



CENTRAL OHIO YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

RULES & REGULATIONS

Updated: August 11th, 2026



MISSION STATEMENT

The Central Ohio Youth Football League is a community-based recreational football league focused on teaching the fundamentals and proper techniques of tackle football. Rules & regulations are established to ensure that participants play in a safe atmosphere with a competitive balance between teams. COYFL aims to promote teamwork, influence good sportsmanship, and provide a positive playing experience.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ARTICLE 1 – GOVERNANCE	
SECTION 1 COMMISSIONER	2
SECTION 2 BOARD OF TRUSTEES	2
SECTION 3 DECISION-MAKING PROCESS & BOARD APPROVAL	2
SECTION 4 ADDING A NEW ORGANIZATION TO THE LEAGUE	2
ARTICLE 2 – GENERAL LEAGUE RULES & REQUIREMENTS	
SECTION 1 DIVISIONS	3
SECTION 2 RESIDENCY	3
SECTION 3 TEAM SELECTION	3
SECTION 4 TEAM ROSTERS	4
SECTION 5 OFFICIAL WEIGH-IN	4
SECTION 6 PRACTICE	5
SECTION 7 GAME DAY	5
ARTICLE 3 – GAME RULES	
SECTION 1 GENERAL	6
SECTION 2 RED STRIPER	6
SECTION 3 SPECIAL TEAMS	6
SECTION 4 OFFENSE	7
SECTION 5 DEFENSE	7
SECTION 6 PLAYER PARTICIPATION	7
ARTICLE 4 – SEASON FORMAT	
SECTION 1 REGULAR SEASON	8
SECTION 2 STANDINGS	8
SECTION 3 POSTSEASON	8
ARTICLE 5 – CODE OF CONDUCT	
SECTION 1 CODE OF CONDUCT	9
SECTION 2 PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS MISCONDUCT	9
SECTION 3 BOARD OF TRUSTEES REVIEW	10
ARTICLE 6 – DOCUMENTATION OF CHANGES	
SECTION 1 DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS	11
SECTION 2 LIST OF CHANGES	11

ARTICLE 1 – GOVERNANCE

SECTION 1 | COMMISSIONER

A. OVERVIEW: The Commissioner is to manage all aspects of the league in accordance with the *COYFL Rules & Regulations* and ensure the league remains focused on achieving its mission.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Ensure *COYFL Rules & Regulations* are in place, communicated, and are being enforced.
2. Act as the Chair of the Board of Trustees and preside over the board and league meetings.
3. Creation of game schedules.
4. Serve a minimum term of three (3) years.

C. APPOINTMENT: The New Albany Youth Football Organization (NAYF), as the founder of the COYFL, is responsible for appointing the Commissioner. Approval of a new Commissioner or removal of the current Commissioner requires *Board Approval (Art. 1 Sec. 3C)*.

SECTION 2 | BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A. OVERVIEW: The Board of Trustees is the governing body of the league.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES: Ensure players and coaches are adhering to the *Rules and Regulations*. The board will collaborate on key decisions, set the strategy for the league, and manage the execution of the strategy within their respective organization.

1. Ensure all Coaches & Players adhere to the *COYFL Rules & Regulations*.
2. Members must act in the best interests of the players.
3. Attend all board and/or league meetings. If a member is unavailable to attend, they must appoint a replacement from their organization.
4. Serve a minimum term of 3 years. The Commissioner must be notified of any member changes.

C. APPOINTMENT: Each participating organization is responsible for appointing a President who will represent their organization as a member of the Board of Trustees.

Appointment of a new Board of Trustees member or removal of a current member requires *Board Approval (Art. 1 Sec. 3C)*.

COYFL BOARD OF TRUSTEES	
Organization	President
New Albany Youth Football	B. Cramer
Bexley Youth Football	M. Canterbury
Big Walnut Youth Football	J. Rhodebeck
Columbus Academy Youth Football	K. Gorospe
Junior Pacer Football (Delaware)	K. Jenks
Gahanna Youth Football	C. Johnson
Jonathan Alder Youth Football	A. Bogart
Junior Cats Youth Football (Newark)	J. Dowling
Olentangy Youth Athletic Assoc.	T. Linley
Worthington Youth Boosters	T. Clifford

SECTION 3 | DECISION-MAKING PROCESS & BOARD APPROVAL

A. OVERVIEW: The Decision-Making Process describes how the COYFL will make decisions and defines the requirements for achieving Board Approval. This process must be used to approve the following:

1. Changes to the *COYFL Rules and Regulations* – No changes can be made to the Rules & Regulations during the season (from the 1st practice until the last game).
2. Appointment of the Commissioner
3. Appointment of a Board of Trustee member
4. Adding new organizations to the COYFL – New organizations must complete one-year probationary period. During the probationary period, the organization will not have a position on the Board of Trustees. Upon completion of the probationary period, the Board of Trustees must vote to add them as an official member of the league.

B. VOTING SYSTEM: A weighted voting system will be used to ensure fair results and better represent the individual participants within each organization. The number of votes for each participating organization is based on the number of teams they have participating in the league; one (1) vote per team.

1. Updated Annually – The number of votes will be updated annually on the day *Preseason Rosters (Art. 2 Sec. 4B)* are submitted to the league; three (3) weeks prior to the first game.
2. Completed Vote – Votes must be received from all Board of Trustee members or an appointed replacement. Votes can be submitted via e-mail or in person.
3. Voting Transparency – Voting results must be shared with the Board of Trustees.

C. BOARD APPROVAL: A vote requires two-thirds (2/3rds) “yes” to achieve *Board Approval*.

Organization	Votes	
Bexley	3	5.8%
Big Walnut	6	11.5%
Columbus Academy	1	1.9%
Delaware	3	5.8%
Gahanna	6	11.5%
Jonathan Alder	4	7.7%
New Albany	6	11.5%
Newark	2	3.8%
Olentangy	16	30.8%
Worthington	5	9.6%
2026 Total Votes	52	

SECTION 4 | ADDING A NEW ORGANIZATION TO THE LEAGUE

A. OVERVIEW: Guidelines and requirements to add a new organization to the COYFL. The Commissioner must notify the Board of Trustees of any requests to join the league.

1. New organizations must provide at least two (2) references from an existing youth sports organization and/or league.
2. Must have teams in all divisions.
3. Must be school or community based and have open registration within their community/school.
4. Must have a field to host 50% of their games. The field must have a working scoreboard.
5. New organizations must complete a one-year (1) probationary period. During that period, they will not have a position on the Board of Trustees. Upon completion of the probationary period, Board Approval is required to add them as an official member of the league.

ARTICLE 2 – GENERAL LEAGUE RULES & REQUIREMENTS

Organization Presidents are responsible to ensure players and coaches adhere to the *General League Rules*.

SECTION 1 | DIVISIONS

A. JUNIOR

1. Rising School Grade – Players must be in 3rd or 4th Grade or under. Participation of younger players is determined by each organization.
2. Age – If a player turns 11 years old before August 1st, the player is ineligible. The player must move to the 5th grade division.
3. Weight Limit – Players weighing over 100 lbs. must adhere to the *Red Stripe Rules (Art. 3 Sec. 2)*.

B. 5TH GRADE

1. Rising School Grade – Players must be in 5th Grade or under. Participation of younger players is determined by each organization.
2. Age – If a player turns 12 years old before August 1st, the player is ineligible. The player must move to the 6th grade division.
3. Weight Limit – Players weighing over 115 lbs. must adhere to the *Red Stripe Rules (Art. 3 Sec. 2)*.

C. 6TH GRADE

1. Rising School Grade – Players must be in 6th Grade or under. Participation of younger players is determined by each organization.
2. Age – If a player turns 13 years old before August 1st, the player is ineligible.
3. Weight Limit – Players weighing over 125 lbs. must adhere to the *Red Stripe Rules (Art. 3 Sec. 2)*.

D. PENALTIES: If a player that does not meet the Division Rules & Requirements participates in a game, the game will result in a forfeit pending a *Board of Trustees Review (Art. 5 Sec. 3)*.

SECTION 2 | RESIDENCY

A. RULES: COYFL is a community-based recreational league. Rosters should be primarily made up of players that reside within the organization's community. Recruiting outside of the city/town the organization represents is strictly prohibited.

1. If a player resides in a city/town with a participating COYFL organization, the player must play for that organization.
2. If a player is enrolled in a school district with a participating COYFL organization, but resides elsewhere, they may play for the COYFL organization representing the school district they are enrolled in.
3. If a player is enrolled in a private school that participates in the COYFL, they must play for that school's team.
4. Grandfather Clause – Players that played for a COYFL organization during the 2022 season that do not meet the Residency Rules & Requirements will be allowed to continue with that organization through the entirety of their eligibility in the COYFL. (rule expires after 2025 season).

B. EXEMPTION LIST: COYFL recognizes school district boundaries differ from city boundaries; some neighborhoods may be part of one school district but are affiliated with a neighboring community's youth sports program. If a player resides in a neighboring city/town without a participating COYFL organization, they may play for the closest COYFL organization. As a matter of transparency, each Organization President must submit a Residency Exemption List that includes all players that do not meet the *Residency Rules (Art. 2 Sec. 1A)* to the Commissioner prior to submitting the *Preseason Rosters (Art. 2. Sec. 4B)*. The Residency Exemption List will be shared with all Organization Presidents. The following information must be included on the list:

1. Team name
2. Player name
3. Player primary city of residency
4. Reason for requesting an exemption

E. PENALTIES: If a player that does not meet the Residency Rules & Requirements participates in a game, the game will result in a forfeit pending a *Board of Trustees Review (Art. 5 Sec. 3)*.

SECTION 3 | TEAM SELECTION

A. RULES: Each organization is required to divide their teams evenly. Stacking teams is strictly prohibited.

1. Each organization must host a combine/evaluation to grade players.
2. A minimum of four (4) combine/evaluation days are required.
3. Each organization must re-select their teams each season to maintain parity.

B. REQUIREMENTS: Each organization must have Board Approval for the process used to select their teams.

1. Draft – must be based on combine/evaluation grades
2. Geography – applies to organizations with multiple schools
3. Organization Board Selection – must be based on combine/evaluation grades

C. CURRENT SELECTION PROCESSES

1. Bexley – Board Selection
2. Big Walnut – Board Selection
3. Columbus Academy – Only one team
4. Delaware – Board Selection
5. Gahanna – Board Selection
6. Jonathan Alder – Board Selection

7. New Albany – Board Selection
8. Newark – Board Selection
9. Olentangy – Geography based on primary/middle school attendance
10. Worthington – Geography based on primary/middle school attendance

D. PENALTIES: Organizations not adhering to Team Selection Rules & Requirements will be subject to a *Board of Trustees Review (Art. 5 Sec. 3)*.

SECTION 4 | TEAM ROSTERS

A. TEAM ROSTERS SIZES: Teams must maintain a minimum of sixteen (16) active players and a maximum of thirty-two (32) players throughout the season. If a team does not meet the requirements, the game may result in a forfeit pending a *Board of Trustees Review (Art. 5 Sec. 3)*.

1. Borrowed Players – If a team's roster drops to fifteen (15) or less, they are permitted to borrow a player from a team in the same organization.
 - a) Approval must come from all four (4) sources:
 - 1) Head Coach of the team that the player is being borrowed from
 - 2) Parent or guardian of the player being borrowed
 - 3) Organization President
 - 4) Board Approval
 - b) Borrowed Players Rules
 - 1) The borrowed player may not play for both teams in the same game week. The player cannot play against their original team.
 - 2) Teams may not use the same players each week; unless it is a permanent change, refer to *Roster Changes (Art. 2 Sec. 4E)*.
 - 3) The borrowed player should not be considered a top performing player from the team they are being borrowed from.
2. Roster Cap – Teams may choose to cap their rosters at twenty-six (26) players. If a roster cap is instituted below the maximum roster size of thirty-two (32) players, registration must be first come, first serve. Select teams, tryouts, and/or cuts are strictly prohibited.

B. PRESEASON ROSTERS: Must be submitted by each Organization President to the Commissioner **three (3) weeks prior to the first game**. An official template will be provided. This information will be used to verify the *Digital Player Profile Form (Art. 2 Sec. 4C)* submissions. The information will also be entered into the COYFL app. Preseason Rosters must include the following information:

- 1) Player First and Last name
- 2) Player Jersey Number
- 3) Player Birthdate
- 4) Player Rising School Grade
- 5) Player Residing School District
- 6) Parent/Guardian Email Address

C. DIGITAL PLAYER PROFILE FORM: Must be submitted by the Head Coach for every player on their roster **two (2) weeks prior to the first game**. A link to the form will be sent by the Commissioner. The Digital Player Profile Form will be used to complete the *Official Game Rosters (Art. 2 Sec. 4D)*. Players that do not have a Digital Player Profile Form submitted prior to the *Official Game Rosters* being distributed are ineligible to play. The Digital Player Profile Form includes the following information:

- 1) Division
- 2) Organization
- 3) Team
- 4) Player Last Name
- 5) Player First Name
- 6) Jersey Number
- 7) Headshot Picture

D. OFFICIAL GAME ROSTERS: Must be distributed by the Commissioner **two (2) days prior to the first game**. The Official Game Roster will be used as the form for the *Official Weigh-In (Art. 2 Sec. 5)* and the as the form to track *Player Participation (Art. 3 Sec. 5)*. Each Head Coach is responsible for reviewing their roster and confirming that it is correct. Any issues with the Official Game Rosters must be addressed with the Commissioner **twenty-four (24) hours prior to the game**. An updated version that includes the weigh-in results will be distributed by the Commissioner **two (2) days prior to the second game**. Players that are not included on the Official Game Roster are ineligible to play. Official Game Rosters must include the following information:

- 1) Player First and Last name
- 2) Player Jersey Number
- 3) Player Weight

E. ROSTER CHANGES: Any roster changes that occur after the *Official Game Rosters (Art. 2 Sec. 4D)* are distributed must be communicated to and approved by the Board of Trustees. If a player is added or removed, it must be reflected on the *Official Game Rosters* prior to playing a game. If a player is added after an organization selects their teams, the Organization President is responsible for placing the player on a team that best maintains parity. The player must complete an *Official Weigh-In (Art. 2 Sec. 5)* prior to playing a game.

F. PENALTIES: If a player that does not meet the Team Roster Rules & Requirements participates in a game, the game will result in a forfeit pending a *Board of Trustees Review (Art. 5 Sec. 3)*.

SECTION 5 | OFFICIAL WEIGH-IN

A. PROCESS: The COYFL will conduct one weigh-in per season. Prior to the game, each Head Coach must verify their *Official Game Roster (Art. 2 Sec. 4D)* is correct, print it out, and bring it to the game. Head Coaches for both teams must be present. Each Head Coach is responsible for completing the Official Weigh-In for the opposing team. The Official Weigh-In must be completed for all players **thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the first game**.

1. During the Official Weigh-In, the Head Coach must complete the form for the opposing team.
 - a) Verify the player's name and number
 - b) Record the weight
 - c) Verify players exceeding the weight limits have a Red Stripe on their helmet.
2. Each Head Coach must sign their own form and the opposing team's form.
3. Each Head Coach must submit the form for the opposing team via email to the Commissioner within **twenty-four (24) hours**.

B. RULES

1. Players not listed on the *Official Game Roster* are not allowed to record an Official Weigh-In and are therefore ineligible to play.
2. Players that do not record an Official Weigh-In thirty (30) minutes prior to the game are in-eligible to play until the following week.
3. Head coaches may not record and/or submit the Official Weigh-In Form for his/her own team.

C. MAKE-UP WEIGH-INS: For teams who had a Week 1 bye or for players that missed Week 1, the Head Coach must notify the opposing Head Coach at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the game to coordinate a Weigh-In. *Official Weigh-In Rules* still apply.

D. PENALTIES: If a player that does not meet the Official Weigh-In Rules participates in a game, the game will result in a forfeit pending a *Board of Trustees Review (Art. 5 Sec. 3)*.

SECTION 6 | PRACTICE

A. DEFINITION: Anytime players and coaches meet for drills, scrimmages, practice games or film review.

B. ACCLIMATIZATION PERIOD: All organizations must adhere to OHSAA (Ohio High School Athletic Association) guidelines, "All football candidates must participate in five days of pre-season non-contact acclimatization prior to any physical contact." Players that report late or miss a day **must participate in all five (5) days of non-contact acclimatization**.

Day 1 & 2: Helmets, t-shirt, shorts

Day 3 & 4: Helmets, shoulder pads, shorts

Day 5: Full pads, no contact

Day 6: Full contact allowed

C. PRESEASON START DATE: All participating organizations will begin their OHSAA Acclimatization on the same date. The Preseason Start Date will be determined by the COYFL Board during the winter meeting. It is recommended that the start date be aligned with the OHSAA Season Calendar and allows for four (4) weeks of practice prior to the 1st game.

D. RULES: During each practice, there must be a minimum of a five (5) minute break every thirty (30) minutes for water and rest.

1. Before School Starts
 - a) No practice shall last longer than two (2) hours
 - b) Non-Game Week: No more than four (4) practices in a week
 - c) Game Week: No more than three (3) practices in a week
2. After School Starts
 - a) No practice shall last longer than ninety (90) minutes on a weekday
 - b) No practice shall last longer than two (2) hours on the weekend
 - c) Non-Game Week: There can be no more than four (4) practices
 - d) Game Week: There can be no more than three (3) practices

E. FILMING: Filming practices or scrimmages is allowed so long as the person filming is associated with the team practicing.

SECTION 7 | GAME DAY

A. FIELD PREP: Each Organization is responsible for making sure that the fields are prepped, and the game day equipment is ready. This includes:

1. Lining the fields
2. Placing yard markers & pylons
3. Chains and down marker. **Chain Gang must be on the home sideline.**
4. Field Goal Posts
5. Scoreboard/Clock: It is required that each site has a functioning scoreboard or clock.

B. FIELD CLEAN-UP

1. Each head coach is responsible for making sure trash and debris is cleaned up from their own sideline.
2. Teams playing the last game are responsible for final inspection.
3. Each organization is responsible for removing their own game day equipment.

C. ATHLETIC TRAINERS: It is recommended to have a certified athletic trainer on site.

D. OFFICIALS

1. Host organization is responsible for scheduling four (4) officials per game.
2. A minimum of two (2) are required to start the game.
3. Host organization is responsible for paying the officials.

E. FILMING: Filming games is allowed so long as the person filming is associated with the team playing and remains off the field of play.

F. FILM SHARING: Sharing game film is permitted but not required.

G. DRONES: The use of drones is not allowed. The game will be stopped until the drone is removed.

H. SUBMITTING SCORES: The Head Coach from the winning team must enter the score in the league app within thirty (30) minutes of the conclusion of the game.

SECTION 8 | OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. PROOF OF INSURANCE: All Organizations must submit proof of insurance to the commissioner one (1) month prior to the start of the season.

ARTICLE 3 – GAME RULES & REGULATIONS

All games shall be played under OHSAA rules unless otherwise specified by COYFL Rules.

SECTION 1 | GENERAL

A. GAME DURATION: Four (4) quarters; ten (10) minutes each

1. Halftime is eight (8) minutes
2. Play Clock is thirty (30) seconds

B. TIMEOUTS: Three (3) per half. Unused 1st half timeouts do not carry over to the 2nd half.

C. FIELD SIZE: Standard OHSAA field dimensions.

1. Player's box on each side – 5 yards deep, spanning from 25-yard line to 25-yard line
2. Goal Post – 10 feet tall

D. FOOTBALL SIZE: The ball size will be strictly enforced. You may use other ball brands, but the same size

1. Junior Division – Wilson K2/Pee-Wee (Size 6: 9.5" long, 5.375" diameter, and 17" circumference)
2. 5th & 6th Grade Divisions – Wilson TDJ/Junior (Size 7: 10.5" long, 6" diameter, and 18.5" circumference)

E. MERCY RULE: Once a team is leading by twenty-five (25) or more points, a running game clock will start. The Referee will notify both head coaches. The game clock will resume to normal when the losing team scores bring the lead to less than twenty-five (25) points. When the *Mercy Rule* is in effect, the clock will stop for the following reasons:

1. Time out or Player injury
2. Change of Possession
3. Score & PAT attempt
4. End of Quarter or Half

F. OVERTIME RULES: Each team will have one offensive possession starting on the opponent's 10-yard line.

1. Regular Season: If a winner is not determined after two (2) overtime periods, the game will result in a tie.
2. Post Season: If the score is tied after both teams have had an offensive possession, the process will be repeated until a winner is determined. Beginning with the 3rd Overtime period, a team must attempt a 2-point conversion via passing or kicking if a touchdown is scored.
3. Any situations not specifically addressed in this section shall be governed under the OHSAA game rules.

G. OTHER COYFL RULES

1. The offense will start on their own 35-yard line at the beginning of each half and after all scores.
2. After a Safety, the ball will be spotted on the Offense's 45-yard line.
3. There are no live kickoffs or punts.
4. There must be a minimum of two (2) officials present to play a game.
5. Chain Gang must be on the home sideline.
6. Drones are not allowed to be used during games.
7. Victory Formation: The Head Coach may declare to the Official that they are taking a knee. Doing so makes it a dead play. A fumbled snap is a dead ball and cannot be recovered by the defense.

SECTION 2 | RED STRIPER

A. DEFINITION: Any player that exceeds the division weight limit as described in the *COYFL Rules & Requirements (Art. 2 Sec. 1)*.

B. RULES

1. Identification – Must have an unobstructed red stripe on their helmet visible to other players, coaches, and officials.
2. Offense – Must be positioned as a lineman. Ineligible to catch a pass or receive a handoff. They can advance a fumble. See *Offense (Sec. 4A)*.
3. Defense – Must be positioned as a lineman. They can return an interception or advance a fumble. See *Defense (Sec. 5A)*.

C. PENALTIES: Unsportsmanlike Conduct may be called if a Red Striper participates without proper identification, the Head Coach must immediately notify the Official. The Official will first issue a warning to the team in violation. A second occurrence by any player from that team will result in an "Unsportsmanlike Conduct Penalty" against the Head Coach. The penalty will be assessed based on the Official's discretion.

SECTION 3 | SPECIAL TEAMS

A. PUNTS: 35-yard walk off will occur once a punt is declared by the Head Coach to the Referee. The spot may not exceed the opposing team's 5-yard line. The game clock shall be stopped the moment a walk-off punt is declared and will resume at the start of the next play.

B. POINT AFTER ATTEMPT (PAT): All PAT attempts will take place immediately after a touchdown and will be spotted on the 2-yard line. Play clock will begin after ball is spotted and official blows whistle. OHSAA rules & scoring will be followed for all PAT attempts.

C. FIELD GOALS (5th & 6th Grade Division Only): Field goal attempts are worth three (3) points.

D. FIELD GOAL & PAT KICK RULES: Attempts are live, but defense cannot rush the A-gaps. They can be faked, but no fakes to the A-gaps. Missed attempts can be returned if caught in the air outside of the endzone.

1. Penalties

- a) Roughing – If contact to the kicker or holder is made on an attempt, three (3) points for a field goal attempt or one (1) point for a PAT will be awarded to the offensive team. If the kick is blocked prior to contact, then there will be no penalty.
- b) Defensive A-Gap Violation – Rushing the A-gap will result in a 5-yard penalty and automatic first down for offense.

- c) Offense A-Gap Violation – Running through the A-gap on a fake will result in 5-yard penalty and loss of down against the offense.
2. Switching Sides (No Goal Post) – Both teams will move to the opposite side once an attempt is declared. The offense must line up in a field goal formation. If the offense gets a first down by penalty or fake, play will resume in the current direction (toward the end zone with a goal post). When the kicking teams drive is over, the ball will revert to the original direction. Opting out of a Field Goal attempt can only be done if:
 - a) Offense calls a time out
 - b) Offensive or defensive penalty

SECTION 4 | OFFENSE

A. RULES

1. Red Striper – Must be “covered” by a tight end or receiver. **Must be in a 3- or 4- point stance.**
2. Center (Junior Division Only) – Center may grip the ball and adjust the long axis parallel to the line of scrimmage.

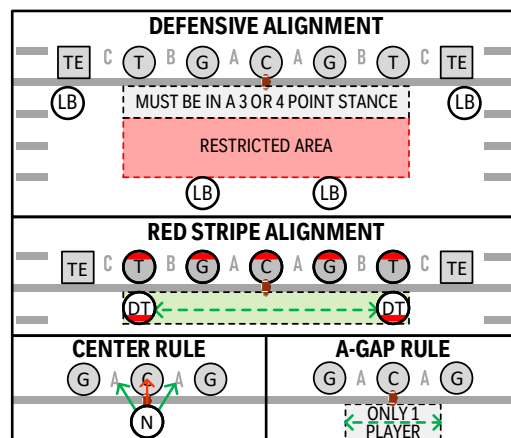
B. PENALTIES: Violations of the Red Striper Rule will be first addressed with a warning to the player & head coach. Additional violations by that player may result in a 5-yard “Illegal Formation” penalty.

SECTION 5 | DEFENSE

A. RULES

1. Linebacker – Any player in a 2-point stance positioned inside the tackle box must remain 3-yards off the LOS until the ball is snapped.
2. Defensive Lineman – Any player positioned inside the tackle box on the LOS is considered a defensive lineman. Must be in a 3- or 4-point stance. Max of five (5) defensive lineman in the tackle box.
3. A-Gap Rule – Only one (1) defensive player can line up on the LOS, between the guards, A-Gap to A-gap.
4. Center Rule – Players cannot make direct contact with the center; they must slant to either A-gap.
5. Red Striper – Must line up on the LOS within the tackle box.

B. PENALTIES: Violations of the Defense Rules will be first addressed with a warning to the player & head coach. **A warning does not result in a replay of the down.** Additional violations by that player will result in a 5-yard “Illegal Defense” penalty (same as offsides).



SECTION 6 | PLAYER PARTICIPATION

A. PLAY MINIMUM: Each player on the roster in attendance for the game must participate in a minimum of ten (10) plays.

1. Five (5) plays in the 1st half. If a player does not meet the first half requirements, they must start the second half until the requirement is met.
2. Five (5) plays in the 2nd half. It is recommended that each player completes their required ten (10) plays prior to the start of the 4th quarter.

B. PLAYER PARTICIPATION TRACKING: The Head Coach is responsible for bringing a printed copy of their team's *Official Game Roster* (Art. 2 Sec. 4D) to the game. The Head Coach must assign an Assistant Coach to track player participation. Once a player meets the required plays for the half, it is not required to continue tracking plays for that player. For the first game, the Head Coach must bring two (2) copies of the *Official Game Roster* (one for the *Official Weigh-In* (Art. 2 Sec. 5) and one for Player Participation Tracking).

1. Injured Player – If a player is unable to participate in a minimum of ten (10) plays due to injury, it must be noted on the *Official Game Roster*. Following the conclusion of the game, the Head Coach must notify the opposing head coach that the player did not meet the requirements because of an injury.
2. Document Retention – The Head Coach is responsible to keep the *Official Game Roster* from each game for record. It will be used as part of the *Board of Trustees Review* (Art. 5 Sec. 3) if a review is required.

C. PENALTIES: If a team does not meet the Player Participation Rules, a warning will be given for the first occurrence. A second occurrence may result in a forfeit pending a *Board of Trustees Review* (Art. 5 Sec. 3).

ARTICLE 4 – SEASON FORMAT

SECTION 1 | REGULAR SEASON

A. FORMAT: All teams will play a 6-game or 7-game regular season schedule. If there is an odd number of teams in a division, the length of the regular season will be extended one (1) week to account for byes. Format may vary year-to-year.

1. Single Division (15 teams or less) – A single division may be used when number of games is more than the number of in-conference games that could be played with two (2) divisions.

Teams will play a random round robin schedule using the following guidelines:

- Avoid matchups with teams from the same organization. Except organizations that feed into multiple high schools.
- Avoid scheduling multiple games versus teams from the same organization (i.e., NA Gold vs BW Red & NA Gold vs BW Black)

2. Conferences (16 teams or more) – Divisions may be split into two conferences when the number of regular season games is equal or less than the number of in-conference games that could be played. Teams will play an in-conference schedule using the following guidelines:

- Split teams within an organization into separate divisions. A draw will determine which conference.
- Split the remaining by draw.

CONFERENCE EXAMPLE	
Scarlet	Gray
Big Walnut Black	Big Walnut Red
Delaware Orange	Delaware Black
Gahanna Blue	Gahanna Gold
Ole. Bears	Ole. Eagles
Ole. Warriors	Ole. Sentinels
New Albany Gold	New Albany Maroon
Newark Crimson	Newark White
Wor. Wolves	Wor. Cardinals
Bexley Blue	Wor. Blue Wolves

B. SEASON START: The 1st games will be played the Sunday following the “First Friday” of the OHSA Football Season.

SECTION 2 | STANDINGS

A. GENERAL: Standings will only include games played against COYFL opponents. Non-COYFL games will not be counted. Standings must be posted by the Commissioner within twenty-four (24) hours of the conclusion of the final game of the week.

B. WON-LOST-TIED PERCENTAGE: Standings will be based on won-lost-tied percentage.

Won-Lost-Tied Percentage	=	$\frac{\text{Wins} + (0.5 \times \text{Ties})}{\text{Total Games Played}}$
-----------------------------	---	--

C. TIE BREAKERS: If, at the end of the regular season, two or more teams in the same division finish with identical won-lost-tied percentages, the following steps will be taken until the tie is broken. Steps that are not applicable will be skipped.

- Best Head-to-Head Record
- Strength of Schedule (opponents combined won-lost-tied %)
- Strength of Wins (combined won-lost-tied % of only opponents that were defeated)
- Coin Toss (2 teams) or **Draw (3 or more teams)**

SECTION 3 | POSTSEASON

A. GENERAL: All participating teams will play at least one (1) postseason game. Prior to the season, the Board of Trustees will determine the postseason format based on the number of teams in each division. Format may vary year-to-year.

B. PLAYOFFS: Seeding will be determined by the Standings. Higher seed is the home team.

- Gold Championship Bracket
- Silver Consolation Bracket

C. BOWL GAMES: Remaining teams will be matched up using the following guidelines:

- Avoid re-matches
- Avoid matchups with teams from the same organization
- Matchups vs. teams with similar records

Home team determined by

- Field availability
- # of regular season home games
- Seeding

D. TROPHIES: The Board of Trustees will purchase 1st & 2nd place awards for teams in each bracket. Following the conclusion of the playoffs, trophies will be paid for by the organization of the winning teams.

E. SEASON END: The final games must be completed the Sunday following the “9th Friday” of the OHSA Football Season.

SECTION 4 | SCHEDULING

A. SCHEDULE CHANGES: Changes to game time are only permitted if there are issues with 1) field availability or 2) officials.

B. GAME TIMES: Games may not start before 9:00 am. It is recommended that no game starts after 5:00 pm (may be exceptions).

C. PLAYOFF SCHEDULING: Host site will determine the game time.

ARTICLE 5 – CODE OF CONDUCT

SECTION 1 | CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. OVERVIEW:** The COYFL regards sportsmanship as its highest priority. Participation in the COYFL is considered a privilege. All participants in the COYFL including Board of Trustee Members, coaches, players, parents, cheerleaders, and spectators are always expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct. All participants will conduct themselves in a distinguished, well-mannered character. They must display fairness, respect, consideration of others, moral character, ethical behavior, and good sportsmanship. While the league encourages competition, our ultimate purpose is to provide instruction and set a positive example for all participants. The league will not tolerate poor sportsmanship from any participant. Any failure to abide by the Code of Conduct will be addressed by the *Procedures to Address Misconduct (Art. 5 Sec. 2)*.
- B. CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT:** By participating in the COYFL all players, coaches, and parents agree to abide by the Code of Conduct. Organization Presidents must ensure all parents receive a copy of the COYFL Rules & Regulations and the Code of Conduct prior to the first practice. The Commissioner will post a copy of the COYFL Rules & Regulations and the COYFL Code of Conduct on the COYFL Website.
- C. COACHES EXPECTATIONS**
1. Place emotional and physical wellbeing of players ahead of personal desires
 2. Lead by example, demonstrating fair play and good sportsmanship
 3. Provide a safe and healthy playing environment that is drug free, tobacco free, and alcohol-free
 4. Treat all others with respect regardless of age, sex, race, religion, or abilities
 5. Do not use profanity, abusive language, derogatory statement, and/or gestures
- D. CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATIONS**
1. Minor Violations
 - a) Foul or obscene language
 - b) Arguing with officials
 - c) Arguing or harassment within a team between players, coaches, or parents
 - d) Other actions that might be considered disrespectful or contrary to generally accepted standards of good sportsmanship
 2. Serious Violations
 - a) Excessive foul, obscene, or abusive language
 - b) Indecent gestures
 - c) Harassment or abuse of any kind toward officials by players or coaches
 - d) Arguing with opposing team coaches, parents, or spectators
 - e) Any other action that results in an Unsportsmanlike or Personal Foul Penalty
 3. Egregious Violation
 - a) Substance abuse in the stadium/playing area (alcohol or drugs)
 - b) Fighting by players (Physical contact of any type; punching, slapping, kicking, pushing, spitting)
 - c) Fighting between coaches, parents, spectators, or officials (Physical contact of any type; punching, slapping, kicking, pushing, spitting)
 - d) Object throwing onto the field or at another person
 - e) Repeat Serious Violations
 4. Ejections From Games
 - a) If a player, coach, parent, or spectator is ejected from a game by a Referee, they must leave the stadium/playing area and return to the parking lot.
 - b) If an ejected player, coach, parent, or spectator refuses to leave the stadium/playing area, the coaches of their team will be given a warning by the Referee asked to assist in removing the ejected person from the playing area.
 - c) If the ejected person still refuses to leave the stadium/playing area after the warning, it will result in a forfeiture of the game.
 - d) If the ejected person leaves and then returns, it will result in a forfeiture of the game.
 5. Other Misconduct or Rules Violations - Misconduct unrelated to play on the field or other violations of the COYFL Rules & Regulations.

SECTION 2 | PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS MISCONDUCT

- A. IN-GAME MISCONDUCT:** If disciplinary actions are necessary for coaches or players for on-field conduct during a game, Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) rules are applied first by the Referee (i.e., personal fouls, unsportsmanlike penalty). The Board of Trustees reserves the right to apply additional penalties above and beyond OHSAA rules. Procedures to address violations of the Code of Conduct are as follows:
1. Minor Violations – Violations not resulting in a penalty from the Referee, should be resolved by the coaches or within the team.
 2. Serious Violations – The Head Coach must immediately notify the Referee. The Referee will address the violation at his/her discretion.
 3. Egregious Violation – The Head Coach must immediately notify the Referee. The Referee will address the violation at his/her discretion. Egregious Violations not caught and/or addressed during the game by the Referee should be reported by the Head Coach to their respective Organization President immediately following the conclusion of the game. The Organization President must make a written report describing the violation and submit it to the Commissioner within twenty-four (24) hours of the conclusion of the game. Egregious Violations (including repeat Serious Violations) are subject to *Board of Trustees Review (Art. 5 Sec. 3)*.
 4. Player/Coach Ejections – The Referee and both Head Coaches must each make a written report describing the events leading to the ejection and submit it to the Commissioner within twenty-four (24) hours of the conclusion of the game. Ejections are subject to *Board of Trustees Review (Art. 5 Sec. 3)*.

- a) Unsportsmanlike Ejection (players only; OHSAA guidelines will be followed for coach ejections)
 - i. 1st occurrence results in a one (1) half suspension. If the ejection occurs in the 1st half of the game, the suspension will occur in the 2nd half. If the ejection occurs in the 2nd half, the suspension will occur in the 1st half of the next game.
 - ii. 2nd occurrence results in a one (1) game suspension. Suspension will include the remainder of the current game and the next game.
- b) Fighting Ejection (players only; OHSAA guidelines will be followed for coach ejections)
 - i. 1st occurrence results in a one (1) game suspension. Includes the remainder of the current game and the next game.
 - ii. 2nd occurrence results in a one (2) game suspension. Includes the remainder of the current game and the next two (2) games.
- c) A 3rd ejection for any reason will result in a suspension for the remainder of the season.

B. OTHER MISCONDUCT OR RULES VIOLATIONS: Misconduct unrelated to play on the field or other violations of the COYFL Rules & Regulations must be reported by the Head Coach to their respective Organization President. The Organization President must submit a formal written report to the Commissioner within twenty-four (24) hours of the occurrence or discovery of the violation for a *Board of Trustees Review (Art. 5 Sec. 3)*.

SECTION 3 | BOARD OF TRUSTEES REVIEW

- A. BOARD OF TRUSTEES REVIEW:** The Commissioner will provide the written reports to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees members must review and provide a recommendation on the penalty.
- 1. Special Board Meeting – For Egregious violations, special board meetings can be called subject to the discretion of the Commissioner or by a consensus of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to apply additional penalties above and beyond OHSAA rules.
 - 2. Penalties for all participants may include but are not limited to the following:
 - d) Warnings
 - e) Suspensions (full or partial game)
 - f) Expulsions
 - g) Board Members: Relieved of Board Member duties, or removal from Board
- B. FINAL DETERMINATION:** The Board of Trustees reserves the right to make the Final Determination of penalties appropriate to the violation that occurred. The Board of Trustee member that represents the violator shall participate in the review and recommendation of penalties but will be recused from voting. Penalties must be approved by no less than two-thirds (2/3^{rds}) of the eligible Board of Trustees members (one (1) vote per member). Votes may be made in person or by proxy. The Final Determination must be made within seventy-two (72) hours of the occurrence. The Board of Trustee member representing the violator shall immediately communicate the Final Determination to the Head Coach and violator.
- C. WRITTEN SUMMARY:** The Commissioner must make a written summary of the Board of Trustees Review (including the Final Determination) and provide a copy to the violator and the Board of Trustees. The written summary must be provided within four (4) days of the occurrence. The Commissioner shall retain a copy of the written summary for a period of four (4) years.

ARTICLE 6 – DOCUMENTATION OF CHANGES

SECTION 1 | DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

A. OVERVIEW: Any changes to the COYFL Rules & Regulations must be documented by the Commissioner in the *List of Changes (Art. 6 Sec 2)*. The update must include the article/section and the date the change was made. Once the changes are made, the Commissioner must distribute an updated version to the Board of Trustees and post it on the league's website. Past versions of the Rules & Regulations must be retained by the Commissioner for a period of five (5) years.

SECTION 2 | LIST OF CHANGES

- 2/25/2026 – Rule changes from Board Meeting
 - 1) Jonathan Alder Approved as a full member
 - 2) Paying the Officials (Art. 2 Sec 7D-3)
 - 3) Film Sharing (Art. 2 Sec 7F)
 - 4) Drones (Art. 2 Sec 7G)
 - 5) Added Art. 2 Sec 8 "Other Requirements"
 - 6) Proof of Insurance (Art. 2 Sec 8A)
 - 7) Chain Gang on Home Sideline (Art. 3 Sec 1G-5)
 - 8) Victory Formation (Art. 3 Sec 1G-6)
 - 9) Illegal Defense Warning Clarification (Art. 3 Sec 5B)
 - 10) Draw to break 3-way tie (Art. 4 Sec. 2C-4)
 - 11) Season End (Art. 4 Sec. 3E)
 - 12) Added Art. 4 Sec 4 "Scheduling"
 - 13) Schedule Changes (Art. 4 Sec. 4A)
 - 14) Game Times (Art. 4 Sec. 4B)
 - 15) Playoff Scheduling (Art. 4 Sec. 4C)
- 7/23/2025 – Annual Update
 - 1) 2025 Weighted Vote (Art. 1 Sec. 3B-1)
 - 2) Updated Board Members
 - 3) Gahanna Team Selection changed to "Board Selection"
 - 4) "Format may vary year-to-year." (Art. 1 Sec. 1A)
 - 5) "Format may vary year-to-year." (Art. 1 Sec. 3A)
- 7/23/2025 – Rule changes from Board Meeting
 - 1) Newark approved as full member
 - 2) Rules & guidelines for adding an organization (Art. 1 Sec 4)
 - 3) Roster Cap Rule (Art. 2 Sec. 4A-2)
- 4/17/2025 Jonathan Alder joined the league
- 6/7/2024 Newark joined the league
- 5/30/2024 – Rule changes from Board Meeting
 - 1) No Rule Changes during the season (Art. 1 Sec. 3A-1a)
 - 2) Probationary period for new organizations (Art. 1 Sec. 3A-4a)
 - 3) 5th Grade Division Weight Limit (Art. 2 Sec. 1B-3)
 - 4) Remove Approval for younger players (Art. 2 Sec. 1B-3)
 - 5) Preseason Start Date (Art. 2 Sec. 6C)
 - 6) Schedule 4 officials per game (Art. 2 Sec 7D)
 - 7) Require 2 officials to start a game (Art. 3 Sec. 1G-5)
 - 8) Unsportsmanlike penalty for no Red Stripe (Art. 3 Sec 2C)
 - 9) PAT Kick Attempt = 1 point (Art. 3 Sec. 3B)
 - 10) Offensive Red Stripe Penalty (Art. 3 Sec. 4B)
 - 11) Defensive Red Stripe Penalty (Art. 3 Sec. 5B)
 - 12) Defensive Red Stripe Alignment Change (Art. 3 Sec. 5A-5)
 - 13) Defined Season Format (Art. 4)
 - 14) Reduce Ejection Penalties (Art. 5 Sec. 4)
 - 15) 3rd Ejection Penalty (Art. 5 Sec. 4)
- 1/8/2024 – Annual Update
 - 1) 2024 Weighted Vote (Art. 1 Sec. 3B-1)
 - 2) 2024 Board of Trustee Members (Art. 1 Sec. 2C)
- 5/10/2023 – Complete update of the COYFL Rules & Regulations. Significant changes include the following.
 - 1) Decision Making Process, Voting System (Art.1 Sec. 3B)
 - 2) COYFL Governance (Art. 1 Sec. 1-2)
 - 3) Decision Making Process, Voting (Art. 1 Sec. 3A)
 - 4) Division Rules & Requirements Age Restrictions (Art. 2 Sec. 1)
 - 5) Residency Rules & Requirements (Art. 2 Sec. 2)
 - 6) Team Roster Rules & Requirements (Art 2 Sec. 4)
 - 7) Weigh-In Rules & Requirements Penalties (Art. 2 Sec. 5D)
 - 8) Practice Rules, OHSAA Acclimatization (Art. 2 Sec. 6B)
 - 9) Defensive Rules (Art. 3 Sec. 2)
 - 10) Player Participation Tracking (Art. 3 Sec. 5B-C)
 - 11) Maximum of 2 OT periods Rules (Art. 3 Sec. 1F)
 - 12) Tie Breakers for Standings/Seeding (Art. 4 Sec. 1C)
 - 13) Updated Code of Conduct (Art. 5 Sec.1)
 - 14) Updated Procedures to Address Misconduct (Art. 5 Sec. 2)
 - 15) Updated Board of Trustees Review (Art. 5 Sec. 3)
- 2/15/2023 – Rule changes from Board Meeting
 - 1) Reduce to one Official Weigh-In per season.
 - 2) Senior Division Split. Establishing weight limits for both.