

2024

North Alabama American Youth Football



OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Updated – 24 May 2024



NAAFY – 2024 Rule Book

24 MAY 2024

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1. NAAFY League Construct / Roles

The North Alabama American Youth Football league is officially chartered and recognized by the national American Youth Football and Cheer organization, as the AYF championship conference for all of North Alabama. Receiving this charter in 2020, the NAAFY league is a member of the Southeast Region of AYF, and routinely sends football and cheer squads to the AYF Regional and National tournaments.

The mission of NAAFY is to prepare the youth of North Alabama to play at the next level, specifically middle school and then high school. To this end, NAAFY works directly with the high schools in the area and directs all 7th graders graduating from the league to play for their respective middle schools, bringing with them the skills and knowledge they have received from NAAFY coaching.

NAAFY is constructed as a group of independent football / cheer associations around the North Alabama area. With the sole purpose of organizing the rules, schedule, and gameplay oversight, NAAFY seeks to promote instructional and inspiring youth football and cheer activities in a coordinated manner to ensure fair and safe gameplay for the youth of North Alabama.

The individual associations, and their respective board members, comprise the league as a whole.

The league (of associations) represented in NAAFY from the prior season, minus any associations that have resolved to leave NAAFY, selects the NAAFY league leaders for the upcoming season. These roles at a minimum include the NAAFY President and NAAFY Commissioner. These roles do not need to be existing association board members, and it is preferred that these roles be performed by experienced individuals with prior association board or youth football organization, as well as officiating experience.

Each year, the league will hold an Inaugural Meeting, at which various season-initiating logistics will be resolved, including but not limited to:

- selecting/re-affirming the President and Commissioner roles, and other roles as desired
- reviewing and voting on new requests to join the league
- reviewing and voting on proposed changes to league rules, amended from the previous year
- reviewing any league construct changes, such as association groups in conferences

In 2023, NAAFY was designated an AYF Division 2 conference, specifically an AYF All-American Conference. By default, AYF conferences are designated Division 1, unless otherwise requested by the conference to be designated Division 2. Due to North Alabama being a smaller market than larger cities with Division 1 teams, NAAFY will continue to pursue the Division 2 designation for 2024.

For 2024, the NAAFY Conference, Division 2, will consist of one conference of teams, and will not be divided into sub-conferences for scheduling. Playoffs will be determined at the end of the regular season based on schedule win-loss-tie percentage and then point for-against differential, in that order.

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Also for the 2024 season, **the AYF National and Southeast Regional leaders have requested that NAAFY expand and host a new Division 1**, while continuing to host the existing Division 2 associations, thus forming a split-division AYF Conference. Furthermore, NAAFY has been asked to **serve as “supporting conference” for new Division 1 organizations in the Southeast Region. *With this, the NAAFY organizational rules in this document will apply to associations in ALL AYF Divisions, while the gameplay rules (also known as “local” rules), will only pertain to Division 2 teams.*** Division 1 teams will adhere to the gameplay rules found in the 2024 National AYF Rulebook. For 6U Flag Football, all teams will adhere to the 6U Flag Football rules found in this document.

While serving in this manner, **NAAFY Division 1 associations in 2024 will operate in a probationary period of three (3) years**, with the current board of Division 2 organizations serving as a board for both divisions overall. Due to the nature of the probationary period which AYF National has recommended, the first infraction of any kind from a Division 1 organization will result in a warning with notification to AYF National, and the second infraction will result in removal from the NAAFY league.

League President

The responsibilities of the NAAFY President include, but are not limited to the following:

- Organizing league meetings
- Coordinating with league associations to ensure all requirements are being met
- Creating and updating the season schedule
- Assisting the Commissioner in maintaining the league rules
- Determining, Proposing, and Collecting any Season League Fees/Fines from associations
- Serving as arbiter in any league changes or disputes over rules or other issues as they arise
- Procuring League trophies for Bowl Game champion teams

League Commissioner

The responsibilities of the NAAFY Commissioner include, but are not limited to the following:

- Updating and maintaining the league rules
- Organizing the Field Bosses for the season
- Organizing the game officiating with the league’s officiating group
- Providing league rules to the league’s officiating group and Field Bosses
- Certifying team rosters for each team to ensure they meet league requirements
- Serving as arbiter in any league disputes over rules or other issues as they arise
- Reporting the final certified scores each week to the league
- Tracking and communicating league disciplinary matters

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League Associations

NAAFY is considered a “conference” in the American Youth Football organization, but is referenced by the member associations as the “NAAFY league”. NAAFY League Associations are members of the American Youth Football (americanyouthfootball.com/) organization, and enjoy all rights and privileges that accompany this membership. The Official Rules and Regulations contained in this document are derived from the National AYF Rules for this year, and are referenced in the below section explaining the order of applicability. Each season, each association is responsible for (at a minimum):

- Registering each football and cheer team as a member of AYF (myayf.com)
- Obtaining the necessary insurance for each football and cheer team (discounted via AYF)
- Obtaining/Maintaining the necessary equipment and uniforms for the players
- Securing a regulation football field for practices and for hosting home games (if possible)
- Communicating venue availability dates for hosting home games to the President/Commissioner
- Attending all NAAFY league meetings and conference calls
- Compiling team paperwork for each football team for league certification
- Performing background checks for each coach, team mom, and adult on the field with children
- Ensuring coaches are certified via ayfcoaching.com, and completed concussion training
- Ensuring home games have required Medical and Security personnel present at all times
- Organizing volunteers and all assistance needed in hosting home games
- Ensuring the field boss and referees are paid for their services at hosted home games
- Ensuring all affiliated coaches, parents, and players respect the rules set forth, as well as show sportsmanship to all players, coaches, referees, and field bosses

Associations Joining NAAFY – New Associations

As stated previously, returning member associations of NAAFY will vote at the beginning of each year to accept / reject requests from outside associations to join NAAFY for the upcoming season. The voting process for accepting new organizations will be done both anonymously and with transparency for all to see the immediate tallies, similar to the way modern elections are done today. Associations that are accepted into NAAFY for the upcoming season are considered “New Associations” and will be able to participate in the League meetings throughout the season. In the first year of membership, “new associations” will not have the ability to vote on league matters. Unless otherwise noted by AYF Regional or agreed upon, “new associations” will serve this as a 1-year probationary period in NAAFY.

Season League Fees

NAAFY attempts to minimize the league fees each season, as all associations already spend large amounts of funding on the items needed to make the sports affordable and safe for the youth.

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Each season, the League President will present the expected league costs and fees to the league for the season, and based on the number of associations, each association will pledge to provide its portion by the League Coaches' Meeting.

These costs typically cover administrative things such as the calibration of weigh-in scales, printing costs for rule books for the referees, end-of-year awards, and league website administration.

The final league fees per association will be discussed each year two (2) months prior to the start of the regular season, to provide each association with the ability to consider these costs early in season budgeting.

Registration and Season Scheduling

Unless agreed upon and waived by the league, associations may open registration for the season no earlier than March 1st of the year of the season.

Unless changed and agreed upon by the league, NAAFY will hold the League Coaches' Meeting on or before the week before Jamboree – not before the start of the season practices.

NAAFY will present the initial draft of the season game schedule to the league no later than one (1) week prior to the first games of the season. Every attempt will be made to provide this sooner, but this date is to provide associations as much time as possible to certify teams for the season. Only organizations fielding teams in each of the 8U, 10U, and 11U tackle divisions will be allotted home dates for game hosting.

Associations will have until the Jamboree to request schedule modifications to the season game schedule. **NO SCHEDULE CHANGES will be accepted after the Jamboree**, unless due to unforeseen circumstances.

Only in EXTREME circumstances will be game venue or date/time be modified after the Jamboree. These circumstances include, but are not limited to: field unavailability or poor condition, referee / field boss unavailability, inclement weather, or any safety or life-threatening situation.

2. Order of Rule Applicability

NAAFY rules will be consistent with current rulebook for national AYF rules, and the NFL / USA Football Flag Football rules. The national AYF rules are published each year by American Youth Football, Inc. and can be referenced by member AYF associations at www.myAYF.com. The NFL / USA Football Flag Football rules are published annually as well, and can be referenced at www.nflflag.com.

The local NAAFY variations to the national AYF rules for 2024 are contained in this document.

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NAAYF – 2024 Rule Book

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In the NAAYF, all procedural and gameplay rules for the execution of the flag football season shall be applied in the following order:

1. 2024 NAAYF Rules (local rules) contained within this document contains ALL flag rules
NOTE: Flag rules are based on the NFL / USA Football Regular Season Rulebook

In the NAAYF, all procedural and gameplay rules for the execution of the tackle football season shall be applied in the following order:

1. 2024 NAAYF Rules (local rules) contained within this document supersede all rules;
2. 2024 National AYF Rulebook supersedes NFHS rules (current);
3. 2024 NFHS Football Rulebook covers everything else.

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3. Age Divisions of Play

FLAG FOOTBALL DIVISION

Age Division	Protected Ages	Weight Restrictions
6U Division	AGE MINIMUM – 4 YEARS-OLD CANNOT TURN 7 BEFORE 8/1/2024	UNLIMITED WIEGHT

INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISIONS OF PLAY

(per AYF Rulebook, Section 5-A)

Division	Protected Ages	Weight Restrictions
7U Division*	CANNOT TURN 8 BEFORE 8/1/2024	UNLIMITED WIEGHT
8U Division	CANNOT TURN 9 BEFORE 8/1/2024	UNLIMITED WIEGHT

* 7U Division will only be organized if four or more associations are able to field 7U teams. As an Instructional Division, 7U teams will play be the same rules as the 8U Division. Based on the number of teams, 7U teams *may* play 8U teams during the regular season.

ALL-AMERICAN COMPETITIVE DIVISIONS OF PLAY

(per AYF Rulebook, Section 5-C)

Division	Protected Ages	Weight Restrictions
9U Division**	CANNOT TURN 10 BEFORE 8/1/2024	UNLIMITED WEIGHT
10U Division	CANNOT TURN 11 BEFORE 8/1/2024	UNLIMITED WIEGHT
11U Division***	CANNOT TURN 12 BEFORE 8/1/2024	UNLIMITED WIEGHT

** 9U teams will play be the same rules as the 10U Division. 9U teams may play 10U teams during the regular season.

*** ***11U Division will allow 12 year-old players (turning 12 before 8/1/2024), ONLY if they are going into the 6th grade and documentation is reviewed/approved by the NAAAYF Board. Any exceptions must be board approved. 12 year-old players may participate in the NAAAYF playoffs, but will not be allowed to participate in the AYF Regional/National playoffs.***

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AGE DIVISION CLARIFICATIONS

1. Except for the 11U Division under special circumstances for 12 year-olds, there will be NO older/lighter players playing down for any division.
2. Other than rules outlined specifically in this document, the 9U, 10U and 11U Divisions will play under the 2024 National AYF Rulebook and National Federation of State High Schools Association (NFHS) rules for football.
3. There will be 4 referees on the field for each tackle football division.

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4. Restricted Weight Players and Division Ball Size

For the 2024 season, the following rules will apply concerning **Restricted Weight Players (RWP)** and the specific ball size used per division of play. Ball size is determined by the AYF National Rules.

Age Division	D2 Restricted Weight Player (RWP) - Restrictions	Maximum Weight (RWP)	Ball Size
6U Division	There are no restricted weight players in the 6U Flag Division	Unlimited	K2
Age Division	D2 Restricted Weight Player (RWP) - Restrictions	Maximum Weight (RWP)	Ball Size
7U/8U Divisions	<p>Offense: The 7U/8U RWP may only play Center, Guard, or Tackle</p> <p>Defense: The 7U/8U RWP may only play Nose Guard, Tackle, or Defensive End</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If 7U/8U RWP gains possession of the ball, in any circumstance, the play is blown dead immediately. 2. If at any time there is a mismatch by formation in a 7U/8U game, play can be stopped by officials or head coach going to the officials. 3. There will be no blitzing by 7U/8U RWPs. 	115 lbs.	K2
9U/10U Divisions		Unlimited	9U-K2 10U-TDJ
11U Division		Unlimited	TDJ

Any and all movement of players to a higher or lower age division of play or sign up of new players must be completed by 15 September, per National AYF Rulebook, Section 13.

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7U/8U RESTRICTED WEIGHT PLAYER – JERSEY NUMBER RESTRICTIONS

1. All Non-RWPs that qualify to carry the ball (based on weight restrictions) must wear jersey numbers 1 through 49, or 80 through 89, to carry the ball.
2. All RWPs must wear jersey numbers 50 through 79, or 90 through 99.
3. A Non-RWPs may wear a jersey with an RWP number, however the player must comply with all rules governing the RWPs due to the number worn.
4. If a player's weight is certified at the Jamboree, the "initial weigh-in", to be a number 1 thru 49, or 80 through 89, they are a Non-RWP player at that number through Week 4. **NOTE:** All players must be certified as RWP or Non-RWP no later than 2 days prior to the first regular season game, or the player will be disqualified from participating in Game 1.
5. There will no changing of numbers from week to week.
6. A RWP will remain a RWP even if they lose weight later in the season.
7. On Week 4, five (5) pounds will be added to the maximum weights for each tackle division, and a "final weigh-in" will be performed. For the 7U/8U Division this will be a maximum of 120 lbs.

This weight increase only pertains to certified regular weight players (Non-RWPs). The intent is no RWP can become a regular player because of the weight increase. Once a player is certified as RWP, he cannot go back to a regular player this season.

Rationale for this rule:

- All players are still growing and this is inadvertently pushing certified players close to the weight limit. Therefore, a growth allowance is being made mid-season during a time most/all teams have a bye week. Also, this discourages coaches from intentionally forcing a player to cut extreme amounts of weight prior to the first weigh-in.

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5. Coaching Staff Requirements

As mentioned in Section 9-C of the 2024 National AYF Rulebook, the following rules apply for all organizations in the NAAFY:

- At least one coach **MUST** be present during every practice.
- During all practices and games, there **MUST** be at least one coach in attendance who has taken the CDC concussion training course and has been certified and or received a passing score, as applicable
- Each and every coach **MUST** have a background check performed and reviewed/approved by the process established by the NAAFY and the corresponding Association. **NAAFY Board members must be able to review background checks and provide them to authorities for legal/insurance claim matters.** Background checks returned with serious crimes, especially domestic crimes involving children, **MUST be taken seriously.** Future incidents involving a coach/parent may not be covered under liability insurance if the Association ignored the background check results and permitted someone on the field with such a record, should parents involved pursue litigation.
- **TACKLE FOOTBALL ONLY:** The Head Coach & All Assistant Coaches **MUST** be Human Kinetics/Coaching Youth Football the AYF Way Certified or have been previously ASEP Certified and taken the Coaching Youth Football the AYF Way Refresher Course for 2024. 2 Million Dollar Liability Insurance included. The courses can be found at www.ayfcoaching.com.
- There **MUST** be at least one person holding a Red Cross Card, or of similar equivalency, present at all practices. This can be a coach or any volunteer approved by the Association.

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6. Pre-season Association Requirements and Activities

League Coaches' Meeting

The League Coaches' Meeting will be held on or around the Saturday prior to the Jamboree.

This meeting is mandatory for ALL COACHES, who will each sign-in to confirm attendance. Excused absences will be permitted by the League President or Commissioner for extreme emergency circumstances only.

Head Coaches for each team will receive a copy of the NAAFY Rules at the meeting.

If there are no coaches for a team present at the meeting, the team will NOT be allowed to participate in the season.

At the meeting, associations will schedule Team Paperwork checks date/time with the Commissioner. If a digital paperwork system is used, NAAFY will inform the associations of the paperwork upload deadline at this meeting.

At the meeting, each association will be **required** to pay the annual league fees and any one-time referee assigning fees for the upcoming season.

Badges and Field Access

If NAAFY is using a physical badging system for the season, badge photographs will be taken for each coach at the League Coaches' Meeting.

If NAAFY is using a digital paperwork system, each coach or volunteer requiring access to the sideline must have all paperwork and a photograph submitted in the system, and be able to present this to the Field Boss on gamedays as requested.

With either system used, all coaches and volunteers requiring sideline access **MUST** have a league physical or digital badge for the current season to access the field.

Associations may request up to two (2) additional field access badges for personnel needed to assist with gameday setup and assistance on the field. Similar to coaches, any additional badges will need to be paid for by the association, and the personnel will require background checks.

Associations may request one (1) additional badge for "media" person who can access the team sideline, but outside of the coaches' box, for the sole purpose of taking pictures or video of the game. Similar to coaches, any additional badges will need to be paid for by the association, and the personnel will require background checks.

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Team Paperwork Requirements

NAAAYF requires physical or digital paperwork for each team, and team paperwork must be provided, and if using a physical team book, must be in the following order:

1. Registration form w/current headshot photo
2. Physical/medical clearance form
3. Waiver of liability/consent form
4. AYF Parent/Player Photo Waiver
5. AYF emergency medical treatment, consent form
6. Copy of birth certificate or passport
7. Player Code of Conduct
8. Parent Code of Conduct
9. Coach's Code of Conduct
10. Coach's concussion form and background check
(A team may have one sheet listing all the team staff with background checks and all with concussion training).

Team Paperwork Checks (Certification)

Team paperwork checks will be performed and organized by the League Commissioner no later than the Jamboree.

Any date/time scheduling arrangements for the Team paperwork checks prior to Jamboree will be done at the League Coaches' Meeting.

Player Transfers

Players desiring to transfer from one association to another (not between age/weight divisions of the same association) may only do so up until and on the day of the Jamboree. No transfers will be accepted after the Jamboree.

Any player that has registered with one association, but desires to transfer to another association, MUST have written agreement by both the association the player is leaving, and the association the player is joining. It will be the responsibility of the association boards to coordinate any transfer of equipment and registration costs necessary for the player transfer to take place.

7. Pre-game Procedures (7U/8U Weigh-In / Minimum Play Record)

7U/8U Weigh-ins will be performed twice during the season (tackle football only):

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1. **INITIAL WEIGH-IN:** Held at or prior to Jamboree for certification of players as RWP or Non-RWP.
2. **FINAL WEIGH-IN:** Held on Week 4, prior to each game to weigh Non-RWP players with the additional 5-pound consideration.

Head Coaches will be held responsible for the actions and/or inactions of all team personnel at the scales.

At a maximum 2 individuals per Association are allowed at the scales during weigh-in. It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to ensure all other individuals (staff, family members, etc.) leave the area.

If a player does not make the required weight during the “**initial weigh-in**”, the player will not be allowed to weigh-in again that day, and the player will be considered an RWP. Teams will not be allowed to turn jerseys inside-out if the player does not make weight.

A Field Boss must conduct all weigh-ins and have players produce the proper ID as mandated in the Team Paperwork.

At a minimum, the Head Coach will have in possession at every game the certified team paperwork with all required documentation, which contains team insurance documentation.

All players, including those not present or injured, must be listed on the Minimum Play Requirements (MPR) sheet as such for each game.

For weigh-ins, all teams will weigh-in in full gear except shoulder pads and helmet, and must have their game jersey on. A coach may opt to have a player weigh-in stripped (down to underwear) in order to meet the weight requirement, however the player’s parent or guardian **MUST** be present and provide verbal permission to the coach and Field Boss to do so.

For the “**final weigh-in**”, a player has until half time of the scheduled game to be weighed-in and will play if they make weight and have the proper ID as mandated in the Team Paperwork.

NOTE: The late player will still be required to meet the MPR as if the entire game was played.

If a player does not weigh-in prior to the end of half time... the player **WILL NOT PLAY IN THE GAME!**

Head coach will ensure the late player meets the minimum play requirements.

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IMPORTANT: Although weigh-ins will not occur prior to each game, team paperwork will be checked each game to ensure that non-RWP players (allowed to carry the ball) continue to match the jersey number and player picture, as well as maintain accountability to prevent any un-allowed player changes.

Each team must have one copy of the MPR sheet completely filled out to be used for recording plays during the game.

8. 6U – NAAFY Flag Football Gameplay Rules (Local Rules)

Coaches on the Field / Field Access

One coach may be present on the field for instructional purposes during all 6U games.

Pregame warm up area will be designated outside of the playing area. ONLY use the designated areas. Field warm up time will be based on game schedule.

Field sideline access is limited to up to five (5) coaches/volunteers serving as a coach or assisting with team management (i.e. Team Mom, Health/Medical, etc.). All coaches and volunteers must be documented in the Team Paperwork. No one under the age of 18, that is NOT a player and participating in that game, can be on the field. No parents (not serving as a cleared coach/volunteer) are allowed on the field.

Associations may have up to two (2) additional badged personnel to assist with gameday field setup and assistance on the field. Similar to coaches, any additional badges will need to be paid for by the association, and the personnel will need to be 18 or older, and require background checks.

Associations may have one (1) additional badged “media” person who can access the team sideline, but outside of the coaches’ box, for the sole purpose of taking pictures or video of the game. Similar to coaches, any additional badges will need to be paid for by the association, and the personnel will need to be 18 or older, and require background checks.

Game (per NFL / USA Flag Football Rules)

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. The visiting team calls the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three (3) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) plays to score a touchdown.

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4. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.
5. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line.
6. All possession changes, **except interceptions**, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
7. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.

Equipment

1. **Flags MUST be of the "pop" plastic-insert type** – no Velcro flags allowed.
2. **Flags MUST be a different color of the shorts worn by the players.**
3. Cleats or other sport shoes are permitted. **NO METAL CLEATS.**
4. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads and knee pads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
5. Players must remove all jewelry, hats and do-rags. Winter beanies are allowed.
6. Players' jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants if they hang below the belt line.
7. It is recommended players wear shorts or pants that do not have pockets. Shorts or pants with belt loops or pockets must be taped. Games will not be delayed for a player to tape up pockets.
8. **All players are required to wear mouthguards** when on the field of play. Soft-shell helmets are not required, but may be worn for added head protection.

Field

1. The field dimensions are 30 yards by 70 yards with two 10-yard end zones, and a midfield line-to-gain. No-run zones precede each line-to gain by 5 yards. When playing on a field lined for tackle football games (NFHS fields), the flag football field length will remain 54 yards, and marked accordingly. However, the field width will be 33.3 yards, where one normal sideline is used as one bounding line, and the far opposing hash mark will be used as the other bounding line. When using a 100-yard tackle football field, the field can be setup in a two-field configuration with two flag football games competing at the same time.

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2. **No-run zones** are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the no-run zones (a 5-yard imaginary zone before midfield and before the end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. **All plays must be pass plays.**
3. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
4. Each offensive team approaches only **TWO** no-run zones in each drive (one zone 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one zone 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD)

Roster

1. Home teams wear dark color jerseys. Visiting teams wear light color jerseys.
2. Each team **MUST** have a minimum of 8 players to field a team, and may have only a maximum of 10 players.
3. Teams must start games with a minimum of five players. In the event of an injury, a team with insufficient substitute players may play with four players on the field but no fewer than four.

Timing

1. Games are played on a 40-minute **continuous clock with two 20 minute halves.**
2. **Halftime is one minute.**
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team must attempt to snap the ball in 30 seconds. Referees have discretion for the 6 year-olds.
4. Each team has **one 30-second timeout per half.**
5. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
6. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
7. **Regular season games will be allowed to end in a tie.**

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Scoring

1. **Touchdown** – 6 points
2. **PAT** – **1 point from 5 yard-line** or **2 points from 10 yard-line**
3. **Safety** – 2 points (team scoring safety now gets the ball on offense, starting from 5 yard-line)
4. **Mercy Rule** – 28-point advantage will result in Mercy Rule. Score at time of reaching 28-point advantage is recorded as the final score. Play will continue as normal so all teams get a full game.

Coaches

One coach is allowed on the field to direct the players. Once the players begin the play cadence, the coach on the field **MUST** be quiet and back out of the team's backfield. Sideline coaches may continue to coach at start and during the play.

Live Ball / Dead Ball

1. For the 6U Flag division, players must snap the ball from the ground, but not required to snap between their legs. When snapping the ball, the player may not be completely located on the defense side of the ball.
2. A player who gains possession in the air is considered inbounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
3. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
4. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
5. Any official can whistle the play dead.
6. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - a. The ball hits the ground.
 - i. If the ball hits the ground as a result of a bad snap,
 - b. the ball is then placed where the ball hit the ground.
 - c. The ball-carrier's flag is pulled.
 - d. The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.
 - e. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
 - f. The ball-carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
 - g. The ball-carrier's flag falls out.
 - h. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
 - i. The 7-second pass clock expires on the QB.

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- j. Inadvertent whistle.
NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball-carrier's feet were at the time of the fumble.
7. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
 - a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed.
 - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage
8. A team is allowed to use a timeout to question an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct, the team will be charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the timeout will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.

Running

1. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ballcarrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the player's front foot.
2. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
3. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind or to the side of the offensive player but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
 - a. Center sneak" play is no longer allowed. The QB is not allowed to handoff to the center on the first handoff of the play.
4. Pitches, laterals, and passes behind the line of scrimmage will be allowed, however the no rush zones and will be enforced as normal.
5. No-run Zones are located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE. (Reminder: Each offensive team approaches only TWO no-run zones in each drive – one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down and one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).
6. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
7. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
8. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
9. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
 - a. Players spinning out of control will be called for flag guarding.
10. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.

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11. No blocking or “screening” is allowed at any time.
12. Offensive players without the ball must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.
13. Flag obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player’s hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

Passing

1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward.
 - a. Forward passes behind the line of scrimmage are allowed and considered a “forward pass”. The pass does not need to go past the line of scrimmage to be considered a legal forward pass. Similar to allowing pitches, this is to accommodate the 6 and under age group.
2. Shovel passes are allowed.
3. The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule is no longer in effect.
 - a. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS).

Receiving

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted toward the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
5. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
6. Interceptions are returnable but not on conversions after touchdowns.

Rushing the Passer

Defensive players cannot rush the QB in the 6U Flag division, but the QB is still required to handoff, pitch, or pass the ball within 7 seconds.

Flag Pulling

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.

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2. Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

Formations

1. Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
 - a. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
 - b. No motion is allowed toward the line of scrimmage.
2. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
3. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

1. If the field boss or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
2. Offensive or confrontational language is not allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.
3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
4. Ball-carriers ***MUST*** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
5. Defenders are ***not*** allowed to run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
6. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:
 - a. Defense + 10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
 - b. Offense - 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

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Penalties *(full penalty details can be found in Appendix D)*

1. The referee will call all penalties.
2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot fouls)
4. Only the head coach or coach on the field may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question calls. The field boss may be called upon to discuss a penalty call or rule clarification.
5. Games may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
8. An offensive penalty in a NO RUSH ZONE will require the offense to pass on the next down, however all defensive penalties result in a first down.

9. 7U/8U – NAAAF Gameplay Rules (Local Rules)

Coaches on the Field / Field Access

One coach may be present on the field for all pre-season 7U/8U games and the first two (2) regular season 7U/8U games. It is NAAAF's philosophy that 7U/8U players can and should learn to function on the field without the presence of an instructional coach out on the field of play.

Coaches with a scheduled BYE during any of the first regular season 7U/8U game schedule will be allowed to be present on the field for instructional purposes during subsequent weeks to ensure ALL teams get their allowed two (2) weeks of in-game instruction.

Coaches MUST cease all instruction, physical contact and/or verbal communication with their players once the quarterback is under center and must be 5 yards behind the deepest player on the field of play.

If a coach's presence on the field unduly delays the play of the game, a referee may prohibit that coach from coming on to the field for instructional purposes.

Pregame warm up area will be designated outside of the playing area. ONLY use the designated areas. Field warm up time will be based on game schedule.

Field sideline access is limited to up to eight (8) coaches/volunteers serving as a coach or assisting with team management (i.e. Team Mom, Health/Medical, etc.). All coaches and volunteers must be documented in the Team Paperwork. No one under the age of 18, that is NOT a player and participating

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in that game, can be on the field. No parents (not serving as a cleared coach/volunteer) are allowed on the field.

Associations may have up to two (2) additional badged personnel to assist with gameday field setup and assistance on the field. Similar to coaches, any additional badges will need to be paid for by the association, and the personnel will need to be 18 or older, and require background checks.

Associations may have one (1) additional badged “media” person who can access the team sideline, but outside of the coaches’ box, for the sole purpose of taking pictures or video of the game. Similar to coaches, any additional badges will need to be paid for by the association, and the personnel will need to be 18 or older, and require background checks.

Clock, Quarter Length, and Timeouts

In 7U/8U Games, an 8-minute regulation clock will be in effect and will stop per normal NFHS football rules.

Each 7U/8U team will have 3 timeouts per half.

Field Length

The 7U/8U will be a standard regulation 100 yards, with 10-yard end zones.

Turnovers

All standard turnovers will be allowed in an 7U/8U football game.

Tie Games

7U/8U regular season games will be allowed to end in a tie.

In playoff games, and similar to AHSAA rules, tie games will be broken by the 10-Yard Line Overtime Procedure as outlined in the National Federation of High Schools rules book.

Special Teams – Kickoffs and Kick Returns

7U/8U teams **WILL NOT** kickoff. Ball will be placed at the 30 yard-line, at the beginning of the game, beginning of the half, and after each score.

Special Teams – Punts and Punt Returns

7U/8U teams **WILL NOT** punt. Teams will have the option to try for a first down conversion, or have a punt walked-off 30 yards from the line of scrimmage (LOS).

For walk-off punts, no walk-off punt can enter inside the 20-yard line. If the ball passes the 20-yard line of the opposing team, the play will be blown dead and the ball placed at the 20-yard line. Teams must notify about their intent to punt before the play clock expires.

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Point After Touchdown (PAT) Attempts

7U/8U teams will attempt points after touchdowns. Both 1-point and 2-point attempts are allowed:

- **1-Point:** Attempt from the 3 yard-line
- **2-point:** Attempt from the 10 yard-line

Defensive Line

7U/8U games will not have more than 6 defensive players on the line of scrimmage from end to end.

Lining up over the Center is PROHIBITED during all 7U/8U games. This is defined as head up over center and lining up in the “A” gaps. Be smart. If a kids shoulders are in the “A” gap but he is head up on a guard then the player is fine. Best rule of thumb is line up head up on the guard.

ALL 7U/8U defensive backs (including linebackers) must be at minimum 3 yards from the line of scrimmage, and cannot move forward toward the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped. Any infraction is considered “defensive encroachment”, similar to lining up in the neutral zone.

ALL 7U/8U defensive linemen must be start in a 3-point or 4-point and may not start the play standing up, EXCEPT defensive ends. Defensive Ends may begin the play in a 2-point stance / standing position.

7U/8U Defensive Ends CANNOT be lined up any further than 3 yards from the last down offensive lineman on the line of scrimmage. If a referee sees that the DE is lining up further than 3 yards from the TE or T on that side, he will stop play for safety.

Offensive Line

7U/8U offensive lineman must lineup in a 3-point or 4-point stance, EXCEPT the lineman at the tight end of the line that may be blocking the defensive end. This lineman (tackle or tight end) may line up in a 2-point stance / standing position to remove any disadvantage and allow the lineman to have the ability to block the defensive end effectively.

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10. 9U/10U/11U – NAAFY Gameplay Rules (Local Rules)

Coaches on the Field / Field Access

No coaches may be present on the field during 9U, 10U or 11U games.

Pregame warm up area will be designated outside of the playing area. ONLY use the designated areas. Field warm up time will be based on game schedule.

Field sideline access is limited to up to eight (8) coaches/volunteers serving as a coach or assisting with team management (i.e. Team Mom, Health/Medical, etc.). All coaches and volunteers must be documented in the Team Paperwork. No one under the age of 18, that is NOT a player and participating in that game, can be on the field. No parents (not serving as a cleared coach/volunteer) are allowed on the field.

Associations may have up to two (2) additional badged personnel to assist with gameday field setup and assistance on the field. Similar to coaches, any additional badges will need to be paid for by the association, and the personnel will need to be 18 or older, and require background checks.

Associations may have one (1) additional badged “media” person who can access the team sideline, but outside of the coaches’ box, for the sole purpose of taking pictures or video of the game. Similar to coaches, any additional badges will need to be paid for by the association, and the personnel will need to be 18 or older, and require background checks.

Clock, Quarter Length, and Timeouts

In 9U/10U/11U Games a 10-minute regulation clock will be in effect and will stop per normal NFHS football rules.

Each team will have 3 timeouts per half.

Field Length

The 9U/10U/11U field will be standard regulation 100 yards, with 10-yard end zones.

Turnovers

All standard turnovers will be allowed in a 9U/10U/11U football game.

Tie Games

9U/10U/11U games which end regulation play in a tie will be broken by the 10-Yard Line Overtime Procedure as outlined in the National Federation of High Schools rule book. 9U/10U/11U games will be allowed a maximum of three (3) overtime series to break the tie. ***If the score is a tie after three (3) completed overtime series, then the game will end in a tie.***

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Special Teams – Kickoffs and Kickoff Returns

9U/10U/11U teams **WILL NOT** kickoff. Ball will be placed at the 30 yard-line, at the beginning of the game, beginning of the half, and after each score.

Special Teams – Punts and Punt Returns

9U/10U teams will have the option to *try for a first down conversion, walk-off a punt for 30 yards, or actually punt.*

- If actual punt is chosen by a 9U/10U team, it will be a “**NO MOVE PUNT**”:
 - o The return team “may” position one or more punt returners to attempt to field the punt, but this is not required
 - o Both teams **WILL REMAIN STILL throughout the entire play**, except the Center snapping the ball, the Punter kicking the ball, and a possible Punt Returners attempting to field the punt
 - o The punt team **WILL NOT** rush the punt returner or run down to recover a muffed punt
 - o There are **NO FUMBLES** on a punt play. If the returner muffs the punt, the player can recover / down the ball to prevent it from rolling further downfield
 - o The ball will be down where the punt returner fields the ball, where the ball rolls and comes to a rest, or where the ball goes out of bounds
- For walk-off punts, no walk-off punt can enter inside the 20-yard line. If the ball passes the 20-yard line of the opposing team, the play will be blown dead and the ball placed at the 20-yard line. Teams must notify about their intent to punt before the play clock expires.
- A Safety results in a free kick by the opposing team. A free kick “may” be a punt. These punts may be walked off as a part of a free kick following a Safety.

11U teams will have the option to *try for a first down conversion, or actually punt.*

- If actual punt is chosen by a 11U team, it will be a “**MOVE AFTER KICK**” punt:
 - o Both teams **WILL REMAIN STILL** throughout the snap and punt motion, except the Center snapping the ball, the Punter kicking the ball, and Punt Returners attempting to field the punt.
 - o Each team **WILL NOT** move until the ball is kicked by the punter, even if the snap is fumbled. The punter may retrieve the ball and punt.
 - o Once the ball is punted, the play is a live punt play for both teams.

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Point After Touchdown (PAT) Attempts

9U/10U teams will attempt points after touchdowns. Both 1-point and 2-point attempts are allowed:

- **1-Point:** Attempt from the 3 yard-line
- **2-point:** Attempt from the 10 yard-line

11U teams will attempt points after touchdowns. Both 1-point and 2-point attempts are allowed:

- **1-Point:** Attempt from the 3 yard-line
- **2-point:** PAT kick with the ball placed at the 3 yard-line.
 - o NOTE: Defenders **CAN NOT** rush in to block the kick, but can jump up and down to try and block.
 - o NOTE: The kicking team **MUST** attempt a kick even if the snap and hold is fumbled. The kicking team can retrieve the ball and setup the hold even if fumbled, but **MUST** attempt a kick and **CANNOT** run or pass to score once the 2-point PAT is selected.

11. Player / Coach Disqualifications

In reference to NFHS Rules, Section 32, a **disqualified player is barred from further participation in a game.**

In reference to NFHS Rules, Section 8, a **disqualified member of the coaching staff shall be removed from the stadium area** and be prohibited from any further contact, with his team, direct or indirect, during the remainder of the game. Disciplinary actions concerning coaches will follow the process outlined in Section 20. For failure to comply, the referee may forfeit the game.

12. Jamboree Procedures (Team Paperwork – Weigh-Ins)

Flag Football teams **will not** be required to weigh-in during the season.

ALL teams will be required to present a copy of a CERTIFIED (with State seal) birth certificate for each player.

7U/8U tackle teams **MUST** have the weigh-in form completely filled out before coming to the scales.

7U/8U Tackle teams **MUST** be brought to the scales the order found in the team book, or in the digital paperwork system.

ALL 7U/8U players **MUST** weigh in at Jamboree, regardless of previously recorded weight by the coach.

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All 7U/8U teams will weigh-in in full gear except shoulder pads and helmet, and must have their game jersey on. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Only 1 coach at scales and no parents.

13. Jamboree Gameplay and Rules

Regular season rules from NAAFY will apply except where noted below:

No special teams in any division. All punts will be marked 30 yards from the line of scrimmage (LOS).

Extra points will be limited to a 1-point try from the 3-yard line. No 10-yard 2-point or kicking PATs.

No kickoffs. All divisions will start at the 30-yard line after a score and at the beginning of the game.

Timing rules will be (2) 12-minute (continuous clock) quarters per game match up, with a 2-minute timeout for the change of quarter.

The game clock will run continuous, stopping in the final 2 minutes of the second quarter for normal timing rules.

ALL TEAMS WILL ONLY BE ALLOTTED (1) 30-second timeout per half.

For the beginning of the second quarter, game play will resume at the same Line Of Scrimmage, with possession remaining with the team that had possession at the end of the first quarter.

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14. Game and Play Clock

6U Flag Football Clock Instructions

- HALF LENGTH = 20-minute halves – 2 halves / Halftime is 5 minutes
- CONTINUOUS RUNNING CLOCK -

The clock does not stop on penalties.

The clock stops for injuries, but resumes when the injured player leaves the field.

The clock stops on timeouts – each team has one 30-second timeout per half.

- PLAY CLOCK = 30 seconds

The coaches are on the field, and the first infraction of delay of game will be a warning to the coach. Subsequent infractions will result in delay of game.

7U/8U Clock Instructions

- QUARTER LENGTH = 8-minute quarters – 4 quarters / Halftime is 10 minutes
- 7U/8U PLAY CLOCK = 30 seconds

For games where the coach is on the field, the first infraction of delay of game will be a warning to the coach. Subsequent infractions will result in delay of game.

When coaches are no longer on the field, there will no longer be a warning, and all infractions will result in a delay of game penalty.

- CLOCK STOPPAGE:

Clock stops on Injuries, timeouts (3 per half), penalties, TDs and point after tries.

After point after, clock starts again at the start of ensuing kickoff

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* When team score reaches Mercy Rule, the clock becomes a running clock and only stops on Injuries and time outs. (See Mercy Rule section of this rule book).

* Mercy Rule: Clock does not stop on penalties, TD's, or point-after try.

9U/10U, and 11U Clock Instructions

- QUARTER LENGTH = 10-minute quarters – 4 quarters / Halftime is 10 minutes
- 7U/8U PLAY CLOCK = 30 seconds

For games where the coach is on the field, the first infraction of delay of game will be a warning to the coach. Subsequent infractions will result in delay of game.

When coaches are no longer on the field, there will no longer be a warning, and all infractions will result in a delay of game penalty.

- 9U/10U/11U PLAY CLOCK = 30 seconds
- CLOCK STOPPAGE:

Clock stops on Injuries, timeouts (3 per half), penalties, TDs and point after tries.

After point after, clock starts again at the start of ensuing kickoff

* When team score reaches Mercy Rule, the clock becomes a running clock and only stops on Injuries and time outs. (See Mercy Rule section of this rule book).

* Mercy Rule: Clock does not stop on penalties, TD's, or point-after try.

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15. Mercy Rule (Tackle Football Divisions)

For 7U/8U, 9U/10U, and 11U teams, Mercy Rule is in effect when the score reaches a **35-points OR 5 touchdowns have been scored (whichever comes first)**.

NAAFY will follow the following rules when the Mercy Rule is in effect:

Winning Team ball carriers who have already scored **CANNOT** carry the ball the remainder of the game.

Winning Team **CANNOT** intentionally run outside the tackles, do sweeps or trick plays, and cannot pass. The ball carrier must make every attempt to run inside the tackles, between tackle to tackle, and may only bounce outside of a tackle once an attempt to run inside has been made. Any violation of this will result in an illegal procedure penalty.

NO BLITZING by either team (pertains to pass plays).

To clarify the intent of the rule, the DB's and LB's cannot be moving forward at the time of the snap.

No advancement of a turnover (fumble or interception) **by either team**.

Neither team can line up more than 6 players on the line and 8 players in "the box". "The box" shall be defined as 5 yards outside of the Defensive Ends (left/right boundary), and 10 yards from the line of scrimmage (top boundary).

LBs must line up 5 yards off the ball, with no forward motion prior to the snap.

Defensive Linemen **CANNOT** line up over the center or A-gaps. All defensive linemen must line up over an offensive guard our outer gaps and linemen.

Age Divisions with special teams will **NOT** kickoff after score/PAT or beginning of the half. Ball will be placed at the 30 yard-line. Punts will still be handled the same.

Continue clock only stopping on Injuries, time outs, or discretion of a referee. Clock does not return to normal even if the score gets under a 35-point differential.

If the score drops below a 35-point difference or under a 5 touchdown lead, the game reverts back to regular gameplay rules, but the clock will continue to run **as the game outcome has already been decided**.

North Alabama American Youth Football

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16. Gameday Home / Visiting Team Requirements

Home Team Requirements

The home team must provide the following during the game of play:

- Clock operator (unless covered by the host venue)
- Chain Crew

3 people **over the age of 18 years-old.**

NOTE: Unlike NFHS rules, the chain gang is **always** located on the Home side of the field.

Volunteer chain crew is to refrain from "coaching" and "excessive cheering". Violation of this etiquette will result in removal from the field at the discretion of the referee or field boss.

- Minimal Play Requirement (MPR) personnel (1 person, on team's sideline). Turn in MRP sheets to the assigned field boss following each game.

1 person **over the age of 18 years-old.**

Visiting Team Requirements

The visiting team must provide the following during the game of play:

- Minimal Play Requirement (MPR) personnel (1 person, on team's sideline). Turn in MRP sheets to the assigned field boss following each game.

1 person **over the age of 18 years-old.**

17. Host Venue Requirements

All host venues must provide a 100-yard field ready for play, with appropriate down markers, field markers, and goal posts. All natural surface fields must be adequately cut grass with any holes properly filled to avoid any injury to the players. Additionally, the host venue must provide:

- At least one trained medical personnel on-site
- At least one uniformed security guard

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The hosting venue is responsible for all expenses incurred during the day of play:

- Medical personnel
- Security
- Referees
- Field Boss

18. Field Boss Representation and Fees

Each NAAFY intra-league football game (played between two NAAFY teams), including Jamboree, Regular Season, and Playoff Games, will have at a minimum of one (1) NAAFY Field Boss present.

Associations will only be responsible for paying for one (1) Field Boss per game, even if the Commissioner should send more than one Field Boss to a venue for a game.

If the Commissioner serves as a Field Boss, the Commissioner will be paid the same rate of all of other Field Bosses.

The Field Boss is responsible for:

- Checking team rosters / books prior to each game
- Ensuring players ejected from previous games sit out the required quarters/half
- Performing / Certifying the player weigh-ins on designated weigh-in dates
- Ensuring that the home team has provided the chain crew for the referees
- Ensuring that each team has provided one adult for tracking MPR for their respective team
- Resolving any league or gameplay rule disputes during the execution of a game
- Certifying the final score of each game represented
- Reporting to the any player ejections to the Commissioner

Field Bosses are paid **\$45** per full game, and half of this amount for each 6U Flag and the Jamboree half games.

19. Referee Fee Schedule

Prior to the League Coaches' Meeting, NAAFY will provide all associations with the referee fee schedule. NAAFY will collect all one-time referee assigning fees at the League Coaches' Meeting at the beginning of the season.

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On gamedays, referees are paid in cash by the host association at the end of the gameday, unless other arrangements have been made with the referees. Referees will get paid extra for a single game when hosts only have ONE game in a day.

Referees **do not** get paid for transportation - NO MILEAGE.

If a game is cancelled mid-day, each official will be paid half of the game fee for that game. (unless it is the last game of the day).

Jamboree games are half-games, and referees will receive half payment for each Jamboree game.

20. Disciplinary Actions / League Fines

Individual and Organization Discipline

NAAAYF continues to manage risk within the league and associations by tracking and administering disciplinary actions to coaches and associations for various infractions. NAAAYF member associations agree to adhere to the rules in this rulebook, as well as the overarching applicable rules set by AYF National and the NFHS. When these rules are not followed, the NAAAYF Board will take disciplinary actions from a) an individual (coach/parent) and/or b) organizational perspective.

Individual infractions can result as follows:

- **Minor Warning:** A minor warning is an official warning to an individual coach, parent, or association leader which is given for any instance where a league rule, restriction, or code of conduct is violated by an individual. The warning is given in writing, and the individual is expected to change behavior so that a safe and fair playing environment is ensured. This warning does not have a probation period attached - it is merely a minor warning for an infraction large enough to be documented. This warning may be given from any league board member and does not require a league or board vote.
- **Probationary Warning:** A probationary warning is an official warning to an individual coach, parent, or association leader which is given for any instance where a league rule, restriction, or code of conduct is violated by an individual and results in direct impact to the safety and security of the playing environment. The warning is given in writing, and the individual is expected to change behavior so that a safe and fair playing environment is ensured. This warning comes with a probation period attached - the league board will set the probationary period where any further violation of any kind may result in the individual being prohibited from coaching teams and/or attending games. The probation can be lifted at any time during the probationary period with a majority league or board vote.

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- **Coaching Restriction:** an official restriction from the league to an individual coach that prohibits the individual from coaching any player for ANY team in the league. This restriction is handed down in writing by the board due to multiple warnings not being heeded, or such an egregious violation of the coach's code of conduct that the individual is no longer allowed be on the sidelines. The violation(s) will be documented, and the restriction requires a majority vote of the league board. A coaching restriction comes with a timeframe, set by the league board, and once the timeframe is up, the individual will be allowed to coach with a probationary warning applied for a set probationary period, also set by the league board. The restriction can be lifted at any time during the restriction period with a majority league or board vote.
- **Premises Restriction:** an official restriction from the league to any individual (including a coach) that prohibits the individual from attending ANY league-organized game, contest, or function without written permission from the league board. This restriction is handed down in writing by the board due to multiple warnings not being heeded, or such an egregious violation of the code of conduct that the individual is no longer allowed be on the premises of any league function. The violation(s) will be documented, and the restriction requires a majority vote of the league board. A premises restriction comes with a timeframe, set by the league board, and once the timeframe is up, the individual will be allowed to attend league functions with a probationary warning applied for a set probationary period, also set by the league board. The restriction can be lifted at any time during the restriction period with a majority league or board vote.
- **Permanent League Ban:** an official restriction from the league to any individual that prohibits the individual from participating in ANY league-organized game, contest, or function, as well as serving as a board member, volunteer, or paid service provider of any league-affiliated association. This restriction is handed down in writing by the board due to multiple warnings not being heeded, or such an egregious violation of the code of conduct. The violation(s) will be documented, and the restriction requires a majority vote of the league board AND member associations. A permanent league ban is indeed permanent; however, the individual can be restored to a probationary warning with a set probationary period, set by the league board, with a majority vote of the league board AND member associations.

Organizational infractions can result as follows:

- **Organization Warning:** an official warning to a member association which is given for any instance where a league rule is violated by an association, OR when an individual serving the association in an official capacity violates a league rule, restriction, or code of conduct. The warning is given in writing, and the organization is expected to correct the issue or communicate with the individual in violation so that behavior can be corrected. This warning does not have a probation period attached - it is merely a minor warning for an infraction large enough to be

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documented. This warning requires a majority vote from the league board or league associations.

- **Organization Probation:** an official warning to a member association which is given for any instance where a league rule, restriction, or code of conduct is violated by an organization and results in direct impact fair play or to the safety and security of the playing environment. Multiple warnings can also result in a probationary period. Probation notification is given in writing, and the organization is expected to correct the issue or behavior so that a safe and fair playing environment is ensured. The probation implementation requires a majority vote from the member associations, and comes with a probationary period set by the league board, where any further violation of any kind may result in the organization being prohibited from participating in the league. The probation can be lifted at any time during the probationary period with a majority vote by the league board AND member associations.
- **Organization League Ban:** an official restriction from the league to an organization that prohibits affiliation and participation as a member association of the league. This restriction is handed down in writing by the board due to multiple warnings not being heeded, or a violation of organization probation. The violation(s) will be documented, and the restriction requires a majority vote of the league board AND member associations. An organization league ban is indeed permanent; however, the organization can be restored to a probationary status with a set probationary period, set by the league board, with a majority vote of the league board AND member associations.

No-Shows and Forfeits

NAAAYF member associations are also to ensure that their respective teams attend and participate in any and all scheduled games, including Jamboree, Regular Season, and Playoffs. Hosting games requires much gameday coordination with volunteers and vendors, and not showing up to scheduled games can cost hosting associations greatly, as well as result in a chaotic gameday at the venue. Furthermore, associations that are hosting games are required to have medical and security personnel present at all times.

The following penalties will be applied to offending associations/teams:

ASSOCIATION PENALTY: Host venue does not a medical person and/or security person

- 1st offense: \$50 for each game for each person missing (medical person and/or security person)
- 2nd offense: Venue no longer hosts games for remaining scheduled games in the season.

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ASSOCIATION PENALTY: Team requests to forfeit an upcoming game more than 24 hours prior to game*

- EACH offense: \$100 for each game for each team forfeiting

* Forfeits, per National AYF rules, result in a LOSS for the forfeiting team, and a WIN for the opposing team, with a recorded score of 6-0. However, if a point-differential becomes a determining factor for the opposing team in determining entry into the playoffs, or specific playoff bracket (i.e. Gold vs. Bronze bracket play), then a calculation will be made at the end of the season using the opposing team’s average win-point-differential for its winning games, and the playoff seeding/entry will be determined by substituting this average point value for the “6” points received in the forfeit.

ASSOCIATION PENALTY: Failure for a team to show for a game, without notifying NAAFY Board 24 hours prior *

- EACH INSTANCE:
 - o 6U Game = \$130
 - o 7U/8U, 9U/10U, and 11U Game - \$515
 - Field Boss Fee \$45
 - Est. Medical Cost \$30
 - Est. Security Cost \$30
 - Est. Referee Fees \$260 (\$65 x 4)
 - Concession/Ticket Loss \$150
 - If it is the last game of the day - \$260

* For no-shows, the NAAFY Board will look at each case as to the reason why. The same for a medical personal or a security personal not showing. Contact info as to name and phone number will need to be furnished.

Acceptable considerations include, but are not limited to:

- TEAM - Vehicle accident/breakdown with multiple players (not just one player)
- TEAM - Medical situation impacting part of the team (e.g. multiple players with CoVID-19, flu)
- MEDICAL/SECURITY – Service provider fails to show due to unforeseen reason

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TEAM PENALTY: Team leaves the field and refuses to play the game through completion

- 1st offense: Team loses any eligibility to ANY season playoff contention. Head Coach and Association President will be required to meet with the NAAFY Board to discuss the matter.
- 2nd offense: \$125 (flag) or \$515 (tackle) fine paid to the league (same as no-show fine). Head Coach and Association President will be required to meet with the NAAFY Board to discuss the matter. Board will work with host association to determine recoup of hosting costs.
- 3rd offense: Association will be evaluated for admission to league next season by the NAAFY Board. Head Coach and Association President will be required to meet with the NAAFY Board to discuss the matter.

All fines collected will be provided to the NAAFY Board, who will then reimburse the host association.

21. AYF National Rules / Dates of Importance

DATE: Regional / National Team Division Commitment

Per Section 23 of the National AYF Rulebook, NAAFY must submit the age divisions of the teams that will be sent to represent NAAFY in the AYF Regional and National tournaments no later than **August 1**.

DATE: AYF Roster Certifications

Per Section 13 of the National AYF Rulebook, NAAFY associations must have team rosters entered into myAYF no later than **August 31**. Per Section 16, this includes players and coaches, including coach contact information.

Final updates to rosters can be made up until **September 15**.

RULE: Insurance Requirement

Per Section 17 of the National AYF Rulebook, all associations and teams must have insurance that includes accident liability up to \$100,000 and general liability up to \$1,000,000, but additionally, **American Youth Football, Inc.** 1000 South Pointe Drive TH-9, Miami, Fl. 33139, must be named as an additional insured entity.

RULE: Season Game Scheduling

Per Section 10 of the National AYF Rulebook, football games are to be scheduled with a minimum of 48 hours (2 days) between games. The AYF National Office reserves the right to waive this rule when extenuating circumstances exist or to accommodate a championship tournament.

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RULE: Regional / National Games

Per Section 23 of the National AYF Rulebook, official AYF Absent Player Forms will be needed for eligible players that are not participating due to injury and can be found on myAYF.

22. Other Rules

Electronics / Cell Phones / Cameras

Cell phones, cameras, and electronic devices in general are prohibited from the sidelines. If a coach needs to use his cell phone, he is to remove himself, then re-enter when action is complete.

Social Media – Responsible Usage

North Alabama AYF uses several social media platforms, and many organizations utilize social media to promote their teams, players, and gameplay. NAAFY frequently monitors social media posts by affiliated organizations and coaches, and it is imperative that all parties including parents DO NOT make negative or disparaging posts that demean the reputation of others. The NAAFY Board often receives concerns from parents and coaches as it pertains to social media posts. Disparaging posts will be documented and organizations will be notified by the NAAFY Board of any concerning posts that need to be addressed within the organizations with coaches or parents. Ongoing issues of this nature will be handled by the NAAFY Board via coach and organization disciplinary actions.

Game Protests

Head Coach or designated Assistant Coach may protest a game if such coach reasonably believes that a game official (Commissioner, Field Marshal or Game Official) error in a decision that affected the outcome of the game (i.e., the Coach's team would have won the game but for the decision).

All protests must be submitted to the NAAFY Commissioner or the Executive Board, in writing, no later than midnight of the day following the game being protested.

NOTE: Age/Weight protests MUST be made prior to the initial start of the game or such protest shall be barred.

The NAAFY Commissioner shall review the protest, interview relevant personnel, and decide to uphold or deny the protest.

Any protest decision may be appealed to the President and Commissioner for a decision.

The Field Boss will have a protest form at the game location to be filled out, if the game is being played under protest.

The Field Boss will be the final say on game day for rule interpretations.

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Middle School Eligibility

NAAAYF expressly encourages all students attending Middle School to participate in Middle School football and cheer, rather than American Youth Football. As a league, the goal is to coach and train players to be ready for middle school and eventually high school football and cheerleading.

NAAAYF strict prohibits any player that has dressed out for a middle school game from playing for a NAAAYF team during the same season.

Any player that has dressed for a middle school game and NAAAYF game during the same season, the game(s) is a forfeit and the coach will be suspended.

Any violation of this rule results in suspension of coach for up to 1 year.

NOTE: Per AHSAA eligibility rules –

A student may not participate on a non-school team or in an outside sport activity (including camps, tryouts, showcases, etc.) in his/her sport during the school sport season.

No student can participate more than six years (seasons) in any one sport after entering the seventh grade.

Bottom line: put the interest of the player first! Attempting to play a player who is playing for Middle School can jeopardize the player's future eligibility in varsity sports in Alabama.

Spring Football / 7-on-7 Leagues

For all NAAAYF Conference Divisions, Division 1 and Division 2 organizations, spring club football is permitted in AHSAA-sanctioned 7-on-7 leagues. Teams/Players must adhere to the club rules outlined by the AHSAA, where a single club team can only consist of half of the fielded team size for the regular season. Fielded teams in football consist of 11 players on the field, therefore any club teams may only have a total of 6 players from the same regular season team on a club team. All other spring football participation is prohibited.

Photos

Photos may be taken of the players and games by anyone from an area outside of the field of play. Due to liability concerns, NAAAYF will only authorized/cleared personnel to take photos on the field of play, including end zones and sidelines. However, there will NOT be an additional person added to the existing coach/volunteer staff limit, and this photographer will be a part of the number of allowed personnel on the field for a particular team:

- Everyone that gets on ANY NAAAYF field must be cleared by the NAAAYF Commissioner or League President. (includes EVERYONE)

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- All photographers on "the field" must be cleared by NAAAYF. This is an insurance and association board liability issue.

Coaches' Badge Photo

Coaches' photos will be uploaded the digital paperwork system used by NAAAYF, and validated Field Bosses as coaches enter the field.

23. Out-of-Conference Games

In 2024, NAAAYF teams across all age divisions may be requested to play regulation games against teams from the other conferences. When these games are played, some rules specified in this document may be different or not applicable, depending on the agreement between NAAAYF and other conferences.

When playing other AYF conference teams, the National AYF rulebook will be used, unless otherwise agreed upon by the participating associations prior to the games.

For clarification, the Commissioner will provide each association with any and all rule differences and changes prior to engaging in games with other leagues.

Out-of-conference games **WILL NOT** be applied to the NAAAYF division win-loss record when determining bowl game seeding at the conclusion of the regular season.

If an association desires to play an unscheduled out-of-conference game or tournament (i.e. during preseason, a BYE week, or during the week), the association must notify the NAAAYF President or Commissioner, confirming that the division of play and applicable insurance are all in line with the out-of-conference opponent (i.e. Special Teams expected, any weight restrictions, etc.). If not, this could result in the participating association not having valid insurance thus introducing legal liability to the association, or possibly entering into a dangerous environment known by the NAAAYF board.

Per Section 7 of the National AYF Rules concerning Dual Participation, no football player may be on two rosters within AYF or for another league, all-star league, or select team simultaneously. If a player is determined to be on multiple teams, the player will be disqualified for play with any NAAAYF team for the remainder of the season, and the NAAAYF team for which the player is registered will forfeit all games for which the player participated.

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24. Health / Safety Protocols

In addition to the existing health and safety requirements found in the National AYF Rulebook, there may be instances when NAAAYF may need to institute additional health and safety protocols for the health and safety of our players, coaches, parents, and spectators.

Prior to the first day of practice, NAAAYF will determine and declare any additional health and safety protocols that each association will be required to implement and adhere throughout the season.

For this season, please refer to the **2024 NAAAYF Health/Safety Guidelines** for more information.

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Appendix A – 7U/8U Weigh-In Roster Form and Instructions

North Alabama American Youth Football – Weigh-In Certification

Team Name _____

Association _____

Division _____

Coach Name _____

Coach Phone _____

	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	JERSEY NUMBER	DATE	DATE	CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE
				Weight	Weight	
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						

	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	JERSEY NUMBER	DATE	DATE	CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE
				Weight	Weight	
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						
26						
27						
28						
29						
30						
31						
32						
33						
34						
35						

Coach Signature _____

Instruction for Weigh in form 2024 Season

- 1. All teams must have 2 copies of Weigh in Form**
- 2. Association name and team names are to be on all forms**
- 3. Do not go to a weigh station without the weigh-in form filled out completely. You and your team will have to wait until this is done before you weigh and/or play.**
- 4. Present both copies of weigh-in form and team book (paperwork) to the Field Boss.**
- 5. All players will be weighed with full equipment (except helmet and shoulder pads).**
- 6. Any player may request a “strip” weigh-in. A “strip” weigh-in will be granted ONLY if a player’s legal guardian is present.**
- 7. Players not making maximum weight will be given one more chance during the Jamboree to make weight. A player may participate in Jamboree play if the player is over/under by 5 lb. or less of certified weight. The Field Boss on site will advise the coach the time for any second chance weigh-ins.**
- 8. All decisions made by the Field Boss with regard to player’s weight are official.**
- 9. Times for weigh-in will be appointed to all teams and adhered to. If you miss your time you will have to wait until the other team(s) following you has weighed-in.**
- 10. Jersey number and colors will not be held against you until regular season begins.**

Appendix B – 6U Flag Football Penalties

Defensive Spot Fouls

Defensive pass interference	Automatic first down
Holding	Automatic first down
Stripping	+10 yards and automatic first down

Offensive Spot Fouls

Screening, blocking or running with the ball	-10 yards and loss of down
Charging	-10 yards and loss of down
Flag guarding	-10 yards and loss of down

Defensive Penalties

Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards and automatic first down
Defensive Unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yards and automatic first down
Offside	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal rush <small>(Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)</small>	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull <small>(Before the receiver has the ball)</small>	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Taunting	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down

Offensive Penalties

Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards and loss of down
Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct	-10 yards and loss of down
Offside / false start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal forward pass <small>(Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)</small>	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Offensive pass interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal motion <small>(More than one person moving)</small>	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Delay of game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Impeding the rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Procedure	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

