

HCYF TACKLE FOOTBALL RULES

United by Community. Driven by Purpose.

2026

ARTICLE I – GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1.01 – Purpose

These Rules govern the Harris County Youth Football (HCYF) Tackle Football program and provide uniform administration, player safety, competitive balance, and operational consistency.

Section 1.02 – Governing Authority

All games shall be governed by the current Georgia Recreation and Parks Association (GRPA) Youth Football Rules except where specifically modified herein. In the event of conflict, these HCYF Rules shall control.

Section 1.03 – Season Definition

The season begins with the first authorized team practice and concludes upon completion of the final scheduled HCYF contest.

Section 1.04 – Coach Eligibility

(a) Head Coaches must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age. (b) All coaches must complete required certifications, background checks, and Recreation Department requirements prior to participation. (c) Coaches must display proper identification during games.

Section 1.05 – Injury Reporting and Return to Play

(a) Coaches shall report all injuries removing a player from participation to their Community Football Commissioner. (b) The Commissioner shall report injuries to the HCYF Board/Safety Member using the approved tracking system. (c) The Commissioner is responsible for ensuring medical clearance prior to return to play.

ARTICLE II – AGE DIVISIONS AND WEIGHT CLASSIFICATION

Section 2.01 – Age Determination

Player eligibility shall be determined based on age as of August 31 of the playing year.

Section 2.02 – Divisions

6U – 5–6 Year Old; 8U – 7–8 Year Old; 10U – 9–10 Year Old; 12U – 11–12 Year Old.

Section 2.03 – Ball Carrier Maximum Weight

Ball carrier maximum weight limitations shall follow current GRPA Youth Football Rules.

Section 2.04 – Restricted Category

(a) Players exceeding maximum ball carrier weight shall be designated Restricted Players at official weigh-in. (b) Restricted Players must comply with GRPA position limitations. (c) Restricted Players must display a clearly visible “X” on helmet. (d) Restricted status remains for the duration of the season.

Section 2.05 – Official Weigh-In and Roster Verification

(a) Official weigh-in and roster verification shall be conducted on a date established by HCYF prior to the season. (b) Required documentation must be presented at weigh-in. (c) Weight recorded at official weigh-in determines player classification for the season. (d) Rosters are finalized at weigh-in; no additions permitted except verified new residents approved by the Board. (e) The Board may establish a designated make-up weigh-in. (f) A player failing to attend both official and make-up weigh-in shall participate only as a Restricted Player for the remainder of the season. (g) Restricted status from missed weigh-in shall not be subject to later adjustment.

ARTICLE III – PRACTICE, PARTICIPATION, AND TEAM STRUCTURE

Section 3.01 – Practice and Contact Limitations

(a) Teams shall be limited to a maximum of four (4) contact involvements per week, including games. (b) No more than three (3) of the four (4) contact involvements may be full-contact practices. (c) The practice week shall be defined as Sunday through Saturday. (d) No practice session shall exceed two (2) hours. (e) Practices shall conclude no later than 10:00 p.m.

Section 3.02 – Dual Registration and Participation Prohibited

(a) A player may not register with or participate on another tackle football team or league during the same HCYF tackle football season. (b) Registration shall not be permitted for any player currently rostered on another football team during the same season. (c) This provision is adopted for player safety due to the cumulative impact of contact practices and games, to ensure fairness to players who practice exclusively with their registered team, and to preserve competitive balance. (d) Violation of this provision shall result in immediate player ineligibility for the remainder of the HCYF tackle season.

Section 3.03 – Mandatory Play Rule

(a) Each eligible player must receive a minimum of ten (10) plays during regular season games. (b) A player must attend weekly practices and may miss no more than one (1) practice to remain eligible. (c) This rule does not apply to playoffs or All-Star games. (d) If removed due to injury, requirement is satisfied. (e) Confirmed violations result in Head Coach suspension for the next scheduled game and the affected player shall participate for the entire first quarter of the next regular season game.

Section 3.04 – Minimum Players and Forfeit

(a) Eleven (11) players are required to start a game. (b) A team with ten (10) players may elect to play with no forfeit incurred. (c) A team with nine (9) or fewer players may play; however, the game shall be recorded as a forfeit. (d) A forfeited game may be played to completion but shall not count as a win or loss for standings purposes for the forfeiting team.

Section 3.04.1 – Minimum Roster to Establish a Team

(a) A 6U team must have a minimum of nine (9) players. (b) All other divisions must have a minimum of eleven (11) players. (c) Failure to meet minimum roster three (3) days before close of registration shall result in dissolution and release of players.

Section 3.05 – Mandatory Team Split

(a) Any 6U team with more than twenty-four (24) registered players shall split. (b) Any 8U, 10U, or 12U team with more than thirty (30) registered players shall split. (c) Splits shall promote competitive balance and be overseen by the Community Football Commissioner.

ARTICLE IV – GAME ADMINISTRATION

Section 4.01 – Equipment

All GRPA-required equipment must be worn. A mouthguard must be securely attached to the helmet and only one (1) mouthguard may be worn.

Section 4.02 – Weight Enforcement

(a) Alleged weight violations must be reported to the referee during the game. (b) The referee shall address the matter during play. (c) The Board may conduct post-game review and impose forfeiture or discipline if violation is confirmed.

Section 4.03 - Game Clock, Timeouts, and Halftime

- (a) 6U (5-6 Year Old): Games shall consist of four (4) eight-minute quarters using a running clock. The last two (2) minutes of the second and fourth quarters shall use a regulation clock.
- (b) 8U (7-8 Year Old): Games shall consist of four (4) ten-minute quarters using a running clock. The last two (2) minutes of the second and fourth quarters shall use a regulation clock.
- (c) 10U (9-10 Year Old): Games shall consist of four (4) ten-minute quarters using a running clock. The last two (2) minutes of the second and fourth quarters shall use a regulation clock.
- (d) 12U (11-12 Year Old): Games shall consist of four (4) ten-minute quarters using a running clock. The last two (2) minutes of the second and fourth quarters shall use a regulation clock.
- (e) Timeouts: Each team shall receive three (3) timeouts per half. Unused timeouts shall not carry over to the second half.
- (f) Halftime: Halftime shall be ten (10) minutes.

Section 4.04 - Tie-Breaker Procedure

Two-Team Tie: head-to-head; point differential; total points allowed; coin flip. Three-Team Tie: head-to-head among tied teams; point differential; total points allowed; coin flip. If one team is eliminated, revert to the two-team procedure.

Section 4.05 - All-Star Selection

(a) Tiger Bowl winning Head Coach serves as All-Star Head Coach. (b) If unavailable, runner-up Head Coach serves. (c) Each regular season team may provide one coach, subject to Board approval.

ARTICLE V – SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Section 5.01 – Lightning and Weather Policy

Practices and games shall be suspended immediately upon sight of lightning or sound of thunder. Activities shall not resume until thirty (30) minutes have elapsed since the last lightning strike or thunder occurrence.

Section 5.02 – Concussion Management

Any athlete exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with concussion shall be immediately removed from participation and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional.

Section 5.03 – Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness, including Automated External Defibrillator (AED) availability and maintenance, shall comply with the HCYF Board Operations Manual.

ARTICLE VI – ADOPTION AND EFFECTIVE DATE

These Rules shall remain in full force and effect until amended or repealed by formal action of the HCYF Board.

President: _____ Date: _____

Secretary: _____ Date: _____