
Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association

2024 Football Rules

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Revision History

Date Updated	Revision Author	Version	Summary of Changes
January 16, 2018	Keith Rybak/Denny Moyer	V01	Created first edition of the SMYFA Rules. All old WLJFL rules were transferred over as is.
February 13, 2018	Keith Rybak/Denny Moyer	V02	<p>Document updated to reflect approved rule changes from the SMYFA Rules Meeting February 6, 2018.</p> <p>Eliminated Cut Blocking at all levels (rule 1.1.11) and revised to make clear no Cut Blocking was permitted.</p> <p>Revised rule 1.1.5 concerning minimum number of plays.</p> <p>Created new Freshman Developmental Rule (1.2).</p> <p>Deleted 1.3.3.1 (Pull Card Rule).</p> <p>Increased Varsity Restricted Weight to 190 lbs. from 185. See rule 2.2.1.</p> <p>Revised Tie Breaker Criteria rule 7.2.4 due to having one division – this made rule 7.2.4.2 redundant, and it therefore was deleted.</p> <p>Revised playoff format due to having 8 teams – see section 7.2.</p> <p>Deleted rule 9.1.1 and revised rule 9.1.2 concerning Award Rules</p>
March 14, 2018	Heather Ringrose	V03	<p>Clarify rule 1.2.3</p> <p>Added time out to 1.2.1</p>
March 22, 2018	Heather Ringrose	V04	<p>Addition of exclusion statement to 2.1.1</p>

<p>April, 18,2019</p>	<p>Keith Rybak</p>	<p>V05</p>	<p>Increased Varsity Restricted Weight to 195 lbs. from 190. See rule 2.2.1</p> <p>Modified Freshman Development play time. Playing time will now be 4 min in the first half and 4 minutes in the second half instead of eight minutes in the first half. See rule 1.2.1 and 1.1.3</p> <p>Modified Freshman Development playing time. See Rule 1.2.3</p> <p>Modified the minimum number of plays based on roster size. See Rule 1.1.5</p> <p>Modified Scouting Rule. See Rule 11.1.2</p> <p>Modified onside kick rules for Freshman and JV. See Rule 1.1.13</p> <p>Eliminated kickoffs for Developmental Play.</p> <p>Created Developmental Play for JV. JV will follow mostly the same rules as Freshman Developmental Play. See Rule 1.2.1 and rule 1.1.3</p> <p>Modified early weigh-in uniform. See Rule 2.3.1</p> <p>Modified the Playoff Format- Top four teams will make the playoffs, the bottom four teams will play consolation games. See Rule 7.2</p>
<p>February 5, 2020</p>	<p>Josh Kirk</p>	<p>V06</p>	<p>1.1.12 updated rules for OT for Freshmen/JV; Varsity follows MHSAA</p> <p>1.1.13 updated rules for onside kicks for Freshmen/JV for 1Q, 2Q, 3Q. Clarified game ball used for kickoffs and game</p> <p>1.5.3 updated rule for mouthpiece</p> <p>1.7.1 updated rule for player/coach ejections</p> <p>2.1.1 updated rule regarding granting waivers for player's maximum weight</p> <p>2.3.1 updated rule for weigh-ins, on what players must wear</p>

			<p>2.3.3.1 updated rule on where restricted players can line-up on defense and who they can initiate contact with</p> <p>2.4.1 updated rule on sharing of rosters</p> <p>2.4.4 updated rule on final rosters and documentation</p> <p>4.1.4.5 updated rule on defining boundaries by each unit</p> <p>4.1.4.6 updated rule on adding players outside of geographical boundaries</p> <p>4.1.5.3 updated rule on assignment of new players as first-come-first serve basis</p> <p>10.1.1 updated text to refer to SMYFA</p>
June 15, 2020	Josh Kirk	V07	11.1.2 updated "game sharing" scout film platform = Hudl per SMYFA email vote
August 10, 2020	Josh Kirk	V08	<p>7.1.1.2 added note about adjusting regular season games due to unforeseen circumstances</p> <p>7.2 added note about adjusting number of playoff teams games due to unforeseen circumstances</p>
February 11, 2021	Josh Kirk	V09	6.3.1 reduced number of practice days from six (6) to five (5)
February 23, 2022	Josh Kirk	V10	<p>7.2 Playoff Games</p> <p>Playoff teams will be set with the top 6 teams. Playoff format to be voted on during the SMYFA scheduling meeting</p>
March 16, 2023	Josh Kirk	V10	<p>6.1.1 Opening Practice</p> <p>Informal non-mandatory summer conditioning shall be allowed without pads</p>
March 23, 2022	Josh Kirk	V10	1.6.4 It is the duty of the football directors from both football teams to introduce themselves, attend games, and introduce themselves to referees
August 23, 2022	Josh Kirk	V10	1.5.1 Added a reference for Nike game balls for each squad
January 12, 2023	Josh Kirk	V11	2.2.1 Age and weights updated with new May 1 st date and cutoff details for each level.

January 12, 2023	Josh Kirk	V11	1.2.3 rule clarified that non-developmental players can meet their minimum play requirements (ie. 5) anytime during the half
February 16, 2023	Josh Kirk	V11	1.3 pull card points rule updated to 18 points for both offense and defense for regular season games
February 25, 2024	Josh Kirk	V12	2.2.1 updated squad eligibility to grade based for and non-high school kids who are 13-years old as of April 30th
February 25, 2024	Josh Kirk	V12	1.5.1 standardized the eligible game balls that to be used for each squad
February 25, 2024	Josh Kirk	V12	7.2 updated playoff language to clarify that playoff format, seeding, and tie-breakers will be voted upon during SMYFA scheduling/board meeting
July 18, 2024	Josh Kirk	V12	7.2 playoff format, selection process, and tiebreaker updated

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Developmental Player	A first-year and or low-impact player.
Football Director	A member of the Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association Board from a Unit.
Full Roster	A roster for each Team in a Unit consisting of the following elements in numerical jersey order: First Name, Last Name, Age before August 1, Date of Birth, Weight, Veteran Status, School District, Physical Home Address, Phone Number and each player out of district must be Highlighted.
Geographical Boundaries	<p>The geography, as defined by the school district boundaries maintained at the Michigan.gov site below, from which a Unit may add players to its Team's rosters. The player must live or go to school at a physical address within the Geographical Boundary that is a player's legal school district.</p> <p>http://www.michigan.gov/cgi/0,1607,7-158-52927_53037_12540_13100-101130--,00.html</p>
League	<p>Eight (8) Units that comprise the Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commerce Chargers (Walled Lake School District from Loon Lake, Maple, Mary Helen Guest, Oakley Park, Pleasant Lake and Twin Beach) • Livonia Blue Jays (Livonia School District from Cleveland, Grant, Hayes, Cooper and Emerson); New Players: South of Schoolcraft – East of Farmington. • Livonia Eagles (Livonia & Clarenceville School Districts from Botsford, Coolidge, Grandview, Roosevelt, Kennedy***, Riley*, Holmes*, Johnson*** and Frost***); New Players: North of 5 Mile – East of Merriman and Between 5 Mile and Schoolcraft – East of Farmington • Livonia Falcons (Livonia School District from Buchanan, Cass, Hoover, Riley** and Holmes**); New Players: North of 5 mile – West of Merriman

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livonia Orioles (Livonia School District from Garfield, Webster, Rosedale, Randolph, Kennedy****, Johnson**** and Frost****); New Players: South of 5 mile – West of Farmington • Northville Colts (Northville School District) • Northville Stallions (Northville School District) • Walled Lake Braves (Walled Lake School District from Hickory Woods, Meadowbrook, Walled Lake and Wixom) • Novi Bobcats (School districts TBD, see rule 4.1.4.5) • Garden City Cougars (School districts TBD, see rule 4.1.4.5) • Dearborn Thunderbirds (School districts TBD, see rule 4.1.4.5) • Redford Eagles (School districts TBD, see rule 4.1.4.5) <p>*East of Hubbard Road **West of Hubbard Road ***East of Farmington Road ****West of Farmington Road</p>
Maximum Roster	A roster than contains a maximum number of registered players for each Team in a Unit as defined by individual Units.
Minimum Roster	A roster that contains thirty (30) registered players for each Team in a Unit.
New Player	A non-Veteran registered player
Pull Card	A list of eight (8) players who represent the highest impact players on each Team in a Unit. A Pull Card player must meet the unlimited play weight limits and must play in the actual game, thus disqualifying injured players.
Qualified Medical Personnel	At least one individual with at least the medical qualifications of an EMT or Certified Trainer
Shared Roster	A roster for each Team in a Unit consisting of the following elements in alphabetical order: Last Name, First Name, Age before August 1, Weight

Team	One of the four (4) Teams, consisting of Flag, Freshman, Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams in each Unit in the Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association, known by their name.
Unit	One of the eight (8) entities in the League, each with four (4) Teams that comprise the total membership of the Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association.
Veteran Player	A Veteran shall be defined as a player who was on the prior season's roster of a SMYFA Team as of the first game of that season or the sibling of a Veteran player. Veteran status shall be given to players who experience a season-ending injury any time following the first day of practice of the prior season. Veteran status shall not be given to those players who elect to quit before the first game of the prior season.
Wait List	A list of player candidates that exceed the Minimum Roster count for a Team in a Unit, organized in priority order, with #1 being first priority.

Program Philosophy

The Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association (“SMYFA”) is designed for the improvement and development of the capabilities of individual youths, to encourage team athletic endeavors in football and to promote the physical, mental and moral development of youths 6 through 14 years of age, without regard to race, creed, color or religion. Players shall receive education and instruction in football, to develop a sense of fair play, honest and fair competition and true sportsmanship.

1. Playing Rules—Tackle Football

1.1 General Rules

The rules of the National Federation of High School Associations, also known as the “NFHS”, shall apply except as hereinafter noted, the Rules of the League will be binding on all Units without exception.

- 1.1.1 The games will be administered by a minimum of three (3) officials (upon mutual agreement by head coaches, games may be played with less than three). The duties of the officials and head referee are those as set forth in the NFHS rules.
- 1.1.2 Down markers (ie. chain gang) shall not be required at the goal lines.
- 1.1.3 All games shall be played in four (4) quarters of twelve (12) minutes each. Except for Freshman and JV. Freshman and JV will play a four (4) minute developmental game prior to the start of the regular Freshman and JV game as well as a four (4) minute developmental game prior to the start of the second half. The regular Freshman and JV game will consist of four (4) quarters of ten (10) minutes each. There will be at least a twelve (12) minute intermission at the half. Subsequent games will start no sooner than two (2) hours from the starting time of the preceding game. The clock will stop for out of bounds, time out, incomplete pass, change of possession, first down moving of the chains, and penalties. Following a clock stoppage as defined in this Rule, the clock will re-start on the snap of the ball, except following a first down or penalty, where the clock will re-start on the official’s signal.
- 1.1.4 Each player who is completely uniformed for a game must play the minimum number of plays as provided below in Rule 1.1.5 in each half. The other Team in a Unit must be notified that a player cannot participate because of injury, sickness, weight, disqualification, or disciplinary action, which shall be specifically noted for each and every affected player on a Team’s Shared Roster, exchanged by each Team at the weigh-in before each game. Kick-offs, receiving of the same, and extra point attempts on defense or offense are considered a play. The following circumstances do not constitute a play and will not count towards a player’s minimum allowable plays for the half or game: any repeated down due to penalty; a play in which the offense spikes or “clocks” the ball; and a play in which the offense takes a knee.

- 1.1.5 In the event that a Team has completely uniformed thirty-three (33) or more players, each player must receive a minimum of four (4) plays per half. In the event that a Team has completely uniformed twenty-seven (27) to thirty-two (32) players, each player must receive a minimum of five (5) plays per half. In the event that a Team has completely uniformed twenty-six (26) or less players, the minimum amount of plays is six (6) per half. For Freshman and JV Non-Developmental players, five (5) plays minimum per player, per half regardless of roster size. Freshman and JV Developmental players will play four (4) minutes prior to the start of the regular Freshman and JV game and four (4) minutes prior to the start of the second half of the Freshman and JV game and not a specific number of plays.
- 1.1.6 Game quarters may be shortened or start times changed in the event of any emergency upon the agreement of the Units' Football Directors of the Teams competing. The game shall be played on regulation football field (300' x 160').
- 1.1.7 In cases where there is an exception to this rule, procedure would follow by mutual consent of the Units' Football Directors of the Teams competing.
- 1.1.8 One (1) point shall be scored by a Team making an after-touchdown conversion by pass or run for after the touchdown conversion. Two (2) points shall be scored for a successful kick after a touchdown.
- 1.1.9 Weekly game reports shall be submitted by email or fax to the League President no later than 16:00 hrs. on the Monday immediately following the game. Each Unit's Football Director shall submit game reports for each Team in their Unit Game reports will be submitted on the League-provided format.
- 1.1.10 The use of communication devices for coaching purposes on the game field to transmit or receive information, are prohibited, except for emergency purposes, which must be disclosed to the opposing coach and officials prior to the commencement of the game for approval by the designated Head Official for that game.
- 1.1.11 No cut blocking is permitted on any play.
- 1.1.12 For Overtime during regular season games at the Freshman/JV levels, teams will follow the MHSAA rules except each team will get only 1 possession to score with the ball starting at the offensive 10-yard line. For Varsity, overtime will be played as outlined in MHSAA rules.
- 1.1.13 For Freshmen/JV game, during Q1, Q2, Q3, the ball must travel 20 yards for it to be recoverable by the kicking team. If the returner gains possession (regardless of distance), makes a football move and then fumbles, the football is live and can be recovered by the kicking team. For Q4, onside kicks are permissible with the intent of maintaining a safe playing environment for all players. Varsity will follow MHSAA rules

for all kickoffs. The game ball being kicked off must be the same game ball that the team uses during the game for their offensive possession.

1.2 Freshmen and JV Developmental Teams

- 1.2.1 There will be an eight (8) minute developmental game comprised of two (2) four (4) minute halves. The first four (4) minute half will be before the start of each Freshman and JV game. The second four (4) minute half will be before the start of the second half. This game will be made up of the eleven (11) developmental kids from each team. The score will not be kept during these eight (8) minutes. The time clock will run as normal. The ball will be placed at the forty (40) yard line to start each half. A coin toss before the start of the game will determine who starts with the ball. The same coin toss will also determine the kicking and receiving teams for the freshman game. Each team will have one 30-second timeout for use during the developmental game. This timeout cannot be carried over to the Non-Developmental part of the game.
- 1.2.2 During the Freshman developmental game, the developmental team may have two (2) coaches on the field; both coaches must be 15 yards behind the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball. No coaches will be allowed on the field for the JV developmental game. The coaches are to assist the players in the huddle only. When the huddle breaks to line for the play, the coaches must remain back 15 yards from the line of scrimmage and stay out of the play, physically and verbally. A 5-yard penalty for violation of this rule will be enforced.
- 1.2.3 Developmental players are allowed to play in the regular freshman and JV game; however, they are not required to do so as their playing requirement has been met by playing in the developmental game. Any developmental player may re-enter the game at any time as long as non-developmental players meet their minimum play requirements of five (5) plays any time during the half.
- 1.2.4 The eleven (11) Developmental Players will be listed on each Team's Shared Roster for the game, which shall be exchanged at the weigh-in, between the weigh-in representatives of the opposing Teams before the start of each game. Two (2) players who are also considered to be non-starting-low impact players, not Developmental Players, will also be listed with the eleven (11) Developmental Players as substitutes in case of an injury to a Developmental Player.

1.3 Pull-Card Rule

- 1.3.1 When a Team in a Unit is at eighteen (18) points ahead, eight (8) players designated on that Team's Pull Card are no longer allowed to play on offense or defense.
- 1.3.2 If the eighteenth (18th) point ahead is scored by the way of a touchdown, the eight (8) designated players shall be allowed to participate in the point after attempt.
- 1.3.3 The eighteen (18) point "Pull Card" will be established using the following player criteria:
 - 1.3.3.1 One (1) official's time out will be granted one (1) time per game for player set up following a Team's first occasion to pull their eight (8) players
 - 1.3.3.2 When the eighteen (18) point rule is in effect, the eight players must remove their helmets and place them inside the 20-yard line and at least five (5) yards from the field of play during offensive plays, and then may rejoin their team on the sideline without their helmets. Point rule list of players constituting the "Pull Card" must be designated on each Team's Shared Rosters and exchanged at the weigh-in, with the weigh-in representative of the opposing Team before the start of each game.
 - 1.3.3.3 When the eighteen (18) point rule is in effect, the Team so affected can only have its roster reduced to a minimum of thirteen (13) players. In such event, a Team's roster of eligible players for the game falls below thirteen (13) players while the eighteen (18) point rule is in effect, a player from the eighteen (18) point Pull Card must return to the game and be a player selected by the opposing Team's Head Coach.
 - 1.3.3.4 Teams may challenge the "Pull Card" of an opponent a maximum of two (2) times per game. The Team challenging may elect to remove one player per half, or two players from the field in the second half, and place the player on the opponent's Pull Card. The challenging Team will also choose the returning player without loss of a challenge. The challenge shall only occur when the rule is in effect. A maximum of two players per game may be challenged, per Team. One (1) challenge per half is permitted, or two (2) challenges in the 2nd half if no challenge was presented in the 1st half.
 - 1.3.3.5 If the "Pull Card" players have not participated in their minimum number of plays per half as designated in Rule 1.1.5, they must return to the game concurrently and consecutively on defense, only, at the first available opportunity to do so. Kickoffs and defending extra point attempts are considered defensive plays.
 - 1.3.3.6 This rule is amended to twenty-four (24) points for all playoff games including championship game. Consolation games (see Rule 7.2) will still follow the normal eighteen (18) point rule. All other Pull Card Rules apply.
 - 1.3.4.8 When the pull card rule is in effect, the pull team cannot recover an onside kick.

1.4 Player Game Participation

- 1.4.1 It is the duty of each Football Director to see that the coaches are giving each player proper opportunities for participation in practice and games. A specific individual within the Unit, known as the team “spotter”, other than the coaching personnel of the game in progress, should be charged with the responsibility of checking on participation and determining six (6) minutes prior to the ending of each half which players have not played their minimum number of plays, and to inform the Team’s Head Coach to enter those players into play.
- 1.4.2 A League approved spotter sheet shall be filled out by both Teams prior to the start of each game.
 - 1.4.2.1 The sheet will list all players, noting eligibility status.
 - 1.4.2.2 The sheet will list all restricted play players and all players exceeding weight of over 6lbs.
 - 1.4.2.3 The sheet will list all eighteen (18) point “Pull Card players”.
 - 1.4.2.4 Opposing Teams at their discretion may have an individual from their Unit other than coaching personnel serve as a “spotter” on the opponent’s sideline to verify the opponent is having all players participate in the minimum number of plays per half in the game.
- 1.4.3 All spotter sheets will be signed by spotters and retained by each Unit’s Football Director or the designated representative for each Unit.
- 1.4.4 Spotters are not allowed to influence the game in any way.
- 1.4.5 The Referee shall remind each Team’s Head Coach six (6) minutes prior to the end of the first half and six (6) minutes prior to the end of the game, to check their participation status on all their players.
- 1.4.6 At the discretion of the Football Directors by majority vote, a Team found not playing an eligible player the proper amount of their minimum plays may result in: (i) a written warning; (ii) a one game suspension of the Head Coach; (iii) if the infraction represents more than the first infraction in the same season, a permanent suspension of the Head Coach, and/or forfeiture of the game.

1.5 Equipment & Uniforms

- 1.5.1 The game ball can be comprised of a composite or leather material and shall be selected from list below:

- 1.5.1.1 Varsity: Wilson model TDY for GST Youth ages 12-14
- 1.5.1.2 JV: Wilson model TDJ for GST Junior ages 9-12
- 1.5.1.3 Freshman: Wilson model Pee Wee K2 for GST Pee Wee ages 6-9
- 1.5.1.4 Flag: Wilson model Pee Wee K2 for GST Pee Wee ages 6-9

1.5.2 Football shoes shall consist of soft leather, synthetic or canvas uppers. Molded cleats may be used but under the following restrictions: All cleats shall be made of rubber or plastic and should be no longer than one-half (1/2) inch in length. Screw-in cleats are permitted as long as no metal is exposed or visible. Clear helmet visors are permitted during games.

1.5.3 The wearing of a protective mouthpiece, athletic supporter, and protective cup shall be mandatory. Mouthpiece must be tethered to helmet or a clearly visible model. Failure of a player to wear a protective mouthpiece in a game shall constitute a rule violation subject to the following action:

- Violation – player removed from field for 1 play, but it does not count against minimum number of plays

1.6 Game Day Operations

1.6.1 Player weigh-ins must be conducted before each game to enforce the Rules established in Section 2 Eligibility Rules.

1.6.2 Announcing

1.6.2.1 The announcer should talk only after the whistle has blown the play dead and announce or play music only until the offensive center breaks the huddle or the huddle is broken.

1.6.2.2 There will be no Play-by-Play from the time the center reaches the line of scrimmage, until the whistle blows the play dead.

1.6.2.3 The announcer should remain neutral at all times as they represent both teams while performing their duties.

1.6.2.4 It is the responsibility of the Football Director for the home Team or his representative to enforce this Rule.

1.6.2.5 An unsportsmanlike conduct penalty may be issued if this Rule is not followed after the first warning.

1.6.3 The National Anthem shall be played before the start of each game.

1.6.4 It is the duty of the football directors from both football teams to introduce themselves to each other, to be in attendance at every game, and to introduce themselves to the referees prior to the start of game.

1.7 Game Behavior

- 1.7.1 Swearing, fighting, and/or improper behavior will not be tolerated. Such actions will result in ejection from the game. Anyone being ejected from a contest will be ineligible to participate in the next contest. 2nd violation for football player in the same season is a 3-game suspension. 2nd violation for a coach will be ineligible for the remainder of the season subject to review by SMYFA board. It is the responsibility of each Director of Football in the contest to confirm and report to the league president any ejection on the weekly game day report. For a player being ejected, the player can remain on the sidelines, but must remove their helmet and shoulder pads. For a coach being ejected, he is not permitted to be on the football field.
- 1.7.2 If a taunting penalty is assessed against a player, that player must be removed from the game for the next play. A fifteen (15) yard penalty shall be assessed and a warning given to the player's coach. The second time a player is penalized for taunting during the same game, he or she will be ejected from the game and a fifteen (15) yard penalty shall be assessed. (A team time-out must be taken if a coach wants to discuss the second taunting penalty/ejection). If more than one player on a Team is assessed a penalty for taunting in a game, the Officials shall, in addition to the yardage penalty, charge the offending Team with the loss of a time-out, and issue a warning to the Head Coach of that Team. If another taunting violation occurs by any player on that Team, the Head Coach shall be ejected from the game, along with any player who may also be required to be ejected under this Rule, and the infraction reported to the League President by the Football Directors at the game, in conformity with Rule 13 for any further action by the League. In the event any penalty under this Rule is called during a point after attempt or any other play resulting in a change of possession, the yardage penalty shall be assessed on the ensuing kick-off or change of possession. If any Team is assessed a taunting penalty after its Head Coach has been ejected under this Rule, the Officials shall terminate play and the game shall be forfeited by the offending Team.

1.8 League Insurance

All Units participating in the League will be covered under one insurance policy that will be issued to the League. Payment of the policy will be shared equally between all Units of the League.

2. Eligibility Rules

2.1 General Requirements

- 2.1.1 By a majority vote of the Football Directors, they reserve the right to waive the eligibility rules for any player when they feel it is appropriate or necessary. Reasons for a waiver may be for, but are not limited to, physical or emotional needs of the player. If a Unit wishes to request a waiver it should be made to the Football Directors. Changes will be approved by a majority vote of the Football Directors prior to the start of the season. Waivers must be attached to the player's documentation for game day review. Under no circumstances will a waiver be granted for a change to the maximum age and/or grade and/or weight of the eligibility rules.
- 2.1.2 Eligibility rules will be finalized each year no later than the January meeting of the Football Directors.

2.2 Age & Weight Requirements

- 2.2.1 Youths who are entering the grades listed in the table below are eligible to play football in the league.

Team	Grade based	Base Weight (lbs.)	Restricted Play weight
Flag	1st - 2nd	N/A	N/A
Freshmen	3rd - 4th	125	130
Junior Varsity	5th - 6th	150	160
Varsity	7th - 8th	175	195
	Non-high school kids who are 14-years old as of April 30th	135	145

2.2.2 Exceptions

2.2.2.1 Players who turn fifteen (15) prior to November 15th must have League Board approval.

2.2.2.2 Players are eligible to "Play-Up" at the discretion of the Unit. However, players may only "Play-Up" by increment of one (1) year above that player's age on July 31st before any season.

2.2.2.3 Any unique or marginal weight issues will be resolved on game day using the discretion of Football Directors from both Units.

2.3 Weigh-In Procedures

- 2.3.1 For early weigh-ins, players must wear game jersey and pants/shorts for Freshman, Junior Varsity and Varsity. For the regular pre-game weigh-in, the game jersey and all the playing equipment from the waist down (including game pants), but excluding football game shoes is required to be worn for weigh-in.
- 2.3.2 Scales should be set at 126 for Freshman, 151 for Junior Varsity and 176 for Varsity (136 for 14yr old's * above). A player who does not raise the beam to the halfway point of the scale shall be considered to be within the allowable weight.
- 2.3.3 Players over 125/150/175 but under 131/161/196 and 146 for fourteen (14) year old's will be allowed to play the entire game with restrictions:
1. Restricted players will have their helmet striped with a contrasting piece of tape that is 1" wide and is applied from the front of the helmet to the back of the helmet. On the weigh in sheet restrictor player will be clearly marked. Only two (2) restricted players can play per play. The restricted player can only play offensive center, guard and or tackle. A restricted player may not advance the ball on offense. On defense, the restricted player may only line up as Defensive Tackle (DT) over Offensive Guard or Tackle DT cannot be heads up over the Center or Tight End DT's initial engagement should be with the opposing Offensive Guard or Tackle However, if DT is initially engaged by others [ie. Guard pulls and Center/Tackle fills the gap], then DT is ok to engage others. . A restricted player may advance the ball on defense. Striped players will not be allowed to play on Kickoff or Kickoff return.
 2. Any player who is above the maximum allowable weight will be ineligible to participate in the game. The above stated rule is to be administered by the Football Directors at the game, only.
- 2.3.4 The aforementioned weights shall be determined within one-half prior to each regularly scheduled game by actual weigh-in, in the presence of one representative from the opposing teams. At this time the scale is to be balanced with an honest weight. One person shall be responsible for all weigh-ins from each Team. No coaches or parents are allowed at the weigh-in. All reasonable efforts should be made to

allow players to make weight, limited to removing non-required equipment and balancing of weight bar on scale.

- 2.3.5 No artificial means may be used to affect a player's weight.
- 2.3.6 The opposing team must accommodate early weigh-ins on game-day after the Freshman team weigh-in period, unless an earlier time is agreed to by Football Directors from each Unit for that game. Players are limited to one official weigh-in, per game.

2.4 Rosters

- 2.4.1 All Shared Rosters of player personnel, including those shown in the program, shall be listed by each Unit. A roster with the phonetic spelling of cheerleaders, players, and coaches must be supplied, so as to be used to announce from during the games (a draft of the first rosters shall be shared with SMYFA by the first Monday in May).
- 2.4.2 Each team must submit a roster for all units by the *Friday before the first regular season game to the league Secretary*. The final (closed) team rosters must be submitted by the Friday before the second game of the season.
 - 2.4.2.1 One roster for each Team in a Unit shall be a Full Roster.
 - 2.4.2.2 One roster for each Team in a Unit shall be a Shared Roster.
 - 2.4.2.3 An initial Shared Roster, including a Unit's Wait Lists for each Team, must be submitted to the League Secretary at the June meeting before every season, and the Secretary shall thereafter make these rosters available to all Football Directors and to the League President.
- 2.4.3 All roster documentation including birth certificates and registration forms will be reviewed by Football Directors for accuracy and completeness at a scheduled meeting of the board for this purpose prior to the first game.
- 2.4.4 A Unit Football Director, or an appointed representative, must have the approved final league roster at all games. Any player not listed on the approved league roster is ineligible to participate. All roster documentation, player name, player number, birth certificate, proof of eligibility, current physical, will be made available to DOF's prior to 1st regular season game, refer to rule 2.4.3. Failure to do so will make the player or players in question ineligible for that game(s).

2.5 Team Requirements

- 2.5.1 Each Team of a Unit must have at least sixteen (16) eligible players on its approved Shared Roster by the end of the second (2nd) full week in August before the season begins. If any Team from a Unit cannot meet this player requirement by this deadline, this shall be presented to the League Secretary at that time and the information distributed to all Board Directors and to the League President.
- 2.5.2 The minimum number of players on a Team in a Unit to start a game shall be thirteen (13).

2.6 Medical Support

- 2.6.1 Qualified Medical Personnel shall be present for each game. No game shall start without Qualified Medical Personnel being present.

2.7 Dual Rostering

- 2.7.1 Players participating in a public, private, or parochial school football program, or other organized football program, during the current League season are not eligible to participate in the League.
- 2.7.2 The Football Directors discourage the participation in concurrent athletic programs.

3. Head & Assistant Coach Rules

3.1 Code of Conduct

3.1.1 Coaches will adhere to the following Code of Conduct:

3.1.1.1 I will provide positive support, care and encouragement for the team

3.1.1.2 I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all participants, coaches, officials, board members and league staff at home and away games.

3.1.1.3 I will place the emotional, psychological, and physical well-being of the players and other children in the league ahead of any personal desire I may have.

3.1.1.4 I will insist that my team participate in a safe and healthy environment.

3.1.1.5 I will support all coaches, board members in order to encourage a positive enjoyable experience for all.

3.1.1.6 I will demand an environment that is DRUG, TOBACCO, and ALCOHOL free at all events.

3.1.1.7 I will remember that the League is for the youth, not the coaches.

3.1.1.8 I will ask the team to treat other participants, coaches, board members, parents, and spectators with respect, regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.

3.1.1.9 I will refrain from any and all vulgar, lewd or obscene language or gestures.

3.1.1.10 I will direct all comments and criticisms to parents, participants, officials, and board members away from the children participation in the league.

3.1.1.11 I will read and understand the League rules and regulations. I understand violations of rules may result in disciplinary action.

3.1.2 Unit Football Directors, or his or her appointed representative for each Team in a Unit are responsible for collecting signed Codes of Conduct and maintaining these signed documents on file. They will also be sent to the President of the League on the Friday before the first game.

3.2 Other Requirements

3.2.1 No Head Coaches will be younger than 18 years of age.

4. Registration & Fill Rules

4.1 Uniform Registration & Fill Rules

4.1.1 Participation Fees

4.1.1.1 Each Unit shall establish the participation fees each season for its program.

4.1.2 Physical Exams

4.1.2.1 Each Unit belonging to the League shall require a physical examination for each player on or before a date to be specified each year.

4.1.2.2 A certificate of examination, signed by a physician and countersigned by his parents, must be submitted to the Unit prior to the start of practice.

4.1.2.3 The certificate of examination shall contain the date of examination, which must be within the calendar year of the start of that year's football season, and the physician's statement declaring the fitness of the child to play football.

4.1.2.4 All physical examination certificates shall be on file with the Unit and open for inspection at all times

4.1.3 Age Verification

4.1.3.1 Each player shall furnish a Birth Certificate which must be validated by the Unit Football Director, or his or her appointed representative for each Team in a Unit.

4.1.4 Player Eligibility

4.1.4.1 All players and parents must be in good standing with respect to the Player and Parent Codes of Conduct to be eligible to register for the upcoming season. Parents must meet the minimum volunteerism requirements, as determined by each Unit, for their player(s) to be considered a Veteran for the following year. Good standing status is at the discretion of the Unit.

4.1.4.2 In the case where the player's parents move from one Unit to another Unit the player may exercise veteran rights in either the new or the old Unit.

4.1.4.3 There shall be no player tryouts for any Team in a Unit participating in the League.

4.1.4.4 All Veterans registered with their respective Units will receive literature and schedules related to their Team in that Unit.

- 4.1.4.5 Assignment of New Players from Units within the League will only be allowed if a Unit cannot fulfill its Minimum Roster requirements from its registration and Wait List with eligible New Players within its own Geographical Boundaries. In such an event, that Unit seeking to fill its roster must follow fill policy and Wait List requirements from the other Unit. A Unit must obtain written approval from another Unit if taking a player from that Unit's Geographical Boundary. (Boundaries will be defined by each unit and not infringe on neighboring unit. If an agreement between the units cannot be made the Board members will settle the dispute on Boundaries.)
- 4.1.4.6 A Unit can only add 2 players outside the unit's geographical boundaries beyond their minimum roster (not subject to board approval). If the Unit is below their minimum roster after May 1, they may add players who outside their geographical boundaries to get to their minimum roster (subject to board review) plus 2 players who outside their geographical boundary (not subject to board approval). Once a player has earned veteran status, they will be grandfathered in and will be considered in SMYFA's Boundaries for future seasons.
- 4.1.4.7 Any League Unit seeking to add any player to one of its Teams above the Minimum Roster from outside its Geographical Boundaries must seek approval from a majority of the Football Directors at a League Board meeting prior to the official closing date for Rosters.
- 4.1.4.8 Maximum Roster sizes for Teams will be at the discretion of the individual Units.
- 4.1.5 Registration Process
 - 4.1.5.1 All Veteran players will be given adequate notice and opportunity to register prior to open enrollment of New Players.
 - 4.1.5.2 All New Players will be given adequate notice and opportunity to register following commencement of Veteran registration.
 - 4.1.5.3 New Player enrollment will be conducted using first-come, first-serve.

- 4.1.5.4 Late registration from a Veteran player shall be treated as a New Player registration and subject to first-come, first-serve process.
- 4.1.5.5 Once a Minimum Roster is achieved for any Team in a Unit, a Wait List will be created for all New Players for that Team.
- 4.1.5.6 All registrants shall submit the following information during registration:
 - Unit Registration Form
 - Official Birth Certificate
 - Participation Fees

- 4.1.6 Registration Timing
 - 4.1.6.1 The Registration Period shall be defined as the period from January 1 to the official closing date for rosters each year.
 - 4.1.6.2 If Team rosters in a Unit are below thirty (30) players, the Registration Period may be extended with the approval from a majority of the Football Directors. Once a Team roster in a Unit is at thirty (30) or more players, the Registration Period will be deemed closed for that Team in a Unit.
- 4.1.7 Minimum Roster Size
 - 4.1.7.1 Minimum Roster requirements should be used for each Team in a Unit at the time of Registration, when players are available.
 - 4.1.7.2 If a Team in a Unit fulfills the Minimum Roster requirement, or opts to proceed with fewer than thirty (30) players, any player assigned to that Team in a Unit who came from within another Unit's Geographical Boundaries, may elect to return to a Team or Wait List for a Team within the player's original Unit prior to the official closing date for rosters.
- 4.1.8 Roster Definition
 - 4.1.8.1 Each Football Director shall supply the League Secretary with an electronic version of all of its Unit's Shared Rosters on or before the date for the June meeting of the Football Directors and with an electronic version of all of its Unit's Full Rosters on or before the date for the August meeting of the Football Directors before the season begins.
 - 4.1.8.2 Players shall be listed in the Shared and Full Rosters in accordance with the definitions for both Rosters, as set forth in the Glossary of Terms in these Rules.
 - 4.1.8.3 Failure of a Unit to comply with these Roster deadline requirements for any Team within its Unit shall be cause for action by the League to impose forfeiture of all League games for any Team in a Unit not in compliance until compliance is achieved.

5. Scrimmage Rules

5.1 Scrimmage Requirements

- 5.1.1 Intra-League and extra League scrimmage games are allowed. These games are considered and count as a practice session and absolutely no attempt shall be made to approximate game competitive standards:
- No referees are permitted
 - No time clock is permitted
 - No score keeping is permitted
- 5.1.2 No player from any Team in a Unit or from any other team participating in a scrimmage may participate if that player's weight exceeds the maximum allowable weight limits established by these Rules by 10 lbs. or more.
- 5.1.3 Qualified Medical Personnel shall be present at any and all scrimmages involving any League Teams in a Unit.

6. Practice Rules

6.1 Opening Practice

- 6.1.1 Informal non-mandatory summer conditioning shall be allowed without pads (open to any athletes [from any team and any squad]) before the scheduled official start date of practice established by the League Board every year. Practice start date shall never occur more than five (5) weeks prior to the first regularly scheduled game.
- 6.1.2 Camps may be conducted by League Teams within a Unit at their discretion, but shall be limited to no more than three (3) days, for no more than two and one half (2.5) hours each day, and shall not occur less than one (1) week prior to the official start date of practice in any season.
- 6.1.3 Camp participation may not be used for Teams in any Unit to conduct “try outs” or to “cut” players from any Team.

6.2 Body Contact

- 6.2.1 Prior to body-to-body contact or tackling drills, each player must have at least three (3) full days of physical conditioning following the official practice start date each season. Helmets may be worn during time conditioning. Athletic supporters, cups and mouth pieces are recommended during conditioning, but not mandatory.

6.3 Prohibited Practice

- 6.3.1 Prior to the first game, no Team in a Unit shall practice more than five (5) days a week. The week following the first official game of the season, there shall be no more than four (4) days of practice per week. The days-off are up to the discretion of each Team in a Unit.

6.4 Practice Duration

- 6.4.1 Teams in a Unit may practice two and one-half (2.5) hours per day up to the first official League game. After the first official League game, Teams in a Unit may only practice up to two (2) hours per day.

6.5 Practice Attendance

- 6.5.1 Any otherwise eligible player having two (2) unexcused absences from practices during a game week shall be held out for 1st half of that week's game. Any otherwise eligible player having three (3) or more unexcused absences from practice during a game week shall not participate in that week's game. Each Unit shall have the right to grant the Head Coach for any Team in a Unit the discretion to limit the playing time of any player who has missed more than two (2) or more practices in any given week, based on considerations for player(s) safety.

6.6 Water Breaks

- 6.6.1 During games, it will be the responsibility of the Home Team in a Unit to supply both sidelines with adequate amounts of water to ensure proper hydration for all players.

7. Scheduling Rules

7.1 Regular Season Game Scheduling

7.1.1.1 Games for all Teams in a Unit shall be scheduled and approved by a majority of the Football Directors.

7.1.1.2 All teams will play a set number of regular season games approved by a majority of the Football Directors during the scheduling meeting (note: the number of regular season games can be adjusted due to unforeseen circumstances but must be approved by a majority of the Football Directors).

7.1.1.3 Re-scheduling for the games must be approved by a majority of the Football Directors.

7.1.1.4 The first game for all tackle day games shall start at 11:00 A.M, unless otherwise specified and approved by a majority of the League Board.

7.1.1.5 The first game for all tackle night games shall start at 3:00 P.M, unless otherwise specified and approved by a majority of the League Board.

7.1.1.6 No games will be scheduled on Labor Day weekend

7.2 Playoff Games

Playoff format (& consolation games if applicable), seeding, and tie-breaker criteria to be voted on during the SMYFA scheduling/board meeting. The number of playoff teams can be adjusted due to unforeseen circumstances if approved by SMYFA football directors.

Updated July 18, 2024: Step 1: following the last game of the regular season, for any teams that have played an extra game, one (or more) regular season game(s) will be randomly removed by SMYFA to create an equal number of games for all teams. Step 2: Playoff seeding for the top 4 teams (see **excel SMYFA schedule August 7, 2024**) will be determined based upon the best won-loss-tie record. In the event of ties (same overall record between teams), see 7.2.4

In the event of a forfeit, the non-forfeiting team will be awarded a win and the forfeited team a loss.

7.2.1 Playoff game times and locations shall be scheduled once the season has ended via SMYFA board meeting

7.2.4 Tie Breaker Criteria

7.2.4.1.2 Head-to-Head. The record between the two tied Teams playing each other during the season (includes all games, even any that get randomly removed).

7.2.4.1.3 Total Points Allowed.

7.2.4.1.4 Coin-Toss.

8. Weather & Field Rules

8.1 Weather Conditions

8.1.1 The decision whether a game should be played in inclement weather shall be in the hands of the Unit Football Directors for the Teams playing in that game. They shall place primary emphasis on the welfare of the players. MHSAA guidelines should be followed. If the two Unit Football Directors for the Teams playing cannot agree, the head official for the crew scheduled for that game shall make the final decision.

8.1.2 Once a decision is rendered, it shall be considered final and received in the spirit of good sportsmanship. In the event that a decision to cancel or discontinue a game is made by the Football Directors, the rescheduling of the game or its completion shall be done in accordance with Rule 7.1.1.2 above.

8.2 Field Conditions

8.2.1 The decision as to whether a game should be played due to poor field conditions shall be solely in the hands of the home field Unit Football Director.

9. Award Rules

9.1 Player & Team Awards

9.1.2 Award stickers on helmets are permitted as long as the awarding of such stickers is not based upon a play that impacts the safety of the opposing team, for example – “Best hit of the week”

10. Commercialization Rules

10.1 Individual Player, Team & Unit Commercialization

10.1.1 Exploitation of the Southeast Michigan Youth Football Association's (SMYFA) program, a Unit, a Team or an individual player with the benefit or otherwise to an individual, or to a business is not permitted.

10.1.2 The sole aim of the contributor, both in time and money should be to assist the Team or individual Unit as a whole, and to help make their community a better place in which to live.

11. Scouting Rules

11.1 Scouting

11.1.1 All teams will be provided with a "game sharing" scout film account. For the purpose of using it to exchange film. Each team will share its previous game with their next opponent. Film will be exchanged by 6:00 p.m. on the Monday following the weekend game. Game film of a Team may only be obtained from that Team/Unit.

11.1.2 All teams must maintain a "game sharing" scout film platform, Hudl, or any similar platform, account. Each team is responsible for the funding of their platform of choice. All teams must adhere to and utilize the same software that was voted on and passed with approval by majority vote of the Board at said meeting: Hudl.

11.1.3 Any violation of the Film exchange needs to be reported to the Directors immediately. Teams will NOT be allowed to film opponent's game. Please report filming to opposing teams Unit Director or Football Director. Filming of opponents will not be allowed at Scrimmages or Practices.

11.1.4 No Unit shall be authorized to post, disseminate or otherwise publish any game film or parts thereof, in any media or fashion, nor allow any person within its organization, including players or family members of players, to post to any media site created, operated, or controlled by the Unit or a Team within a Unit, such game film involving Teams from any other Unit in the League, without the express written consent of the other Unit.

12. Infraction of Rules

12.1 Accountability

12.1.1 The Head Coach of each Team in a Unit is responsible for the actions of his coaching staff and players, and potentially for persons involved in prohibited activities set forth above in Rule 11, as may be determined by the League Board.

12.1.2 If any Rule of the League is violated during a game, the Head Coach of that Team in a Unit will be held responsible.

12.2 Infraction Reporting & Process

12.2.1 Any and all Rule(s) violations must be reported to the League President verbally within forty-eight (48) hours and in writing within seventy-two (72) hours of the alleged Rule or conduct violation, when the violation became known to the Football Director for the complaining Unit, for any action to be taken by the League. At a minimum, a reported violation must cite the Rule violated, the date and time (or best reasonable estimate of the time if not precisely known) of the alleged violation, and the date and time and under what circumstances the alleged violation became known to the complaining Unit Football Director.

12.2.2 The League President shall notify all Football Directors via email of the alleged Rule or conduct violation as promptly as is reasonable. All comments or feedback by anyone in a Unit's organization must be made through that Unit's Football Director, only, who shall communicate such feedback or comments to the League President and all other Football Directors on the League Board. In the event the League President is unavailable for any reason to comply with this Rule, the League Secretary shall be notified with the reported violation and shall assume the task of circulating the reported violation to all Directors but shall take no further action until the League President becomes available.

12.2.3 The League President shall dictate the time for all Directors to communicate feedback and comments in response to any alleged Rule or conduct violation and shall determine if a hearing is needed. If a hearing is determined to be needed, the date, time, and location shall be determined by the League President, with reasonable notice to all Board Directors. The person(s) charged with any Rule or conduct violation and a quorum of the Football Directors must appear at the hearing for the Directors to review, discuss and vote upon any finding of a violation and the imposition of any penalties the Board deems necessary and that are authorized within these Rules. If a quorum of the Directors at this hearing is not available, the hearing shall be adjourned until such time as a quorum is available.

12.2.4 The League President shall preside over such hearing and shall see that the hearing is conducted in an orderly, fair fashion. The person(s) charged with any violation, if they elect to appear, shall have an opportunity to be heard by the Board, and offer any proofs they may wish for the Board to consider, including witnesses, if they choose. If any person(s) charged with a violation fails or elects not to appear, the Board shall proceed with the hearing, but shall not allow any representative(s) to appear on behalf of any person(s) charged with a violation or a witness, to take part in any hearing. The complaining Unit, through its Football Director, shall present its proofs of the alleged violation, and may likewise call witnesses if it so chooses, for the Board to consider. The League President shall control the presentations of proofs, and the number of witnesses allowed.

12.2.5 All rulings by the Board concerning Rules or conduct violations and/or penalties imposed by the Football Directors, shall be final. Any person(s) who shall not abide by the findings of the Board of Directors shall be banned from all Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association activities of any kind, and shall expose Team(s), coaches, Directors, and/or leadership of a Unit, or the Unit itself, to further sanctions by the Board.

12.2.6 In addition to the specific remedies for Rules or conduct violations set forth in these Rules elsewhere, the Board, by a majority of the Directors, may vote to impose such other or additional penalties or sanctions as they deem proper against an individual, Team, Head Coach or coaching staff, Unit official, or a Unit as a whole, in order to meet and further these Rules' stated philosophical goals for the betterment and/or preservation of the Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association.

13. League Membership

13.1 Membership Status

13.1.1 Any Unit of the League will be notified before October 15 at a League Board meeting if their League participation status has changed for the following season.

14. Summary of Rules

14.1 Rule Changes

14.1.1 All Rules and the intent thereof, as published herein, including their enactment and enforcement, shall be the responsibility of the Football Directors to express in the Rules, with any clarifications required being documented in the official minutes of any League Board meeting and maintained by the League Secretary, with approval by majority vote of the Board at said meeting.

14.2 Other Rules

14.2.1 The home Team at any game is responsible for having a set of the League Rules at each game.

14.2.2 Any Directors who are absent for two (2) regularly scheduled consecutive meetings of the Board of Directors, may cause that Director's Unit to face disciplinary action that could include the following:

14.2.2.1 Loss of the right to host as a play-off site that year. If the Unit is not scheduled to be eligible to host that year, it could lose this right for the following season. Review by remaining Board members for continued participation in the League.

14.2.2.2 Review by the remaining Board members for purposes of communicating to that Unit's leadership that a new Football Director for the Board should be considered.

14.2.3 Smoking, chewing tobacco, use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs are prohibited at practice, games and on any playing fields. This rule shall be strictly enforced.

14.3 Final Determination of Eligibility and League Issues

14.3.1 Final determination with respect to the eligibility and or status of any player and the overall oversight and management of the League is within the sole discretion of the Football Directors. Final and ultimate decisions as to the eligibility and or status of any player or other issue that affects the League shall rest with and be made by the Football Directors.

14.3.2 A decision by a majority vote of the Football Directors shall be binding and is the final point of appeal and is not subject to any further review.

15. Acceptance of Rules

In order for any Unit to be eligible for membership and/or maintaining its membership in the Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association, each Unit must adopt and comply with the Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association Rules. By signing below, the authorized Unit Director affirms that their Unit and Teams have adopted, will abide and be governed by, the Southeastern Michigan Youth Football Association Rules.

Signature

Title

Date

Unit Name or Names