

## **7/8<sup>th</sup> YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE 2025 Guidelines**

**2021 National Federation Rules will apply** unless stated as follows:

Note: We are not affiliated with or governed by the WIAA, therefore rules and regulations of the WIAA do not apply. Both head coaches should meet with the officiating crew prior to each game to review the rules specific to the league. Coaches will stress with officiating crews that these are developmental games and the calling of penalties should not become excessive or one-sided unless serious infractions of the rules are being committed.

**Playing Equipment:** Coaches are responsible for verifying that all playing equipment is in compliance with the rules and properly maintained (Federation Rule 1-5-4).

Note: All jewelry is illegal (Federation Rule 1-5-31).

**Numbered Jerseys:** It is not mandatory, however whenever possible, teams should number the players of the offensive team as follows (Federation Rule 1-4-3 & 7-2-5):

Centers, Guards, & Tackles should be numbered 50-79

Ends & Backs should be numbered 1-49 & 80-99

Whenever a player numbered 50-79 lines up as an End or Back, he must report to an official prior to entering the game. **8 player teams may deviate from rule but should still follow the rule for ball carrier eligibility**

**Maximum Number of Players on a Team:** A team consists of no more than 35 players. If a team has 36 players, two teams must be formed and the schedule of games adjusted accordingly. **With teams having a varying number of players some teams will field only an 8 player team. Some teams may switch between 8 and 11 player teams each week based on their opponent. Each team must declare by August 8, 2022 if their team will play 8 player or 11 player for the season. The schedule will denote an (8) or (11) next to the team name on the schedule. If there is any need to change from the committed number, the league and the next opponent must be notified by the Monday before the next schedules game.**

**Chains/ Down markers:** The chains and down markers will be positioned on the home team sideline

**Weight Limits:** Common sense should prevail and the safety and well-being of all players should be the priority. The limits are to be used as guidelines during the course of a game. Coaches should use good judgment in position players who approach or exceed the weight limits. Coaches need to be aware of the potential personal liability of playing athletes at positions where the league has installed a weight limit.

**160 pound weight limits without pads** (shorts only)

Coaches must supply the opposing team with a roster of players with their jersey number, weight, and grade listed. If a coach wants to make a weight challenge, it must be made to the head official prior to the end of regulation time of a game. The host school must make available a weight scale to weigh the athlete in question. The athlete in question should be weighed in the presence of both head coaches and the head official. A team in violation of the weight limit will be assessed a 15 yard

unsportsmanlike penalty and the head coach will receive a one-game suspension to be served the next game on the league schedule.

Players who exceed the above weight limit shall be limited to interior line (tackles, guards, & center) and may not under any circumstances line-up off the line of scrimmage on offense. Exception: a player who exceeds the weight limit may be used as a punter or placekicker; however he may not advance the ball by running, but may advance the ball by passing. Penalty: Ball is dead at point of original LOS, and loss of down.

A player, who exceeds the weight limit, may recover a fumble, or intercept a pass, and advance the ball.

No player who exceeds the weight limit can line up, or receive the ball, deeper than 15 yards from their team's LOS (no punt or kickoff returns).

**Playing Time:** Recommendation: All players should play in each game. Each team is responsible for maintaining a developmental approach to playing time and game management. Factors that will contribute to playing time are player safety, player skill development, and the score of the game. Coaches should meet prior to each game to discuss playing time and other related game management issues.

6<sup>th</sup> graders may play with prior league permission. Note: National Youth Sports Coaching Association (NYSCA) suggests that developmental age (physical and mental maturity) is a better indicator of readiness than chronological age.

**Playing Field:** Every team should make every effort to arrange for the following game equipment:

Regulation size playing field **8 player teams field dimensions are 40 yard by 100 yard**

3-4 WIAA certified officials

Use of an electronic clock

Down markers & 10 yard-First down chain

Goal posts

Phone access for medical assistance

Source of water for both

**Pre-Game Warm-ups:** Officials & home team should allow the visiting team a minimum of 20 minutes to warm-up prior to the start of the game. No team shall be penalized or put at a disadvantage for a late arriving bus. Warm-ups are also necessary for the safety and well-being of the athletes.

**Authorized Footballs:** **Wilson TDY Youth Football**. Home team will furnish a new ball, or one in good condition, for all home games. Away team is welcome to bring/use its own regulation game ball. More than one ball will be needed in wet, rainy, or snowy conditions.

**Length of Periods:** Games will consist of four, 8-minute, stop time quarters. Halftime will be 8 minutes, running time, with 3 of those minutes for mandatory warm-up.

**Official Time:** The referee on the field, in accordance with Federation rules, will keep official time. When there is not an electronic field clock in use, the referee shall notify both

benches when approximately four minutes remain at the end of each half (Federation Rule 3-3-1).

**Electronic Scoreboard Clock:** When an electronic field clock is in use, the referee shall have the option of discontinuing use of the electronic field clock if he deems the operation of the clock is not being properly performed. Trained and knowledgeable adults should operate the electronic field clock.

**Scoring:** 6 points for a touchdown. 2 points for kicked PAT, one point for run or passed PAT. 3 points for success kicked field goal. No tiebreakers will be used. After regulation time has expired, games that are tied will remain tied. Player substitutions and play calling should reflect a concerted effort to keep games competitive and not run up the score.

**Blow-out Rule:** any team behind by 17 points or more in the second half can request to receive the **at their 35 yard line** kick-off after they score. Head Coach of a team trailing by 17 points or more in the second half is also entitled to request other team pull any or all of its starting offensive backfield. **There is no running clock in the GMMYFL unless requested by a coach and mutually agreed upon by both coaches.**

**Time-outs & Charged Conferences:** 3 time-outs permitted each half (Federation Rule 3-5-1). Unused time-outs in the first half cannot be used in the second half.

**Team Areas:** All coaches and players shall remain between the 25-yard lines at all times (Federation Rule 1-2-3e).

**Coaches:** No coaches are allowed on the field during the game.

**Special Teams Kick Off** All kick offs have been eliminated. At the start of each half or after a score a team will start at their own 35 yard line. 20 yard line for 80 yard fields

~~**Kick-off Options:** For safety of the players, if a team has a concern over safety of their players, both teams can mutually agree to eliminate kick offs during a specific game. No kick offs would occur but the receiving team would take possession at their 35 yard line as if the ball was kicked out of bounds~~

**Player ejection:** If a player is ejected from a game, the player will automatically miss the next scheduled game.

**Officials:** It is recommended that at least 3 and preferably 4 officials are scheduled to work games, but not mandatory. Home team is responsible for payment of officials. **\$50**/official is the League rate.

**2021 Season:** Earliest allowed starting date for the first practice is **Monday, August 8, 2022**. Games will begin September 10. A scrimmage is recommended the week before. The season will consist of a 7-game schedule with the last regular game scheduled no later than Saturday October 22nd. Teams may choose to schedule an additional game but the results will not be included in the league standings.