



2026 LEAGUE RULES

Cincinnati United Youth Football & Cheer League

Welcome to the Cincinnati United Youth Football & Cheer League. In this league we focus on teaching, skill development and sportsmanship. Our rules are designed to act as a guide for operating a fair league for all members. Therefore, each Head Coach and staff is responsible for knowing and adhering to all the rules listed below. **IGNORANCE OF THE RULES IS NO EXCUSE.**

Organization Criteria

The Cincinnati United Youth Sports Commission has a preliminary list of criteria that new teams entering must meet:

- Each Organization representative must attend all scheduled CUYFCL meetings
- Each must complete a background check (through NAYS) for every coach/team mom or

team dad, in your organization by the first weigh-in. These documents will be held and reviewed by the commission secretary.

- Each coach must be certified through NAYS and provide current certification
- Each team must have two members of your organization that are CPR Certified

Each coach must sign the CUYFCL's Coaches Code of Ethics

- Each organization must have at least 14 players on the roster per age group (Example 5-6 team must have 14 players, etc.)

• Each organization must have a designated home field for games, provide bathroom facilities at that field and the equipment needed to host those games Each organization will be responsible for paying the CUYFCL Referees for each home game your organization hosts

New Organizations

Each organization will pay a deposit for entering the CUYFCL and at the end of the second year of participation, 50% of that deposit will be returned. Should your organization leave by any means, the deposit will be forfeited.

Conduct of Coaches

It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to control the conduct of his assistant coaches. The following are violations that will result in suspension of Head and assistant coaches from coaching in the Cincinnati United Youth Sports Commission. Head or Assistant Coaches that violate the conduct rule two (2) times will be suspended from the League for the season, (and/or the next year's season if late in the current season).

- ANY THREATS TO A REFEREE IN ANY SITUATION.
- ABUSIVE LANGUAGE IN FRONT OF YOUTH.
- GAMBLING ON GAMES
- COACHING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

If the organization does not take the above action on the coach in question, the organization is liable for suspension from the Cincinnati United Youth Sports Commission.

Conduct of Host and Visiting Fans

It is the responsibility of the Host and Visiting Head Coaches to always keep fans back from the field of play. Fans must stay at least five feet from the field at those fields that don't have bleachers.

- There will be two warnings by the refs.
- The third warning will result in an un-sportsmanlike conduct penalty (15 yards).
- The next will be a forfeiture of the game. The opposing team will win the game regardless of score.

Admission, Books and Weigh-in, Eligibility Rules

Admissions

All Coaches and League Officials must pay admission at each Organizational Home Game and League Event; the Fine will be \$100.00.

Team Structure

All Organizations participating in the CUYFCL must have teams in all four age group divisions with a minimum of 14 players per team, or the Organization is ineligible to participate in the League.

Weigh-Ins

All Players must appear at weigh-in to be certified eligible to play for the upcoming season. Any player not appearing at the weigh-in, is ineligible to play in the first game of the season. Any player that missed the first weigh-in MUST appear and make weight, at the second and final opportunity to weigh-in (place and time to be announced) prior to the second game.

Process for Weigh-in

All Coaches must present the following books for each age level at Weigh-in: Two (2) three ring binders -

- Roster of players IN JERSEY NUMBER ORDER WITHIN THE BOOK
- One book will be returned to the Coach to have available during the season, and the
- The Commission President will retain the Official Book (second book) and keep the other books for comparison if questions arise regarding a player's eligibility to play.
- Players line up in that same order to approach the scale.

Inside of each team book you must have the following:

- The Team Roster,
- The players CUYFCL Contract, signed by the Coach, Player, and the Player's parent (on both lines),
- A picture of the Player in the numbered jersey he/she will wear this season (stapled to the front upper left corner of the contract). (The picture must be (approximately 2 in x 3 in), of a single Player and allow the viewer to identify the Player's face and jersey number.)
- The State Issued ID card must be back-to-back with the contract and must be clear enough to

view the Player's name, date of birth and other information printed on it. (A State ID card is required) All the above also apply at the second weigh-in and teams must weigh-in during their time slots.

Eligibility Rules

Each Player must make weight for his/her age group

- 5/6=95lbs (in underwear), and players cannot be seven (7) years of age before JULY 1st. *See below
- 7/8=115lbs (in underwear), and players cannot be nine (9) years of age before JULY 1st. *See below
- 9/10=135lbs (in underwear), players cannot be eleven (11) years of age before JULY 1st. *See below
- 11/12=155lbs (in underwear), and players cannot be thirteen (13) years of age before JULY 1st.

CUYFCL ELIGIBILITY

Any player under registration for the Cincinnati United Youth Football & Cheer League cannot play for any other CUYFCL for the current season or any other football team in another league. Under OHSA (Ohio High School Athletic Association) regulations, student-athletes cannot play on a non-school/little league team and an interscholastic school team in the same sport at the same time during the school's official season. Should a player participate in another CUYFCL and / or a school team during the current season, the original team will forfeit ALL CUYFCL sanctioned games. Please note: School coaches (paid or volunteer) are heavily restricted from instructing or coaching players from their school teams in non-school settings outside of the designated summer window (typically June 1 through July 31). EXCEPTION: An exception to this may be if the player's parent/guardian has requested a transfer to another CUYFCL team and both organization Presidents have signed a new CUYFCL contract for that current season. (SEE SWITCHING TEAM RULE) If a certified CUYFCL player participates with another football team in a different league (outside of CUYFCL) during the current season, the team rostering that player will forfeit the entire season.

Switching Teams

Any player who requests a release may transfer to another CUYFCL team prior to certification at weigh-in. Any requests or situations arising after certification will be reviewed and decided by the Commission Board in the best interest of the Commission.

Player Fails to Make Weight

A player who does not make weight will have one final opportunity to do so at the announced second weigh-in prior to the second game. If the player fails to make weight at that time, they will be ineligible for the season. However, the player may move up to the next age group with the consent of their parents and coaches. Once moved up, the player remains ineligible to return to their original age group, even if they meet the weight requirement later in the season.

Scales and Weigh-In

Only the Head Coach or his/her designee will work with the league's representative or secretary to handle all weigh-ins (all others remain outside the weigh-in area). Each Player making weight: He/she will have his/her contract and picture stamped with a "certified seal". Each Player failing to make weight by the second weigh-in will be ineligible for the season.

THERE WILL BE NO SIDE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN COACHES IN REFERENCE TO

ALLOWING PLAYERS WHO HAVE NOT MADE WEIGHT TO PLAY.

Challenges

Opposing Coaches have the right to see the opposing team's Contracts/Book and players before, at halftime, or after any game. If an opposing Coach CHALLENGES a Player, that Player's contract page must be turned over to the Commission Board designee for investigation. Failure to do so immediately, results in immediate suspension of the coach and player. NOTE: If any Coach makes what appears to be ridiculous challenges, i.e. excessive number of Players, or too many challenges, etc., that Coach will face sanctions from the Commission

President. Jersey Number that is turned in with the contract must be worn throughout the season. Any deviation or changes must have prior approval by the Commission Board. Exception – Any Player having blood on his/her jersey may change jerseys for the remainder of that game after informing the opposing coach of the change.

Violation of Eligibility Rules

Any team found in violation of eligibility rules will forfeit all games and may be suspended from CUYFCL at the discretion of the Commission President.

FINES-Please review attached Fine sheet for information

Game Rules

Referees

CUYFCL's referees are sanctioned by OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (OSHAA) We have a standing agreement with a ref crew. The fee for each game will be negotiated before the first game and communicated with every organization in good standing. Each organization will be responsible for paying the CUYFCL Referees for each home game your organization hosts. All teams must be at the field ONE hour before their scheduled game time.

- All games must start on time – no grace period.
- All quarters will be eight (8) minutes in duration.
- Federated High School rules shall prevail except for additional rules stated herein.
- Kickoff will be from the forty (40) yard line (except when penalized).
- 5 & 6 and 7 & 8-year olds, will start the game by placing the ball on the forty (40) yard line.
- 9 & 10 and 11 & 12-year olds will kick off from the 40-yard line (except when penalized).

Forfeit Policy & Fines

- First Forfeit: The team will be fined the cost of referees plus \$100, payable before the next

game.

- Second Forfeit: The coach must notify the opposing team's coach and the League President by Wednesday prior to the game to allow for referee rescheduling. A \$100 fine will be assessed.
- Third Forfeit: The organization must meet to determine whether it can continue to field a team and notify the League President of its decision. A \$100 fine will be assessed for each additional forfeit until notification is provided.

Punts

- 5&6 and 7&8-year olds will walk off the punt if they desire. On fourth down, or any preceding down, if the offensive team chooses to punt, the coach must notify the referee.
- Punts will be walked off 25 yards. If the offensive team is on the defensive team's 25 yard line, the punt can only be walked off to the defensive team's 10 yard line.
- 9&10 and 11&12-year olds- on fourth down, must punt, run or pass the ball.

Down Marker, Line Marker, Goal Posts

Down Markers, Chains and Goal post pads are to be provided by the host team for all games. (Fine \$100.00). Yard Markers must be collapsible, not wood. The visiting team can protest if yard markers are made of wood.

Working the Chains

"Home teams" provide two people, and "Visiting team" provides one person to work the chains. People who are on the markers and chains are to refrain from coaching from the sidelines. If this happens, they will be asked to leave.

Protest

- There will be no fees for the team's first protest.
- Any team that protests more than once must pay \$5 for each additional protest. The protesting team must deposit \$5 to the Commission's Designee.
- If the protesting team wins the protest, they will receive a \$5 refund.
- ALL PROTESTS MUST BE EMAILED TO THE Commission's Designee WITHIN 72 HOURS OF THE GAME IN QUESTION.
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Host Team

Scores

The host team will use the "Score Sheet" (filled out by winning Head Coaches at the Concession Stand) to call the scores to the Commission's Designee by Sunday night so standings can be posted on the website.

GameDay

All games will be played on Saturday unless other arrangements or if the field location is not available for a Saturday, and are made by the prior Wednesday night. It is the host team's responsibility to call games off because of bad weather, can't get on the field, etc. The host team must provide restrooms or port-o-let facilities for each home game or be fined a minimum of \$150.00 (due before the next game).

Equipment, Foot Wear and Pad Wear

Player Equipment

Ohio High School Rules apply: All players must have a properly fitting helmet, shoulder pads, side pads, butt pad, thigh pads, and knee pads and mouth pieces (colored), socks and regulation football shoes.

Footballs

Each age division will use the proper size football, Rubber balls are not permitted

- 5&6 and 7&8 -K2
- 9&10 - TDJ
- 11&12 - TD

Games/Play-offs

The top four (4) teams of each age division (5&6, 7&8, 9&10, 11&12) will participate in the conference play-offs (1 vs. 4 - 2 vs. 3). The winners of the Conference Champions will play for the CUYFCL Championship of their age division.

To compete in playoff and championship games, each registered CUYFCL team must be in good standing, with all applicable fees paid by the last game of the current season.

Tie Breakers

In the event there are two or more teams tied for first thru fourth place:

- The first tie breaker is head-to-head.
- The second tie breaker is common for opponents.
- The third tie breaker is coin flip.

Ejected Players or Coaches Referees shall report ejected Players numbers and team age and name, and ejected Coaches to the Commission President who shall ensure enforcement of CUYFCL rules.

CUYFCL Trophies

- The first-place team of each (age) division of each Conference will receive a division first place trophy.
- Winners of the Conference game will receive a Conference Championship Trophy.
- Winners of the Super Bowl will receive a Super Bowl Championship Trophies
- Runner ups will receive runners-up trophies or medallions.

Commission rule changes

Rule changes will be adopted by a majority vote of 2/3 of the Organization Presidents or their representatives present at such meetings called to discuss League Rules or a regular League meeting.

Meetings and Commission Functions

- League Meetings shall be _____ (exception: No January Meeting)
- Meeting time: TBA
- Meeting location: TBA
- Any Organization failing to have a representative present at Commission Meetings will be fined \$100.00 and ignorance of rules or rule changes is no excuse.
- Two Representatives from each Organization are required to attend, work, and support any Commission Function (e.g. Super Bowl, Cheerleading Championship) or the Fine will be \$250.00.
- Disruption of a Commission Meeting, the Fine will be \$100.00.

New Organizations

Any new Organization that wishes to join the Cincinnati United Youth Sports Commission, and has not played in the during the prior season, must pay a \$500.00 Initiation Fee plus regular League Fees as follows:

- \$500.00 plus half the League fees (\$1000) by the April meeting.
- The balance of the League Fee must be paid by the first game.

New Organizations must sign an agreement pledging to participate in the CUYFCL for 2 Years, and serve a two year "No Fault" Probation. All Organizations must have teams in all four age divisions with a minimum of 14 Players per team.

Fees

For organizations in good standing to participate in League play, 1/2 the League Fee must be paid by the April meeting. All past fines and the balance of the League fee MUST BE PAID BY THE FIRST GAME, or the team does not play.

League Game Participation & Scheduling

All CUYFCL teams are required to play all league-sanctioned games unless one of the following exceptions applies:

Permitted Exceptions

1. At least 50% of the team's certified players are sick with a communicable illness (such as measles, shigella, etc.) and cannot play due to illness.
2. The team has fewer than 11 certified players and cannot field a team.

Bowl & Exhibition Games

Scheduled bowl games or exhibition games must not interfere with scheduled CUYFCL league games.

Fine for Conflicting Games

A team that is scheduled to play a CUYFCL league game and instead plays in another bowl or exhibition game will be fined **\$100 plus referee fees**.