

OK Youth Football League Rules

Philosophy of the League

1. Have fun playing football
2. Learn the fundamentals and experience playing football
3. Learn about working together and experience being on a football team
4. It is not all about winning, but about being a positive experience for the kids
5. Start to learn the basics of your school's high school system
6. Understanding the importance of Attendance and commitment to team activities/ practices

Sportsmanship

We have zero tolerance rules for unsportsmanlike conduct. This rule will be enforced for everyone; coaches, players, and fans alike. It is the responsibility of the head official for the game and/or field director, that all parties involved in the game are in compliance with this zero tolerance rule. The head official or field director has full authority to assess penalties or ejections associated with violations of this rule.

1. No foul or derogatory language may be used by a coach or player. This will be cause for immediate ejection from the game.
2. Foul or abusive language used by a parent or fan will result in the ejection of parent from the game.
3. Any unauthorized parent stepping onto the field of play and displaying unsportsmanlike behavior may be ejected from the field area. Play will not resume until the parent has departed or been removed. This individual may not be permitted to attend any OK Youth Football League (OKYFL) events for the remainder of the year or more.
4. Fighting will not be tolerated. Any player or coach initiating or involved in a physical confrontation on the playing field will be ejected. Upheld ejections by the league board are an automatic 1 game suspension and may result in a lifetime ban.
5. Any coach involved in promoting unsportsmanlike conduct amongst his players may be ejected without warning, and may not be permitted to coach for the remainder of the season or longer.
6. Coaching sportsmanship responsibility:
 1. Exhibit respect in your teams play for the team with the lesser score.
 2. Make sure all players have played in that day's game per the league guidelines of a minimum of 8 plays per half. For each play missed due to injury or illness, that player's minimum playing time will be reduced by the same number of plays for that half. (This rule may have exceptions in games where the number of plays in a half is 20 or below).
 3. Remember this game is for the kids, not coaches or parents.
7. Complaints – Any parent, coach, family member, etc. with a concern or complaint about any subject regarding the league, teams, coaches, etc. need to go through the proper chain of command for their home league. Concerned individuals should contact an appropriate member of their board.
8. Social Media – OKYFL exists for fun and development of youth players. All postings regarding the league shall be positive in nature. Any negative, accusatory, or classless posts may result in the removal of responsible parties from play for the remainder of the season (subject to permanent removal at discretion of league officials).

Weight and Grade

A participant's playing level is determined by the player's grade that they are entering in the fall of the current year. For player safety, please note each level has a maximum weight that a player can not exceed to be able to carry the football. The following chart depicts the ball carrying weight restrictions. Players may not play down grade levels. There is no deviation from these weight requirements.

Grade	Playing Weight	Ball Carrying Weight
3rd/4th	No Limit	120 lbs without equipment
5th/6th	No Limit	145 lbs without equipment

There are no exceptions to this weight limit.

Any player exceeding the ball carrying weight limit must play from Tight End to Tight End on the offensive side of the ball. No restrictions on the defensive side of the ball.

Every week, before each game, one official weigh-in will occur which will be facilitated by the onsite field director. No one over the ball carrying weight is allowed in the backfield or in any other position that they could intentionally or unintentionally advance the football (except TE).

Players over the ball carrying weight may not play the following positions:

1. Running Back
2. Quarterback
3. Receiver
4. Tight End (Can play TE, but may not run any pass routes – blocking only)

Stickers will be placed on the front of a player's helmet to indicate if a player is over the ball carrying weight. If the ball is loose on the field, they may only fall on it, not advance the ball. If a player of the limit were to catch a tipped pass, intercept the ball, or recover a fumble... they must immediately kneel the play dead. Any infraction of the ball carrying weight limit is treated as a personal foul. It will result in a 15 yard penalty.

General Rules

OK Youth Football League follows MHSAA playing and scoring rules with the following modifications.

1. Every player must play a minimum of 8 plays in each half of every game. Failure to comply may result in a three game suspension of the head coach.
2. Overtime
 - a. In the event of a tie – 1 Overtime period will be permitted.
 - b. The winner of a coin flip will select to either go 1st or 2nd on offense, or which end of the field will be used.
 - c. The same end of the field will be used for both teams.
 - d. Each team will get the ball 1st and Goal from the 10 Yard Line
 - e. There are no restrictions (other than weight limit) as to what players are allowed to play in the skill positions for Overtime.
 - f. No Overtime clock
3. No trading of players between coaches is allowed.
4. In the event of an injury, an official timeout is called. The player injured is removed from the game and will stay on the sidelines for at least one play.
 - a. The field director, league administrator, coach or official in charge will remove the injured player from the rest of the game if, in their opinion, the player is unable to safely continue playing. Any player removed for the remainder of the game due to injury must have a doctor's note clearing them to play before returning to team play at the next game or practice.
 - b. Any infraction of this rule will result in a 15 yard penalty.
 - c. Timeouts cannot be used as a play to get a player back into the game earlier.
 - d. A player with a hard cast is not permitted to participate in contact drills or games until the cast has been removed and a doctor's release has been obtained.
5. Any team behind by 24 points or more will automatically receive the ball on the opponent's 35 yard line after a score by either team. Should the team fail to generate a first down with the allotted four downs, the ball would be turned over to the opposing team on downs.
6. Any team ahead by 24 points or more must go 20 yards to receive a new set of downs (FirstDown).
7. Any team ahead by 24 points or more may not blitz at all.
8. If a team is down by 30 points, the clock will be a running clock. The running clock will only stop for timeouts and injuries.
9. ***Coaches of teams who are ahead by 24 points or more are strongly encouraged to rotate kids into various positions for experience.***
10. Two 60 second timeouts and one stop clock are allowed per half.
11. 5 minutes are allotted between all halftimes. (May be altered by Field Director or Head Official)
12. Games may only be cancelled or postponed in the case of threatening conditions (Example: lightning and severe weather or weather watches). OKYFL will follow the home team school's guidelines for event cancellations. Makeup of scheduled or postponed games is the responsibility of the League Officials.
13. No "coaches agreements" to deviate from league rules may be made at game time.
14. Only approved coaches are allowed on the sideline during games. (4 coaches per team unless approved by league.

Special Rules: 3rd/4th Grade Division

1. Practices may 2 hours.
2. A maximum of 3 practices per week during preseason.
3. A maximum of 3 practices AND games combined per week. (Team scrimmage counts as a practice)
4. A 10 minute clock will be used for each quarter.
 - a. Clock will be stopped for Out of Bounds, Incomplete Passes, Penalties, and Touchdowns.
 - b. Clock will restart following Out of Bounds, Incomplete Passes, and Penalties when the ball is "Ready for Play" (except in the last 2 minutes of each half)
5. One coach from each team may remain on the field and enter the huddle to help direct the team for the first four games. After the fourth week, no coaches are allowed on the field.
6. Offenses may use motion. (1 Player at a time)
7. The offensive and defensive coach must remain at least 10 yards behind the line of scrimmage after the offensive teams huddle is broken.
8. Coaches must be quiet after the pre-snap. Violation of this rule is a 15 yard penalty.
9. No kickoffs are utilized at this level. At the beginning of a half, or after a score, the ball is placed on the offensive team's 35 yard line.
10. After a safety, the ball is placed on the 40 yard line.
11. There is no weight limit to play at this level, but any player over 120 lbs. (120 lbs w/o equipment) may not advance or carry the football.
 - a. In order to make it easy to identify players who cannot advance the ball, a sticker is to be applied to the front of the helmet of any player over the 120 lb. limit.
 - b. Any player over the 120 lb. limit who intercepts a pass or recovers a fumble, may not advance the football. They should be instructed prior to the start of the game that if they recover a fumble or intercept a pass that they are to fall to the ground. The play is to be called dead at the point of recovery.
 - c. The team for a player over the 120 lb. limit that advances the ball will receive a 15 yard penalty and a loss of down.
12. Ball size will be Wilson TDJ (or equivalent).
13. For extra point attempts, a Kick = 2 points (no rush, Pass to Receiver in the End Zone = 2 pts, and a Run or Pass (Receiver not in End Zone) = 1 Point.
14. . No more than 5 players on the line of scrimmage (in the box TE to TE)
 - *Does not apply to CBs in Bump and Run Coverage
 - *Exception is for short yardage on 3rd or 4th Down or Goal Line Defense (inside of the 10)
15. LBs and Safeties must be at least 3 yards off of the line of scrimmage, and may not creep or approach the line of scrimmage prior to the snap being made. Any violation should be treated as Encroachment and will be marked off as a 5 yard penalty.
16. No Blitzing or Stunts.
 - a. Blitzing is defined by any pre-snap assignment that would send a player (who is off the line of scrimmage) across the line of scrimmage prior to the ball being handed off.
17. DE do NOT have to be in a down position.
18. Down linemen may NOT shift in gaps or slant, they must be lined up "Heads Up" with the offensive lineman (outside defensive ends may line up shaded to the outside).
19. No Shooting the Gaps. The defender must (attempt to) engage the lineman by making a form of contact with said lineman.
 - * If said lineman is pulling, blocking down, or "in retreat"... engaging the blocker is nullified.
20. If defense plays a nose guard over the offensive center, the nose guard must be 1 yard off the line of scrimmage for the first two weeks.
21. Punting – Free Kick
 - a. 3 Steps from where caught/ picked up
 - b. No rush
 - c. No return – Ball is placed where caught/ downed by return team, or touched by kicking team.
 - d. No Fakes

Special Rules: 5th/6th Grade Division

1. Practices may be no longer than 2 hours.
2. A maximum of 4 practices per week during preseason.
3. A maximum of 4 practices AND games combined per week. (Team scrimmage counts as a practice)
4. A 10 minute clock will be used for each quarter.
 - a. Clock will be stopped for Out of Bounds, Incomplete Passes, Penalties, and Touchdowns.
 - b. Clock will restart following Out of Bounds, Incomplete Passes, and Penalties when the ball is "Ready for Play" (except in the last 2 minutes of each half)
5. Coaches are not allowed on the field, and must stay between the 25 yard markers.
6. Offense may use motion and may go no huddle.
7. Kickoffs will take place on the 40 yard line.
8. While in punt or field goal formation, no defensive player may line head up or touch the offensive center. Violation of this rule is a 15 yard penalty and an automatic first down.
9. All Punts will be live plays.
10. There is no weight limit to play at this level, but any player over 145 lbs. may not advance or carry the football.
 - a. Players are weighed prior to each game with all the equipment they will be using during the game. No additional padding may be added after weigh in.
 - b. In order to make it easy to identify players who can not advance the ball, a sticker is to be applied to the front of the helmet of any player over the 145 lb. limit.
 - c. Any player over the 145 lb. limit who intercepts a pass or recovers a fumble, may not advance the football. They should be instructed prior to the start of the game that if they recover a fumble or intercept a pass that they are to fall to the ground. The play is to be called dead at the point of recovery.
 - d. The team for a player over the 145 lb. limit that advances the ball will receive a 15 yard penalty and a loss of down.
11. Ball size will be Wilson TDY or TDJ (or equivalent). *Hudsonville to use TDY
12. For extra point attempts, a Kick = 2 points (no rush, Pass to Receiver in the End Zone = 2 pts, and a Run or Pass (Receiver not in End Zone) = 1 Point.
13. Field Goals Attempts and Extra Point Attempts will be free kicks (snap must be clean or a low snap immediately positioned correctly by holder – referee's discretion). Kicker is allotted no more than 5 steps prior to kick. Defenders may raise their arms and jump, but are not permitted to cross the line of scrimmage. The coach must inform the official(s) of the attempt prior to the play. No Fakes are allowed.
14. No more than 5 players on the line of scrimmage (in the box TE to TE)
 - *Does not apply to CBs in Bump and Run Coverage
 - *Exception is for short yardage on 3rd or 4th Down or Goal Line Defense (inside of the 10)
15. LBs and Safeties must be at least 3 yards off of the line of scrimmage, and may not creep or approach the line of scrimmage prior to the snap being made. Any violation should be treated as Encroachment and will be marked off as a 5 yard penalty.
16. Down linemen MAY shift in gaps or slant.