



**Independent Youth Football League**  
**2025 Playing Rules**

## Outline of IYFL Rules Changes

### 5.21.24

- **General Number Order of Rules**
- **Section 2, Playing Rules:**
  - **4) 7U: Two** coaches per team allowed on the field during weeks 1 – 4. Only **one** coach is allowed on the field for weeks 5 – 8. MUST stay out of the way of play.
  - **16)** Game Scores will be recorded with IYFL
- **Section 4.1 (d) Age Standards** Eligible Players who are in High School may participate, but may NOT be on a HS Varsity roster.
- **Section 4.2 (d)** No player may be a MEMBER OF/OR ROSTERED ON MORE THAN ONE (1) ORGANIZED FOOTBALL TEAM SIMULTANEOUSLY, during a football season.
- **Section 6 (c)** Heat Acclimatization Period

### 6.18.24

#### **Section 2.7 Medical**

- c) Gameday medical personnel must be cleared by the IYFL Executive board PRIOR to being allowed on the field. All league representatives will have access to a cleared list of medical personnel across the league. If a person is not on that list, they are not an acceptable choice to provide on-field medical care for games.
- f) If cleared gameday medical personnel need to leave for an emergency, another cleared medical person MUST take their place for the game to resume.
- g) If cleared gameday medical personnel are not available for the start of a game and cannot be substituted for by other cleared gameday personnel, that game is a forfeit by the home team.
- h) Designated gameday medical personnel MUST have a tent station on the field where they actively watch gameplay and have no other responsibilities. Gameplay will not begin without having this tent station in place.

### 8.13.24 Changes

**1) Argumentative vs Overly argumentative:** Overly argumentative was used in initial IYFL Rules. Denotes being belligerent, hostile, aggressive.

7.1 A (3) - Added “overly” argumentative and descriptive verbs (belligerent, hostile, aggressive)

7.2 D – original IYFL Rules use “overly argumentative” and is appropriate.

**2) “Threaten” definition** - indicates or suggests approach of possible trouble or danger; to remain poised to inflict harm, danger or distress on.

“Threaten” is used in 7.2 A & 7.2 B – this is original language in IYFL Rules and is an appropriate use of word.

**3) Violations with Consequence for Organization: 7.2 highlighted sections, 7.3 highlighted sections, and 7.4 A highlighted section.** Replaced with consistent language that is used elsewhere in Rules for violation procedure (see 6A and 7.5)

“Violations will follow the Violation Procedure Process outlined in Section 7.5 in accordance with IYFL By-Laws. The IYFL Executive Board shall investigate and determine any organizational consequence(s). A ruling will be handed down by the Commissioner within five (5) days after receipt of notification of violations. There is no appeal from the action of the Commissioner.”

**Removed language defining specific Org Consequence. Section 7.3, Section 7.4 A**

**4) Violation Procedure Process timeline:** shortened time from ten (10) days to five (5) days for decision. Section 6 A, Section 7.2 Violations, Section 7.3, Section 7.4A, Section 7.5

**5) Section 7.4 Mercy Rule:** Rules apply to Varsity and JV levels

### **8.20.24 Changes**

- 1) **Section 7.1 D (1)** – added “spectator” to penalties for violation.
- 2) **Section 7.2** - Removed redundant paragraph re: violations C-G

### **9.17.24 Changes**

Added: **Section 7.8 Weapons**

### **10.1.24 Changes**

Added: **Section 13.3 B Drones**

### **10.22.24 Changes**

Added: **Section 2.1 (G) 7U & 9U JV Playing Rules:** No QB sneaks. Player taking direct snap from center (QB by rule) may not be any closer than 4 yards in order to run through the A-Gaps.

### **3.18.25 Changes:**

#### **Section 8 (C) Officials**

- Increased number of Officials: Three (3) officials per 7U, 9UJV & 9U V game and four (4) officials per 11U JV, 11U V, 13U JV & 13U V game.
- During playoffs, the number of officials shall be four (4) per 7U & 9UV game; five (5) per 11U & 13UV game.

### **6.17.25 Changes:**

#### **Modified Section 4.2: (d) and A**

- Allows for 11U players who are in middle school to play for a middle school affiliated team.

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Independent Season Playing Rules**

Independent Youth Football League Playing Rules will be in effect for all participating clubs during all pre-season, regular season, and post season.

The levels for teams include – Flag, 7U, 9U, 11U, 13U.

### **A. Failure to Field a Team**

No penalty

### **B. Dropping a Team**

Any organization dropping a team from ANY of the age classes, Varsity or JV **AFTER THE SEASON HAS STARTED** shall pay \$100.00 per game penalty to the opposing teams for the games not played, unless the forfeited game can be rescheduled with another team.

## **1.2. Rules Changes**

### **A. General**

Rule changes are passed by a simple majority vote.

# **2. General Playing Rules**

## **2.1 Follow NFHS Rules**

National Federation of State High School Associations rules and handbook (interpretations) of the current year shall apply, with the following exceptions:

### **A. Quarters**

Quarters shall be:

- 1) Ten (10) minute quarters for all Teams
- 2) There will be a maximum of ten (10) minutes at halftime of all games.

### **B. Point After Touchdown**

Point after touchdown shall be:

One (1) if by pass or rush from ball placement at the 2 yard line.

Two (2) if by place or drop kick from ball placement at the 2 yard line. Two (2) if by pass or rush from ball placement at the 5 yard line.

### **C. Overtime (Playoff Tie Game)**

A game during the regular playing season can end in a tie and is counted as such (see Section 3.3 – Point System). However, a game during the playoffs (including a championship game) that ends in a tie must determine a winner. The PIAA tie breaking playoff procedure will be used with the following exception:

The line of scrimmage will be the 10-yard line instead of the 25- yard line.

### **D. Playing with a Cast**

Cast must be completely covered and inspected by the game officials.

### **E. Jerseys**

Players wearing the same numbers are allowed but cannot be on the field at the same time.

### **F. Time Clock**

The official time is kept on the field unless there is an official in the press box keeping time.

Per current NFHS rules game clock shall start on the referee's ready for play signal/whistle with the following exception:

When the time remaining in the half or end of game is four (4) minutes or less the game clock shall stop on change of possession and start on the snap of the ball.

A scoreboard is mandatory for all playoff games.

### **G. 7U & 9U JV Playing Rules**

**The following provisions apply to the 7U & 9U JV Divisions ONLY**

- 1) Timing shall be two (2) 25 minute halves with **running clock**. Clock stops for injuries, TO's & TD's (start on reset). Games not to exceed 1 hour.
- 2) There shall be a 40 second play clock with refs giving some leniency as needed earlier in season.
- 3) Two (2) timeouts per half.
- 4) **7U: Two** coaches per team allowed on the field during weeks 1 – 4. Only **one** coach is allowed on the field for weeks 5 – 8. **MUST** stay out of the way of play.
- 5) **9U JV: One** coach per team allowed on the field. **MUST** stay out of way of play.

- 6) There is NO kicking game (kick-offs). Offensive team starts on own 40-yard line. Teams may attempt PAT per Varsity rules (1 pt from 2 yard line or 2 pt from 5 yard line).
- 7) Punting is allowed outside of the opponents 35-yard line. A 15-yard walk-off or a dead ball punt option is allowed. Team will have the option to have a player drop back 5 yards and have a free punt. There is no center snap. There is no defensive rush allowed. The ball is dead where it rests; caught or touched by either team. Return team must be in the acceptable defensive formation (6/2 - Cover 1/3 with 2 ILB, 2 CB 5 yards from LOS with FS being only exception being permitted to roam free).
- 8) After a safety, the ball is moved to the **OPPONENTS** 40-yard line going in.
- 9) No Blitzing AT ALL. LB delayed blitz NOT allowed - must be 5 yards from LOS at time of snap.
- 10) Interceptions Play Out as normal.
- 11) **Fumbles:** Play Out as normal in standard field of play; however, if fumble initiated behind LOS defense may not gain possession (loss of down), BUT offense MAY advance behind LOS.
- 12) Defense must be "6-2". 6 linemen; 2 Linebackers, 2 cornerbacks, 1 safety. LB & CB **starts 5-yards from LOS** and CB 5-yards outside of last player on line of scrimmage. Safety starts 10-yd from LOS. After the snap the defensive players are not restricted in any way, normal football rules apply.
- 13) **No** defensive player may lineup in the "A" gaps or directly over the center. There are no maximum splits.
- 14) Offense shall have no more than 3 players on the LOS on either side of the center (including wide receivers); players lined up in the backfield, with the exception of the quarterback under center, shall be a minimum of 2 yds behind the LOS. Shifts and motions are allowed.
- 15) No QB sneaks Player taking direct snap from center (QB by rule) may not be any closer than 4 yards in order to run through the A-Gaps. *(updated 10.22.24)*
- 16) Game Scores will be recorded with IYFL

## **2.2 Playing Field**

### **A. Goal Posts & Field Size**

No less than one (1) goal post. Field will be 100 yard (plus end zones) in length, marked in five (5) or ten (10) yard increments. There shall be no reduction in width, i.e., 160 feet. In-bounds line should be marked on the yard lines, if possible.

## **B. Crowd Control**

Fields must be roped off including the end zones. For safety concerns, be aware of the devices and types of materials used to hold the ropes.

Sideline control (of parents and coaches) is the responsibility of both teams.

## **C. Sideline Game Personnel**

- a) Team Coaching Staff
  - The head coach, president, or the league rep are the only ones to communicate with the officials.
- b) Medical personnel
- c) Two (2) water boys
- d) One (1) camera person
- e) All sideline personnel need to be in the coaches' box between the 25 yard lines.

## **2.3 Game Balls**

Home Team provides leather (or composite K2) Wilson footballs for game. If visiting team wants to use their football, they must bring qualified football onto field with them at change of possession, without delaying game.

- a) 9U and under teams shall be the leather or composite Wilson K2.
- b) 11U teams shall be the leather Wilson TDJ.
- c) 13U teams shall be the leather Wilson TDY.

## **2.4 Game Times**

### **A. Regular Season**

Prior to beginning of the season, each participating club will announce their regular home game weekend schedule, which could be subject to revision on as-needed basis. Any such schedule changes must be agreed upon by the home and away clubs, referees.

### **B. Playoff Games**

At a Meeting held one week before the playoff weekend, each home club will announce their preferred playoff game day and time. Once all clubs have announced their preference, a schedule will be agreed upon and announced that will ensure adequate referee coverage for each game.

### **C. Championship Games**

To be scheduled according to field availability (see Section 7 Post-Season).

## **2.5 Weather Conditions**

### **A. Home Team**

In inclement weather, it will be the decision of the home team to decide if the game will be played. Every effort should be made to play scheduled games. **If cancelled, communication will only be made by the home team's league rep.**

On Saturday rain-outs, the games should be rescheduled for Sunday if possible. If not possible and for those teams without lights, the home teams will travel on the following day (Sunday to the visiting team's field) in order to make-up the game. Original home team will remain the same for the purpose of the coin toss. Starting time will be at the discretion of the organization hosting the game.

The team in charge of the field which is being used Sunday for the purpose of make-up of Saturday rain-out has the option of canceling game if they feel condition of field warrants cancellation.

**NOTE:** Sunday Games canceled are to be rescheduled by the following Wednesday night at a neutral field with lights. If scheduled Home Team has lights on field, game will be rescheduled for Monday night.

Friday night games canceled will be rescheduled for Saturday at Home Team field. Saturday night games canceled will be rescheduled for Sunday at Home Team field.

### **B. Cancellation Procedure**

If the game is called, the League Rep for the Home Team is to call the League Rep, Alternate League Rep, or President of the Visiting Team, and the Head Official to cancel officials for the day. It is the visiting team's responsibility to contact people within their organization.

The following times are to be used by all League Reps to cancel games: **GAMES MUST BE CANCELED 2 HOURS BEFORE 1<sup>ST</sup> GAME.**

## **2.6 Equipment**

Each player must be equipped as follows in order to participate in practices and/or games.

- a) Helmet - approved (NOCSAE) type with plastic or rubber coated steel face guard.
- b) Durable shoulder pads.
- c) One piece (or two piece) pants with hip, spine, thigh and knee pads.
- d) Sneakers or football shoes with rubber cleats – 5/8 inch maximum
- e) Mouthpiece (colored, molded plastic/rubber)
- f) Socks must be worn at all games.

**NOTE:** No player will be allowed to participate in a practice and/or game unless equipped as listed above, except for non-body contact practice.

The Teams' Coaching Staff is responsible for players to wear all required safety equipment. Any player found to not be wearing the proper, required safety equipment will result in immediate ineligibility status.

No uniform modifications.

A shield added to the helmet must be CLEAR with NO visible tint, No mirrored finish.

Face paint is limited to only one (1) stripe under the eye.

## **2.7 Medical Personnel**

- a) There must be at least one (1) person at the practice facility at all times who is certified, has completed basic first aid and CPR training.
- b) Sports Medicine Trainer or emergency medical (EMT) personnel or personnel with advance first aid certification shall be present at every game and shall be provided by the HOME team. The cost of the medical personnel shall be the responsibility of the HOME team.
- c) Gameday medical personnel must be cleared by the IYFL Executive board PRIOR to being allowed on the field. All league representatives will have access to a cleared list of medical personnel across the league. If a person is not on that list, they are not an acceptable choice to provide on-field medical care for games. *(Updated 6.18.24)*
- d) Each home team is responsible to have a form of communication to call an Ambulance.
- e) Home medical personnel MUST present themselves to the visiting team.
- f) Each home team's emergency medical personnel must guarantee that they will be at the game until its conclusion. If cleared gameday medical personnel need to leave for an emergency, another cleared medical person MUST take their place for the game to resume. *(Updated 6.18.24)*
- g) If cleared gameday medical personnel are not available for the start of a game and cannot be substituted for by other cleared gameday personnel, that game is a forfeit by the home team. *(Updated 6.18.24)*
- h) Designated gameday medical personnel MUST have a tent station on the field where they actively watch gameplay and have no other responsibilities. Gameplay will not begin without having this tent station in place. *(Updated 6.18.24)*

NOTE: If the home team does not have medical personnel on the field at the start of a game, and visiting team does, the game may start. This rule is to be used only if home team medical personnel is called away for an emergency prior to the start of the game.

## **3. Schedules/Standings/Playoffs**

### **3.1 Point System**

#### **A. Standings**

Standings are based on the total points awarded for each win and each tie.

- 1) For a win, a team will receive ten (10) points.
- 2) For a tie, a team will receive five (5) points.
- 3) For a forfeit, a team receiving the forfeit will be awarded a win and will receive ten (10) points; the forfeiting team will be given a loss. Forfeits will be recorded as a 2-0 score.
- 4) For a bye, a team will receive ten (10) points.

## **B. Bonus Points**

Each team will receive bonus points based on wins/ties recorded by the teams that they defeat during the regular season, and will be awarded as follows:

- 1) For each opponent's win, a team will receive two (2) bonus points.
- 2) For each opponent's tie, a team will receive one (1) bonus point.
- 3) There are no bonus points associated with byes.

## **3.2 Playoffs**

Prior to the April meeting Club members shall make a simple majority vote to determine the number of regular season games and playoff format.

For all playoff formats and regardless of division structure, playoff seeding shall be based on total accumulated regular season points.

### **A. Playoff Format (8 Team)**

- 1) Top 8 teams based on regular season point totals are eligible for playoffs.
- 2) Playoff Week one (1):
  - Team one (1) vs. Team eight (8) Team two (2) vs. Team seven (7)
  - Team three (3) vs. Team six (6) Team four (4) vs. Team five (5)
- 3) Playoff Week Two (2):
  - Highest seed vs. Lowest seed
  - Second Highest seed vs. Second Lowest seed
- 4) The winners from Playoff Week 2 meet for the IYFL Championship game.

### **B. Division Playoff Format (12 Team)**

- 1) Top 12 teams based on regular season point totals are eligible for playoffs.
- 2) Playoff Week one (1):
  - Top four (4) teams shall receive a BYE
  - Team five (5) vs. Team twelve (12) Team six (6) vs. Team eleven (11)
  - Team seven (7) vs. Team ten (10) Team eight (8) vs. Team nine (9)
- 3) Playoff Week Two (2):
  - Team one (1) vs. Lowest remaining seed
  - Team two (2) vs. Second Lowest remaining seed
  - Team three (3) vs. Third Lowest remaining seed
  - Team four (4) vs. Fourth Lowest remaining seed
- 4) Playoff Week Three (3):
  - Highest seed vs. Lowest seed
  - Second Highest seed vs. Second Lowest seed
- 5) The winners from Playoff Week 3 meet for the IYFL Championship game.

### **C. Division Playoff Format (16 Team)**

- 1) Top 16 teams based on regular season point totals are eligible for playoffs.
- 2) Playoff Week one (1):
  - Team one (1) vs. Team nine (9) Team two (2) vs. Team ten (10)
  - Team three (3) vs. Team eleven (11) Team four (4) vs. Team twelve (12)
  - Team five (5) vs. Team thirteen (13) Team six (6) vs. Team fourteen (14)
  - Team seven (7) vs. Team fifteen (15) Team eight (8) vs. Team sixteen (16)
- 3) Playoff Week Two (2):
  - Highest remaining seed vs. Lowest remaining seed
  - Second Highest remaining seed vs. Second Lowest remaining seed
  - Third Highest remaining seed vs. Third Lowest remaining seed
  - Fourth Highest remaining seed vs. Fourth Lowest remaining seed
- 4) Playoff Week Three (3):
  - Highest remaining seed vs. Lowest remaining seed
  - Second Highest remaining seed vs. Second Lowest remaining seed
- 5) The winners from Playoff Week 3 meet for the IYFL Championship game

### **3.3 Tie Breakers**

Tiebreakers for determining Week 1 Playoff seeding, by order of priority:

- 1) Head-to-Head Record
- 2) Strength of Schedule – Opponent Cumulative Point Total
- 3) Coin Flip

### **3.4 IYFL Post Season Advancement Tiebreaker**

In the event that the IYFL Champion at a particular level is unable or unwilling to advance to the IYFL post season opportunity, the next most-deserving team will be offered the opportunity based on the following order of priority:

- 1) Championship Game Runner-Up
- 2) Playoff Semi-Finalist
- 3) Head-to-Head Regular Season
- 4) Regular Season Point Total
- 5) Coin Flip

## 4. Team Personnel

### 4.1 Age Standards

Note: The following age guidelines apply to ALL IYFL teams (Varsity and all B teams).

The age schematic provides a uniform series of two basic years of age qualification for each division of play.

Member clubs have the PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY to verify that the player and state birth certificate presented are true and legal.

#### A. 7U Team (6-7 year olds)

Players may not turn 8 years of age ON or BEFORE July 31 of the calendar year of the football season to be eligible to play on the 7U team.

#### B. 9U Team (8-9 year olds)

Players may not turn 10 years of age ON or BEFORE July 31 of the calendar year of the football season to be eligible to play on the 9U team.

#### C. 11U Team (10-11 year olds)

Players may not turn 12 years of age ON or BEFORE July 31 of the calendar year of the football season to be eligible to play on the 11U team.

#### D. 13U Team (12-13 year olds)

Players may not turn 14 years of age ON or BEFORE July 31 of the calendar year of the football season to be eligible to play on the 13U team.

Eligible Players who are in High School may participate, but may NOT be on a HS Varsity roster.

#### E. Violation

If a player is ineligible due to age, all games in which player participated previously will be forfeited, and the player is suspended from all League play for the remainder of the season, plus Club is put on one-year probation with vote to remove organization from IYFL altogether.

### 4.2 Squad Makeup

- a) Each squad shall be composed of not less than fifteen (15) players and there shall be no maximum number of players on a team. The squad should also consist of a Head Coach, and at least two (2) assistants.
- b) A player may not be on more than one team roster of a League Club with the exception of JV/V at the same level of play. **Penalty:** all games forfeited in which the player participated and that team forfeiting its playoff participation.
- c) Not less than Eleven (11) players must be suited up and available to play in order to start a League game. **Penalty:** forfeiture of the game.

1) d) No player may be a MEMBER OF/OR ROSTERED ON MORE THAN ONE (1) ORGANIZED FOOTBALL TEAM SIMULTANEOUSLY, during a football season. **Penalty:** all games forfeited in which the player participated and that team forfeiting its playoff participation. An exception is made for CYO at all levels and the 11U and 13U teams – see Section 4.2A. (updated 6.17.25)

e) An organized team is deemed to mean any athletic endeavor sponsored by a school, church or other civic organization scheduling football games during the regular IYFL season.

#### **A. Middle School Players on Dual Rosters**

Players may be rostered on and/or play on IYFL team and middle school affiliated team at the discretion of the member club. (updated 6.17.25)

1) Supplemental rules governing participation is at the club's discretion.

**Note:** Coaches should be aware of the PIAA eligibility rules applying to Jr High/Middle School/High School players who become involved with a youth football program.

#### **B. 50 % Participation Rule**

Every varsity player must make 50% of check-ins and be eligible to play in 50% of the games during the regular season to be eligible for the playoffs – see Section 4.3B – Participation During the Season. Approved Check-In rep will check off players who are present on roster of opposing team at check-in and lock the roster for the week.

**Penalty:** those players found not to have participated in 50% of the games will be ruled ineligible for the playoffs.

\*Exception to be eligible to play is made for injured players.

#### **C. Violations**

Violation of the 11 player start of game rule will result in forfeiture of the game.

Violation of remaining articles shall result in all games forfeited in which the player participated and that team forfeiting its playoff participation.

### **4.3 Eligibility**

#### **A. Scholastic Requirements**

IT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS LEAGUE TO MAKE NO SACRIFICE TO SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT. RATHER, IT IS OUR PURPOSE TO TEACH THAT FOOTBALL CAN ONLY BE PLAYED BY THOSE WHO PERFORM SATISFACTORILY IN THE CLASSROOM.

**B. Participation during the Season – Playoff Eligibility** Each 9U, 11U, 13U varsity team is required to have all of the players play during each league game that he or she is eligible to participate in. The amount of playing time is left up to each individual member club. Failure to participate in a game in which the player is eligible will result in a loss of that player's post-season- privileges. Challenges to another organization's player eligibility will fall under Section 4.4.

### **C. Penalty**

If a player is found to have played in an outside game (School/CYO, etc.) while listed as being injured for IYFL, that player will lose their post-season eligibility.

### **D. Post-Season Ineligibility List**

Players who are ineligible for the playoffs will not show up in the roster system for check ins.

## **4.4 Procedure for Challenging An Illegal Player**

If an organization suspects the opposing team of illegal players, that organization must enter a protest (see By-Laws, Article XI) accompanied with a \$100.00 fee.

If a player is found ineligible, IYFL will immediately place the organization on probation for whatever term chosen by the commissioner (see By-Laws, Article XI) and suspend the player(s). The fee of \$100.00 will be refunded to the protesting organization.

If the player is found eligible, the protesting team loses its protest and the fee is retained by the league.

Definitions: Illegal player - Over-age, non-rostered and/or not within territorial districts or non-waived player from outside territory.

NOTE: Challenging team must submit challenge before next game

## **4.5 Physical and Age Requirements**

No player shall be permitted to participate in any practices, scrimmages or games, or be listed on any League Roster unless they have presented to the Club and the Club maintains a file on the following:

A certificate attesting to player's sound physical condition, signed by a duly registered examining physician.

An ORIGINAL STATE BIRTH CERTIFICATE (**NOTE: State supplied. Certified Copy of Original** will be considered the same as original state birth certificate.), PASSPORT, or STATE ID.

Parental Consent - Each League team must keep on file written permission for participation signed by the parents or legal guardian for each player on its roster. It is understood that parental consent may be withdrawn by written notice from the parents to the head coach, at any time during the playing season.

### **A. Violation**

Violation of this Article shall result in not only forfeiture of all games in which player played, but the player is ineligible for the rest of the season.

## **5. Registration & Administrative Procedures**

### **5.1 Member Club Records**

All clubs must file a certificate of LIABILITY INSURANCE coverage with the Commissioner's office prior to starting organized practice. Clubs shall name the IYFL as an additional insured.

### **5.2 Registration Records**

A. Clubs are required to keep in their possession the following data for EACH REGISTRANT

1. Signed registration form - including parental consent, agreement to IYFL League waiver statement, and signed disclaimer for address release for football promotions.
2. Signed physician's consent for participation.
3. Signed code of conduct for EACH REGISTRANT.
4. Copy of state birth certificate, passport or state ID. The copy MUST be stamped certified that original proof of age document was seen (signed off by person who saw it) Documents that were certified in previous seasons within the IYFL may be re-used.
5. Team must receive and keep on file a parental permission waiver document demonstrating their agreement that their child is playing for two teams. This pertains to the 13U team (reference Section Squad Makeup).
6. Signed code of conduct for each parent
7. Signed code of conduct by each coach/volunteer

The above may be inspected by the League officials for verification.

### **5.3 Identification Documents**

Identification Documents (ID) is a requirement for all football players and cheerleaders (except for flag team football players and cheerleaders)

All participants requiring identification shall provide to the member club documents that verify Date of Birth (DOB) and photo identification (PHOTO).

**ONE** of the following documents shall satisfy the identification requirements:

State issued identification card (DOB & PHOTO)

United States issued passport (DOB & PHOTO)

**TWO** of the following documents shall satisfy the identification requirements:

Original Birth Certificate (DOB)

School issued photo identification card (PHOTO)

Picture of participant taken by the Member Club (PHOTO)

The member club shall be responsible for verifying original documents and maintain in their possession copies of all participant identification documents. The member club shall certify the copied documents by ink stamp of member club's name and/or logo. The identification documents may be inspected by the League officials for verification at any time. The member club shall have the identification documents organized and available for game day check in.

See Section 9 Check-Ins.

### **5.4 Coach / Volunteer Documents**

All individuals 18 years of age or older having contact with a participant; football and cheerleading coaches, volunteers, organizational personnel shall be required to complete child abuse clearance and criminal background check. The method of completing this requirement shall be determined by the IYFL Board of Directors.

Football and Cheerleading Head Coaches shall be required to complete a coaching certification course. The coaching certification course(s) shall be determined by the IYFL Board of Directors. A copy of required IYFL course certificates **MUST** be included in the Team Binder during check in or game will result in forfeiture.

### **5.5 Rosters**

Each team must be on a separate roster and IDs must be by roster.

#### **A. Contents**

1. Team rosters are to be TYPED with players listed in jersey number sequence (low to high). Hand-written rosters are not acceptable.
2. Must be completed in their entirety with the following information

Team Information:      Club Name  
                                 Age Class  
                                 Jersey Colors (Home & Away)  
                                 Head Coach & Phone Number  
                                 All Assistant Coaches  
                                 League Rep & Phone Number

Player Information:    Player Name    Address  
                                 Date of Birth  
                                 Jersey #  
                                 School Attending

### **5.6 Roster Turn In**

#### **A. Initial Submission**

- 1) Must be submitted to the league one (1) week prior to the first scheduled game.

#### **B. Violation**

If Rosters are not received as required, the offending team will forfeit the subsequent game or games, until rosters are received, with the game or games being played as "Exhibition". Failure of a team to appear for any game which has been designated an "Exhibition" could result in that team's suspension from the League and from all League activities in which it, and and/or its players might otherwise be eligible for participation.

#### **C. Roster Changes**

Teams may add to rosters each Wednesday until roster cut-off (September 15). The

information must be complete as outlined above. No phone additions or game day hand written additions will be accepted.

#### **D. Final Roster Turn In**

FINAL REGISTRATION DATE shall be September 15 for all teams.

#### **E. Dual Residency**

Players with dual residency must choose one as their primary residence. This will become their residence for the requirements of the IYFL League. This residence once chosen will remain in effect for the duration of the season. No changes will be allowed after rostered with a team. This becomes their official residence for the IYFL League. Any changes after a player choosing a residency will require waivers prior to the season starting.

### **5.7 Waivers**

The waiver is the vehicle by which a member club can release a person, deemed “theirs” by terms of the member club territory boundaries, to another member club upon request by parent or legal guardian. A waiver is NOT REQUIRED if the player/cheerleader resides in a designated “open” territory.

#### **A. Waiver Procedure Process**

1. The waiver must be initiated by the “granting” member club. This will give that club the opportunity to address the reason why the request is being made.
2. The waiver must be expediently processed, especially, if it is the playing season, for practice reasons.
3. The signed waivers must be brought to the next IYFL regular meeting and those waivers entered into the minutes.
4. A copy of the signed waivers must be kept on file by the “Receiving” member club and the original waiver will be kept by the league.
5. It is the “Granting” member club’s choice as whether to approve the waiver request or not. Final resolution, if required, can be presented to the IYFL Executive Board for decision.

#### **B. As Applied to Coaches**

1. That any waiver for coaches in the IYFL who wish to leave one organization (team) in the league to coach for another organization (team) in the league be withheld until a verification of returned items from the departing organization (team) is obtained.
2. That any coach seeking a waiver in order to leave one organization (team) in the IYFL League to coach for another (team) in the league sign a consent allowing the new organization to interview officials of the departing organization in regard to that coaches departure.

### **6. Practices & Scrimmage (Practice) Games**

- a) Practices shall not begin before the first day of the season as determined by the IYFL Board of Directors.
- b) Practices shall not last longer than two (2) hours at each session. Maximum of five (5) sessions. Maximum of ten (10) hours per week.
- c) Teams are required to adhere to a heat acclimatization period, applicable to all players, for five (5) consecutive days:

- Day 1 & 2: Helmet Only
  - Day 3 -5: Helmet & Shoulder pads (contact with dummies and sleds allowed)
  - On Day 6, full pads may be worn and full contact drills are allowed.
- d) After Labor Day, practices shall be limited to not more than three (3) per week. Maximum of six (6) hours per week, not lasting more than two (2) hours per session.
- e) Three (3) or more persons constitute a legal practice.
- f) Scrimmages may be scheduled, provided that not more than two (2) are played per week. Scrimmages ARE considered a practice time.

Scrimmages and practices may not be scouted by anyone. (Note: A scrimmage has no kick-off. Any conditions involving kick-offs and/or with officials present are considered GAME conditions.)

Notify the IYFL Commissioner of any scrimmages against teams outside of the IYFL.

## **A. Violation**

Any notification of a violation of the above Article must be submitted to the Commissioner, in writing, by the team official who has personal knowledge of such violation, and further, must be attested to by team's general manager. This is to be done not more than seven (7) days after alleged violations happened. A ruling will be handed down by the Commissioner within five (5) days after receipt of notification of a violation of the above Article. There is no appeal from the action of the Commissioner. *(updated 8.13.24)*

## **7. Sportsmanship**

### ***7.1. Adults on the Field of Play***

#### **Purpose**

To ensure the safety and integrity of the game by regulating field access for all adults.

#### **Provisions**

##### **A. General Rule:**

1. No parent, guardian, or any other adult is allowed on the field of play at any time, including pre-game, during the game, half-time, or post-game, except as outlined below.
2. Coaches are permitted on the field pre-game, during half-time, and at the end of the game for team activities. However, it is unacceptable for a coach to be on the playing field in an argumentative manner. Coaches may not enter the field to argue with officials, opposing team coaches, or opposing team players.
3. Any coach or team/organization representative that enters the field of play in an overly argumentative manner (belligerent, hostile, aggressive), as determined by the Official(s), is in violation of this rule. *Updated 8.13.24*
4. This rule can be enforced even if officials do not make the call during the game. If a league representative witnesses the event or if video evidence is reviewed by league officials, the adults involved will be subject to full enforcement of this rule.

##### **B. Exceptions:**

1. Emergency Situations: Adults may enter the field if immediate intervention is required with the approval and support of the officials.
2. Injury: Coaches and parents may assist injured players with the support of the officials.
3. Safety Concerns: Adults may enter the field to address immediate safety threats with the support of the officials.
  - Note: A safety concern does not include children fighting or arguing, as officials are fully capable of handling such situations.
4. In instances where, for example, "Coach A or Adult A enters the field of play, approaches the sideline of Coach B, or Players of Coach B. Coach B enters the field to ensure the safety of his player or Coaching Staff," Coach A/Adult A would be in full violation of this rule. Coach B's reaction would be reviewed by the executive committee of the IYFL to determine if disciplinary action is required.

**C. Protocol for Exceptions:**

1. Permission from game officials is required before entering the field, unless the situation is critical and requires immediate safety attention (e.g., injury to a player).

**D. Penalties for Violation:**

1. Any coach or spectator who violates this rule will be removed from the game and suspended for the following TWO (2) games.
2. Coaches and adults are still subject to standard 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalties for these events. However, if that penalty is not called by an official, the league can still enforce the additional penalties noted above.
3. Standard sideline warnings or penalties/unsportsmanlike conduct penalties on a coach do not apply to the ruling above. However, two sideline penalties on the same coach during the same game will result in removal from the game and a one-game suspension. *(updated 8.20.24)*

**Additional Notes**

**A. Responsibilities:**

1. Coaches must inform parents and guardians of this rule.
2. Game officials must enforce this rule and report violations.

This rule is effective immediately and must be communicated to all participants to ensure safety and order during football activities. *(updated 6.18.24)*

**7.2. Unsportsmanlike Acts**

No coach, player, manager, team parent, or guardian, business manager, athletic director, club officer or official, etc., shall commit or be party to, either by their action or inaction, any of the following unsportsmanlike acts, or any other act, which hereafter is deemed to be unsportsmanlike:

- A. Violation** – Strike or threaten any game official, league official, opposing coach, player or fan

## **B. Consequence –**

If after presentation of the facts to the IYFL Officers, any person or persons are found in violation of any of the above provisions, the following shall be imposed:

For the acts defined above:

Person(s) committing the offense shall be suspended from IYFL League (time determined by the IYFL Officers) and may not serve with any club in any capacity.

ANY PERSON (including parents/spectators) who strike or threaten ANY game official, league official, opposing coach, player, parent or fan will be IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM THE SITE, AND WILL BE REQUESTED TO TAKE THEIR CHILD/CHILDREN INVOLVED IN THE ORGANIZATION. NEITHER THE ADULT NOR THE CHILD WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN IYFL HENCEFORTH.

IN ADDITION, the club will be liable for the MOST SEVERE OF PENALTIES, including (but not limited to) player ineligibility, game forfeiture, probation and fines.

Violations, C through G, listed below will follow the Violation Procedure Process outlined in Section 7.5 in accordance with IYFL By-Laws. The IYFL Executive Board shall investigate and determine any organizational consequence(s). A ruling will be handed down by the Commissioner within five (5) days after receipt of notification of violations. There is no appeal from the action of the Commissioner. *(updated 8.13.24)*

- C. Violation** - Forfeiting game(s) unless documented injuries prevent the rostered team from having 15 or more players where “flex” or “swing” players are not available to complete the roster. Documented injuries need to be supported by a medical official who states the child cannot play and the specifics of the injury
- D. Violation** - Become overly argumentative with, or disrespectful to, any game official, league officials, opposing coach, player or fan.
- E. Violation** - Interfere with the progress of any game, i.e., remove team from field before game is officially completed, or actually impede or stop progress of game.
- F. Violation** - Knowingly allow an ineligible player to participate in a game.
- G. Violation** - Repeatedly allow improprieties to take place at Roster Check-ins, or repeatedly allow players to check-in with improper identification documents, falsifying birth certificates, etc.

**First Offense:** Person committing the offense shall be suspended for not less than two (2) games, including any playoff or championship game. Such offenders may not return to his position until suspension is over.

**Second Offense:** Person committing the offense shall be suspended for not less than six - (6) games, including any playoff or championship games. Such offenders may not return to their position until the suspension is over.

**Third Offense:** Person committing the offense shall be suspended from the IYFL League for life and may not serve with any club.

Head Coaches shall be subject to the same disciplinary action of the person(s) committing the unsportsmanlike acts are directly under the supervision or jurisdiction of the head coach, i.e., assistant coaches, managers, team parents, etc.

Persons who are party to such unsportsmanlike acts or conspire to commit same shall also be subject to disciplinary action.

For Head Coaches and others, as defined in Article XVII, B and C, penalties shall be imposed on the individuals and/or clubs involved as determined by the Commissioner.

### **7.3. Game Misconducts**

Game misconducts cover players/coaches ejected from games.

- A. Players. Players ejected from games, following NFHS rules, will immediately leave the game and serve a (1) game suspension. Any player receiving a second ejection will face a (2) game suspension and may have his playing season terminated.
- B. Coaches. Coaches ejected from games will immediately leave the game and serve a (1) game suspension and following NFHS rules, must leave the playing field and facility immediately. The suspended coaches will be subject to club and IYFL review.

Multiple ejections by a player or coach will be reviewed by the IYFL Executive Board and will follow the Violation Procedure Process outlined in Section 7.5 in accordance with IYFL By-Laws. The IYFL Executive Board shall investigate and determine any organizational consequence(s). A ruling will be handed down by the Commissioner within five (5) days after receipt of notification of violations. There is no appeal from the action of the Commissioner.” *(updated 8.13.24)*

### **7.4. Mercy Rule**

Any coach who runs up a score shall be subject to suspension per the schedule listed below. It will be the sole responsibility of the IYFL Executive Officers to decide if a coach ran up a score, after discussing game scores with all parties involved. Those described as parties shall include Coaches, Game Officials, and Organization Representatives.

The Varsity and JV levels will follow the NFHS Mercy rule as written by the NFHS. The point differential is 35 points and the clock begins to run. The clock will run regardless if the point differential changes. *(updated 8.13.24)*

To avoid the appearance of running up the score at the Varsity and JV levels the following must be implemented when the score reaches a 5 touchdown or more difference. *(updated 8.13.24)*

- a) The winning team shall make every effort to replace starting players with reserves. If reserves are limited, starting players should be placed in a different position.

- b) The winning team should stop passing plays, running plays intended to go outside the tackles or run any play that may be considered a trick play, i.e. reverses, odd formations, fake punts, counters, intentional onside kicks, draws.
- c) While on defense, neither team can blitz and, each team shall play a regular defense (i.e. 4-3, 5-3, 3-4) with defensive lineman, linebackers, and defensive backs in their normal positions.
- d) At the end of any quarter, the opposing Head Coaches and the Head official shall decide if the remainder of the game shall be played with a running clock. The coach of the losing team will have the final say as to whether a running clock is used.
- e) If the losing team's coach refuses the running clock (as is his right), the other components of the rule are still in effect – e.g. no blitzing, offensive play calling etc

## **A. Violation**

Any coach deemed guilty of running up a score shall be suspended for the below number of games:

- 1) First Offense: One (1) game
- 2) Second Offense: Three (3) games
- 3) Third Offense: For the rest of the season

The IYFL Executive Board will review all mercy rule violations, following the Violation Procedure Process outlined in Section 7.5 in accordance with IYFL By-Laws. Subsequent offenses by multiple coaches will result in further action that can include being removed from the IYFL. A ruling will be handed down by the Commissioner within five (5) days after receipt of notification of violations. There is no appeal from the action of the Commissioner. *(updated 8.13.24)*

## **7.5. Violation Procedure Process**

Procedure for any member organization charged with violations of IYFL Rules or By Laws:

- a) Commissioner will notify member organization of violation(s).
- b) Member organization will have the right to make an appeal to the Commissioner within a five (5) day period from the time of notification of violation charges.

The decision of the Commissioner will be final.

Discussion will be held as follows:

- a) Commissioner will call violating club/clubs.
- b) League Officers will meet with the violating club/clubs in private, prior to the next regular meeting, to hold discussion of the reported violation.
- c) Decision of the Officers will be announced at the League meeting.
- d) THERE WILL BE NO PUBLIC DISCUSSION.

## **7.6. Alcoholic Beverages**

NO alcoholic beverages are to be brought to any playing field, parking area, or streets adjacent to the playing field. It will be the responsibility of each organization to inform anyone who is involved (e.g., coach, parent, fan) about this rule. Anyone who sees alcoholic beverages is to notify the Home Team Rep, Alternate or Club Officer. It will be their responsibility to take care of this problem. If it is a person from the visiting team who is breaking the rule, then the Home Team Rep, Alternate or Officer is to inform the Visiting Team Rep, Alternate or Officer, and they will be responsible to resolve this problem.

### **A. Violation**

Penalty for the above rule is:

- 1) A \$50.00 fine for first offense.
- 2) Second Offense will result in probation for the offending club.

ANY INDIVIDUAL(S) WHO ARRIVES AT A IYFL PLAYING SITE IN AN INTOXICATED CONDITION WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!

It is the responsibility of the reps/clubs to attend AT ONCE to any such individual.

## **7.7 Smoking and Animals**

- A. There is to be “No Smoking” at any member club field or IYFL sponsored function. The use of all tobacco related products by coaches on the sidelines is prohibited.
- B. For safety concerns, and unless specifically allowed to be present, no animals shall be at any member club field during a league game.

## **7.8 Weapons**

Weapons are prohibited at all IYFL games and events except by on-duty police officers working a security detail. Anyone found in violation will be asked to immediately leave the premises. *(updated 9.17.24)*

## **8. Officials**

- A. It is the responsibility of the Commissioner to see that a master list of officials who are to officiate during the coming season is sent to each team representative not less than one (1) week prior to the season. However, the Commissioner has the sole responsibility to accept or decline the assignments of any or all officials.
  - B. Any head coach may, in writing, recommend either deleting an official from the master list or adding one or more to it. This may be done prior to, or during, the season. However, the Commissioner has the sole responsibility to accept or decline such recommendations.
  - C. It shall be the responsibility of the Commissioner to contract an assignor to assign officials.
    - Three (3) officials per 7U, 9U JV & 9U Varsity game
    - Four (4) officials per 11U JV, 11U Varsity, 13U JV & 13U Varsity game.
- During playoffs, the number of officials shall be four (4) per 7U & 9UV game; five (5) per 11U & 13UV game. *(updated 3.18.25)*
- D. All officials must be registered P.I.A.A. members.

- E. All officials must be dressed in P.I.A.A. uniforms.
- F. All game officials must be present at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the first game.

### **8.1 Fees and Payment of Officials' Fees**

- A. The official fee shall be negotiated with the official assignor and agreed to by the member clubs yearly.
- B. Following NFHS guidelines, any official working any part of a game gets full fee for that game at fees established by the Commissioner. Those fees are to be paid by half time to eliminate confusion at the end of a game.
  - 1) The official's fees shall be split between both clubs participating in the game. The club designated the home team shall be responsible for collecting the money and paying the officials.
  - 2) If a game is moved to another site due to weather conditions or other circumstances, the official's fees are still be paid as above.
  - 3) If a game is suspended due to extreme weather conditions and played the next day or later, the crew working the game receives full pay and the crew that works the rescheduled suspended game receives full pay. Because this is a financial hardship, IYFL will reimburse the member club(s) for the second set of fees but the normal procedure in paying the officials should be used to keep the game moving.
  - 4) The host club may request an extra official to operate the game clock. The cost of the clock official shall be the sole responsibility of the host club.

## **9. Check-Ins**

Home Team retains copies of all rosters.

1. All players present at the field at the time of the check in must check -in at the official team check -in. Any player arriving after their game has started and prior to the start of the second half may check -in and participate in the remainder of the game. ***If a player arrives after the start of the second half of his game, he shall be ineligible to play until the following week.***
2. Club certified ID is necessary at time of check -in for inspection and approval by check -in representatives.
3. Teams must present ID binder and current roster before the players are lined up for check-in. Check-ins will not begin until completion of this step.
4. At this time, both representatives should advise which players on the roster are absent, hurt or expected to arrive after the start of the check -in.
5. Team must come to check-in with their official team game jersey. Must be in numerical order from lowest to highest. Jersey does not need to be worn for the check-in but must be with the appropriate player.
6. Official roster is to be checked at the check -in. No roster changes are allowed at the check in with the exception of game jersey number. If a game jersey number is changed, barring unforeseen circumstances, the player assigned the number will wear it for the remainder of the game. Ineligible players, if any, are noted on the official roster. The playing of an ineligible player will result in a club fine (determined by the IYFL Board of Directors) and forfeiture of the game.
7. Since there is a minimum participation rule for the varsity teams, the status of the player must be clearly identified on the roster at check-in. If the status is unclear on the roster, the player will be considered missing.

- A check mark (√) or OK if they check in.
  - An X, NS (No Show), NO or a line through the name if not present.
  - An INJ if the player is there but is injured. Use MED if a player is out due to sickness.
8. Without a valid roster spot and ID, the player will not participate in the game for any reason. If an ineligible player is allowed to play, the offending team will forfeit the game played.
  9. League rules require that each team post these procedures in an easily visible location at the site of all check -ins.

## **10. Open Territory**

- A. Any player living in open territory who has played one season or more for a particular club is committed to that club. If the player chooses to change clubs, he will need a waiver. If the player moves from one open territory to another territory, he will be allowed to choose a new club.
- B. A player residing in open territory which is subsequently allocated to a new member organization shall have a one-time choice during the initial membership year (probationary) PLUS 1 (additional) year of the new member club as to which club he chooses to play for. Waiver to change clubs would be required subsequent to this.

## **11. Junior Varsity/ B Teams**

### **11.1 Structure**

- A. JV teams are considered an auxiliary program. They should be structured to allow playing time and training to the player who is at the younger, less experienced or less aggressive status than the varsity player.
- B. Member clubs of the IYFL League are not REQUIRED to field JV teams.
- C. Teams wishing to commit to JV teams at any level must do so NO LATER THAN THE SECOND MONDAY OF AUGUST of each year.
- D. The Junior Varsity program for any club can begin:  
Once a team rosters 30 players, that team may decide to field a Junior Varsity team from those players. The minimum amount of rostered players on the Varsity team must remain at least 15 if a Junior Varsity team is fielded.
- E. Parents/guardians of JV players should be made aware of the differences in guidelines for JV and varsity teams.
- F. All players rostered on JV teams are expected to play in each JV game.

\* Note: Coaches must have the ability to exclude or limit playing time of players from games who have not regularly participated in practice sessions, but overall it is considered reasonable to expect rostered players to participate in each game for which they have prepared.

### **11.2 Rosters**

- A. JV players may move up and/or down from varsity to JV.
- B. JV players may be "borrowed" or moved up to fill vacancies and/or shortages on varsity squads, due to injury, illness, etc.

### **11.3 Schedules & Games**

- A. Until such time as all member clubs field JV teams at specified ages JV teams will be considered to be in one (1) division.
- B. Scheduling for JV teams will be drawn in conjunction with varsity schedule. Clubs with JV teams playing each other at varsity level will play each other at JV level. Clubs playing clubs without JV teams will be scheduled either with a bye or versus another open team, as feasible.
- C. All Junior Varsity level schedules remain the same as the Varsity scheduling, but that the IYFL League Officials make a secondary schedule (if needed) to make sure that all Junior Varsity teams play a minimum of seven games. The secondary schedule, if needed, will be FINAL.
- D. JV games rained out do not have to be rescheduled. Time, field conditions, etc., permitting, games may be rescheduled if possible.
- E. Any changes in scheduling from published schedule are to be phoned to Officials and Commissioner NOT LATER THAN TUESDAY OF THE WEEK PRECEDING GAME. (This includes change of time, location of scheduling of open/bye dates.)
- F. There will be no running up of scores. Games with point differential exceeding 30 will be investigated. Penalties for running up scores, if necessary, will be per standard IYFL Rules (see Sportsmanship Rule). Referee's fees for JV games will be split equally between clubs playing on neutral fields.
- G. In the event games are played on a neutral field, teams playing will be responsible to make satisfactory arrangements for providing medical personnel. (This may include use of each team's medical personnel, arrangements by both teams to use one team's personnel, or arrangements by both teams to use "home field" medical personnel, if applicable). The cost of such personnel will be divided equally between clubs playing.

### **11.4 Post-Season**

There will be no playoffs or League-sponsored Championship Game for JV teams.

## **12. Flag Team Regulations**

- A. FLAG FOOTBALL TEAMS are considered an auxiliary program. They should be structured to allow playing time and training to all players.
- B. Member clubs of the IYFL are NOT REQUIRED to field FLAG teams.
- C. Teams wishing to commit FLAG teams for scheduling games must do so NO LATER THAN THE LAST MONDAY OF AUGUST of each year.

### **12.1 Age Standards**

- A. Players may not turn 7 years of age ON or BEFORE July 31 of the calendar year of the football season to be eligible to play on the FLAG team.
- B. The minimum age for the FLAG team is 4, which must be reached On or BEFORE July 31 of the playing year.

### **12.2 Playing Rules**

- A. Length of Game shall be:
  - 1) Playing time is 1 (one) Hour for FLAG teams.
    - a) There will be two (2) 25-minute halves per game.
  - 2) There will be a 10-minute halftime.
- B. No scores shall be kept and no PAT attempts.

#### **A. Number of Players**

There are only 7 players from each team on the field at any time during the game. Each team is required to have 7 players start the game.

- 1) 2 Coaches are allowed on the field with their team for team instruction only. Coaches may not interfere with game play.

#### **B. Start of Game**

- 1) There will be no "Kickoff" or punts. There will be a coin toss to determine which team will be on offense first. The ball will be placed on the defensive 40-yard line.
- 2) Each team will have ten (10) offensive plays in which to score.
- 3) There will be no "Turnovers". At the end of the ten (10) plays, the possession will change, and the ball will be placed on the defensive 40-yard line.
- 4) Defensive can score on interceptions only.

#### **C. Line of Scrimmage**

- 1) The offensive team must have a minimum of four (4) players on the line of scrimmage. Once the center has placed his hands on the ball no offensive player may cross the ball until the ball is snapped to the quarterback.
- 2) Not following these rules warrants a false start, offside, or encroachment call.
- 3) There will be no defensive player over the offensive center's head on the line of scrimmage, (this player is commonly known as a defensive nose guard). This rule permits the offensive center to deliver the ball to the quarterback without being hit or disrupted. In addition, there is no blitzing through the gaps on either side of the center, (these gaps are commonly known as "A" gaps). Again, these rules are to protect the center and to allow a clean snap to the quarterback. There shall be no QB sneaks.

#### **D. Backward Passes and Fumbles**

- 1) Backward passes that hit the ground shall be blown dead and may not be advanced by either team.
- 2) Fumbles may only be recovered and advanced by the offensive team on a snap from center. If the ball is fumbled any time after initial control is established by the ball carrier, then

the ball is down where it hits the ground. Initial control is established when the offensive ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage. If a fumble occurs in the backfield, only the offensive team may recover and advance. Otherwise, Dead Ball.

#### **F. Blocking**

- 1) Contact Blocking shall only be allowed in the free blocking zone. (The free blocking zone is the area occupied by the down line)
- 2) Screen blocking is allowed in the open field. Screen blocking shall take place without contact. A screen blocker cannot use their hands, arms, elbows, legs or body to initiate contact. If they do use contact, it will be called a Personal Foul. The referee will grant a one-time team warning, second infraction, the next player will be removed from the game for at least one play.

#### **G. The Flag Belt**

- 1) All shirts must be tucked in and are not permitted to hang over the flag belt.
- 2) Should a player lose their flag belt legally or illegally during a down and should that player gain possession of a live ball, that player will be considered down when a legal tag (one hand touched by the defense between the shoulders and knees, including the hand and arm) is made.

#### **H. Guarding the Flag Belt**

- 1) Runners 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. Flag guarding includes:
  - a. Swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging.
  - b. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging.
  - c. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner which flag guards.
  - d. Shirts not tucked in and hang over the flag belt.
  - e. Players cannot hurdle or jump over an opponent trying to pull a flag.

#### **I. Play Clock**

- 1) There will be 90-second play clock between plays.
- 2) Failure to snap the ball before the play clock has expired will result in a "loss of down" penalty. The Referee will give the offensive team a one-time team warning per half, second infraction will result in a loss of down penalty.

#### **J. Penalties**

- 1) NO TACKLING: this will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. The referee will give a one-time team warning for tackling, after the warning from the referee, any player tackling the opposition will be removed from the game for at least one play.
- 2) The only way to "tackle" the ball carrier/receiver is to remove one of his/her flags. No pushing the player out of bounds or to the ground is allowed. If one of the ball carrier's flags falls off before the player is "tackled", the ball will be dead at the spot the flag was lost.
- 3) Normal football rules apply; however, ALL offensive fouls shall be loss of down and the ball placed at the prior spot. ALL defensive penalties shall be yardage penalties from the spot of the foul.

### **12.3 Officials**

- A. There will be referees scheduled for all FLAG games.
- B. An official assumes authority 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time, and until they have left the field.
- C. The officials have the authority to rule on any situation not specifically covered in the rules.

- D. His/her decision is final, unless ruled otherwise by the League.
- E. The official has the right to eject players or have them sit out of part or all of the game.
- F. Fans, coaches, and spectators are a part of a team and any fouls they commit will go against their team.
- G. The referee is there to enforce all flag rules agreed upon by the IYFL. He/She is there to call penalties, remind players and coaches of the subtle rules of the game, and help promote good sportsmanship. Please reference your club's code of conduct for players and coaches.

## **13. Miscellaneous**

### **13.1. Scouting**

Scouts **MUST** check in with host club upon arrival.

Scouts are not allowed to scout between the 20-yard lines. Scouts are allowed to walk between the 20s to get from one end to the other but cannot stand there to scout.

Scouts may not address game officials concerning the game being played except at half time or after the game, and then only to ask a question about an applied rule.

Scouts may not come within close proximity of either team they are scouting at half time or post game meetings. If they are required to pass it to leave, they must proceed directly out of the area.

Scouts/coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players with them, who are subject to the same guidelines.

Head Coach will be held responsible for any scouting violations with possible 1 game suspension for violations.

Video Cameras can be used. See Section 15.3 for guidelines in their use.

### **13.2 Chain Crews**

Chain crew shall consist of two (2) home club members and one (1) visiting club member and a minimum of one (1) alternate from each club. If either club cannot supply adequate personnel, the other club can supply the difference. The home club will decide what positions the chain crew personnel will occupy - i.e. box or chain.

- 1) The individual assigned to the box must be an adult (minimum 18 years of age).
- 2) The individuals assigned to the chains must be at least 16 years of age.

An individual can be removed from the chain crew by request of the head coach of either team to the head official. The official may approve or deny the request. The official's decision is final.

## **B. Procedure**

Box and chain are to be kept on the backside of the sidelines on the home side of the field. Box should be aligned with the forward most point of the ball with one end of the chain directly behind the box. The other end of the chain should be extended in the direction of play with all slack removed. After the chain is in place, it should only be moved when:

- 1) An official signals a first down.
- 2) An official signals a change of possession
- 3) A collision with a player or players may occur. In this event:
  - a) Step back quickly taking the chain pole with you.
  - b) If not possible, drop pole to the ground in a backward motion and get out of the way.

## **C. Conduct**

- 1) Do not move until told by an official, and then move quickly.
- 2) Hand and body movement should be kept to a minimum to avoid the appearance of signaling.
- 3) No utilization of a cell phone.
- 4) Keep enthusiasm and disappointment to a minimum.
- 5) Absolutely no coaching. Examples include telling players to move here or there, watching for a run or a pass and that "they are coming your way".

## **D. Recommendations**

Before the first game of the season, anyone who may be part of a chain crew should be assigned a game or games and instructed on the proper procedures and conduct.

At least 10 minutes prior to the start of each game, a home club representative should briefly explain the proper procedures and conduct to that game's chain crew and alternates.

### ***13.3 Electronic Devices***

#### **A. Video Cameras**

The use of video cameras are allowed when scouting an opponent. These guidelines are to be followed:

- 1) Individual(s) filming the game must adhere to the Scouting guidelines as set forth in section 15.1.
- 2) One individual per club per division is allowed to film the game. In other words do not send two (2) people with two (2) cameras to film one (1) game. The intention here is not to dictate how many people can be in a scouting group but to restrict the filming of that game to one camera by that group. The scouting team brings one camera.
- 3) Restricted to varsity games only. Junior varsity games are excluded from the filming process.
- 4) The individual filming the game must sign in at the host facility (or report to the League Rep.).
- 5) Game films are the property of the team taking the film and are permissible to be exchanged with other IYFL clubs.
- 6) People assigned from one team to film another must abide by reasonable conduct expected of any spectator at any IYFL event. No IYFL team should allow any disruption of another team's filming by anyone attending the game.

## **B. Drones**

Drones are not allowed over the playing field or spectator areas. If a drone is used, they must be behind either end zone and not over any spectator viewing area or over the playing field at any time. *(Updated 10.1.24)*

## **C. Other Electronic Devices.**

Other electronic devices may be used, providing home team and visiting team have equal access to electronic devices that are being used during game. (Example - Walkie-talkies, headphones).

AMENDMENT: Upon agreement of both teams.

## **D. Violation**

Penalties for not following the above procedures will result in one (1) game suspension for offending head coach team involved.

### ***13.4 Game Announcing***

Announcing guidelines and code of conduct as adopted from the National Association of Sports Public Address Announcers (NASPAA). These are to be placed next to the microphone at any facility announcing games.

- 1) Announcers shall not attempt to be bigger than the game or event by doing play-by-play or by providing commentary to draw attention to themselves.
- 2) Announcers shall understand that because they have a tremendous influence on the crowd and that cheerleading, or antics designed to incite the crowd for the purpose of gaining an advantage for their team is inappropriate.
- 3) Announcers shall promote good sportsmanship by what they say and how they act.
- 4) Announcers shall treat the opponents and their fans as guests, not the enemy.
- 5) Announcers shall respect the individuals who are responsible for the conduct and administration of athletic games and events, such as coaches, officials, and administrators, and avoid making any comments that reflect positively or negatively on them.
- 6) Announcers shall respect the participants of all teams and remain neutral when introducing the starting participants, announcing substitutions and the outcome of plays or performances of the participants.
- 7) Announcers shall be competent. This means following approved announcing guidelines, expectations, and policies, such as emergency procedures, provided by the administration or the host facility.

- 8) Announcers shall be prepared, such as being familiar with the correct pronunciations of the participants' names, knowing the rules of the sport, the officials' signals and how the game is played.
- 9) Announcers shall exhibit professional behavior and present their school, organization or association with respect and dignity at all times by what they say, how they act and how they appear.

## **14. Appendix**

### **14.1. Statement of Submission**

STATEMENT FOR INCLUSION IN/OR ATTACHMENT TO REGISTRATION FORM FOR USE BY ALL IYFL MEMBER CLUBS.

This statement is to be signed by parent/guardian of all players registered. (Statement is to be included with other required roster data submitted to League.)

NOTE:

I UNDERSTAND THAT I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF TRUE AND VALID DATA TO (Club Name) IN COMPLIANCE WITH IYFL REQUIREMENTS, FOR THE PURPOSES FOR PLAYING FOOTBALL OR CHEERLEADING. I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS DATA (INCLUDING CONSENT, BIRTH CERTIFICATE & PHYSICIAN'S RELEASE) IS TO BE COPIED AND KEPT ON FILE BY BOTH THE CLUB AND THE LEAGUE.

I AGREE TO VERIFICATION OF THE SUBMITTED DATA WITH THE STATE DEPT. OF VITAL STATISTICS, SCHOOL AND/OR PHYSICIAN OF RECORD, SHOULD THIS BECOME NECESSARY.

I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT SHOULD ANY INFORMATION SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF (Player Name) BE INCORRECT OR INVALID, THE PENALTIES STATED IN THE BY-LAWS AND RULES OF THE IYFL WILL BE IMPOSED ON THE CLUB, TEAM (ALL PLAYERS) AND PLAYER (INDIVIDUAL), AND THAT THESE INCLUDE (BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO) FORFEITURE OF GAMES AND SUSPENSION.

MY RESPONSIBILITIES ALSO INCLUDE ADVISING THE CLUB AND/OR LEAGUE BOARD IF I AM AWARE OF AN ILLEGAL PLAYER ON ANY MEMBER TEAM

(Signature of parent/guardian)

(Date)

## **14.2. Code of Conduct**

Following is the IYFL Code of Conduct forms and they include:

Disciplinary Code

Volunteer Code of Conduct

Parent, Guardian or Guest Code of Conduct

Participant Code of Conduct

Injury Release, Indemnification and Hold Harmless Agreement



## Independent Youth Football League

I, \_\_\_\_\_, and on behalf of the following

Participant(s), \_\_\_\_\_, as a Volunteer (Director, Officer, Coach, Concession or other), Parent, Guardian and/or Participant in the Independent Youth Football League, and its Member Organizations, being a youth organization, understand that my responsibility and behavior is of great importance, that my actions have the potential to significantly influence the children I come into contact with and therefore We agree to conduct ourselves in accordance with the following:

- Disciplinary Code
- Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Parent, Guardian or Guest Code of Conduct
- Participant Code of Conduct
- Injury Release, Indemnification and Hold Harmless Agreement

By signing below, my signature constitutes that the participant and I have been provided a copy of the above marked IYFL Code of Conduct(s), Disciplinary Code and Injury Release, Indemnification and Hold Harmless Agreement; We have read, discussed, understand and accept the above Disciplinary Code and Injury Release, Indemnification and Hold Harmless Agreement; We have provided or discussed with all non-signing parties who will attend sanctioned events the applicable Code of Conduct(s) and Disciplinary Code; We, including non-signing parties, agree to conduct ourselves in accordance with the specified terms and conditions of the Code of Conduct(s) and Disciplinary Code; and We fully understand that failure to abide by the specified terms and conditions may result in disciplinary action as stated in the Code of Conduct(s) and Disciplinary Code.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## IYFL DISCIPLINARY CODE

All Volunteers, Parents, Guardians, Guest and Participants are required to review, sign and comply, or by their presence at a sanctioned event, agrees to comply with the IYFL Code of Conduct. In the interest of providing a safe and positive environment for the children involved in IYFL and the Member Organizations, strict compliance with the Code of Conduct will be required and enforced at any and all IYFL and Member Organization functions, including but not limited to, sign-ups, practices, games, pep rallies, banquets, competitions and fund-raising events. Violations of the Code of Conduct will not be tolerated and violations will be subject to disciplinary action.

Violations will be brought to the Member Organization Board of Directors for review and determination as to what type, if any, disciplinary action is appropriate. The Board shall review the allegation/incident and render a judgment. If the Board, in its sole discretion, believes a hearing would be helpful in determining as to what type, if any, disciplinary action should be taken, the accused and aggrieved parties shall be given an opportunity to testify concerning the incident. There is no automatic right to a hearing. The Board, in its sole discretion, will determine who, if anyone, will testify or appear at a hearing. It shall be the responsibility of the Board to determine the appropriate disciplinary action for any offense. The disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- § Warning Letter**
- § Probation**
- § Letter of Reprimand**
- § Fine**
- § Practice/Game Suspension**
- § Season Suspension**
- § Lifetime Suspension**
- § Civil or Criminal Prosecution**

Due to the number of potential violations and varying degrees of severity, the Board, in its sole discretion, can decide to take or not take any disciplinary action. No warning is required. Additionally, IYFL or a Member Organization may pursue legal action as appropriate, including instituting a civil lawsuit and/or referring the matter for criminal prosecution, based on the nature and severity of the Code of Conduct violations. The decision of the Board shall be communicated to the accused and aggrieved parties and if either is from a different Member Organization, to the President or League Representative of that Member Organization.

In the event that the Board decision and/or disciplinary action are in dispute, the accused or aggrieved party may request a review by the IYFL Commissioner. The request must be in writing. If, in the Commissioner's sole discretion, a review is warranted, the Commissioner may appoint a disciplinary review committee. The disciplinary review committee shall have a minimum of three members. Pertinent information on the incident including testimony, if any, shall be reviewed. The disciplinary review committee, in its sole discretion, may hold a de novo hearing. Upon review of all pertinent information, the disciplinary review committee shall either endorse or reject the Board decision and disciplinary action by way of majority vote. In the event of a tie, the chairperson shall cast the deciding vote. If the disciplinary review committee rejects the Board's decision and/or disciplinary action, the committee will be required to issue a recommendation on appropriate disciplinary action and the accused parties Member Organization shall enforce such action.

## IYFL VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

I understand that my responsibility as a volunteer (Director, Officer, Coach, Concession or other) for the IYFL and its Member Organizations, a youth organization, is of great importance and that my actions have the potential to significantly influence the children I come into contact with and therefore I agree to conduct myself in accordance with this Volunteer Code of Conduct as follows:

1. I recognize that I am a role model for all participants and the families involved in the IYFL and the Member Organizations. I shall at all times control my behavior so as to promote a positive attitude and experience for the children. I shall place the emotional and physical welfare and development of my players ahead of any personal desire to win.
2. I will treat each player, opposing coaches, officials, parents, and administrators with respect and dignity at all times.
3. I will thoroughly become familiar and follow the letter and spirit of the bylaws, rules, regulations, requirements and objectives of IYFL, the Member Organization and the sport.
4. I will communicate to my players and their parents what is expected from each participant, parent or guardian, family and invited guest.
5. I will cooperate with the administration of IYFL and the Member Organization in the enforcement of the bylaws, rules, regulations, requirements and objectives and will report any irregularities to IYFL and the Member Organization.
6. I will do my best to protect and preserve the health, safety and welfare of all participants entrusted to my care and supervision.
7. I will comply with IYFL and Member Organization participation requirements and make every effort to ensure active participation by each of my players in every game or competition.
8. I will not use profanity or make disparaging remarks or gestures of any type to any person, whether an official, coach, parent, participant or other nor will I publicly disparage or humiliate any of the above-named individuals.
9. I will not use or be under the influence of any illegal drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco during any practice, game, competition and/or sanctioned activity and will immediately report any person who I believe to be using and/or under such influence.
10. I agree to submit to a criminal background check and child abuse clearance in accordance with IYFL rules and regulations, which shall be a precursor to my ability to volunteer and be permitted on the football field.
11. I shall comply with and enforce the IYFL Code of Conducts and if I fail to do so, I may be subject to discipline as provided in the IYFL Disciplinary Code.

## IYFL PARENT, GUARDIAN OR GUEST CODE OF CONDUCT

I understand that my responsibility as a parent or guardian involved in a youth organization is of great importance and that my actions have the potential to significantly influence the children I come into contact with and therefore I agree to conduct myself in accordance with this Parent, Guardian or Guest Code of Conduct as follows:

1. Participation in the Organization involves travel and outdoor activities. Attendance is required at all scheduled games, home or away, good weather or bad. If the football team is playing, the cheerleaders are cheering. Transportation to and from an event or activity is the parent or guardian responsibility. The parent or guardian agrees to participate in volunteer activities and duties associated with the Member Organization, to include but not limited to, snack bar, field set up, field clean up, and general maintenance.

2. A risk of injury is inherent in participation of the sports of Football and Cheerleading. A parent/guardian or a duly authorized adult will be present during all practices, games, events, competitions or organization activities in which their child is attending or participating.

3. I understand that all Football/Cheerleading equipment issued to the participant is the property of the Member Organization and will be returned to the Member Organization at the conclusion of the season or at such time as requested by a coach or other club official. I agree to keep the equipment clean and well maintained. Whether or not provided by the Member Organization, I agree to regularly check and ensure that the participant's equipment is properly fitted and worn and understand that ill-fitting and/or improperly worn equipment may cause or facilitate serious bodily injury to the participant. Parent/guardian will be financially responsible for equipment and/or uniforms that are lost or not returned to the Member Organization at the end of the season. Equipment will not be issued until the Member Organization receives the full registration fee, which is non-refundable after August 1<sup>st</sup> of each season.

4. I give permission to the Member Organization to transport or have transported my child to the hospital in the event of an unforeseen accident or emergency. In the unlikely event that emergency medical treatment is required and neither a parent/guardian nor duly designated agent is present or immediately available, said parent/guardian hereby authorizes the child's coach and/or another adult member of the organization to make any necessary medical decisions, until such time as the parent/guardian can be present or contacted. Said parent further represents the child is covered by medical insurance and/or assumes full financial responsibility for any medical treatment or service provided.

5. I will exhibit good sportsmanship at all times, and shall not boo or openly criticize players, coaches, officials, or opposing teams, nor will I incite others to do same. I shall comply with and enforce this Parent, Guardian or Guest Code of Conduct. I further accept responsibility for my guests, non-signing spouse, non-signing parent, family members, friends, and other invitees, who attend games, practices, competitions or any IYFL or Member Organization activity, and shall ensure they exhibit good sportsmanship and comply with the Parent, Guardian or Guest Code of Conduct, which shall be applicable to and enforced against them as if they had read, agreed and signed same. Any and all violations may be subject to discipline as provided in the IYFL Disciplinary Code.

6. I will not use or be under the influence of any illegal drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco during any practice, game, competition and/or sanctioned activity and will immediately report any person who I believe to be using and/or under such influence.

## IYFL PARTICIPANT CODE OF CONDUCT

The participant does hereby agree to participate in the IYFL and the Member Organization. The participant understands that they must conduct themselves in a civil and sportsmanlike manner and agrees and pledges that the participant will comply with the following:

1. Be respectful of my parents, coaches, teammates, opponents, Officials, and teachers.
2. Complete all homework assignments and work to improve my grades at school.
3. Attend all practices and games, be on time for practice and games and at all times, and be physically and mentally ready to play or perform.
4. Work to improve myself as a player/cheerleader, teammate and person.
5. Encourage all participants, whether my teammate or opposing squad.
6. Bring my own hydrating beverage to practices and games.
7. Keep all issued equipment clean, safe and in my possession at all times.
8. Return all issued equipment in clean condition and when requested.
10. Notify my coach as soon as first possible, if it is necessary for me to miss a game or practice.
11. Not use foul or demeaning language.
12. Not mock, taunt, or demean another member of my team or an opposing team.
13. Not fight with another player.
14. Not talk back to or be disrespectful to my parents, coaches, teammates, opponents, officials, and school employees or teachers.
15. Not damage the property of another.
16. Comply with and enforce the Participant Code of Conduct, and if I fail to do so, I may be subject to discipline as provided in the IYFL Disciplinary Code.

**IYFL**  
**INJURY RELEASE, INDEMNIFICATION**  
**AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT**

I am the parent or guardian of the participant. In consideration of such participation and intending to be legally bound, and after discussing the contents of this document with the participant, we recognize, acknowledge and understand the following:

1. The participant shall participate in all League or Member Organization games, practices, competitions and other activities and we assume the risk of such participation.
2. The participant shall use all facilities and equipment and we assume the risk of such use.
3. Participation in Football or Cheerleading can be physically, emotionally, and psychologically demanding and that a risk of physical or psychological injury or illness, is inherent in the sports of Football and Cheerleading.
4. The risks and demands of participating in Football or Cheerleading and we hereby voluntarily agree to assume such risks and demands.
5. I certify that the participant is physically and psychologically capable and able to participate in Football or Cheerleading the participant and I recognize, acknowledge and understand that participation in Football or Cheerleading may involve violent and significant physical contact which may cause physical (bodily) or psychological (mental) injuries or illness.
6. I have no knowledge of any physical or mental impairment that would affect the participant's ability to fully participate in Football or Cheerleading. I represent and warrant that I am covered by appropriate medical insurance and/or assume full responsibility for any provided medical treatment or service incident to the participant's participation in Football or Cheerleading.

**I, BEING OF FULL AGE, WITHOUT PHYSICAL OR MENTAL DEFICIENCY OR INCAPACITATION, DO VOLUNTARILY AND WITH FULL KNOWLEDGE OF MY ACTIONS, HEREBY AGREE TO ASSUME THE RISK AND AGREE TO RELEASE, DISCHARGE, HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFY IYFL AND ITS MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS, THEIR DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, SHAREHOLDERS, MEMBERS, EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS, SERVANTS, AGENTS AND/OR THEIR SUCCESSORS OR ASSIGNS, FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY FOR ANY PHYSICAL (BODILY) INJURIES OR ILLNESSES, PSYCHOLOGICAL (MENTAL) INJURIES OR ILLNESSES, OTHER LOSSES AND/OR HARMS, OF WHATSOEVER NATURE OR KIND, RESULTING FROM PARTICIPATION IN FOOTBALL OR CHEERLEADING.**