

Niagara Erie Youth Sports Association (NEYSA)

Rules and Regulations

SECTION A **TACKLE FOOTBALL** (adopted 1/2026)

Rule 1 Player's Qualifications

1. Each football player must have a current (within the past 12 months) physical examination to cheer or play football.
2. Each new football player must provide written proof of birth date (legible) copy of birth certificate or other legal and official document.
3. At least one parent/guardian must sign the member organization's participants registration form.

Rule 2 Insurance

1. All member organizations in this Association must carry Comprehensive Liability Insurance protecting bodily injury and property damage with a limit of \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence. Each member organization will be responsible for providing NEYSA with a Certificate of Insurance naming NEYSA as a loss payee and as an additional insured. This document must be provided no later than July 1st of the current year.
2. If the member organization does not have insurance in place and a copy of their Insurance Certificate on file with the NEYSA's Secretary, that member organization will not be able to practice, scrimmage or participate in any NEYSA sanctioned events until such time as the member organization's document is on file with the Secretary.

Rule 3 Team and Football Game Rosters

1. Each member organization's Statistician shall attend the NEYSA's annual Commissioner, Coaches and Statisticians meeting held in accordance with the *Constitution and By-Laws - Article 16 Effective Dates -Yearly Agenda* held prior to the start of the season.
2. Team Rosters shall be limited to a maximum of forty (40) football players with a minimum of fourteen (14) football players for all football teams except the Mini football team and a minimum of five (5) cheerleaders.
3. Each new participant shall provide a legible copy of their birth certificate or other legal and official document during the Player Verification process. All football players shall be officially verified and have their picture taken and may be weighed in by a member of the Auditing Committee or those persons designated by the President, during the pre-season Team Book preparation session or for new participants up to the fourth week of the regular season, to document their eligibility in participating. The Player Verification process will occur at a location determined and scheduled by the Scheduling Committee. The Player Verification form, for that particular team, must be completed by a member of the Auditing Committee or those persons designated by the

President and submitted to the League Statistician by the players' member organization for his/her review and approval.

4. A complete team roster and proof of birth (for new players) must be prepared by each member organization football teams for review by the Statistician prior to the start of the regular season. The new players' birth certificates or other legal and official document shall have the athlete's NEYSA identification (ID) number in writing and legible in the lower right-hand corner of the document. The athlete's NEYSA ID number should be approximately one inch in height.

Prior to the start of the regular season, NEYSA shall provide to each organization a legible copy of each football participant's photo and information for the member organization's documentation of the participant's eligibility. Each member organization shall print, maintain and keep current their participant's eligibility information in their Team Book and shall ensure the documents are provided to the opposing team's coaches, for review, at the beginning of each regular season or post season game (if applicable) and any other NEYSA sanctioned event.

5. Team Rosters must contain the following information:

- a. NEYSA at the top of the roster
- b. The current year and the words "Team Roster"
- c. The member organization's name
- d. The member organization's team name
- e. The weight limit or age/grade level for that team
- f. The Head Coach's name
- g. The Head Coach's phone number
- h. NEYSA participant's Identification Number*
- i. Participant's date of birth
- j. Participant's name
- k. Participant's full address
- l. Participant's phone number

*NOTE: Once a participant has a NEYSA Identification Number, there will not be a need for the member organization to provide an additional birth certificate, unless upon request from NEYSA.

6. In order for new football participants, added after the pre-season Team Book preparation session required by this Rule, to be eligible to participate and receive a NEYSA ID number and photo, the member organization must provide the proof of birth (for new players), a legible copy of each football participant's photo and the completed fully executed Player Verification form to the Statistician by the Wednesday prior to the next game. This submission and official player verification must be before midnight of that Wednesday.

For football participants who have an existing NEYSA identification number, who are added after the pre-season Team Book preparation session to be eligible to participate, a legible copy of each football participant's photo and the completed fully executed Player Verification form must be submitted to the Statistician by the Wednesday at midnight prior to the next game. Players cannot be weighed in until the League Statistician has provided approval for that player. All players must be weighed in in accordance with Rule 6 #1.

7. Participants cannot be added to a Team and Game Roster after the completion of the fourth (4th) week of the regular season.

8. Player Movement

- a. During the season no participant may transfer from one member organization to another without the written consent of the Commissioners of each effected member organization. The Statistician must receive a copy of this written consent of player transfer no later than midnight of that Wednesday prior to the next game.
- b. If either affected Commissioner refuses to consent to a proposed in-season participant transfer, the participant may petition the Board of Commissioners to approve the transfer. If good cause is shown and the Board of Commissioners votes in the majority to approve the transfer, the President of NEYSA will sign the consent of player transfer form, approving the transfer.
- c. During the off-season, any participant is free to register with any organization they wish. If a participant previously played for another organization, the prior organization has no hold or right to prevent that participant from moving to a different organization. There is no written consent necessary to complete such an off-season transfer.
- d. For purposes of this section, the season will be defined as being between July 1st and December 31 of any given year.
- e. Registration for flag football has no bearing or impact on registration for the following tackle football season.

9. Football Game Rosters shall be limited to a maximum of forty (40) football players with a minimum of fourteen (14) football players for all teams except the Mini football team.

10. **A football game roster must be created in duplicate to provide official documentation of the game. After being fully executed with all the pertinent information from the game, a scan of this roster must be sent to the NEYSA statistician no later than midnight on the Wednesday following the game(s). Also, the top copy goes to the member organization's team and the bottom copy goes to the opposing team coach. A copy of the completed, fully executed Game Rosters must be maintained in each member organization's Team Book for the duration of the season.**

11. Football Game Rosters must contain the following information.

- a. NEYSA at the top of the roster
- b. The current year and the word "Game Roster"
- c. The member organization's name
- d. The member organization's team name
- e. The opposing organization's name and team name
- f. The final game score
- g. The field played on
- h. Signature space for both Head Coaches
- i. Ejected player and jersey number
- j. Ejected coach's name
- k. Participant's names

- l. NEYSA's participants' Identification number
- m. Participants' jersey number
- n. Eligible
- o. Striper
- p. Weight
- q. Play count
- r. Written certification upon conclusion of the Game by the Opposing Coach

All information must be completed properly otherwise a fine will be assessed against the offending member organization. All new players must be placed at the bottom of the Game Roster. Adding new players without the Statistician's approval will result in a fine.

For subsection n – p above, the following wording, marking or initials must be used:

Eligible = Eligible, OK or a check mark
 Non-eligible = Absent ABS or Injured INJ
 Striper = Striper or an S

12. NEYSA and the Statistician shall provide a template for each member organization to use when creating their team and football Game Rosters. These templates will be approved by the NEYSA Board and training in the proper documentation process of the templates and all other documentation required by the *Constitution and By-Laws* and these *Rules and Regulations* will be provided to each member organization's Statistician and/or League representatives prior to the opening day of the season. A committee will be established by the President to assist all member organizations in the League requirements for proper documentation.

In addition to the templates for team and football Game Rosters, the Statistician shall provide all of the pertinent documents required to comply with the *Constitution and By-Laws* and these *Rules and Regulations* prior to the opening day of the season. This includes but is not limited to: Team and Game Rosters; organizational information; player and cheerleader contact sheet; official player transfer sheet and code of conducts.

The Statistician shall reserve all rights to modify, revise or otherwise change said documents to enhance and comply with the requirements of the *Constitution and By-Laws* and these *Rules and Regulations*, with approval of the NEYSA Board.

13. A copy of the completed, fully executed Game Roster must be submitted, by each member organization, to the Statistician no later than midnight on the Wednesday following the game(s). This submitted Game Roster(s) must be electronically sent, via email. The original (top) copy of each Game Roster must be submitted to NEYSA at the next NEYSA Board meeting following the games.

NOTE: The Statistician will only accept one electronic file from each member organization containing all of that member organization's rosters for that particular game day (ie: Mini, Freshmen, Junior Varsity and Varsity game rosters).

14. The complete final score of the game(s) and the teams playing must be reported to the Statistician and the Scheduling Committee Chair no later than midnight on the day after the game(s). This reporting must be done by email or text.

The report shall be as follows:

- a. Host organization name, division, and team name
- b. Opponent organization name, division, and team name
- c. The winning and losing scores

Submission of the completed fully executed Game Roster will suffice to comply with this rule.

15. In the event that a team splits – One team shall be placed in the North Conference and the 2nd team shall be placed in the South Conference.

Rule 4 Divisions, Weights, Stripers and Ages

1. Football divisions, weights, Striper and ages

DIVISION	WEIGHTS	STRIPER	AGE ON JULY 1 st (Current Year) *
Mini	90 lbs.	> 90 95 - Unlimited	5, 6 & 7**
Freshmen	110 lbs.	> 110 115 - Unlimited	8 & 9
Junior Varsity	135 lbs.	> 135 140 - Unlimited	10 & 11
Varsity	160 lbs.	Unlimited	12, 13 & 14***

*NOTE: The July 1st date applies to all ages except the 14-year-old.

**NOTE: Any 5-year-old who turns 6 before or on December 31st of the current year will be allowed to play on the Mini team. 5-year-olds will be allowed to play on the Mini team at the discretion of the Head Coach. As not all 5-year-olds are the same, playing time will be a coach's decision and they are not subject to the 6 play minimum under Rule 7.18.

***NOTE: Players who turn 14 years old after April 1 of that current year will be allowed to play on the Varsity team.

- a. Organizations can allow players to play down following the "older, lighter rule". There is a limit of 4 players per roster. Each player must weigh in before the season, at week 4, and before 1st playoff game.
 - i. Mini - Player must not turn 9 before June 30th and be 50lbs or less
 - ii. Freshman - Player must not turn 11 before June 30th and be 60lbs or less
 - iii. J.V. - Player must not turn 13 before June 30th and be 80lbs or less

(adopted 1/2026)

2. NEYSA recognizes a "Mini" football team for the purpose of instructional football for five (5), six (6) and seven (7) year old players. The emphasis for these players is on learning, safety and having fun. These games will not count towards league standings; scores will not be kept and there is no playoff and/or championship games for this level. As such, each player must be given the opportunity to play at every offensive and defensive position throughout the year.

If a member organization does not have enough players to field a Mini team, the seven (7) year old players may play with the Freshmen team; however, the player must weigh at least fifty (50) pounds to participate.

Mini teams have the option of playing Flag football, full equipment Flag football or Tackle football for the season.

3. Eligible game weight will remain in effect throughout the regular and post season (if post season games are played).
4. Rules for Striper players for all participation in practices, scrimmages, regular and post-season activities.
 - a. Striper players helmets will be marked with a distinct STRIPER decal as provided by NEYSA to be placed on the front and back of the helmet.
 - b. Striper players must bring the helmet (with decal) and jersey when being checked in prior to a game.
 - c. Striper players are not allowed to advance the ball on defense, offense, or special teams. Should a Striper player obtain possession of the ball, the play will be blown dead at the spot of possession.
 - d. Striper players are allowed to play on the offensive and/or defensive line only. Striper players on the defensive line may not play in a two (2) point stance. Offensive linemen are allowed to play in a two (2) point stance.
 - e. Striper players are not allowed on kickoff or kick receive teams, unless the total number of eligible (non-Striper) players available at the game is less than eleven (11).
 - f. Striper players are not eligible for a pass, regardless of the formation.
 - g. Striper players may only line up and play between and include the offensive tackles on offense. Defensive Striper players may only line up and play inside the last man on the offensive line (excluding split/wide receivers) on defense.
 - h. A penalty of Unsportsmanlike Conduct (15 yards) will be issued for Striper players who are out of their assigned position or in an improper stance, at the time of the initiation of the play.
 - i. There can only be a maximum of three (3) Stripers at any time on the defensive or offensive line, except in unique circumstances, such as the maximum number of eligible (non-Striper) players on a team, to play that game is eight (8) and using an additional Striper would exceed the maximum requirement.
 - j. Once a player is designated a Striper player, they will remain a Striper player for the season (except as provided for in Rule 6 #1). If a player exceeds the maximum non-Striper playing weight at the official weigh in, that player will be designated a Striper player for the remainder of the season.
 - k. The Striper designation must be indicated on the Game Roster.
 - l. Intentional roster or in game violations of these Striper rules will result in a one game suspension for the Head Coach and a One Hundred (\$100) dollar fine for the offending organization.
 - m. A Defensive Striper player's initial charge, at the snap, must be forward and into the offensive backfield.

Rule 5 Football Practice

1. NEYSA has established a "No Jewelry" rule whereas no football player is permitted to wear jewelry of any kind during any NEYSA sanctioned activity.
2. Proper athletic apparel shall be worn at all times by all participants. Appropriate footwear (sneakers) and socks must be worn at all NEYSA sanctioned activities by all participants including coaches and trainers.
3. NEYSA has adopted the USA Football "National Practice Guidelines for Youth Tackle Football". The most current format of these requirements will be met by all member organizations and is mandatory for all practices. The most current copy shall be provided to all member organizations prior to the start of the season.
4. NEYSA mandates that all Football players must have completed eight (8) practices to be considered eligible to take part in NEYSA sanctioned games and completed five (5) practices to be eligible for team scrimmages.

Rule 6 Weigh Ins and Football Game Rosters

1. At the first regular season game, there will be an official weigh-in for football players who did not weigh in during the Player Verification Day.
2. All players must be weighed in to ensure they are within the maximum allowable weight. The official weigh in shall occur at the host organization's location with a NEYSA Commissioner and/or Representative of the organization and a NEYSA Commissioner and/or Representative of the
3. opposing organization.
4. There may be one additional weigh in for any player who is classified as a Striper to change classification to a non-Striper. This weigh-in will only occur at game 4 of the season. Notification of this weigh-in must occur by the Wednesday prior to game 4 of the regular season. Notification will be made by the Commissioner or Representative of the visiting organization to the home organization's Commissioner or Representative to ensure proper representation will be available from both organizations. No further weigh ins will occur for the rest of the regular season and playoffs. If a player is absent (i.e.: vacation or medical reasons), they can be weighed in officially at the second game by the host organization's NEYSA Commissioner and/or Representative and the opposing team's NEYSA Commissioner and/or Representative.
2. Prior to each regular and post season (if played) game, each football coach must submit to the opposing football coach the following: an original football Game Roster with two copies indicating all of NEYSA's information required as per *Rule 3 - Team and Game Rosters - #10* and the Team Book with the player contact sheets. This check-in process shall occur for all regular and post season (if played) games. If there is no NEYSA identification number for a player, that player is ineligible and will not be checked in.
3. Proper notation shall be performed by the opposing team's football coach and shall include the proper wording, marking or initials as indicated in *Rule 3 - Team and Game Rosters - #10*. All Game Rosters shall be filled out completely. If a roster is not filled out completely or has improper information contained within, the roster will be considered invalid, and the member organization will

be subject to a fine.

4. If a player quits or drops from the member organization, the words "Quit" or "Dropped" shall be written in the eligible column. In order to remove the dropped player from the Team and Game Roster completely, written notification must be submitted to the Secretary and the Statistician. Upon acknowledgement of receipt of that written notification, the member organization can then remove the dropped player from their Team and Game Roster.
5. At the time of the check in, all players must remove their helmets so the opposing teams' head coach can compare the player to the legible copy of the player's photo found in the Team Book. The head coach must provide legible copies of each participant's contact information to the opposing head coach for proper check-in of each participant. All players must have in their possession at this check-in their jersey (and helmet if they are a Striper) and show it to the opposing coach. The number on their jersey must correspond to their assigned jersey number on the game roster. No duplicate numbers are allowed.
6. The Statistician shall report at each monthly meeting, during the season, which team is in violation of the reporting requirements.
7. On all game days, at the end of the player check-in, the Head Coaches must check in all of their opponents' assistant coaches and verify their USA Football Certification badge is being properly worn and visible at that time. Teams will pay a \$50.00 fine if any assistant coach is not wearing their required badge. Any coach that does not have a badge visible will not be allowed on the sideline for that game. A line will be added to the Game Roster for both Head Coaches to sign off on.

Rule 7 Games

1. The first regular season game shall start on the last weekend of August of the current year.
2. Teams may play in scrimmages during their normal practice hours that are not indicative of NEYSA's sanctioned games.
3. If a member organization must cancel a game, they must contact the Secretary and the opposing team's Head Coach immediately but no later than the Wednesday preceding the scheduled game. Failure to notify the Secretary and the opposing team's Head Coach will result in a fine.
4. For games that need to be postponed due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances, the member organizations that are to participate must come to a mutual agreement between the coaches and Commissioners of each organization for the makeup date, time and location and notification containing that information must be made to the Secretary as soon as possible but no later than midnight on Monday following the postponement.
5. Any team failing to attend and play a NEYSA sanctioned game will forfeit the game. If at game time, a team fails to attend and play a sanctioned game or forfeits the game without the approval of their organization's NEYSA Commissioner and/or Representative, that team shall be responsible for the referee fees for that game. Only a NEYSA Commissioner and/or Representative can forfeit a game once it has begun. They must consult with their Head Coach and the opposing team's NEYSA Commissioner and/or Representative and Head Coach.

6. The visiting team shall be responsible for contacting the home team by the Wednesday prior to the regularly scheduled game to discuss field requirements and any other issues.

7. In the event a team has a bye or their opponent forfeits, the team may schedule another NEYSA game to play on that open game day. These games shall not count in the NEYSA standings but will be sanctioned by NEYSA and will be officiated by the current referee's group under contract at that time.

8. All Sunday single, double, triple or quadruple headers shall kick off at a time determined by the Scheduling Committee after consultation with the affected organizations. Generally, the smallest weight division shall play first followed successively by the higher divisions in ascending order.

9. All teams shall be responsible for providing a numerical jersey roster to the home team's announcing booth at least one half (1/2) hour prior to the start of the game.

10. The use of headsets are prohibited anywhere for the purpose of communicating to players or coaches.

11. ~~All games, except the Mini division, shall have at least three (3) approved referees.~~ **All Freshman level games will have three (3) referees, and the JV and Varsity level games will have four (4) referees.** No games, except the Mini division, shall begin with fewer than two (2) referees. The Mini division shall have two (2) approved referees.

12. Any referee may remove a player from the playing field, whom he/she deems to have an aggravated injury. The extent of the injury is left to that player's sideline representative. If for any reason a player is removed by medical personnel and treated at the field, it shall be at the discretion of that treating medical personnel as to the player's return to play.

13. One (1) point shall be awarded for the Point After Touchdown (PAT) if the ball is run successfully. Two (2) points shall be awarded on a successful pass as long as the receiver is beyond the Line of Scrimmage when catching the ball or for a successful kick play. The try for the PAT kick shall be placed at the two (2) yard line.

14. All quarters in the Freshmen, Junior Varsity and Varsity games shall be a twelve (12) minute quarter with stoppage of the clock during those official referee stops and shall have a fifteen (15) minute halftime.

~~The Mini games shall have a two (2) thirty (30) minute halves with a running clock and a ten (10) minute halftime.~~ **The Mini games shall have four (4) fifteen (15) minute quarters with a running clock and a ten (10) minute halftime.**

15. There will be an official uncharged time out at each four (4) minute warning at the end of the first half and at the end of the game except for the Mini games.

16. The team in the conference with the highest point total shall be named the highest seed in the conference. In case of a tie and to determine the highest seed only, the following shall be the determining factor in descending order:

- a. Division Record
- b. Head-to-Head (among the tied teams)
- c. Strength of schedule (defined as the total record of all the wins/losses of the teams played.
The highest winning percentage shall break all ties.

- d. Win/Loss record of common opponents
- e. Coin toss

In the instance of a tie between three or more teams, the determining factors shall be followed until a team is eliminated. Once a team is eliminated, the remaining teams shall then go back to the first determining factor and in descending order, the division champion shall be selected.

The following is the determining point system:

- a. Win 2 points
- b. Bye 2 points
- c. Tie 1 point
- d. Loss 0 points
- e. Forfeit 2 points (the team that forfeited receives 0 points)

17. Marijuana and alcoholic beverages will not be served or consumed by any NEYSA members, coaches or spectators at any event sanctioned by the League.

18. All football players who attend practices regularly and are not restricted due to health or disciplinary reasons shall play a minimum of six (6) plays if the **Gameday** Roster is more than twenty-five(25) players or more and eight (8) plays if the **Gameday** Roster size is less than twenty-five (25) players. **The number of players on a Gameday Roster will be used to determine this, and will be based on the number of players confirmed by the opposing coach at Pregame check-in. Players who are Absent, Injured, or Quit will not be figured in this number.** This includes all games (regular season, playoffs, and championships). Each member organization may establish their own protocol of achieving this including, for example: attending all practices the week prior to the game or the willingness of the player to play in the position the coach is assigning.

Each team shall assign an individual whose primary responsibility is to ensure compliance with this minimum play rule. This individual must document the number of plays up to the minimum of six (6) and must provide a reason why a player did not participate (health, injury, disciplinary or refusal). The member organization's team must keep this documentation readily available upon request by NEYSA and/or the opposing team, for the duration of that season.

Players must play in a minimum of 3 games, barring injury, to be eligible to participate in the playoffs.

19. All cheerleaders are expected to be at both home and away games, unless at a competition. The cheerleaders are encouraged but not expected to be at playoff games. All cheerleaders must remain with their respective cheer teams throughout the game unless released by the Head Coach or other authorized personnel.

20. Unless approved by the Cheer Head Coach, Cheer assistant coach or Cheer Coordinator, there will be no eating or drinking while the participant is in their uniform.

21. If during a game, where there is a difference in the level of talent, the coach of the leading team, must substitute liberally, replacing primarily their highest-level players from their starting lineup, to make every effort to show restraint and respect to the trailing team. If the total number of players available at the game does not allow for liberal replacement, the leading coach will ensure that the higher-level players are

placed into positions other than their starting roles or skilled position (ie: quarterback, running back, receiver, linebacker or defensive end).

22. If a game is well in hand (in excess of twenty-four points), the team that is leading shall not have their first string players involved, allowing the second and third string players the opportunity to participate in the game during meaningful plays. In addition, the opposing team should make substitutions to keep the level of competition consistent.

NEYSA recognizes there will be times a large margin of victory may still be scored by a second or third string unit.

- a. If a game is well in hand and the talent level is obviously at an uneven level- at any point in the game both teams may agree to shunt the score and just continue play for all players to get in and have fun. Just stop adding points to the scoreboard. The Final score on the roster will be what it was when both teams agreed to this.

23. However, for any game where it is felt the opposing team did not comply with the rule by not substituting liberally by replacing their higher-level players when there is a difference in talent or by leaving their first-string players in the game when the opposing team is leading by twenty four (24) points or more, a complaint can be filed with the League. In order for the complaint to be considered, the complaining Commissioner shall report to the Statistician no sooner than Monday following the game and no later than midnight of that Monday.

After review and investigation by a Committee established by the President which will include, at the minimum, an interview with the Coaches and the Commissioners of the competing teams where evidence, such as video tape, must be provided for review, the Committee shall make a report to the Board. All persons requested to attend the review process must attend. Failure to attend an investigating Committee meeting will result in immediate suspension from League sanctioned events for that offending person. If the report determines that the offending team violated the intent of rule 7 #21 or #22, the Committee shall issue their findings to the President. The President, upon receiving the recommendation from the Committee, shall provide the Committee's report to the Board for their review. The Board, excluding the Commissioners from the affected organizations named in the report, shall vote on the recommendation.

If the Board, excluding the Commissioners from the affected organizations, votes in the majority in favor of the Committee's recommendations, the Committee's recommendations will take effect immediately. Should a second offense occur within the same season, the offending organization shall be fined \$250.00, and the Head Coach shall be suspended for one (1) calendar year.

24. All organizations must participate in the League wide NEYSA Cheer Competition, if one is held during the season. This is mandatory with no exceptions. Organizations are open to attend other non-League competitions as long as they are not held on the day of the NEYSA Competition.

25. Only participants, certified coaches and authorized personnel are allowed along the sidelines or end zones. All football coaches must wear their USA Football Coach Badges indicating their completion of their Coaches Certification, which must be visible at all times when on the sidelines.

26. During a game and in the event of a disagreement or misinterpretation of NEYSA or High School rules by the officials or either teams head coach – the Head Referee shall call an uncharged timeout and invite both head coaches to the center of the field to review a hard copy of the rules and determine the proper outcome.

Rule 8 Playing Fields

1. Organizations applying for admission into NEYSA shall have their playing fields inspected by a Committee established by the President. The Committee shall have the authority to approve a playing field.
2. Unless otherwise approved, the playing field shall be 53.33 yards wide and 120 yards long.
3. Spectators must observe the game in an area designated by the home team's organization.
4. The home team is responsible for ensuring the availability of an ambulance service.
5. If an organization provides personnel to perform medical assistance or evaluations of participants, the medical person(s) shall be on the playing field during all activities in order to observe and provide immediate medical care to the injured party. The medical person(s) shall be identified to all Head Coaches and shall have all the necessary equipment on hand to provide immediate medical care. If the medical person(s) is going to be compensated, they cannot have any other duty, including coaching. This includes any organization's board members or volunteers who are participating in any other activity.
6. It shall be the responsibility of the HOME TEAM, as annotated on the schedule, to provide the volunteers for the chain crew.

Rule 9 Equipment

1. All players shall have the proper equipment and shall be fitted properly by their team's coaching staff.
2. Eye shields are permissible to wear in the helmet as long as it is constructed of a molded, ridged material that is clear and has no tint.
3. A colored mouthpiece shall be worn by all players and must be attached to the helmet.
4. NEYSA member organizations shall use an official youth league football. It is the option of each member organization to use either a pebble grain leather, rubber or a composite football. The following ball sizes will be used for each team:

Mini – Pee Wee
Freshmen – Pee Wee
Junior Varsity – Junior
Varsity – Youth
5. No sticky or slippery substances of any kind is to used on any part of the equipment or body.
6. Gloves may be worn however the gloves must comply with the NFHS rules.

Rule 10 Football Coaches

1. No coach shall be permitted to coach in more than one youth football and/or cheerleading league, during the NEYSA season, without the written approval from the Board of Commissioners.
 2. Each member organization shall have at least one (1) person trained in Basic First Aid and Adult/Child CPR readily available for all NEYSA sanctioned activities. A fully stocked first aid kit must be readily accessible for all teams' locations for each member organization.
 3. Each coach within each member organization shall have a minimum certification of a National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA) or equivalent. This certification must be current and up-to-date and made readily available upon request by NEYSA and/or the opposing team, for the duration of that season.
 4. Each member organization must ensure that their football coaches (Head and assistant) are all participating and must possess a valid certification in the USA Football "Youth Certification for Contact" program for the current season. If a member organization is found to have football coaches (Head and/or assistants) coaching in any capacity without a valid and current USA Football certification, the member organization will be subjected to an immediate disciplinary action of the forfeiting of the next regular season game for that violating coach's team. In addition, the non-certified coach will be suspended immediately and cannot return to participate in any League sanctioned activities until which time they are certified.
 5. Each member organization shall maintain a legible copy of each Head Coach, assistant coach and trainers photographs within their Team Books and make it readily available upon request by NEYSA and/or the opposing team, for the duration of that season.
 6. Prior to the start of each season, a list of all coaches, assistants and trainers shall be submitted to NEYSA.
 7. Prior to the opening day of the season, NEYSA shall schedule a "Commissioners, Representatives, Statisticians and Coaches" meeting that shall be attended by each member organization as well as their Commissioner, Representative, Statistician, and all coaches. This meeting shall cover any new changes, introduce the referee organization, and discuss other business pertinent to coaching.
- During the first two weeks of the pre-season, each member organization shall hold a "Parent" meeting to discuss the Rules and Regulations of the Association as well as having them sign the NEYSA "Parent Code of Conduct". All parents must sign the "Parent Code of Conduct" and understand their contents. A NEYSA Executive Officer will be made available to present at this "Parent" meeting upon confirmation of the scheduling of the meeting.
8. Every coach for every team must sign a NEYSA "Coaches Code of Conduct" and a copy must be maintained within their Team Books by the member organization and made readily available upon request by NEYSA and/or the opposing teams, for the duration of that season.
 9. Each member organization shall perform a confidential background check on all volunteers, including coaches and assistants. Should a "red flag" result be found on any volunteer, the member organization must take immediate steps to ascertain the reason for the "red flag" and make a determination of that person's status in their organization. Any crimes against children, chemical or drug, alcohol related, domestic violence, assault or any serious felonious charges against a person will preclude them from

participating with NEYSA and the member organizations. Each member organization shall maintain a current listing of those persons who have been background checked within their Team Books and make it readily available upon request by NEYSA and/or the opposing team, for the duration of that season.

Failure to have a background check performed on all volunteers, including coaches and assistants, will result in the volunteer, coach and assistant being suspended for the season and the member organization will receive a monetary fine established by the Disciplinary Committee. If the member organization participates with NEYSA for the background checks, the results will be shared with the member organization from NEYSA. If the member organization performs the background checks themselves, they must share the information immediately with NEYSA.

Rule 11 Rules of Play

1. The official rules of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) shall govern the rules of football where the NEYSA rules are not described herein.
2. The referee organization that will officiate the NEYSA games shall receive a copy of the NEYSA Rules and Regulations prior to the start of the season.
3. In the Mini division, all of the NEYSA Rules and Regulations apply except as follows:
 - a. No kickoffs allowed.
 - b. The ball will be placed at the 30-yard line at one end of the field. The entire game will be played at that end of the field. Each team's offensive possession will begin at the 30-yard line.
 - c. Teams in possession on fourth down shall execute an offensive play. If a first down is not obtained, the defense will take possession on the 30 yard line.
 - d. No punts allowed.
 - e. Two (2) coaches from each team will be allowed on the field of play, however the following must be complied with: prior to the quarterback getting under the center, the coaches are allowed to align their players in the proper position; at the moment the quarterback gets under the center, the coaches are required to move back ten (10) yards behind the line of scrimmage and remain silent until the whistle blows signaling the end of the play.. Failure to move ten (10) yards back and remain silent will result in a loss of down for the Offensive team or a ten (10) yard penalty on the Defensive team. Continued failure to follow this rule will cause, at the Referees' discretion, the offending coach to be removed to the sidelines. This does not count as an ejection under NEYSA Rule 7 #17.
 - f. No score keeping or standings will be recorded.
 - g. No extra points will be attempted.
 - h. All games shall have two (2) thirty (30) minute halves with a running clock and a ten (10) minute halftime. In the event of a lengthy stop in play due to an injury on the field, the referee must stop the game clock to preserve playing time for the remaining players. **Each team is allowed one (1) timeout per half.** There are no **additional** timeouts in the Mini division games except for those deemed necessary by the referees.
 - i. Defensive linemen may not line up any closer to the Offensive center than head up on the Offensive guard. No Defensive player may rush the "A" gap at any time. There will be no stunting or blitzing on defense. The only players allowed to rush the Offensive backfield are those lined up on the line of scrimmage. Offensive line must be lined up in a reasonable sense of a normal line set up. Guards cannot line up with an extended gap from the center.

- j. The quarterback is not allowed to run through the “A” gap.
 - k. When there is a muffed exchange between the quarterback and the center, the play will be blown dead and replayed. This is only in effect when the quarterback is under center. Any missed or dropped snaps in a Shotgun, Pistol or other formation where the quarterback is not under center, will be considered “live” and play will continue.
 - l. Two (2) approved referees must officiate each Mini game.
 - m. All turnovers in weeks 1 – 4 will result in the Offensive team retaining possession at the original line of scrimmage or further back if the turnover happens in the backfield, with a loss of down. All turnovers in week 5 and beyond will result in a change of possession, with the defending team taking over on the 30 yard line.
 - n. There will be no play clock for the first four (4) games of the season to allow the coaches time to align and instruct their players. Beginning at game five (5) through the completion of the season, there will be a sixty (60) second play clock in an effort to promote more plays for the players.
 - o. At no point will any offensive snap take place beyond the 30-yard line. If there is a sack, penalty or other play that results in loss of yardage, the ball will be placed at the 30-yard line for the next offensive possession with the appropriate loss of down.
 - p. The defensive team may only line up a maximum of five (5) defensive linemen on the line of scrimmage.
 - q. ~~All defensive players may cross the line of scrimmage to pursue the ball after any ball-carrier has exited the “tackle box” (i.e.: the area of the field between where the offensive tackles have lined up).~~ **All Defensive players, except the maximum of five (5) down linemen, must be lined up at least five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage. All defensive players may pursue the ball on the snap.**
 - r. All penalties incurred by Players during game play in Weeks 1-4 will NOT be enforced. Officials will notify the Player and Coaches of the infraction to allow Coaches the ability to correct and teach proper technique. Starting Week 5, ALL player penalties will be enforced as per NEYSA Rules and Regulations. Penalties incurred by Coaches during gameplay will be subject to the current NEYSA Rules and Regulations starting Week 1.
4. In the Freshmen division, all of the NEYSA Rules and Regulations apply except as follows:
- a. No kickoffs allowed. The receiving team shall put the ball into play on the 40 yard line.
 - b. Punts will occur with no contact from either team or rush from the Defensive team. Both teams will line up in an appropriate punt formation and remain in a static position until the ball is kicked. Offense will shotgun snap ball to the punter and the punter will kick the ball from wherever he/she fields the ball (even if the ball is fumbled or snapped over his/her head). The receiving team will recover the punt by catching it or at first control of the ball by the receiving team player. No contact will occur and the receiving team will take over at the recovered spot. Contact will result in a 15 yard penalty. Offsides will still result in a 5 yard penalty to the encroaching team.
 - c. ~~Two (2) coaches from each team will be allowed on the field of play, up to the fourth regular season game.~~ **Two (2) coaches from each team will be allowed on the field of play up to and including the fourth regular season game. Beginning in week 5, coaches must be on the sideline during gameplay.** However, the following must be complied with: prior to the quarterback getting under the center or is established in a shotgun formation, the coaches are allowed to align their players in the proper position; at the moment the quarterback prepares for the snap of the ball, the coaches are required to move back ten (10) yards behind the line of scrimmage and remain silent until the whistle blows signaling the end of the play. Failure to move ten (10) yards back and remain silent will result in a ten (10) yard penalty and a loss of down for the offending team.

- d. On fourth down, a team in possession of the ball between its own 20 yard line shall have the option of moving the ball out to its own 35 yard line and giving possession over to the Defense or executing an offensive play.
 - e. On fourth down, a team in possession of the ball between its own 20 yard line and up to and including the 50 yard line, shall have the option of moving the ball forward fifteen (15) yards and giving possession over to the Defense or executing an offensive play. **Once a team passes midfield, they can still punt in accordance with the guidelines in section 4.b above, but will not be allowed any automatic walkoffs.**
 - f. If a safety is scored, the ball shall be moved to the 50 yard line and possession given to the Defensive team, which scored the safety.
5. Overtime in all games shall be in accordance with the following criteria and shall continue until there is a declared winner:
- a. All of the NEYSA Rules and Regulations shall apply.
 - b. Each team will have one time out per overtime.
 - c. First and second overtime will begin with a coin toss.
 - d. Winner of the coin toss will decide to start on offense of defense.
 - e. Each team will get possession starting at the 10 yard line.
 - f. In any additional overtimes, the above rules apply, however after each touchdown, the scoring team must go for two (2) points.
6. If any player receives two (2) Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalties within the same NEYSA sanctioned game, that player will be ejected from that game and may be subject to a one (1) game suspension after a review and vote by the NEYSA Board. If the same player is ejected from a second NEYSA sanctioned game, in the same season, the player will be suspended for that season. The exception to this rule would be the use of profanity on the field by a player or coach. If a player or coach is heard using any profanity, they will be ejected from that game and may be subject to a one (1) game suspension after a review and recommendation by a Committee established by the President and a review and majority vote in favor of the recommendation by the Board.

Rule 12 Health and Safety

- 1. The use of a sauna or steam bath for weight reduction purposes is prohibited.
- 2. Each member organization must implement a Concussion Management Program (CMP) and shall maintain and keep it up to date. Each member organization's CMP must include a medical removal criteria for any athlete exhibiting signs and symptoms consistent with a concussion as well as a "Return To Play" criteria that must be met for each suspected concussion.

For all NEYSA sanctioned activities, if a medical professional determines that an athlete is exhibiting any signs of or suspects a concussion, the athlete must be removed from the activity (practice, scrimmage or game) and is not allowed to return to that activity. In order for the affected athlete to return to any NEYSA sanctioned activities, a written approval from a healthcare professional, must be obtained and the member organization's "Return To Play" criteria must be met before the athlete is allowed to fully participate in the member organization's events, including practices, scrimmages and games.

A copy of each member organization's CMP must be submitted to NEYSA.

3. Each member organization must implement an Emergency Action Plan (EAP). This plan must be in writing and must be kept current and up to date. Each member organization's EAP must include the location of the AED and First Aid kit, the chain of command for that member organization and their responsibilities and overall action of what to do in case of a medical emergency (non-serious and serious injury, heat illness or Sudden Cardiac Arrest) and weather related emergencies.

A copy of each member organization's EAP must be submitted to NEYSA

4. All NEYSA practices, scrimmages and games must follow the recommendations of the NYSPHSAA heat index procedures.

Rule 13 Penalties and Fines

1. Any member organization's coach who falsifies any record or birth certificate or who knowingly plays an illegal player or who otherwise makes misrepresentation of a player's information shall be punished as follows:

- a. The team shall forfeit all of the games they played that season.
- b. The coach shall be disqualified from further participation in NEYSA sanctioned activities for the remainder of the season and shall re-apply to NEYSA to participate in future seasons.

2. Failure to provide notice of absence from a NEYSA meeting will result in an initial fine of \$25.00. Subsequent unexcused absences will result in a fine of \$50.00 for each unexcused absence. Both of these penalties are referenced in the Constitution and By-Laws Article 5 #3.

3. A Game Roster with incorrect information will be considered an invalid game roster, as per Rules and Regulations Rule 6 #3. An invalid Game Roster will result in a fine of \$10.00 per roster.

4. A Game Roster that has been submitted to the Statistician after the required day and time will be considered a late game roster and the fine for each late game roster will be \$10.00 per roster, as per Rules and Regulations 3 #13.

5. Teams not submitting any Game Rosters shall receive a fine of \$25.00 for each roster, as per Rules and Regulations Rule 3 #10.

6. Failure to notify the Secretary of the scores prior to the required date and time will result in a fine of \$10.00 per failure, as per Rules and Regulations Rule 3 #14.

7. The use of an ineligible player will result in a fine of \$75.00 per player.

8. Cancelling a scheduled game without proper notification to the Secretary and the opposing Head Coach will result in a fine of \$250.00, as per Rules and Regulations Rule 7 #3.

9. Failure to notify the Secretary of a postponed game will result in a fine of \$25.00 per member organization, as per Rules and Regulations Rule 7 #3.

10. Failing to show up for a scheduled game without proper notification will result in the member organization, that failed to appear, being responsible for the referee fees for that game, as per Rules and Regulations Rule 7 #5.

11. If a player, cheerleader or any other person is ejected from a NEYSA sanctioned activity, that person will be subject to a disciplinary review of the incident by the Disciplinary Committee established by the President. If, after their review of the incident, the ejection is determined to have been warranted and proper, the offending person will be subject to an automatic minimum fine of fifty (50) dollars, which will be levied on their organization. If the same individual is ejected from a second NEYSA sanctioned activity in the same season and the ejection is deemed warranted and proper, a mandatory fine of one hundred (100) dollars will be levied against their organization. The Disciplinary Committee may also make further disciplinary recommendations based on the severity of the infraction(s) leading to the ejection(s). These additional disciplinary recommendations shall be reviewed by the Board of Commissioners and either accepted or rejected by a majority vote. Should an ejection occur at the last game of the season, the penalty will carry over to the following season.

If a coach is ejected from a NEYSA sanctioned activity, they will be subject to a disciplinary review of the incident by the Disciplinary Committee established by the President. If, after their review of the incident, the ejection is determined to be warranted and proper, the offending coach will be subject to an automatic minimum one (1) game suspension. If the same coach is ejected from a second NEYSA sanctioned activity in the same season and the ejection is deemed warranted and proper, that coach will subject to a minimum two (2) game suspension. The Disciplinary Committee may also make further disciplinary recommendations based on the severity of the infraction(s) leading to the ejection(s). These additional disciplinary recommendations shall be reviewed by the Board of Commissioners and either accepted or rejected by majority vote. Should an ejection occur at the last game of the season, the penalty will carry over to the following season.

12. If an unauthorized parent or person enters the field of play, including the sidelines, without authorization of the Head Coach, Commissioner, referee or other authorized person, the referee will issue an “Unsportsmanlike Conduct” penalty to the team that violates this rule.

The violating member organization shall be issued a fine of \$100.00. For every subsequent violation, within the season, the violating member organization will be issued a fine of \$250.00.

13. If any player receives two (2) “Unsportsmanlike Conduct” penalties within the same NEYSA sanctioned game, that player will be ejected from that game and will be subject to a one (1) game suspension. If the same player is ejected from a second NEYSA sanctioned game, in the same season, the player will be suspended for that season, as per Rules and Regulations Rule 11 #6. The exception to this rule would be the use of profanity on the field by a player or coach. If a player or coach is heard using any profanity, they will be ejected from that game and may be subject to a one (1) game suspension after a review and recommendation by a Committee established by the President and a review and majority vote in favor of the recommendation by the Board as per Rules and Regulations Rule 11 #6.

14. Failure to attend the League mandated “Commissioners, Representatives, Statisticians and Coaches” meeting required by Rules and Regulations Rule 10 #7 will result in a fine of \$10.00 per each person that does not attend the meeting.

15. If during a League audit, a coach (18 years and older) is identified as not having the minimum certification as required by Rules and Regulations Rule 10 #3, there will be a penalty of \$50.00 per coach/per instance of violation for each member organization. The offending coach will also be suspended until which time the proper certification is produced and provided to the Disciplinary Committee for review and approval. This penalty is inclusive for both football and cheerleading coaches.

16. Any other violation of the Constitution and By-Laws or the Rules and Regulations shall be reviewed by a Committee established by the President. After review and investigation by the Committee established by the President, the Committee shall issue their findings to the President. The President, upon receiving the recommendation from the Committee, shall provide the Committee's report to the Board for their review. The Board shall then vote to either accept or deny the Committee's recommendation. Acceptance of the Committee's recommendation will be based on a majority vote of those member organizations in attendance at a duly authorized meeting or electronically, as deemed necessary by the President.

17. Willful and aggravated violations of a host organization's field rules (ie: eating or drinking on the field, types of cleats that can be worn, etc.) may result in a fine to the offending organization after review and recommendation by the Disciplinary Committee and a majority vote by the Board of Commissioners.

Rule 14 Amendments

1. These Rules and Regulations may be amended in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws Article 10 #2.

2. These Rules and Regulations shall be dated each year to indicate the review and acceptance from the Board of Commissioners.

Tackle Football Rules and Regulations Approved and Adopted on January 8th, 2026