

Youth Level Rules and Regulations (G2/3/4)

Rules & Regulations for YOUTH (G2/3/4) Rules shall follow the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rule book, except as noted herein:

Youth Teams will play either:

- A. Youth 2G - Varsity and JV Game (4th/5th/6th Grade). or
- B. Youth 1G - 1 Varsity Game (minimum 12 players, maximum 25(2026))

A: Game Designation

- 1. Varsity Game: Competitive
- 2. JV Game: Developmental

NOTE: team designation based on a player's physical and emotional wellbeing, as well as talent/skill level

B: Team Responsibilities:

- 1) Provide a roster using the template roster provided by the League for all teams to use.
- 2) Official team rosters are to include the following player information:
 - a) Player's first and last name
 - b) Game jersey number(s): The NJHFL does not follow the Federation numbering rules at this level.
 - c) Player's birth date
 - d) Town of residence
 - e) Player's weight and weight classification
 - f) Player's Grade level
- 3) Roster Changes
 - a) Any team requesting a revision to its roster after they submitted their official league roster i.e.: add a player, change in game jersey number, etc., must contact the Vice Chairman and/or his designee by 8pm the WEDNESDAY NIGHT, prior to the upcoming game. If adding a new player after the official league weigh-in, that player is automatically ineligible to play in a ball carrier position and will receive a helmet sticker denoting them as ineligible to carry the ball or align in ball carrier positions. See section F.3.
 - b) Roster changes are to be sent to the other league teams by the Vice Chairman and/or his designee, as soon as possible.

C: Rules of Play

Rules shall follow the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rule book, except as noted herein:

- 1) Game will be played on regulation sized football field in accordance with NFHS rules
- 2) Two (2) Coaches per team are allowed on the field during play.
 - a) Once the offense breaks the huddle, coaches on the field must stay a minimum of 10 yards (behind team) from line of scrimmage.
 - b) Once the quarterback starts his cadence, ALL coaches will refrain from "coaching" i.e.: no talking to players and/or physically moving players. No calling out the ball carrier's location or number after the snap. Failure to do so will result in:
 - i. 1st offense – Warning
 - ii. 2nd offense – 5-yard dead ball penalty

Youth Level Rules and Regulations (G2/3/4) Rules & Regulations for YOUTH (G2/3/4) as Amended 04/06/2026

iii. 3rd offense – 15-yard dead ball unsportsmanlike penalty on the offending coach.

c) There is no free kicking or punting.

d) Kick offs: Receiving team will begin play from their 35-yard line.

e) Punts: The Offense must declare prior to start of play whether they are going to punt or continue playing. If the offense declares they are punting, the ball will be placed 25 yards downfield from line of scrimmage and play shall resume. Except if placement puts ball inside the 20-yard line, then the ball will be placed at the receiving team's 20- yard line.

3) Length of Quarters: (15) minute "running" time. Injuries, scores, penalties, change of possession and timeouts are the only means to stop the clock. Once the ball is set for play, the clock will start. On a score, the clock will run until the extra point try ends, then stop and restart on change of possession.

4) The last 2 minutes of the 2nd and 4th quarters will be regulation stop time. Officials will notify both teams.

5) Timeouts will not exceed one minute

6) Halftime breaks will be five (5) minutes.

7) Overtime will not be played. If the game is tied at the end of regulation, the game will end in a tie.

8) Game Balls: Youth teams will use Wilson K2 and/or the equivalent of another manufacturer and will supply their own game balls

D. Blocking Restrictions

1) All blocks must initiate from above waist/belt line, this includes within the Free Blocking Zone as defined by NFHS. Lineman cannot chop, cut, and/or crab block. This rule applies to both offensive and defensive linemen. There is no free blocking zone exception. Any block initiated below the waist is a foul, 15 yd penalty.

2) All other rules and regulations regarding blocking, tackling, etc. will follow NFHS (Federation) Rules.

E. Player Regulations

1) Age and Grade Restrictions

a) All players must be between the age of 7, 8 and 9 and within grades 2, 3, and 4.

b) A player must be a minimum of 7 years old prior to the first regular season game and entering a grade as indicated above.

c) A player must not have reached their eleventh (11) birthday before September 1st.

d) All teams must be able to provide birth certificates for their players, upon request by the league.

F: Weight Restrictions/Official Weigh In:

1) All potential ball carriers will be weighed in by the Vice Chairman and/or his designee and/or appointed designee at the Official Weigh-in. The Official Weigh-in will take place at the annual Youth Jamboree. It is mandatory that all teams attend.

2) At the Official Weigh-in:

- a) Teams are to bring two copies of their roster with them, one to go to the Youth Level Coordinator and/or his designee and/or appointed designee, one to remain with the head coach to record weights.
 - b). Head coach and one assistant coach are allowed to be present at weigh in.
 - d) Head coaches can observe weigh-ins and record weight for their own information.
 - e) Assistant coach is responsible for lining players up in numerical order and controlling the team.
 - f) Parents/guardians/others are not allowed within the designated weigh-in area.
2. All players must be weighed in prior to or during the Official Weigh-in or they will not be eligible to be a ball carrier in the upcoming season. Potential ball carriers get one chance to weigh in. Once they are officially weighed in, they cannot get re-weighed if they don't make weight.
3. Maximum weight of any ball carrier shall be under 96.0 lbs. at the Official Weigh-in, at which time the player is officially added to the team roster.
- a) Ball Carrier Positions: Running Back (Tail, Full, Flanker/H Back), Quarterback, Wide Receiver, Tight End.
 - b) Any player over 96 pounds, when added to the roster is considered over the weight limit for a ball carrier and cannot be re-weighed at a later date to become a ball carrier. Such players will get 2 helmet stickers, one on each side put on their helmet at their weigh-in, declaring them ineligible to carry the ball or align in ball carrier positions. Stickers must clearly contrast with the color of the helmet.
 - c) If a player with stickers on their helmet intestinally carries the ball, it will result in an Illegal Procedure penalty, 5yds from the previous spot.
4. Additional Weigh In: For those players who miss and/or are unable to attend the Preseason Youth Jamboree, an additional "Official" weigh-in will take place after the Preseason Youth Jamboree, time and location to be determined by the Youth Level Coordinator and/or his designee. Teams are to be notified by the Thursday prior to the Preseason Youth Jamboree of the time and place of the additional "Official" weigh-in.
5. A team may also request a weigh-in(s). by contacting the Vice Chairman and/or their designee. If request is for a new player to be added after the official league weigh in, see section B.3.
6. No challenges can be made once the Official Weigh-ins have been recorded, and the player is added to the Official Team Roster.

G. Offense/Defense

- 1) Each team will run its own offense
 - a) Any player receiving the snap may not run between the "A" gaps on either side of the snapper. QB sweeps, keepers and/or bootlegs are legal providing the play is to the outside of the A-Gaps.
 - b) Infraction will result in a 5-yard Illegal Procedure penalty.
- 2) Defenses will be static and non-blitzing. Blitzing is defined as any Defender not on the line of scrimmage approaching the Line of Scrimmage prior to the snap or an interior defensive lineman not in a three (3) or four (4) point stance. An illegal blitz is a 5-yard Illegal Procedure penalty.

- a) The use of a nose guard/tackle over the center or in the “A” Gaps is not allowed.
 - b) Defensive guards must be lined up directly over the offensive guards (head-up), and not in the “A” gaps on either side of the center.
 - c) Linebackers must be at least 3 yards off the ball but can line up anywhere along the Line of Scrimmage including over the Center.
 - d) Defensive Backs must be a minimum of 5yds off the line of scrimmage, unless there is a wide receiver deployed by the offense. In this case Defensive Backs can line up over the split receiver on the Line of Scrimmage.
 - e) No more than six (6) defensive linemen are allowed on the Line of Scrimmage.
 - f) All Interior Defensive Linemen (On or inside the offensive Tackles) must be in either a three (3) or four (4) point stance. Stand-up defensive ends over or outside the TE are allowed. (DEs must be within arm’s reach of the TE)
 - g) Any infraction of the above “a-f” will result in a 5yd Illegal Formation penalty.
- 3) Once the ball is snapped, defensive players can then pursue the ball.

H: Officials

- 1) Officials will consist of at least three (3) board certified officials scheduled by the Northeast Jr. High Football League.
- 2) Plays will run every 45 (forty-five) seconds once the official has placed the ball in play.

I: Mercy Rule

- 1) Once a team has built a lead equal to or greater than 28 points the Mercy Rule will apply. On change of possession the losing team will take possession on their 40-yard line unless the change of possession occurs within the opposing team’s 40-yard line. The winning team will take possession on their 20-yard line, regardless of where or how the change of possession occurred, unless the change is inside their 20-yard line, in which case the change will occur as normal. Invoking the Mercy Rule does not mean the game is over. If the trailing team closes to less than 28 points normal rules will go back into effect. The entire game will be played and the team with the most points wins.

J: Playoffs/Championship Games: See League By-Laws