



**NORTH JERSEY JUNIOR
LACROSSE LEAGUE**
BERGEN - ESSEX - HUDSON - HUNTERDON
MORRIS - PASSAIC - SOMERSET
SUSSEX - UNION - WARREN

2026 NJLL League Playing Rules 2026 v2

The North Jersey Junior Lacrosse League (NJLL) follows both the 2026 NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rulebook and the 2026 USA Lacrosse Boys' Rulebook. This document serves as the primary rules document for the NJLL. If an item is not covered by this document or the USA Lacrosse Youth Boys Rulebook, then revert to the NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rulebook for all other issues. The Garden State Lacrosse Officials Association (GSLOA) is responsible for assigning officials for all NJLL games and functions. Link to NFHS and USA Lacrosse Boys Youth Rules: <http://www.uslacrosse.org/rules/boys-rules>

For 2026 the NJLL will use the chart below to match USA Lacrosse rules to the NJLL appropriate grade.

USA Lacrosse Age Level		NJLL Grade Level
14U	=	7 th & 8 th Grades
12U	=	5 th & 6 th Grades
10U	=	3 rd & 4 th Grade
The NJLL does not recognize play below the 3 rd grade or U10 level.		
See the NJLL Rules and Regulations for age maximum per grade		
Players cannot play on a team with players more than one grade level higher than their grade		

2026 Rule Changes:

- For 7th & 8th grades the goalie no longer gets 5 seconds to return to the crease, as per NFHS rules.
- No free clear mercy rule for 8th grade conference and playoff games.
 - It is the responsibility of the coaches to make the officials aware BEFORE the game, if the game being played is an 8th grade conference or playoff game.
 - Running clock rule does still apply.
- Any non-goalie who enters the crease to defend a shot is subject to a one-minute non-releasable penalty.
- Any loss of helmet on the field is a technical foul regardless of the reason it came off.
- Substitution horns are no longer allowed in 5th & 6th grade games.
 - For 3rd & 4th grade games each team is permitted a maximum of two horns per half.
 - Horns in 3rd & 4th grade can only be requested if the ball has gone out of bounds.
- Home Jersey Rule Change - Consistent with the high school rule, visiting teams are to wear white jerseys and home teams colored/dark jerseys. However, the two teams may mutually agree to deviate from this standard if discussed and agreed in advance. If you do not have reversible or separate home & away pinnies/jerseys, please plan accordingly for the upcoming season
- Each team is required to have a horn available in the bench table area for the purpose of sounding at the end of each quarter or as otherwise needed.
- Mouthguards may not have any adornments or extraneous material attached to it
- One Pass Rule Clarification - Clarify the rule by confirming that no pass is required if a face-off middle wins the ball on a face-off as a result of a procedural foul by the other team (e.g. Face-off middle from

team A moves early so team B middle is awarded the ball and does NOT have to attempt a pass before shooting as he is awarded the ball in the offensive half of the field).

2025 Rule change reminders:

- PENALTIES:
 - All penalties for NJJLL games are releasable OR non-releasable as per NFHS rules and as determined by the game officials.
 - The NJJLL does not follow the USA Lacrosse rule that all penalties are non-releasable.
- Coach Ejections:
 - Any coach who is ejected is automatically suspended for a minimum of the next two games on their schedule at the time of the ejection.
- Player Ejections:
 - Any player who is ejected is automatically suspended for a minimum of the next two games on their schedule at the time of the ejection.
- PENALTY COMMITTED BY GOALIE:
 - Prior to the start of the game, officials will check in with each head coach to confirm that their team has a back-up goalie.
 - If no back-up goalie is available, then officials will advise coaches that if their goalie commits a time serving penalty, one “releasable” minute will be added to the length of the penalty.
 - This modified penalty will be treated as one lengthened penalty (and not as two separate penalties). In this situation, the designated “in home” will serve the penalty.
- CLARIFICATION OF ONE PASS RULE FOR FACE-OFFS:
 - For 3rd & 4th grade, no attempted pass is required prior to shooting if either the face-off middle wins the face-off to himself (either forward or back), or if the wing middle picks up the ball off a face-off on his offensive half of the field, or if the face-off middle is awarded the ball due to a procedural foul by the opposing team (like moving early) or as a result of the mercy rule taking effect. One attempted pass is required if the wing middle wins possession of the ball on his defensive half of the field.
- Coaches ID's:
 - See section 1 – “a” through “l” below

2026 NJJLL Playing Rule Modifications

1) Coaches – All Grade Levels

- a) All coaches in grades 3rd through 8th must be USA Lacrosse Men's Game Bronze Certified or higher and have a NJJLL issued Digital Coaches ID to be on the sideline for any NJJLL game.
 - i) Coaches are required to ensure that all their certifications remain valid during the season, this includes but is not limited to:
 - USA Lacrosse background check
 - USA Lacrosse abuse prevention training
 - Any other training required by USA Lacrosse to maintain Bronze Certification

- b) Only the NJJLL Digital ID presented live on the Digital ID phone app will allow the coach to be on the sideline during the game, with no exceptions.
 - i) Screenshots, photos or anything on paper are not permitted.
- c) Any other person who does not have a NJJLL digital ID may not be in the team / bench areas.
- d) Prior to the start of each game the officials shall speak to the Head Coach of each team.
 - i) This coach will present their NJJLL Digital ID to the officials.
 - ii) This coach will certify that any non-player that will be on their sideline during the game has an NJJLL issued Digital ID.
 - iii) It is the Head Coaches' responsibility to ensure that no one is on their sideline other than coaches with a NJJLL Digital ID and players. This includes any coach(s) who may arrive after the game has started.
- e) During the game, game officials are encouraged to perform random "ID Checks" of coaches on the sideline.
 - i) When random checks are done, at least one coach from each team shall be checked.
 - ii) Any coach on the sideline must have their digital ID with them to be presented immediately.
- f) Game officials may also request to see the digital ID of any coach for any reason during the game.
- g) The NJJLL may also have representative(s) at any game for the purpose of checking coaches IDs.
- h) In the event a coach does not present the Digital ID immediately when requested by a game official or league representative that coach must leave the sideline.
 - i) If that coach does not return and present the game officials with their digital ID before the end of the game, the head coach will be held responsible and will automatically be suspended for one game. Enhanced penalties may be issued for repeated violations by any team or program.
 - ii) If a coach is found on the sideline who is not properly certified, the game officials shall send an email to the head assignor after the game and make them aware of this situation.
- i) Any attempt by a coach to fraudulently display invalid credentials or ID, or verbally misrepresent that they have a valid NJJLL coaches ID will result in the violating coaches program being fined \$500 and said coach will be suspended from coaching in any future NJJLL games.
- j) In the event a team only has one coach with a proper ID a second adult shall be permitted on the sideline for the sole purpose of supervising the players in the bench area. This adult shall not be involved in coaching players on the field.
 - i) This must be pointed out to the game officials prior to the start of the game.

- ii) If a second certified coach arrives at any time during the game this supervising adult must leave the bench area.
- k) For coaches under 18 years of age, as per USA Lacrosse must also be USA Lacrosse Bronze Certified (they do not complete a background check).
 - i) All junior Coaches shall be required to display a NJJLL Junior Coach Digital ID to be on the sideline during any game.
- l) Teams are permitted to have a maximum of 4 coaches on the sideline / team areas.
 - i) Any non-player in the bench area is considered a coach.
 - ii) An EMT or certified trainer is exempt but may not be involved in coaching.
 - iii) The home team's timekeeper is exempt, they must remain in the box area and may not be involved in coaching.
 - iv) Coaches should not be involved in keeping the game or penalty time. This function must be done by an adult provided by the home team.
- m) Coach Ejections: A coach who is ejected from a game must leave the premises immediately.
 - i) Any attempt to argue or dispute their ejection will be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate by the league board.
 - ii) Any coach who touches an official in an aggressive or threatening manner will be permanently suspended from the league.
 - iii) Any coach who is ejected is automatically suspended for a minimum of the next two games on their schedule at the time of the ejection.
 - iv) Any ejected coach who approaches an official, either on the field, in the parking lot, or otherwise to argue or dispute their ejection will be subject to additional penalties as determined by the NJJLL board.

2) Playing Rules – All Grade Levels

- a) All penalties are either full time served or releasable as indicated as per NFHS rules as determined by the game officials.
- b) Penalties Committed by a Goalie: Prior to the start of the game, officials will check in with each head coach to confirm that their team has a back-up goalie.
 - i) If no back-up goalie is available, then officials will advise coaches that if their goalie commits a time serving penalty, one “releasable” minute will be added to the length of the penalty.
 - ii) This modified penalty will be treated as one lengthened penalty (and not as two separate penalties). In this situation, the designated “in home” will serve the penalty.

- c) Any player who is ejected is automatically suspended for a minimum of the next two games on their schedule at the time of the ejection.
- d) Any penalty within 3 minutes of the end of the game, received by a team ahead by 2 goals or less shall extend the game until the penalty time is complete.
 - i) Once the game has been extended play shall continue until the penalty time is complete, regardless of the score.
- e) Any player who receives 3 personal fouls or 5 minutes of person foul time has fouled out of the game.
 - i) This is not an ejection, but the player cannot return to the game.
 - ii) Coaches and game officials are responsible for tracking players' personal fouls.
 - iii) In the case of a team having duplicate jersey numbers, it is the responsibility of the head coach to make the officials aware at the time of penalty enforcement.
- f) Coaches may not request stick checks.
- g) MISCONDUCT FOUL - Game officials may remove any player whose play, or conduct is detrimental to the game, for a period of 5 minutes.
 - i) This is not considered a team penalty; the team may put in a substitute during this time. Referees shall in all cases issue a warning to the head coach of the players conduct prior to assessing a Misconduct Foul
 - ii) This may be assessed with or without a time serving penalty.
 - iii) If assessed with a time serving penalty both times run concurrently. For example, if a player is assessed a one-minute penalty and the official adds a 5-minute misconduct, the team would play man down for one minute, but the player would not be eligible to re-enter the game until 5 minutes have passed since play has restarted.
 - iv) The Misconduct foul by itself does not count towards the 3 personal fouls or 5 minutes of personal foul time.
 - v) If a player receives a second misconduct foul, he is not to reenter the remainder of the game.
- h) Only head coaches may communicate with officials.
- i) Six goal mercy rule.
 - i) Coaches option for a free clear after a goal is scored for team behind by 6 goals or more.

- ii) Each quarter shall start with a face-off unless penalty time is being served, and a team is entitled to possession.
- j) If there becomes a 10-goal difference in score in the second half of any game the clock moves to running time and remains running time for the remainder of the game.
- k) In the event a goalie commits a time serving penalty, penalty time shall be served by the designated defensive player. This player shall be so designated pre-game the same as the in-home and must be a starting defenseman.
 - i) If the coach of the penalized team prefers and they have a second goalie who is already dressed and equipped as a goalie and is ready to immediately enter the game they shall be allowed a one- minute warm-up as per rule, prior to restarting play.
 - ii) At the referee's discretion, a goalkeeper may be required to serve his own penalty time.
- l) All players must use stick heads that meet NFHS standards.
 - i) 7th & 8th grade, any illegal stick shall be penalized as per NFHS rules.
 - ii) 6th grade and below, no penalty but the illegal stick must be removed from the game.
 - iii) 4th grade and below, no long poles permitted.
 - iv) 4th grade and below, all sticks shall be between 37"-42". (Goalie stick can be 37" – 54")

3) Playing Rules – 7th & 8th Grades

- a) All games shall be four, 10-minute stop time quarters.
- b) A maximum of two, 4-minute overtime periods shall be played, except
 - i) Any playoff game shall be played until a winner has been determined.
 - ii) It is the coach's responsibility to inform the officials prior to the game if it is a playoff game.
- c) All high school counts are in effect.
- d) One handed checks are allowed. (2024)
 - i) Check must be otherwise legal as per the game official(s)
- e) Over and back is enforced.
- f) Officials shall perform at least two random stick / equipment checks per game.
- g) Flag down slow whistle as for NFHS rules
- h) No substitution horns are permitted.
- i) Any 8th grade player who is ejected from two or more games during the season for unsportsmanlike conduct is no longer eligible to participate in the NJJLL All-Stars event at the end of the season.

- j) No free clear mercy rule for 8th grade conference and playoff games.
 - i) If is the responsibility of the coaches to make the officials aware BEFORE the game, that the game being played is an 8th grade conference or playoff game.
 - ii) Running clock rule does still apply.

4) Playing Rules – 5th & 6th Grades

- a) All games shall consist of four 12-minute running time quarters.
 - i) Clock stops for all injuries and time outs.
 - ii) All penalties are stop time.
- b) During the last 2 minutes of the game, if there is a two-goal difference or less in the score, stop time will be implemented immediately.
 - i) If at any time the lead increases to 3 or more goals running time will start again
 - ii) For games that are tied, stop time will be played during the last two minutes.
- c) No Overtime
- d) No 20 second or 10 second counts
- e) No Over and Back
- f) No one-handed checks shall be allowed.
- g) Flag down slow whistle as per NHFS rules

5) Playing Rules – 4th Grade 10v10

- a) All games shall consist of four 12-minute running time quarters.
 - i) Clock stops for all injuries and time outs.
 - ii) All penalties are stop time.
- b) During the last 2 minutes of the game, if there is a two-goal difference or less in the score, stop time will be implemented immediately.
 - i) If at any time the lead increases to 3 or more goals running time will start again
 - ii) For games that are tied, stop time will be played during the last two minutes.
- c) No Overtime
- d) Games must be played on a full-size field.
- e) No 20 second or 10 second counts
- f) No Over and Back
- g) Substitution horns permitted ONLY if a ball goes out of bounds.
- h) Flag down slow whistle at the discretion of the game officials
- i) No one-handed checks shall be allowed.

- j) No long poles permitted.
- k) All penalties will be served by the player who committed the foul, and the team SHALL play man down.
- l) No coaches permitted on the field.
- m) One Pass Rule: Whenever a team has possession of the ball in their defensive side of the field, they must attempt one pass prior to taking a shot on goal.
 - i) The receiver of this pass must be on the offensive side of the field, but the pass may originate from the defensive zone.
 - ii) The pass does not need to be caught.
 - iii) If at any time a loose ball is created (other than intentionally by the player in possession) the one pass is no longer needed
 - iv) Once one of these requirements is met another pass is not required until the ball has returned to their defensive side of the field.
 - v) If the player taking the faceoff is first to possess the ball no pass is required regardless of where on the field, they gain possession.
 - vi) If a wing player gains possession on their defensive side of the field a pass is required

6) Playing Rules – 3rd - 4th Grade 7v7

- a) All 3rd & 4th Grade 10v10 rules listed above apply to 7v7 games unless otherwise noted.
- b) See NJJLL Guidelines & Rules For 7 v 7 Play for all additional 7v7 rules.
- c) Under no circumstance may a game be changed to a 10v10 game without prior approval from the assignor.
- d) HIPPO Rule has been eliminated for the 2026 season

END OF DOCUMENT