Physical abuse towards any individual is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated by the League. Complaints of this nature are serious and will be investigated immediately, and any coach accused of such actions shall be temporarily suspended from coaching until an investigation can be conducted. Any accused coach must meet with the CSC in order to determine what disciplinary action, if any, shall be taken, up to and including suspension or any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate.	1
<b>IX Section 2 (cont)</b>	Verbal abuse towards any individual is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated by the League. Complaints of this nature are serious and will be investigated immediately, and any coach accused of such actions shall be temporarily suspended from coaching until an investigation can be conducted. Any accused coach must meet with the CSC in order to determine what disciplinary action, if any, shall be taken, up to and including suspension or any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate.	4
<b>IX Section 2 (cont)</b>	Striking, hitting, or kicking towards any individual is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated by the League. Complaints of this nature are serious and will be investigated immediately, and any coach accused of such actions shall be temporarily suspended from coaching until an investigation can be conducted. Any accused coach must meet with the CSC in order to determine what disciplinary action, if any, shall be taken, up to and including suspension or any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate.	1
<b>IX Section 3</b>	It is strictly prohibited for any person to directly or indirectly receive financial benefits or compensation or offer to pay anyone financial benefits or compensation for participating as a coach or player within the League. While sponsoring a players is allowed, using a sponsorship to encourage a child	1

	to play out of district is not allowed, nor is, back stacking, ghost enrolling.	
<b>IX Section 4</b>	No person barred/suspended from NMYAFL shall be permitted to participate in NMYAFL activities. Any head coach that knowingly takes as an assistant, a person who has been barred/suspended from NMYAFL, and is found in violation of this rule is subject to removal as head coach.	1
<b>IX Section 5</b>	One of the coach's functions is to teach proper respect for authority. Therefore, a coach must act with proper restraint in all of his/her actions towards the NMYAFL, its BOD, individuals and toward game officials. Any improper conduct by a coach towards any individual or game officials shall be cause for removal as a coach are also responsible to the action of their respective assistant coaches and parent of the players. They are also responsible for any and all misconduct by anyone on their sidelines before, during, and/or after a game, including, but no limited to taunting, fighting, and verbal abuse of officials.	7
<b>IX Section 7</b>	All teams will be represented at the monthly meeting of the Coaches Council. It is the Head Coach's responsibility to make certain that a representative from the coach's assigned team is in attendance at the Coaches Council meeting. The President of the Coaches Council has discretion in matters of attendance.	7
<b>IX Section 8</b>	Report in writing when a player quits or is injured due to a related league activity. It is the opinion of the League that if more than 10% of any team's members quit or are injured during the season; the Head Coach may be called upon by the CSC to give an explanation of the causes of such occurrences. In the event of injuries, any time a player is removed by medical personnel a report will be made to NMYAFL with diligence and timeliness.	6
<b>X 1d</b>	Unauthorized use of Funds	1
<b>X 1i</b>	Withholding player registrations	6
<b>X 1k</b>	Using or conspiring to use ineligible players	1
<b>X 1l</b>	Consistent Violations of league rules not listed in this section	7


## Chart of Sanctions

<b>Class</b>	<b>First Offense</b>	<b>Second Offense</b>	<b>Third Offense</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Suspension/Dismissal</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Suspension 4 Weeks</b>	<b>Suspension/Dismissal</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Suspension 3 Weeks</b>	<b>Suspension 4 Weeks</b>	<b>Suspension/Dismissal</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Suspension 2 Weeks</b>	<b>Suspension 3 Weeks</b>	<b>Suspension 4 Weeks</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Suspension 1 Week</b>	<b>Suspension 2 Weeks</b>	<b>Suspension 3 Weeks</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Written Reprimand</b>	<b>Suspension 1 Week</b>	<b>Suspension 2 Weeks</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Verbal Reprimand</b>	<b>Written Reprimand</b>	<b>Suspension 1 Week</b>

**New Mexico  
Young America  
Football League  
Spring Tackle  
League Rules**

## New Mexico Young America Football League

### 8 Man Tackle Football PLAYING Rules

#### Table of Contents:

Article I:	Basic 8 Man Tackle Football Rules
Article II:	Field Dimension/Uniforms/Equipment
Article III:	Game Timing/Timeouts/Scoring
Article IV:	Kicking
Article V:	Defense
Article VI:	Offense
Article VII:	Penalties
Article VIII:	All Other League Rules

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#### **Article I: Basic 8 Man Tackle Football Rules**

##### **Practice Times and Restrictions**

##### The first week practice restrictions are as follows:

- Five (5) days for practice are allowed the first week.
- Each practice of the first week must be no longer than 2 hours in length
- First day of first week – Helmet, T-Shirt, Shorts, Cup and Cleats – **No Contact**
- Second Day of first week – Full Uniform Allowed – **No Player on Player Contact**
- Third practice of first week and each day thereafter – Full Uniform Allowed – **Full Contact Allowed**

##### The first Saturday of season is scrimmage Day at Mesa Del Sol

##### The second week practice restrictions are as follows:

- Each practice of the second and each week thereafter must be no longer than 1 ½ hours in length
- Five days of practice are allowed during the second week.

##### The Third week practice restrictions are as follows:

- Each practice of the third week and thereafter must be no longer than 1 ½ hours in length
- Three days of practice are allowed during the third week and thereafter.

#### **All Age Divisions will play 8 Man Tackle Football**

- Games will start with a coin toss at midfield with the winner of the coin toss choosing between receiving the ball or deferring to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Half. The other team will then have the option of which direction to go or if they want the ball or not.
- **DECEPTIVE PLAYS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.** Trick plays are allowed that fall within the rules of the game. If there are questions regarding the definition of each, please contact the Director of Football or an official for clarification.
- One member from the home team and the visiting team's coaching staff or team parent will man the line markers during the game.

**Coaches on the Field:**

- One coach will be allowed on the field during the game from each team to assist in play calling for the Mite, Peewee, and Rookie divisions.

**Sideline Rules:**

- **Only those coaches on the official coaching roster, and who have gone through a background check will be allowed to be in the coaches and player box. Badges must be visible on each Coach/Team Manager.**
- It is the coach's responsibility to ensure the parents stay out of the restricted area. A referee can penalize the head coach for any misconduct on the sidelines of the team.

**Article II: Field Dimension/Uniforms/Equipment****Field Dimension:**

All teams will play on an 80 X 40 yard field.

**Uniforms/Equipment:**

Helmets, shoulder pads, integrated pants and game jersey will be provided for each player by NMYAFL following registration. There will be no equipment issued to any player who has not completed all of the registration forms signed by the proper party, or who have not paid their registration fees in full. Equipment may not be used in this program unless it is approved by NMYAFL.

Helmets and shoulder pads must be returned **within 5 days of final game**. Parents are responsible for the cost of additional equipment when the equipment needs to be replaced due to theft or loss. The athlete will not play until he or she has the proper equipment, the condition of the equipment is safe, and the athlete is properly wearing their equipment.

The uniform for spring tackle football consists of a white helmet with approved NMYAFL decals, color game jersey (NMYAFL logo printed on the front jersey, with a number on the front and back). A colored mouth piece other than white or clear is required to be worn at all times during practice and games.

Football or soccer 1/2 inch long maximum molded cleat or athletic shoe will be used for footwear. No Detachable cleats will be allowed. Uniformed Game Officials will have final authority as it relates to the proper uniform.

- **All Helmets must have the current NOCSAE approved "Warning Label" in a visible position on the outside of the helmet**
  - **This label shall not be removed and the player will not play if this label is removed.**

The wearing of mouth guards and chinstraps properly fastened is mandatory. A player will first be warned and then the team will be penalized for each additional violation.

- **All Equipment is subject to inspection and rejection. All decisions are final by NMYAFL Commissioners. Equipment inspections may occur on the field before, during, or after games to ensure an athlete's safety.**
- **Face Shields are permitted as long as they are clear and approved by NMYAFL.**

**Players are not allowed to participate in practice and games with cast or splints on any body parts, unless released with a physician's note.**

**Football Size:**

The size of the ball used during all games will be provided NMYAFL for all Age divisions.

Mites = Mini size football

Peewee and Rookie = Peewee size football

Freshmen and Sophomore = "Junior" size football

Junior = Youth Size Football

Varsity = Official Size

Coaches may use other youth size footballs in practice. However, it is recommended to use the provided footballs during both practice and games.

**Article III: Game Timing/Timeouts/Scoring/Game Clock****First Quarter**

- 12 Minutes running clock

**Second Quarter**

- 12 Minutes running clock

**Halftime**

- 8 Minutes

**Third Quarter**

- 12 Minutes running clock

**Fourth Quarter**

- 12 Minutes running clock

- Intermission between quarters will last approximately 1 minute. The clock starts for the next quarter when the next play is snapped. Referee will give 30 second play clock prior to play starting.
  - Playing time will be kept by the best means available to the official. In no case except injury, time outs, and other official delays at the discretion of the official will the clock stop during the game. The clock will not stop with an incomplete pass or player running out of bounds. The offensive team has 30 seconds to get the ball into play. **The clock will stop for change of possession.** Change of possession will take no longer than 30 seconds. The referee will begin the play clock, and the offense has 30 seconds before a delay of game penalty (5 yards penalty).
  - The game clock will not stop for player substitutions. The clock will stop at the referee's discretion for player injuries. Players must leave the game for at least one play after an injury.

**Timeouts:**

- Each team will have 3 time outs per half. There is no carryover of time outs. The clock starts after timeouts when next play begins.
- Timeouts will be 1 minute long, after 1 minute, 30 second play clock will start.

**Scoring:**

- Touchdowns = 6 Points
- Running Extra Point from 3 Yard Line = 1 Point
- Long Kick Option - Kicking Extra Point from 3 Yard Line = 2 Points Varsity and Juniors
- Close Kick Option - Kicking Extra Point from 3 Yards inside back of end zone line = 2 Points Mighty Mites through Sophomores. Team must kick if this option is chosen

- Defensive Safety = 2 Points

## **OVERTIME:**

If at the end of regulation play both teams are tied, two coaches and two players from each team will meet the referee at mid field for a coin toss. Both teams will get an offensive series and defense series. The team with the most points at the end of this first offense and defense series will determine the winner of the game. If the game is still tied the team will play a second play off as noted before. Each team will start their possessions from at the 10 yard line. The team with the most points at the end of the second overtime offense and defense series will determine the winner of the game. If there is still a need for a third or more overtimes. The above process will continue until one of the teams with the most points at the end of an overtime section wins. Starting with the 3<sup>rd</sup> overtime period, teams will be required to perform the extra point from the 8 yard line. **Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.**

## **Mercy Rule:**

No head coach will deliberately run up the score. Clock will start when a team has a 35 point differential during or start of 4th quarter. In the Mites, Pee-Wees, and Rookies Coaches will not be allowed on field when a team has a 21 point lead.

## **Article IV: Kicking**

### **Kick-offs:**

- The ball will be placed on the 30 Yard Line and kicked from a tee to start the half or after a touchdown.
- The receiving team shall have at least 3 players within 10 yards of the ball at the time the ball is kicked.
- The ball is spotted on the receiving team's 20 yard line when there is a "Touchback" to start the offensive plays.
- Following a defensive safety, the ball will be placed at the 20 yard line for a free kick.

### **Punting:**

- There will be rushing of the punter in all divisions.
- If the receiving team fumbles the ball while receiving it, the ball is live, but cannot be advanced by the defensive team.
  - The defense in all divisions may attempt to block the punt without roughing the punter.
  - The punter must be positioned at least three yards behind the line of scrimmage and between the tackles when he or she kicks the ball.
- The punter must be at least 7yds from line of scrimmage for center to be protected from contact.

### **Points After Touchdowns/Field Goals:**

- Close kick option: (applicable to point after kick in the Mighty Mite, Pee Wee, Rookie, Freshmen and Sophomore) Coaches have the option of requesting that the ball be placed 3 yards from the goal posts on the PAT (Point After Touchdown).
- The team must kick, if this option is exercised. If the close kick option is not chosen, a team may either kick or run. In the event of any defensive penalty, the kicking team may re-declare their option.
- If the Close Kick option is once again chosen and the penalty is accepted, the ball will be placed the same distance from the end line as it would have been placed from the goal line after the acceptance of the penalty.

- All PAT and Field Goal attempts are considered live ball- i.e. K can decline an encroachment call if PAT or Field Goal are successful. K may also accept the defensive penalty and decline the spot.

## **Article V: Defense**

- There is no minimum amount of down linemen on the defensive line
- Defensive lineman may line up in front of the offensive lineman, or in the gaps on the line of scrimmage, this includes lining head up in front of the center or either gap on the sides of the center
- The defensive unit cannot shout, yell, or clap their hands in order to disrupt the cadence of the offense.
- However, the defensive team may call audible plays while the offense is calling their play
- **Exception** – One coach is allowed on the field to call plays for the defensive team in the Mite, Peewee, and Rookie divisions only.
- Penalties for the above infractions will be 5 yards from the initial line of scrimmage.

## **Article VI: Offense**

- The offensive team has 4 downs to advance the ball 10 yards for another set of downs. - First downs will be marked by a sideline marker every 10 yards.
- In the Mite, Peewee, and Rookie divisions, one coach will be permitted to be on the field from each team to assist players with offense play calling.
- No Center sneaks.
- However, the guards/ends could become eligible if the coach aligns his players in such a manner to comply with the below 5 player on the line of scrimmage rule.

### **Formation/Motion:**

- No fewer than 5 offensive players are allowed to line up on the line of scrimmage.
- Centers must be covered up by 2 guards that are on the line of scrimmage and are no more than 2 yards from the center.
- Any player who is on the end of the line of scrimmage is an eligible receiver.
- All 3 backs / receivers are eligible as receivers who are lined up off the Line of Scrimmage
- The ends may be tight or split out as wide as the field and either stand or assume a three point stance
- One player may be in motion at a time once the team is set

### **Receiving:**

- All players on the end of the Line of Scrimmage or lined up in the backfield are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or passed laterally from the quarterback).
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

## **Article VII: Penalties (All Divisions)**

### **Tackle Penalty Summary**

**Loss of 5 Yards:**

- 1.Failure to properly wear mandatory equipment during down
- 2.Delay of game
- 3.Failure to properly wear mandatory player equipment just before the snap
- 4.Illegal substitution
- 5.Free-kick infraction
- 6.Free-kick out of bounds (ball will be placed at the offense's 20 yard line)
- 7.Invalid fair catch signal
- 8.Snap infraction
- 9.False start
10. formation
11. Illegal Less than 5 players on the line of scrimmage by the offense
12. Illegal motion
13. Illegally handing ball forward (loss of down)
14. Illegal forward pass (loss of down)
15. Intentional grounding (loss of down)
16. Ineligible receiver down field
17. Helping the runner
18. Incidental face mask contact
19. Sideline interference
20. Non players outside the box, but not on the field

**Loss of 10 yards:**

- 1.Illegal blocking technique
- 2.Interlocked blocking
- 3.Holding
- 4.Runner grasping a teammate
- 5.Illegal use of hands or arms
- 6.Illegal block in the back
- 7.Forward pass interference
- 8.Offensive pass interference (loss off down)
- 9.unsportsmanlike conduct(player non player)
10. Illegally kicking

**Disqualification associated with certain 10 yard penalties:**

- Fighting by player or non-player
- Intentionally contacting an official, coach, or commissioners
- Striking, kicking, or kneeing
- Any act if unduly rough or flagrant
- A second unsportsmanlike foul by player or non-player
- A substitute leaving the team box during a fight.

**Article VIII: All Other League Rules (All Divisions)**

- These rules are strictly playing rules for 8 man football and are not intended to replace any NMYAFL League rules regarding Coaches Conduct, Financial Responsibilities, etc.

# **2015 NMYAFL**

# **Flag Football Rules**

# OFFICIAL NMYAFL FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

## *THE GAME, FIELD, PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT*

### **General Rules**

1. The game should be played between 2 teams of 7 players each. Five players are required to avoid a forfeit.
2. The game shall be played under the supervision of 1 to 2 officials.
3. A speaking captain must be selected to make all decisions and shall be the only one who addresses the officials.
4. Team representatives, including players, substitutes, replaced players, coaches, trainers, and other persons affiliated with the team are subject to the rules of the game, and shall be governed by decisions of officials assigned to the game.

### **The Field**

1. The field should be a minimum of 40 yards in width, and contain four (4) twenty (20) yard zones with a ten (10) yard end zone on each end.
2. A one (1) yard wide line should be marked at each end at the three and ten yard lines in the middle of the field. These lines shall be used for the extra point try when a team scores a touchdown.

### **Game and Player Equipment (Legal)**

1. Football – The game ball shall be YAFL Division regulated size. If teams from different divisions should play, each team will be allowed to use their division's ball on their offensive possessions. The referee shall be the sole judge of any ball offered for play and may change the ball during play at his/her discretion.
2. Spot discs or bean bag - Two ball spotters are required. One, which shall mark the offensive scrimmage line. The second will mark the defensive scrimmage line, one yard away from the offensive line of scrimmage.
3. Jerseys - Players of opposing teams must wear contrasting colored jerseys, and/or pinnies.
4. Pants / Shorts - Each player must wear pants or shorts without any belt(s), belt loop(s), or exposed drawstrings. The pants or shorts must be a different color than the flags.
5. Flag belt - Each player must wear a one-piece belt at the waistline with two flags permanently attached, one flag on each side.  
**Penalty:** Dead Ball Foul – Failure to have flag belt legally attached prior to the snap, 5 yards from the succeeding spot.
6. Mouth Piece - Each player must wear a mouth piece the entire time the ball is in play.  
**Penalty:** Dead Ball Foul -The mouth piece must be securely placed in mouth prior to the snap, 5 yards from the succeeding spot.
7. Gloves - Players may wear gloves which must consist of a soft, pliable and nonabrasive material
8. Headwear – Players are not permitted to wear bandanas. Players may wear knit stocking caps, or elastic headbands. Hats may not have a bill.
9. Shoes – Shoes with cleats must be made of soft pliable plastic or rubber. No exposed metal cleats are permitted. (See illegal player equipment)

### **Game and Player Equipment (Illegal)**

1. A player wearing illegal equipment shall not be permitted to play. This applies to any equipment, which, in the opinion of the Referee, is dangerous or confusing. Types of equipment or substances which shall always be declared illegal include:
  - A. Headgear containing any hard, unyielding, or stiff material, including billed hats.
  - B. Jewelry
  - C. Pads or braces worn above the waist.
  - D. Shoes with metal and ceramic cleats. Any team found wearing illegal equipment will be penalized 15 yards, and the second warning results in a forfeit.
  - E. Shirts or jerseys, which do not remain, tucked in. Any hood on a coat, sweatshirt, or shirt, which does not remain tucked in.
  - F. Pants or shorts with any belt(s), belt loop(s), pocket(s) or exposed drawstring(s).
  - G. Leg and knee braces made of hard, unyielding material, unless covered on both sides and all edges overlapped, and any other hard substance is covered with at least 1/2 inch of closed cell slow recovery rubber or other material of similar thickness and physical properties.
  - H. Towels attached at the player's waist (flag only).
3. An official time out shall be declared to permit prompt repair of equipment, which becomes illegal or defective through use (except for illegal shoes).

### **DEFINITIONS OF PLAYING TERMS**

**Catch** - A catch is an act of establishing player possession of a live ball in flight.

**Clipping** – Clipping is running or diving into the back, or throwing or dropping the body across the back of the leg or legs of an opponent, or pushing an opponent in the back.

**Encroachment** - Encroachment is a term to indicate a defensive player is illegally in the neutral zone. An entering substitute is not considered to be a player for encroachment restrictions until he/she is on his/her team's side of the neutral zone.

**Fair Catch** – A signal made by receiving person of a punt in which the receiver cannot run after catching the ball and the ball is immediately down when caught.

**Foul** – A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is assessed.

**Fumble** - A fumble is a loss of player possession other than by handing passing or kicking the ball.

**Goal Line** – Each goal line is a vertical plane separating the end zone from the field of play. The plane of goal extends beyond the sideline.

**Hurdling** - Hurdling is an attempt by a player to jump with one or both feet or knees foremost over a player who is on his/her feet.

**Interception** - A catch of an opponent's pass or fumble in flight is an interception.

**Live Ball** - A pass or fumble, which has not yet touched the ground, is a live ball in flight and therefore can be caught and advanced by either team.

**Neutral Zone** - The neutral zone is the area between the offensive and defensive line of scrimmage that has been established by the spot cone markers and extends to each sideline. It is established when the ball is ready for play.

**Pass (Forward and Backward)** - A forward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction toward the opponent's end line. A backward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction parallel with or toward the passer's end line. A pass continues to be a pass until it is caught or strikes the ground. A backward pass that hits the ground is ruled the same as a fumble. It will be dead at the spot where it strikes the ground.

**Penalty** – A penalty is a loss imposed by rule upon a team that has committed a foul.

**Protective Scrimmage Kick** – A punt in which prohibits either team from advancing beyond their scrimmage lines until the ball is kicked.

**Punting** - A punt is kicking the ball by a player who drops it and kicks it before it hits the ground.

**Screen Blocking** - Screen Blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without initiating contact with him/her with any part of the screen blocker's body.

**Tagging** - Tagging is placing one hand anywhere between the shoulders and knees of an opponent with the ball. The tagger may leave his/her feet to make the tag. Pushing, striking, slapping, and holding are not permitted. If a player trips the runner in his/her attempt to make a diving tag, it is a penalty.

**Tripping** – Tripping is the use of the lower leg or foot to obstruct an opponent, including the runner, below the knee.

### ***PERIODS, TIME FACTORS, SUBSTITUTIONS***

1. **Game time is forfeit time.**
2. Captains Choice – The second team on the scoresheet shall be the home team and have the choice in the first half or the second half. Whichever team chooses to start on offense or defense, the other team chooses the direction.
3. Start of Half- Each half the ball will be placed on the twenty (20) yard line of the defense and the offense will start on first down. (After each score the ball will start on the twenty (20).)
4. Pinnies – Pinnies must be worn by the visiting team if a color conflict occurs (referees discretion).
5. Length of game - Playing Time shall be 40 minutes, divided into two halves of 20 minutes each. The intermission between halves shall be 5 minutes. When overtime is used, there will be a 3 minute intermission
6. Shortened Periods - Before the start of the game, playing time may be shortened by mutual agreement of the field captains and the Referee. Anytime during the game, the playing time of any remaining period(s) may be shortened by mutual agreement of the opposing captains and the Referee.
7. Extended Periods - A half may be extended by an untimed down when, during the last timed down, one of the following occurred:
  - A. If there was a foul by either team and the penalty is accepted.
  - B. If there was a double foul.
  - C. If there was an inadvertent whistle and the down is to be replayed.
  - D. If a touchdown was scored, the try is attempted unless the touchdown is scored during the last down of the second half and the point(s) would not affect the outcome of the game or playoff qualifying.
7. Continuous Clock - The Clock will start when the ball is legally snapped. It will run continuously for the **first 19 minutes** unless it is stopped for:
  - A. Team time-out (clock resumes on snap of next play)
  - B. Referee's time-out (clock resumes on official's ready to play whistle)
8. 2-Minute Warning - Approximately 2 minutes before the end of each half the Referee shall stop the clock and inform both captains of the playing time remaining in that half. The Back Judge will announce to the captains the remaining time and status of the clock after every play during the final 2 minutes.
9. Stopped Clock - **During the final 1 minute of each half** the clock will stop for the following and resume on the snap of the next play unless otherwise noted:
  - A. Incomplete Pass
  - B. Out-of-Bounds
  - C. Score (touchdown or safety)
  - D. Team time-out
  - E. Fair Catch
  - F. Penalty and administration
  - G. Referee's Time-out - starts at his/her discretion
  - H. Touchback
  - I. Change of Possession
  - J. Team attempting to conserve time illegally
10. Timing Errors - The Referee shall have the authority to correct obvious timing errors if discovery is prior to the second live ball following the error unless the period had officially ended.
11. Tie Game - In case of a playoff game or regular season game ending in a tie score, the officials must bring all players and coaches of both teams to the center of the field. They will discuss the tiebreaker procedures and answer all questions prior to the coin toss. After this meeting the field captains will stay while

the remaining players and coaches return to their respective sidelines.

- A. A coin will be flipped or odd/even choice by the captain will determine the options as in the start of the game. The winner of the toss shall be given the options of offense, or defense. The loser of the toss shall make a choice of the remaining options. **Each overtime period begins with a coin toss or odd/even choice.**
- B. **ALL OVERTIME PERIODS ARE PLAYED TOWARD THE SAME GOAL LINE.**
- C. Unless moved by penalty, each team will start 1<sup>st</sup> and goal from the 20 yard line. The object will be to score a touchdown. An overtime period consists of one possession by each time. If the score is still tied after one period, they go to a second period or as many as needed to determine a winner. If the first team which is awarded the ball scores, the opponent still has a chance to win the game. If the defense intercepts the pass or fumble and returns it for a touchdown, they win the game. If they do not return the interception for a touchdown, the ball will belong to the defense, as the offense did not convert their chance. They must convert to win or another period starts. Each team is entitled to one time-out per overtime period.
- D. Penalties - The offense should be awarded a new series of 4 downs when the penalty for defensive pass interference or roughing the passer is accepted. Dead ball fouls following a successful try will be penalized from the succeeding spot.

**11. Time-Outs – Each team is entitled to 2 charged timeouts per half of regulation play and 1 per overtime period.**

- A. The Referee shall declare time-out when he/she suspends the play for any reason. Each time-out shall be charged either to the Referee or one of the teams.
- B. The Referee shall declare an official's time-out when a team is illegally conserving time and administer a five-yard penalty.
- C. The Referee may declare an official's time-out for any contingency not covered elsewhere by the Rules.
- D. Coach-Referee Conference - When a team requests a charged time-out for a misapplication or misinterpretation of a rule, the Referee will confer with the IM supervisor and team captain or coach. The request must be made prior to the time the ball becomes alive following the play to be reviewed unless the period has officially ended. At the end of the half the team has until the first snap of the second half to protest.
- E. An injured or apparently injured player, who is discovered by an official while the ball is dead and the clock is stopped, shall be replaced for at least one down unless the halftime or overtime intermission occurs. A player who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has blood on the uniform shall be considered injured.

**12. Delays**

Delay of Game - The ball must be put in play promptly and legally and any action or inaction by either team, which tends to prevent this, is a delay of game. This includes:

- A. Failure to snap or free kick within 25 seconds after the ball is ready for play.
- B. Putting the ball in play before it is declared ready for play.
- C. Deliberately advancing the ball after it has been declared dead.

Unfair Tactics - The Referee may order the game clock started or stopped whenever, in his/her opinion; either team is trying to conserve or consume playing time by tactics obviously unfair.

**Penalty:** Delay of Game, 5 yards from previous spot.

**13. Substitutions - No substitute shall enter during a down. All substitutions must enter the game during a dead ball.**

***SERIES OF DOWNS, NUMBER OF DOWN, RUSHING & THE TEAM POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY***

Each team receives four (4) downs to pass the zone-line-to-gain or endzone.

- 1. The zone line-to-gain in any series shall be the zone in advance of the ball, unless distance has been lost due to penalty or failure to gain. In such case, the original zone in advance of the ball at the beginning of the series of downs is the zone line-to-gain or half way mark. The most forward point of the ball, when declared dead between the goal lines, shall be the determining factor.

2. A new series of downs shall be awarded when a team moves the ball into the next zone on a play free from penalty; or a penalty against the opponents moves the ball into the next zone; or an accepted penalty against the opponents involves an automatic first down; or either team has obtained legal possession of a ball as a result of a penalty, free kick, protected scrimmage kick, touchback, pass interception, or failure to gain the zone in advance of the ball.
3. Rushing the passer shall be allowed without restriction after 3 seconds has passed subsequent to the snap of the ball. Exception: Any time the ball is exchanged between players the defense may rush the opponent's backfield without restriction.  
**Penalty:** Off-sides, not a dead ball foul, 5 yards from the previous spot or choice to the decline the penalty.
4. If offsetting fouls occur during a down, that down shall be repeated.  
Exception: If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of team possession, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball, provided its foul was not prior to the final change of possession and it declines all penalties for its opponent's fouls, other than unsportsmanlike.

## ***KICKING THE BALL AND FAIR CATCH***

### Protected Scrimmage Kick

1. Prior to making the ball ready for play on fourth down, the Referee must ask the offense if he/she wants a protected kick (punt). The Referee must communicate this decision to the defensive captain and the other officials.
2. The offense must have all field players (typically 6) except the punter on the line of scrimmage. The defense must have at least 4 players within 1 yard of their scrimmage line. All players on the line of scrimmage must remain motionless until the kick is made. A line player may raise his/her arms to distract the kicker or block the kick but are not allowed to have forward progress.  
**Penalty:** Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot.
3. The kicker must be at least 5 yards behind the scrimmage line when receiving the snap. After receiving the snap, the kicker must kick the ball immediately and in a continuous motion.
4. Any kick caught by the kicking team behind the line of scrimmage cannot be advanced.
5. Any kick caught by the receiving team prior to the ball making contact with the ground may advance the ball. If the kick makes contact with the ground prior to the receiver the ball becomes dead.

### Fair Catch

1. Any receiver may signal for a fair catch while any kick is in flight and is beyond the kicker's free kick line.
2. If any receiver gives a valid signal for a fair catch and catches the kick beyond the kicker's line and between the goal lines, it is a fair catch and the ball becomes dead.
3. After a valid fair catch signal by any member of the receiving team, no receiver may advance the ball. When receiving a protected kick the receiver may call for a fair catch. The player must signal intention by extending one arm above his/her head and waving laterally from side to side more than once.
4. An invalid fair catch signal is any signal by a receiver before the kick is caught or recovered that does not meet the requirements of a valid signal or after the kick has touched a receiver or the ground.

## ***SNAPPING, HANDLING, PASSING, RECEIVING, RUNNING THE BALL***

### Prior to the Snap

1. Following the ready for play and until the snap, no player on defense may encroach, touch the ball, nor may any player contact opponents or in any other way interfere with them. This includes standing in the neutral zone to give defensive signals, or shifting through the zone. After the snapper has placed his/her hands on the ball, it is encroachment for any player to break the scrimmage line plane, except for the snapper's right to be over the ball. **Penalty:** Dead Ball Foul, Encroachment, 5 yards from the previous spot.
2. The snapper, after assuming position for the snap and adjusting the ball, may neither move nor change

the position of the ball in a manner simulating the beginning of a play until it is snapped. An infraction of this provision may be penalized, whether or not the ball is snapped, and the penalty for any resultant encroachment or contact foul by an opponent shall be cancelled.

#### Position and Action during the Snap

1. The offensive team must have at least 4 players on their scrimmage line at the snap. **Penalty:** Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from previous spot
2. All offensive players must be within 15 yards of the ball. **Penalty:** Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from previous spot
3. One offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion toward the opponent's goal line. **Penalty:** Illegal Motion, 5 yards from previous spot
4. The player who receives the snap may receive a snap from under center or a direct shogun snap behind the offensive scrimmage.
5. In a snap preceded by a huddle or shift, all offensive players must come to a complete stop and remain stationary in legal position without movement of feet, body, head, and arms for at least one full second before the snap. **Penalty –** Illegal Motion, 5 yards from previous spot

#### Passing and Receiving

1. There is no **diving** while running with the ball. A receiver may dive to catch a ball. A defensive player may dive for to try to remove a flag.
2. A runner may pass the ball backward or lose player possession by a fumble at any time except if intentionally thrown out-of-bounds to conserve time or to avoid being deflagged/tagged.
3. A backward pass or fumble which touches the ground between the goal lines is dead at the spot where it touches the ground and belongs to the last team in possession unless lost on downs.
4. A backward pass or fumble that goes out of -bounds between the goal lines belongs to the team last in possession at the out of -bounds spot. If out of bounds behind a goal line, it is a touchback or safety.
5. If an offensive player fumbles the ball prior to reaching the end zone and the ball lands in the end zone, the offensive team shall retain possession at the spot of the fumble.
6. All players are eligible to catch a pass.
7. A forward pass is illegal:
  - A. If the passer's foot is beyond the line of scrimmage.
  - B. If intentionally thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage.
  - C. If there is more than one forward pass per down.
8. The line of scrimmage remains throughout the play. A team may advance the ball across the line of scrimmage by laterals or runs, and then lateral the ball behind the line for a forward pass attempt.
9. If a player attempts a catch or intercept while in the air, the player must contact the ground inbounds with the ball in his/her possession prior to touching out-of-bounds, unless an opponent's contact causes him/her to first touch out-of- bounds.
  - A. If one foot first lands in-bounds and the receiver has possession and control of the ball, it is a catch or interception although a subsequent step or fall takes the receiver out-of-bounds.
  - B. A loss of ball simultaneously with returning to the ground is not a catch or interception.
10. A player may, while jumping in the air to attempt a catch, may pass (tip) the ball forward provided he/she has not touched the ground yet.
11. Pass Interference - Contact that interferes with an eligible receiver who is beyond the line of scrimmage is pass interference unless it occurs when 2 or more eligible receivers make a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, catch, or bat a pass. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged/tagged prior to touching the ball on a pass thrown beyond the line of scrimmage.
  - A. Offensive Pass Interference - after the ball is snapped, and until a receiver has touched it, there shall be no offensive pass interference beyond the line of scrimmage.  
**Penalty:** Offensive Pass Interference, 5 yards from previous spot, loss of down
  - B. Defensive Pass Interference - after the pass is thrown, and until it is touched, there shall be no defensive pass interference beyond the line of scrimmage while the ball is in flight.  
**Penalty:** Defensive Pass Interference, 5 yards from previous spot, automatic first down
14. Roughing the passer – Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into the passer

after it is clear the ball has been thrown, also there should be no attempts to hit the player's arm during a throwing motion.

**Penalty:** Roughing the Passer, 5 yards, automatic first down

### **Running and Flag Belt Removal**

1. **Flag Belt Removal** - When the flag belt is clearly taken from the runner in possession of the ball, the down shall end and the ball is declared dead. A player who removes the flag belt from the runner should immediately hold the flag belt above his/her head to assist the official in locating the spot where the capture occurred.
  - A. Players must have possession of the ball before they can legally be deflagged.
  - B. When a runner loses his/her flag belt either accidentally, inadvertently (not removed by grabbing or pulling), or on purpose, play continues. The deflagging reverts to a one-hand tag of the runner between the shoulders and knees.
  - C. In circumstances where a flag belt is removed illegally, play should continue with the option of the penalty or the play.
  - D. A defensive player intentionally pulling a flag belt from an offensive player without the ball is illegal. The official shall warn the team, any further penalty will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct.
  - E. Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain an advantage including tying, using foreign materials, or other such acts is illegal.
  - F. A player may leave his/her feet when trying to remove the flag.
2. **Contact** - In an attempt to remove the flag belt from a runner, defensive players may contact the body and shoulders, but not the face, neck or any part of the head of an opponent with their hands. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the runner down in an attempt to remove the flag belt.

**Penalty:** Defensive Holding, 5 yards from spot
3. **Flag Guarding** - A runner shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. A player may use a spin move, however; must keep their arms away from their flag to avoid flag guarding.

**Penalty:** Flag guarding, 5 yards from the spot of the penalty.
4. **Face Guarding** - A defensive player may not use their arms and hands to intentionally obstruct the receiver's view of the ball.

**Penalty:** Face guarding, 5 yards, automatic first down.
5. **Stiff Arm** - A runner shall be prohibited from contacting an opponent with an extended hand or arm which includes the use of a "stiff arm" to flag guard.

**Penalty:** Stiff Arm, 5 yards from the spot of the penalty
6. **Helping the runner** - A player shall not grasp, pull, push or aid any teammate runner.

**Penalty:** Helping the Runner, 5 yards from spot of the penalty.

### **BLOCKING**

1. **Offense Blocking** - The offensive blocking shall take place with the blockers hands in front in a pass blocking manner within 5 yards from the line of scrimmage. The blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side, in front, or behind his/her back 5yards and beyond from the line of scrimmage. Any use of the elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during an offensive block is illegal.

**Penalty:** Personal Foul, 5 yards from the spot of the penalty
2. **Interlock Blocking** - Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere for him/her by screen blocking, but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner.
3. **Defensive Rush and Use of Hands** - Defensive players must attempt to go around the offensive blocker. Defensive players must not use any part of his/her arms, hands, elbows, or any part of the body to contact the offensive player.

**Penalty:** Personal Foul, 5 yards from previous spot

### **SCORING PLAYS AND TOUCHBACKS**

### Mercy Rule

1. If a team is 25 or more points ahead with 5 minutes to go in the second half, the game shall be officially called.
2. If a team scores during the last 5 minutes of the second half and that score creates a point differential of 25 or more the game shall end at that point.
3. The team can still play if they want. (Service to participate)

### Touchdown

1. All touchdowns are 6 points
2. A touchdown shall be scored when a legal forward pass is completed or a fumble or backward pass is caught behind the opponent's goal line or when a player is legally in possession of the ball and penetrates the vertical plane of the opponent's goal line

### Extra Point Try = 1, or 2,

An opportunity to score 1 point from the 3-yard line or 2 points from the 10 yard line, shall be granted to the team scoring a touchdown. While time is out there shall be one scrimmage play, unless changed by penalty.

1. The Referee must speak to the field captain, asking him/her whether the try shall be from the 3 or 10-yard line. Once the scoring team makes the choice, he/she may change the decision only by taking a charged team time out.
2. If a double foul occurs during the down, the down shall be replayed. When a distance penalty is incurred by the offense during a successful try, the down will be repeated, if accepted. However, if the offense penalty carries a loss of down, the try has ended and will not be repeated.

### Safety = 2 points

1. It is a safety when a runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across his/her own goal line, and it becomes dead there in his/her team's possession.

#### Exception: Momentum Rule

2. A safety is also when an offensive player commits a foul for which the penalty is accepted and the measurement is from the spot of the foul that is in the end zone.
3. When a safety is scored, the ball belongs to the defending team, and they shall put the ball in play from the 20 yard line.

### Overtime

1. The overtime tiebreaker rule will be in effect for NMYAFL flag season and championship games. The ball shall be placed on the 20 yard line and each team will have 4 downs to score for each overtime period

## **CONDUCT OF PLAYERS AND OTHERS**

### Unsportsmanlike Conduct

1. No player shall commit non-contact acts during a period or intermission. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - A. Any acts of unfair play.
  - B. Using disconcerting acts or words prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with the offense's signals or movements.
  - C. Intentionally kicking at any opposing player.
  - D. Intentionally swinging an arm, hand or fist at any opposing player.
2. Dead Ball Player Fouls
  - A. Intentionally kicking the ball.
  - B. Spike the ball into the ground.
  - C. Throw the ball high into the air.
3. Prohibited Acts - There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct by players, substitutes, coaches or others subject to the Rules. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - A. Attempting to influence a decision by an official.
  - B. Disrespectfully addressing an official.

- C. Indicating objections to an official's decision.
- D. Holding an unauthorized conference, or being on the field illegally.
- E. Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
- F. Intentionally contacting a game official physically during the game by persons subject to the rules.

#### Personal Fouls

1. No player shall commit a personal foul during a period or an intermission. Any act prohibited hereunder or any other act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul. No player shall:
  - A. Punch, strike, strip, steal, or attempt to steal the ball from a player in possession.
  - B. Trip an opponent.
  - C. Contact an opponent who is on the ground.
  - D. Throw the runner to the ground.
  - E. Hurdle any other player.
  - F. Contact an opponent either before or after the ball is declared dead.
  - G. Make any contact with an opponent that is deemed unnecessary of any nature including using fists, locked hands, elbows, or any part of the forearm or hand, except according to Flag Rules.
  - H. Deliberately drive or run into a defensive player.
  - I. Clip an opponent.
  - J. Tackling the runner.

#### **ENFORCEMENT OF PENALTIES**

1. Captain's Choice - When a foul occurs during a live ball, the referee shall, at the end of the down, notify both captains. The referee shall inform the captain of the offended team regarding the rights of penalty acceptance or declination and shall indicate to him/her the number of the ensuing down, distance to be gained, and status of the ball for each available choice. The distance penalty for any foul may be declined. If the penalty is declined or if there is a double foul, there is no loss of distance. A captain's choice of options may not be revoked.
2. Live Ball Fouls – Any live ball foul is penalized according to the all-but one enforcement principle, except:
  - A. A foul that occurs simultaneously with the snap or free kick is penalized from the previous spot.
  - B. A non-player foul, unsportsmanlike foul or dead ball foul is penalized from the succeeding spot.
3. Dead Ball Fouls – When a foul occurs during a dead ball either between downs or before a snap or free kick, the officials shall not permit the ball to become live.
4. Establish Zone-line-to-gain - On a live ball foul mark off the penalty yardage first, then establish the zone line to gain. However, with a dead ball foul, establish the zone line to gain first, and then mark off the penalty yardage.
5. All-But-One Principle - Enforcement philosophy is based on the fact that a team is given the advantage of the distance that is gained without assistance of a foul. It is assumed that the only foul that would give this aid is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot. Therefore, all fouls but this one, that is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot, is penalized from the basic spot. This one foul is penalized from the spot of the foul.
6. Loose Ball Play – If a foul occurs during a loose ball play, the basic enforcement spot is the previous spot either the spot of the snap or the free kick.
7. Running Play – If a foul occurs during a running play, the basic enforcement spot is the spot where the related run ends.
8. Half the Distance - A measurement cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line. If the penalty is greater than this, the ball is placed halfway between the enforcement spot and the goal line.
9. Safety / Goal Line - If the offensive team throws an illegal forward pass from its end zone or commits any other foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from or behind its goal line which is now the basic spot, it is a safety. For a defensive team foul, if the enforcement spot that is now the basic spot is on or behind the offended team's goal line any measurement is from the goal line.

10. Foul on a Score - If there is a player foul by the offensive team other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer, during a down which results in a successful touchdown or try, the acceptance of the penalty nullifies the score. If there is a player *foul* by the defensive team, other than unsportsmanlike or non-player, during a down which results in a successful touchdown or try, the penalty is automatically declined.
11. Foul Prior to a Try - When a foul occurs after a touchdown and before the ball is ready for play for the try, the enforcement is at the succeeding spot where the ball will be next snapped for the try, usually the 3 or 10 yard line.
12. Double Foul - It is a double foul if both teams commit fouls, other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer, during the same live ball period in which:
  - A. There is no change of possession.
  - B. There is a change of possession, and the team in possession at the end of the down fouls prior to final change of possession.
  - C. There is a change of possession and the team in final possession accepts the penalty for its opponent's foul.

In all three the penalties cancel and the down is replayed.













EXCEPTION: If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of team possession, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball, provided its foul is not prior to the final change of possession and it declined the penalty for its opponents foul(s), other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer.
13. Multiple Live Ball Fouls - When 2 or more live ball fouls are committed by the same team, only one penalty may be chosen except when a foul(s) for unsportsmanlike or nonplayer conduct occurs. In such cases, the penalty/penalties for the unsportsmanlike conduct or nonplayer fouls are administered from the succeeding spot as a dead ball foul.
14. Multiple Dead Ball Fouls - Penalties for dead ball fouls are administered separately and in the order of occurrence. Dead ball fouls are not coupled with live ball fouls or other dead ball fouls to create double or multiple fouls. Penalize all unsportsmanlike and nonplayer fouls separately.

## Appendix I.

### OFFICIAL'S SIGNALS

FOOTBALL OFFICIALS' SIGNALS		
		
Encroachment (Follows dead ball four signal)	False Start: illegal position or procedure equal forward handling	Illegal Shift, Illegal Motion
		
Illegal Participation	Delay of Game Drawing	Personal Foul
		
Clipping	Roughing the Kicker	Unsportsmanlike conduct, Delay start of half
		
Illegal use of hand or arm	Failure to wear required equipment	Illegal forward pass
		
Interference with fair catch or forward pass	Illegal receiver down held on pass	Illegal kicking or batting a loose ball. Also for first touching of a kick.

From Football Rulebook, The National Federation of State High School Ass'n

 <p>Incomplete forward pass—penalty declined—no play or no score.</p>	 <p>Pushing, helping runner or interlocked interference.</p>	 <p>Touchback (Wave sideways.)</p>
 <p>Touchdown or field goal.</p>	 <p>Safety.</p>	 <p>Time out.</p>
 <p>Official's time out—follows time-out signal.</p>	 <p>First down.</p>	 <p>Dead Ball Four. Follow with four signal.</p>
 <p>Ball ready for play.</p>	 <p>Clock starts.</p>	 <p>Loss of down.</p>
 <p>Grasping opponent's face protector.</p>	 <p>Illegal block below the waist.</p>	 <p>Invalid Fair Catch Signal.</p>

