



<https://www.njhfl.org/>

ARTICLE

I

NAME

NORTHEAST JUNIOR HIGH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

BY-LAWS

The name of this organization shall be the **NORTHEAST JUNIOR HIGH FOOTBALL LEAGUE**, herein referred to as NJHFL

ARTICLE II

OBJECT

The object of this organization shall be to assist area organizations in the promotion of youth football by:

- A. Providing a set game schedule(s)
- B. Maintain communication between organizations.
- C. Provide and enforce a uniform set of Rules and Regulations.

ARTICLE III

ORGANIZATION

The organization shall consist of a Board of Directors and an Executive Board of Directors

A. Board of Directors

- Shall be the governing body of the NJHFL and has final say on all league matters.
- Each organization will be represented by the following:
 - Senior Varsity Head Football Coach: Votes on all league matters and those concerning the Senior Division
 - If so desired will designate another individual to vote on matters concerning the Junior/Youth Division.
- Shall hold yearly elections to elect an Executive Board of Directors. Elections are to be held at the league's end of year meeting.
- Shall vote upon and approve game schedule(s) for the given year.
- Any decision by the Board of Directors shall be binding and final.

B. The Executive Board of Directors shall consist of:

- Chairman
 - Shall act as the Chairman of the board and votes only in the case of a tie by the full board of directors.
 - Will provide the Secretary an agenda for regular meetings.
 - Will be responsible along with the other Executive Board members for overseeing the everyday running and operation of the league.
 - At the start of the season i.e.: scheduled games, the Chairman will act as League Commissioner. As League Commissioner, they shall be responsible for enforcing and/or interpreting League By-laws along

with Rules and



<https://www.njhfl.org/>

- a. Shall assume the duties of the Chairman in the event the Chairman unable or absent from league meetings.
- D. Will be responsible for expansion of the NJHFL.
- E. Will be responsible for Senior player eligibility. (Rosters)
- F. Acts as Senior Commissioner
- G. Will not have a vote
- C. Secretary
 - Shall record minutes and keep record of all meetings.
 - Will be responsible for keeping the contact list current.
 - Will be responsible for informing the membership of meetings
 - Will be responsible for e-mailing the agenda prior to any meeting.
 - Will not have a vote
- D. Treasurer
 - Shall deposit all League funds
 - Will keep bank records
 - Will disburse funds as prescribed by the Board of directors.
 - Will present a yearly budget to Board of directors
 - Will not have a vote
- E. Senior Director Duties and Responsibilities
 - Act as point of contact for Sr Division Teams
 - For all issues, complaints, grievances, etc., will report to Commissioner/E-board and work with the Commissioner/E-board to resolve.
 - Be responsible for collection of all Sr rosters as well as:
 - Verify are accurate and fully completed
 - Ensure rosters are distributed prior to the first game of the season
 - Maintain rosters throughout the season and notify teams/league when changes are made in a timely manner
- A. Junior Director Duties and Responsibilities
 - Act as point of contact for Jr Division Teams
 - For all issues, complaints, grievances, etc., will report to Commissioner/E-board and work with the Commissioner/E-board to resolve.
 - Be responsible for collection of all Junior rosters as well as:
 - Verify are accurate and fully completed
 - Ensure rosters are distributed prior to the first game of the season
 - Maintain rosters throughout the season and notify teams/league when changes are made in a timely manner
 - Weigh Ins/Weights
 - Be responsible for verifying weights at the official league weigh in
 - For those who miss and/or are new, shall be point of contact for weighing in.
7. Youth Director Duties and Responsibilities
 - a. Act as point of contact for Youth Division Teams



<https://www.njhfl.org/>

- H. For all issues, complaints, grievances, etc., will report to Commissioner/E-board and work with the Commissioner/E-board to resolve.
 - I. Be responsible for collection of all Youth rosters as well as:
 - Verify are accurate and fully completed
 - Ensure rosters are distributed prior to the first game of the season
 - Maintain rosters throughout the season and notify teams/league when changes are made in a timely manner
 - J. Weigh Ins/Weights
 - Be responsible for verifying weights at the official league weigh in
 - For those who miss and/or are new, shall be point of contact for weighing in.
- F. Compliance Officer Duties and Responsibilities
- Responsible for setting up, and monitoring coaches' certification through USA Football
 - Insure all who are coaching are USA Football Certified
 - Provides to all teams:
 - A list of all certified players,
 - Maintains the list of certified coaches
 - Lists to be broken down by team and division
 - Reports any violations, discrepancies to League Commissioner for further review/action
 - Responsible for distributing, collecting, and verifying NJHFL President's Affidavit
9. At-Large Referee Director (Added 2026)
- B. Coordinate the assigning of officials to regularly scheduled games and postseason events.
 - C. Serve as the primary point of contact between referees and the league, including communication with coaches, division directors, and league leadership regarding officiating matters.
 - D. Assist with game-day operations by confirming referee attendance and responding to officiating needs with Division Coordinator.
- A. At-Large "ex officio" (Added 2026)
- 1. Member/role refers to a person who serves in an advisory capacity due to their position of influence. Long standing former members are often appointed ex officio. The position doesn't have any power, including voting, but serves to advise current Board members.
- B. League Scheduler (Added 2026)
- 1. Developing the master schedule for all regular season and post-season league games.
 - 2. Collaborating with each organization to align with their local town schedules, finalizing all game dates, times, and locations.
 - 3. Assisting in the yearly division alignment to adjust team placements as necessary.
 - 4. Coordinating with the referee scheduler and submitting the final game schedules for referee assignment.
- C. At-Large Position (Added 2026)
- 1. The Member at Large is a non-voting member of the Board of Directors, tasked with representing the general membership and providing a broad, unencumbered perspective on the governance and strategic direction of the organization.
- A. In the absence of Chairman and the Vice Chairman, the Treasurer and Secretary shall assume all duties of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
- B. If any of the Executive Board cannot fulfill their duties due to resignation, illness, or death, the remaining Executive Board members will call for a special election within thirty days.



<https://www.njhfl.org/>

- E. The Executive Board shall interpret the By-Laws, rules and regulations of the NJHFL, and shall exercise all powers necessary for the proper functioning and operation of the NJHFL.
- F. Shall set divisional alignments within a Division for vote by the Board of Directors.

Article IV

League Funding & Fines

Funds:

- K. Appropriation of funds will be directed by the executive board and approved by a vote of the Board of Directors.
- L. To participate in the League, each organization will be required to pay a yearly fee to the League by **June 1st**. That fee will be determined by the Board of Directors at the beginning of each season.
- M. The Executive Board shall have the right to use funds in the course of its duty, not to exceed \$300.00. These expenditures will be reported to the Board of Directors at the next regular meeting.
- N. League funding, dues and new team initiation fees will be set each year by the Board of Directors.

Fines: The league may impose fines as its sole discretion. Fines will be imposed on the following:

- G. \$25.00 Fine for not having a representative at a regularly scheduled League meeting.
 - H. \$25.00 Fine for not having League dues in by date set by the league.
 - I. \$25.00 Fine for not submitting a team's roster by the date set forth by the league for when a roster is due.
 - The fine shall increase to \$50 for each week missed thereafter.
 - If the Vice Chairman has not received the team's roster by the Friday prior to the next scheduled game, said team to forfeit game and every game thereafter until a roster has been supplied.
3. Team/organization may face additional league sanctions as set forth by Board of Directors.

ARTICLE V

MEMBERSHIP

- O. Membership into the League shall be limited to organizations invited to participate by a majority vote of the Board of Directors at any regular League meeting.
 - Prior to voting, an organization may and can be interviewed by the Executive Board of Directors as well as by the Board of Directors.
- P. Upon admittance to the league will have full privileges and all voting rights.
- Q. League Affidavit-The President of each Organization must sign an Affidavit and submit to the League ***no later than their respective Jamboree*** affirming the following conditions have been met:
 - J. All Coaches and Volunteers (defined as anybody working with players and/or cheerleaders) have had a current background check conducted.
 - K. All players and cheerleaders are insured and have signed all applicable paperwork and waivers.
 - L. There is a current written Concussion Policy in place.
 - M. All Head Coaches in the Organization *must* be certified via USA Football's Youth Tackle Certification.
 - Exception-Any coach who was required to complete NHIAA (or Massachusetts equivalent) certifications may submit the certifications to the Compliance Officer in lieu of completing the USA Football and sportsmanship certifications. 2026
 - N. The Bylaws and Rules and Regulations have been read and approved.
 - O. All Covid related guidance including those from the State of NH, NHIAA and the NFHS (Federation) will be followed.
 - P. A current Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is in place.
 - Q. All football helmets must meet NOCSAE standards (see Federation Rule 1, Art 1)



<https://www.njhfl.org/>

ARTICLE VI

DRAW AREAS/PLAYERS

E. Organizations must designate a High School SAU district from which it draws its players from.

Subparagraph 1: Petition for Exception

- Organizations may petition the League's Board of Directors for exception(s) to SAU Draw Area.
- Approval must be by a two-thirds majority of the then sitting board/members of the league.
- Petitions must be submitted to the League Chairman no later than May 31st of the then current year/season.
 - Tri-Town: BOD approved exception to allow draw area to be the towns of Raymond, Epping and Newmarket, NH. 2019
 - Portsmouth Junior Clippers: BOD approved exception to include Oyster River SAU as part of draw area. 2/22/22
 - ~~Farmington: BOD approved exception to allow draw area to include the Nute High School SAU similar to the one approved by the NHIAA. January 2024-removed 2026~~

D. Players shall live within that organization's represented High School's SAU district or from a town(s) that contracts or has an agreement to send its students into that SAU district.

1. Organizations may take players from outside their represented High School's SAU district. (Exception; Waivers cannot be requested for individual/players that live in Towns that presently have a team in the

League.)

2. S a i d players will then go through the league's waiver process*

3. E f f e c t i v e immediately for the 2026 season, the practice known as the "grandfather rule" regarding player placement is hereby discontinued. All athletes registered within the NJHFL must play within the geographical boundaries of the School Administrative Unit (SAU)/High School for which they reside. (2026)

R. Player Designation:

- Each Team that plays a varsity and Junior Varsity game must designate (as part of its game day roster, name and jersey number) "Varsity" players. These players cannot play JV games unless a team does not have enough players to field a JV team.
 - Roster size 32 or more-Designate 16 players as Varsity game only players (32+ players = 16 designated, Rule of 16)
 - Roster size 31 or less-Designate (# of players less 18) as Varsity game only players (31 players=13 designated, Rule of 18)
- See Rules and Regulations for further information

*Waiver Process

- R. Organizations wishing to waiver in a player will supply the player's name, DOB, current town of residence, grade level and reason why they are requesting a waiver either by email or verbally at a regularly scheduled league meeting.
- S. Prior to the Official Roster Submission-Upon receipt of player information, Board of Directors with vote yes or no to waive player in. Simple yes majority is required for waiver approval.
- T. After the Official Roster Submission- Upon receipt of player information, the Executive Board will vote yes or no to waive player in. Simple yes majority is required for waiver approval
- U. Players shall go through the review/waiver process only once.



<https://www.njhfl.org/>

- V. The waived player in question cannot participate in practice or games until the waiver is approved as stated above).
- W. Any new organization entering the league from a town or city that has more than one organization in NJHFL must jointly present a plan documenting how eligible players will be assigned to each organization and it must be accepted by membership prior to acceptance into the league.
(APPROVED 2026)

Article VII

ORGINIZATION/TEAM FUNDING

- F. Each member of the organization must be self-supporting and self-funding.
- G. The league does get involved with and/or support organizations financially.

Article VIII

LEAGUE SCHEDULE/LEVELS/GAME RULES

- E. The League schedule & divisions will be set yearly by the Executive Board, with approval from Board of Directors.
- F. The League has three separate levels of play.
 - 1. They will be identified as Senior (grades 7 & 8 or Varsity/JV), Junior (grades 5 & 6 or Junior-Varsity/JV) and Youth (grades 2, 3 & 4) divisions. See Rules and Regulations for more information
- C. Preseason Practice: Teams shall start no earlier than four weeks prior to the opening of the regular season.
 - 1. Newly formed teams shall have the option to start practice one (1) week earlier than the normal league practice schedule).
- S. Any open dates on a team's schedule may be filled by that team at their discretion, if it does not interfere with the League schedule.
- T. Games will be played under National Federation of High School Rules, as well as NJHFL Rules and Regulations. NJHFL rules and regulations take precedence over NFHS Rules.
- U. Game Day:
 - The Varsity Head Football Coach for each team is responsible for policing their side of the field. Any violations of NFHS rules, league bylaws, rule and regulations and/or conduct deemed detrimental by their players, coaches, fans, board members or others can and will be subject to league discipline.
 - During games only coaches, players, cheerleaders, medical personnel and team photographers will be allowed to be within the field of play as determined by the league.
 - The chain crew will be on the home team's side of the field
 - Game Day Rules and Regulations shall be followed (see Game Day Procedures and Rules Document)
 - Head coaches shall be responsible for adhering to the rules governing the coach's (Restricted Area) and players' boxes during the game. Refer to NFHS rules governing same.
- V. Home team will provide a current rule book at each game.
- W. Home teams shall set game starting times. *
 - If a game time change is necessary after the schedule has been set as "official", the home team must notify the visiting team, League Coordinator of Officials, and the Executive Board within 48 hours of the desired change. Game time change(s) must be mutually agreed to by both the home and visiting teams. In the event the game needs to be re-scheduled, the Home team is responsible for re-scheduling of the cancelled/postponed game's time, location and date. If the Home team is unable to host the makeup game in the allotted time, the visiting team has the option to host if they have an available and acceptable field.



<https://www.njhfl.org/>

- Changes in game times due to weather conditions or school officials should be announced as soon as possible to the above-mentioned parties.
- All make up games must be played. Within one (1) week of the cancelled/postponed game.
- Upon a change(s) in game time, it is the responsibility of the Executive Board of Directors and/or the league scheduler to notify the rest of the league of the change(s).

- X. If a team refuses to show or play a scheduled league game or refuses to play both the JV and Varsity games scheduled, the following penalties will apply:
- Placed on probation (defined as being monitored to ensure compliance with all rules and regulations for the remainder of the season) and will lose all playoff rights for that season for the varsity level team. Any additional violations will result in removal for the remainder of the year and potential removal from the league which will be voted on by the membership.
 - The team in violation will be assessed a fine of five hundred dollars (\$500).
 - Fine is to be paid to the home team by the end of the season. (2026)

Y. RANKINGS

A team's placement within the division will be decided by its win-loss record within the division. The more wins, the higher the ranking.

- Tie Breakers: If there are any tied records, the following steps will be used until the tie is broken.
 - Best Win/Lost record in the division.
 - Head-to-head (best won-lost record versus each other).
 - Cumulative sum of points allowed in the 1st half of all divisional games. The lower the sum the higher the placement.
 - If two or more teams are still tied, a coin toss will be used to determine placement.
1. When 3 Teams are involved; the odd man wins, and the 2 remaining teams will toss again.
- e. The League tie breaking rules will be reassessed prior to the start of each season and modified as needed due to the League membership and Team alignment for that season.

*Penalties for violation of Section H: In the event the home team fails to abide by Article VIII, Paragraph H:

In the event the game needs to be re-scheduled, the Home team is responsible for re-scheduling of the cancelled/postponed game's time, location and date. If the Home team is unable to host the makeup game in the allotted time, the visiting team has the option to host if they have an available and acceptable field

Article IX

PLAYOFFS

- Z. At the conclusion of the regular season, the top four ranked Varsity teams from each level/division will be the playoff teams. Their respective Junior Varsity Teams follow the Varsity Teams through the playoffs, regardless of record.
- AA. Games will be played as follow: #1 Seed will host #4 Seed; #2 Seed will host #3 Seed.
- BB. The Head Coach of the hosting team will notify the visiting team's Head Coach as well as League's Officials Coordinator and Executive Board to the date, time and place of the playoff game no later than the first Tuesday after the end of the regular season.
- CC. Once dates, times and locations for each playoff game are set, the Executive Board will notify all league teams.
- DD. Unless mutually agreed by both teams, Senior playoff games shall not start earlier than 12 noon.
- EE. The home team shall keep the gate and concession money
- FF. There shall be 4 Officials at all Playoff games, paid by the Home team.
- GG. Prior to the start of the regular season, playoff format will be determined by the B.O.D. and can differ from the above based on number of teams and structure of the Divisions.



<https://www.njhfl.org/>

ARTICLE X

CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES

- X. Senior Championship games shall be hosted at a neutral site. If a neutral cannot be found, games will be hosted by the highest seeded team within the division.
- Host Site: All organizations may nominate themselves to be the host site for the championship games. Nominations must be in no later than June 1st.
 - Host Sites must meet the following requirements.
 - Have a turf field with lights
 - Ample space available for teams to warm up
 - Have available personnel to man concessions, gates etc. for all games
 - Have qualified personnel to run/operate scoreboard/clock and PA system for all games
 - Once all nominations are in, the Board of Directors will then vote on host site by a simple majority
 - The format for the Championship Games will be as follows
 - Division 2 JV Game
 - Division 2 Varsity Championship Game
 - Division 1 JV game
 - Division 1 Varsity Championship Game
 - The “Home” Teams will provide qualified personal to be the chain crew for both the JV and Varsity games
- B. Championship game officials and medical game coverage will be paid by the league.

ARTICLE XI

MEETINGS

- HH. All Organizations shall be notified by the Secretary of any meetings, and the Board of Directors present at those meetings shall constitute a quorum. A quorum will be defined as 2/3 of the membership present, excluding E Board members.
- II. Meetings shall be called at the discretion of the Chairman, Executive Board of Directors, or by petition by no less than (3) members of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XII

DISPUTES, COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES, VIOLATION OF BY-LAWS, RULES & REGULATIONS & DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The Board of Directors of the NJHFL shall have the power to impose any disciplinary action(s) as it deems necessary and appropriate. Disciplinary action can range from a written reprimand to disbarment from participating or associating with the NJHFL. Also, failure to comply with the By Laws, Rules and Regulations of the NJHFL shall be reviewed by the Executive Board/Board of Directors and if necessary, take action as it deems fit. *

*All decisions/actions may be appealed by the process set forth in these By-Laws.

- Y. All dispute(s), complaint(s), grievance(s), violation of By-Laws, Rules & Regulations etc. must be reported to the League Chairman/Commissioner within 48 hrs.
- Z. Upon hearing/reading the League Chairman/Commissioner shall do one of the following:
- If deemed appropriate, call for a hearing of the Executive Board of Directors.
 - Hearing to be held within 72 hours and/or as soon as possible.
 - At hearing will hear/read said dispute(s), complaint(s), grievance(s), etc. as well as all supporting information/documentation/interviews.



<https://www.njhfl.org/>

- The Executive Board of Directors will then, to the best of its ability, resolve, and/or recommend further league action.
 - If a hearing of the Executive Board of Directors is deemed not necessary, the League Chairman/Commissioner will then to the best of their ability resolve and/or recommend further league action.
 - Will report incident(s) to the Board of Directors along with any finding(s) and/or recommendation(s) for further action(s), including recommendation(s) for all disciplinary action(s).
- AA. Board of Directors will then vote, by simply majority, to approve/reject recommendation(s) and/or change recommendation as it sees fit.
- BB. Appeals are handed over to the Disciplinary Committee
- The establishment of the discipline committee would include two (2) Executive Board members and three (3) coaches. Each organization nominates one person from their organization board to be on the committee. The list is kept by the Secretary every year
 - 2026 E-Board members- Jenn Doucette, Melissa Paladino, Walter Cartwright.
 - The 3 coaches are chosen by the E-Board at the time of the Appeal to avoid any conflicts of interest
- CC. The Disciplinary Committee would then review circumstances, documentation and previous decisions.
- DD. The Committee will either confirm the decision or issue an amendment to the discipline issued.
- EE. Action will be a majority vote.

ARTICLE XIII

GAME PROTESTS

- FF. Protests will be presented to the League Commissioner in writing within forty-eight (48) hours. He will then review the nature and wording of the protest before presenting it to the League Executive Board of Directors for a decision.
- GG. Protests will be decided by the Executive Board of Directors consisting of members not involved in the protest.

ARTICLE XIV

PLAYER/COACH GAME DISQUALIFICATION:

- H. Any player or coach who is disqualified before, during or after a NJHFL game (including jamborees and rumbles), shall not participate in his team's next league scheduled game. League playoffs and championship games are included.
- I. The supervisor of officials shall contact the League Chairman/Commissioner by 8PM that Sunday night about any disqualifications. The League Chairman/Commissioner shall contact the affected team and their next opponent (preferably the Head Coaches) prior to their next game about the disqualification.
- J. A disqualified player may be on his team's sideline but may not participate in any way (to include but not limited to water boy, captains' duties, warm-ups). A Disqualified player cannot be in uniform/equipment except for his/her game jersey.
- K. If a player receives a second disqualification that season, he is disqualified for the remainder of the season.
- L. A disqualified coach may not be in contact with his team in any way on game day until the game is over and is prohibited from attending any other League games that week.
- M. If a coach receives a second disqualification that season, he is ineligible to coach for the remainder of season. They may also face further league action with the Board of Directors to vote on any additional actions/sanctions.
- N. Any disqualified player or coach who participates in the next game shall cause his team to forfeit that game and the disqualified player/coach shall be disqualified for the remainder of the season.
- O. Season disqualifications for both players and coaches to include practices, meetings, scouting, etc. as well as games.



<https://www.njhfl.org/>

P. Disqualifications will be carried over to the next season when appropriate.

ARTICLE XV

COMMITTEES

Standing and special committees shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Directors from time to time as deemed necessary to carry on the work of the League.

ARTICLE XVI

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of "Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised", shall govern the League in cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the By-laws and special rules of order of the league.

ARTICLE XVII

Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of the NJHFL, all physical assets will be liquidated and any funds remaining shall be distributed to one or more non-profit, tax-exempt organizations dedicated to serving youth sports in the states of NH and MA. The Board of Directors shall determine to whom the funds are granted.

ARTICLE XVIII

AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS

These by-laws and Rules and Regulations of the league and any items can be amended at any regular meeting of the League if the Board of Directors is in unanimous favor of the amendment. If the amendment is not unanimous then it must be presented in writing and voted on at the next meeting, where it must have a two-thirds favorable vote of the quorum present to pass.