

NYFL Football Rules and Regulations

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As adopted by the Town Representative Board on 7/28/2025

Article 1: SCHEDULES

The Town Representative Board will assign a League Scheduler that will be responsible for divisional alignments, scheduling of games and planning of playoff/championship play. The league scheduler will be assigned by the end of the March meeting and may be a member of the Town Representative Board or a volunteer from outside of the board but part of a member town. Where possible, member towns will host or travel together for ease of scheduling fields of play and to promote camaraderie amongst age divisions. Also, where possible, teams will have an equal number of home and away games. The final schedule shall be released by the 2nd week in August after approval by the Town Representative Board. Team practices may begin the first full week of August. Prior to the first full week, member towns may host conditioning sessions in a league setting but not divided up by teams.

Article 2: PLAYER QUALIFICATIONS

Each town shall collect the following prior to a player participating in any practice.

- Current year parental consent form signed by a parent/guardian.
- Current year Doctor's Statement signed by physician or nurse practitioner, clearing the child for participation in contact sports, cheerleading, or football.
- A copy of player's birth certificate. These are mandatory for all candidates prior to their first practice session each season.
- Weigh-in information for each player completed once during pre-season without equipment.
- All "A" Squad players may be required to submit a copy of their 4th term report card from the preceding year, or other form of proof, indicating that they will not be in HS during the playing year.

Football Divisions, Weights and Ages:

C Division:

- Players must be registered in grade 4 and under and cannot turn 11 years old before 12/1 of the present season with the exception of "older/lighters".
- Players over 125lbs during the pre-season weigh-in must play as interior lineman on offense (Center, Guard or Tackle) in a three-point stance.
- Players between 116-125lbs during pre-season weigh-in may play as interior lineman as well as TE on the line of scrimmage on offense. They may receive a forward pass over the line of scrimmage but cannot receive a snap or handoff.
- Players weighing under 116lbs during pre-season weigh-in are not position limited and may run the ball after receiving a handoff or snap.
- Older/Lighters (O/L) players are permitted under the following restrictions.
 - Only 3 O/L can be rostered. The 3 shall be declared at the official weigh in. Any deviation from the 3 players rostered on the official weigh in shall be announced and

acknowledged to the Town Representative board prior to being eligible for play in accordance with Article 3 Rule 2 para 4.

- O/L player must be in 5 th grade.
- O/L player's weight cannot exceed 75 lbs on the day of official weigh in.
- There are no position restrictions for O/L players

B Division:

- Players must be registered in grade 5-6 and cannot turn 13 years old before 12/1 of the present season with the exception of "older/lighters".
- Players over 155lbs during the pre-season weigh-in must play as interior lineman on offense (Center, Guard or Tackle) in a three-point stance.
- Players between 126-155lbs during pre-season weigh-in may play as interior lineman as well as TE on offense. They may receive a forward pass but cannot receive a snap or handoff.
- Players weighing under 126 during pre-season weigh-in are not position limited and may run the ball after receiving a handoff or snap.
- Older/Lighters (O/L) players are permitted under the following restrictions. o
 - Only 3 O/L can be rostered. The 3 shall be declared at the official weigh in. Any deviation from the 3 players rostered on the official weigh in shall be announced and acknowledged to the Town Representative board prior to being eligible for play in accordance with Article 3 Rule 2 para 4.
 - O/L player must be in 7 th grade.
 - O/L player's weight cannot exceed 90 lbs on the day of official weigh in.
 - There are no position restrictions for O/L players

A Division:

- Players must be registered in grade 7-8 and cannot turn 15 years old before 12/1 of the present season. No 9 th graders will be allowed regardless of weight.
- There are no position restrictions based on weight.

Article 3: CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

The date and time of roster certification shall be determined by the Town Representative Board before the first game of the season.

Rule 1 – Roster Creation - Prior to league play each team shall construct an Official Team Roster which shall include the following information in the following order:

- game jersey number
- player name
- players weight as of day of Nutmeg League sanctioned weigh-in
- a notation of "O/L" indicating that the player is an Older/Lighter (B and C team)

Rule 2 – Roster Sharing - Each Official Team Roster shall be emailed to the Nutmeg League Commission, posted to the Nutmeg Shared Drive, and exchanged with all Member Town league Presidents on the Sunday before the first Nutmeg League game. The reporting responsibility of this rule is required regardless if the Member Town league has a bye during Week 1 of the Nutmeg League schedule; all Official Team Rosters must be reported on the same date, the Sunday before the first Nutmeg League game.

It is the responsibility of each member Town President to ensure compliance with “Rule 2” above.

Prior to the kickoff of each game, the Head Coach, or their designee, shall exchange the Official Team Roster and present his team in roster order to the opposing coach for verification of names, likeness, and jersey number. This will be completed prior to the start of the game. Head coaches will collaborate to find the most appropriate time to validate accuracy of the roster and players. It is acceptable for the Official Team Roster to change throughout the season and after Week 1. For example, a new player may join a team after the first Nutmeg League game, a player’s jersey number may change, a player once considered O/L may change teams, a player may become an O/L after league play begins. In the event that an Official Team Roster changes for any reason, a new/revised Official Team Roster must be created in the form indicated in “Rule 1” above and distributed in accordance with “Rule 2” above by no later than the Friday before the Sunday game of the week that the Official Team Roster changes.

Failure to comply with any of the rules set forth in this Roster Management and Exchange rules will result in the Head Coach of the Team in violation from serving in that capacity and being on the sidelines of the game in which the violation occurred; unless such violation occurs, is discovered, and/or is raised in the second half of any game in which case the Head Coach will be assessed the above penalty (unable to serve as Head Coach and not be able to watch the game from the sidelines) for the remainder of the game in which the violation occurred and the next subsequent game, regardless if a regular season game or playoff game.

No team shall be permitted to start an official NYFL game unless the team has a minimum of fourteen (14) eligible players, but a scrimmage game is permitted. Eligible means meeting all league requirements as set forth in these rules and regulations as well as in league by-laws at game time.

Thirty-five (35) player limits per team will be enforced prior to the schedule being released. Once a team has 36 players, the team must split into two teams. If due to late registration (after the league schedule has been released), a team exceeds 35 players, the team will be permitted to continue with more than 35 players but minimum plays per player will still be enforced as noted in Article 6.

Players cannot be listed on different rosters simultaneously. Players must stay on the same roster after the player has been approved by NYFL unless petitioned and approved by the Town Representative Board.

Recruiting:

Towns will recruit and build rosters from residents of towns within their designated geographic footprint. Players that attend school in a town separate from their established residence are eligible to play for the town in which they attend school OR their town of residence. NYFL roster forms will include “town/school” on them.

Geographic Footprint:

1. Berlin: within the town of Berlin only
2. Farmington: within the towns of Farmington, Avon, Canton (Burlington and Harwinton for 2024 only)
3. Granby: within the towns of Granby, East Granby, Hartland, Suffield, Windsor Locks
4. Middletown: within the town of Middletown only
5. Simsbury: within the town of Simsbury only
6. South Windsor: within the town of South Windsor only
7. Southington: within the town of Southington only
8. West Hartford: within the town of West Hartford only
9. Wethersfield: within the town of Wethersfield only

“Free Agents”:

Towns may roster players from outside of their geographic footprint IF a team roster is less than 25 players. Any “free agents” that bring roster size(s) over 25 players need to be presented for a vote by the town representative board and require a three-fourths majority vote for approval.

Any free agents that played for a town tackle program in 2023 may remain with that program (grandfathered), so long as they remain with that program continuously. If they choose to take a year off to either play for another town and/or take a year off from football, they will lose their “grandfathered” status.

Cuts:

Teams can conduct tryouts, evaluations, etc. as they see fit. Teams may not cut to bring roster size(s) any lower than 32 players (i.e. if roster size is less than 32 players, no cuts are allowed). Teams also may not cut any player from within their geographic footprint if they have retained a player from outside of that footprint on their roster.

Enforcement:

Any town found to be in violation of Recruiting, Free Agents, and/or Cuts will be subject to being disqualified from that year's playoffs. Violations will be adjudicated through the Grievance process outlined in our bylaws.

Article 4: EQUIPMENT

Required for players:

Intra-oral mouth guard, NOC-SAE approved helmets with unaltered, face guard, chin strap, shoulder pads, hip pads, thigh pads, kneepads, socks, shirt, pants, and a protective cup must be worn by both males and females.

Chin straps are required. Football shoes, if used, must be a non-metallic cleat. Detachable cleats are allowed but must meet NFHS Rules.

Rib pads, flack jackets, hand, wrist, forearm, elbow pads, neck rolls, and clear face shields only will be considered optional equipment. Helmets must be worn in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Any belt must be standard football equipment without metal pointed buckle.

Any player that is not properly equipped will not be allowed to play.

Ball: Composite and Rubber Balls are allowed at all levels.

- C Division: Wilson K2 or equivalent.
- B Division: Wilson TDJ or equivalent.
- A Division: Wilson TDY or equivalent.

Field: A NYFL approved football regulation field with an official game clock kept on the field by the officials is required. Yardage markers and end zone pylons are required. Chains will be done by the visiting team on the visiting sideline at all games/fields.

Article 5: WEIGH-IN PROCEDURES

To be eligible, each player must be weighed in prior to the submission and approval of team rosters. Players will be weighed in once during the pre-season without equipment. TRB will coordinate with the towns to determine which town will confirm and approve rosters and books.

Article 6: GAME REGULATIONS

All games shall be played in accordance with the NHFS rules unless otherwise noted.

Player changes from NFHS rules:

Each team must have a minimum of 14 eligible players at the start of the game. Any team not able to field the 14 eligible players automatically forfeits the game but a scrimmage in place of the official game is encouraged.

A minimum of 6 plays including special teams plays during the regular season. A minimum of 4 plays including special teams during the playoffs. Plays that result in a replay of down due to a dead ball penalty will not count towards minimum plays.

Any player sitting due to disciplinary or health reasons must be identified to the opposing coach and cannot wear pads. If a player is injured during a game and is not able to return or is sat for disciplinary reasons is not subject to minimum play requirements. Coaches should make a reasonable effort to notify officials under these circumstances.

Each town will police themselves, however any coach proved not meeting minimum play requirement during a game will receive a warning for first offense, and forfeit any games proved for second or subsequent offenses as determined by the Nutmeg League Board.

Player ejections by officials at any point in a game will result in the following penalties:

- 1st offense – Current game suspension plus next game suspension
- 2nd offense – Current game suspension plus two additional game suspensions
- 3rd offense – Suspension for remainder of the season Scoring changes from NFHS Rules

Extra Points:

- Ball starts on 3-yard line
- 2 points for successful extra point kick
- 2 points for successful pass conversion
- 1 point for successful run conversion

Game clock changes from NFHS Rules Game Time:

- All Divisions – 10-minute quarters with clock stoppages
- Halftime shall be 10 minutes
- Overtime Procedures will be the same as the high school federation except teams will be allowed to attempt one or two-point conversions during all overtime periods.
- One timeout per team per overtime.

Mercy Rule – At a 25-point differential or more, trailing team coach will meet with referees after each score to instruct their wishes with regards to:

- Continue kickoffs or receive ball at 50-yard line
- Commence running clock or continue with stoppages to ensure minimum play requirements met
- If the point differential drops below the 25-point threshold after the mercy rule is in effect, kickoff and time procedures will revert back to normal game operations.

Bench Conduct:

Only coaches or credentialed field personnel will be allowed on the bench or in the coaches' area during the game.

All coaches and professional people must stay within the coaching area, on the sidelines between the twenty-five (25) yard lines on either side of the mid-field stripe. Referees may impose a fifteen- (15) yard penalty for any infraction of this rule.

Any misconduct by players or coaches must be brought to the attention "in writing" to the Town Representative Board, by the member town for action within five (5) calendar days of the game in question.

Any misconduct by a coach resulting in ejection from the game must be reported to the Town Representative Board. Coaches ejected from a game will follow the same penalties as players with regards to future game suspensions and coaches ejected will also be prohibited from attending the next game as a spectator as well. Any coach ejected from two games during a season will be expelled from coaching.

C Division Only – one coach is allowed on the field and in the huddle with their team (both offense and defense) for the first 50% of the regular season. Once the huddle is broken, the coach on the field is only permitted to realign their players through verbal instruction but may not physically move the player. This verbal instruction will be permitted up to the word "set" by the offense. The on-field coach must be a minimum of 15 yards deep of the line of scrimmage. The second 50% of the regular season as well as playoff games, all coaches must be on the sidelines. A coach or league rep may appeal to return to the field during the second 50% of the regular season or during the playoffs if the opposing coach or league rep approves.

C Division Only - A playbook is allowed in the huddle but must be pre-written. Plays may not be designed and drawn in the huddle. Officials will enforce the play clock.

C Division Only - Prohibition Against Crashing "The A Gap". Defensive players may not lineup over the center in C Division. No Nose Tackles. Defensive Tackles must lineup over the offensive guard in a 3- or 4-point stance. Defensive Tackles must engage the guard before movement towards the A gap. Consequently, A QB may not run the A gap from under center but is permitted to run the A gap from shotgun. No blitzing the "A" gap. Linebackers must be 3 yards off the ball and cannot move towards the "A" gap until the ball is snapped. QBs and running backs are required to also line up a minimum of 3 yards off the line of scrimmage if running in the A gap. Infractions of this rule will draw an automatic five (5) yard penalty.

C Division Only - No special teams

Ball will be placed on the receiving team's 35 yard line following a scoring event (Touchdown, Safety, etc)

Punt - On fourth down, an offensive coach may choose from one of the following options:

- Run a play to attempt gaining a first down.
- Punt – Ball is moved 20 yards down field where the ball will change possession
- PAT - Scoring team will have the option to for a PAT if they score a touchdown

Cancellation of Games: In the event of rain out or any potential game cancellation other than heat related issues, the hometown should call the opposing town's representative and referees at least two (2) hours before the game is scheduled to start. Referees have the discretion to cancel any game any time.

In the event of heat related weather conditions that may affect the safety of players, the following rules are to be followed:

No games are to be played if, 1 hour before kickoff or at halftime during the game, the wet bulb globe temperature (WBGT) reads 87.0 at the location of the game.

If the WBGT reading is between 82.0 and 86.9 1 hour before kickoff or at halftime, the home team must provide a cooling station to include but not limited to an iced immersion tub in shaded area.

If, 1 hour before kickoff or at halftime during the game, the wet bulb globe temperature reads 87.0 at the location of the game, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. The game is to be postponed and moved to a later time on the same game day and on the same field, under the assumption that later in the day the WBGT will drop to acceptable levels. Other games shall not be moved or rescheduled to accommodate playing a rescheduled game.

Example: On Sunday 09/01, A is to play at 10:00, B is to play at 12:30, and C is to be played at 3. At 10:00 am the WBGT reads 87°. The A game will be postponed until after the completion of the C game; under no circumstances should the B game or C game be moved to accommodate the playing of the A game.

2. If the postponed game cannot be played on the same game day, the game will be moved to the next succeeding Monday with kickoff at 6:30 pm.

3. If the home team cannot accommodate a Monday game because of either field availability or field lights, the game will be moved to the away team's field if they have lights. The originally scheduled home team will maintain home team status even if playing on an away field.

4. If neither team playing in the postponed game has lights, the game will be played on the next succeeding Monday with kickoff at 6:30 pm at a field of another member town who can accommodate a night game. The originally scheduled home team will maintain home team status even if playing on another member town field.

5. If neither 3. nor 4. above can accommodate the playing of the game, or, due to the rescheduling there is an inability to staff with approved officials and/or medical safety personnel, the game shall be recorded as 1 – 1 tie in the standings.

6. If a game is postponed midway thru the game due to a WBGT in excess of 87.0, the postponed game shall resume on Monday, as set forth hereinabove, at the same point and score as when the game was postponed. I.e.: If the game is stopped at halftime, with the score 6 – 0, it will resume, on Monday, at halftime with the score 6 – 0. 7. In the event a game has started and is then postponed, as in 6. above, and cannot be continued as set forth in 3. or 4., above, the game will be determined by the score at halftime. These rules are subject to majority vote change if the final league game schedule includes a league wide bye week prior to playoffs under which circumstance a postponed game could be moved to the league wide bye week. If the league wide schedule does not include a league wide bye week before the playoffs, then 1 – 7 above shall solely govern.

Rescheduling of games:

Once the league schedule has been set, any rescheduling of game times or dates must be coordinated by the town Presidents (or their designee) involved. The Presidents will work together, in a timely manner, to reschedule the game(s).

If no resolution can be agreed upon, then both Presidents will present their alternatives to the Town Representative Board who will review and make a ruling as to the “best solution” by majority vote.

The Board decision is final and a team that cannot make the reschedule will forfeit.

In all cases the Town Representative Board must be notified of the changes.

This does not apply to league wide cancellation and rescheduling.

Playoff/Championship Procedures

The number of teams making the playoffs will be determined by the Nutmeg League Board through majority vote, taking into account the number of teams in each division, schedule/ calendar allowances, etc. When possible, teams not making the playoffs will play a consolation game to give players an opportunity for additional game time. Seeding for playoffs will be based on regular season winning percentage with ties to be broken by the following procedure:

- 1st Tiebreaker – Head to Head
- 2nd Tiebreaker – Quality of Wins (combined win/loss of defeated opponents)
- 3rd Tiebreaker – Points Against
- 4th Tiebreaker – Coin Toss
- In the case of a 3 or more-team tie, quality of wins will be used first to reduce the tie to two teams and the tiebreaker procedure will start at the top as listed above.

Article 7: OFFICIALS

All officials must be certified to officiate high school games.

Officials must always have foremost in mind the welfare of the players.

Game referees CANNOT make a determination on player eligibility as defined by NYFL Football Rules and Regulations, but can and will enforce player position eligibility based on weights and 'Older/Lighters' as defined in the NYFL Rules and Regulations.

Home team is responsible for the paying officials for as many games that are played immediately following the game(s).

Article 8: FIRST AID and EMTs/Trainers

It is mandatory to have an emergency vehicle or communications to an emergency vehicle available at every game.

Athletic Trainer / Emergency Medical Technician – Game Requirements

The home team will supply a certified Athletic Trainer and/or EMT who will be designated as the primary medical responder to any game injury. No game will begin without the presence of the designated Athletic Trainer and/or EMT.

The Athletic Trainer and/or EMT must have appropriate identification (ID card), which shall be presented to the head coaches and game officials prior to the start of each game upon request.

The Athletic Trainer and/or EMT will position him/herself and remain visible on either sideline in or near the team box during play of the game.

Once the designated Athletic Trainer and/or EMT takes the field the decision on whether or not that player returns to the game is the responsibility of this individual. (NO member of either team's coaching staff may function as the designated medical staff person for a contest in which they are the coach of that game).

If a parent refuses medical services, which is deemed as necessary their child is out of the game for the day. If a child is taken to the hospital, and later returns to the field, they must have a doctor's release before resuming play.

All coaches will carry a binder containing all medical and emergency contact information at all times on the sidelines during games and/or practice.