

***METRO YOUTH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION***  
***7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade RULES AND REGULATIONS***  
***EFFECTIVE: 2017***

***SECTION I***

IOWA HIGH SCHOOL RULES WILL BE USED WITH THE FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS:

- 1) GAMES:
  - A) League games will be scheduled with a split season to accommodate any middle school schedule of games. Games and practices will pause during the middle school season.
  - B) Games will consist of four, 8 minute quarters
  - C) Games will follow IHSSA football rules
  - D) MYFA sanctioned tournament teams are allowed to participate in additional games.
  - E) Games may begin no earlier than thirty minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
  - F) The league may adjust game schedules during the season for competitive balance.
  
- 2) EQUIPMENT:
  - A) The mouth piece must be visible and not clear.
  - B) Only Pro-Tuff decals may be used on MYFA helmets. No stripes along the center line of the helmet are allowed. All decals must be removed from helmets before equipment turn-in following the last game.
  - C) Players must use only League approved equipment.
  - D) Players, Coaches, parents/guardians and others are prohibited from altering any player equipment. The prohibition excludes a Coach approved alteration of player's pants for proper and safe fit.
  - E) **Coaches are REQUIRED to check ALL player equipment weekly and make appropriate adjustments. While all protective equipment is important to the safety of the player, coaches will place an emphasis on checking and replacing mouthpieces. It is suggested equipment checks be made daily.**
  - F) Coaches are strongly encouraged to follow proper player position numbering for uniforms whenever possible.
  
- 3) GAME BALL:

Game ball will be an Intermediate size for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade divisions and will be furnished by the league.
  
- 4) PLAYING TIME:

Playing time will be at the discretion of the coach and there will not be a league required minimum or maximum for any athlete. A player could play the entire game, could only play on one side of the ball, might only be involved in special teams play, or may not participate in the game.

- 5) PARENTS RULE:  
**PARENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO CRITICIZE** the officials, the opposing team, their team, or their child in any way during the game or practices. Encouragement will give your child more benefit than criticism. Parents who are ejected will face a penalty - 1<sup>st</sup> offense is a one game suspension for their child, 2<sup>nd</sup> offense will result in dismissal from the program. **THIS RULE APPLIES TO ANY PARENT REGARDLESS OF THEIR POSITION IN THE STANDS, WITH THE TEAM AS A COACH/ASSISTANT OR AS A MEMBER OF THE CHAIN GANG.**
- 6) HEALTH:  
Any parent or guardian who allows his/her child to play in this program is certifying that the player is physically and mentally able to play. It is the **RECOMMENDATION** of the Board of Directors of MYFA that all players receive a **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION BEFORE THE FIRST PRACTICE**, and that the physician knows it is for football. This, however, is not a requirement.
- 7) INJURIES:  
**TRAINERS WILL KEEP RECORDS** of all injuries (players name, number, team, and injury) if removed from a game due to injury. The trainer must then check the player before they are allowed to play again, either in that game or the following game. Coaches are to have any injuries that occur in practice checked by the trainers before allowing the player to play in the next game. **TRAINERS WILL TURN OVER THEIR LIST** of player injuries to the MYFA league, and the Head Coach of the injured player, indicating the player(s) that must be checked the following week before being allowed to play. Federation rules require a player that is unconscious or apparently unconscious in a game to receive written permission from a physician before being allowed to participate further in football.
- 8) OFFICIALS:  
Must be qualified IHSSA Member Official in football and **MUST CERTIFY HAVING READ** the Metro Youth Football Association rules as they affect Federation rules prior to officiating their first game.
- A) No official shall participate in a game in which they have a close family member participating as a coach or player. (Close family members shall include: father, son, spouse, sibling, brother/sister-in-law or niece/nephew.)

## **SECTION II - ELIGIBILITY**

- 1) There shall be a minimum of 18 players per team. Teams will be split according to the school district the athletes are attending school at. Each team shall have one Head Coach and a minimum of two assistants.
  - A. Districts that have 36 or more players will be responsible for dividing the players into 2 equal size teams.
  
- 2) TO BE ELIGIBLE A PLAYER MUST:
  - A. At least be going into the 7th grade, and **NOT BEYOND 8th GRADE.**
  - B. May only participate on one MYFA team and MYFA sanctioned tournament - team during the football season, which starts with the first practice and ends with the last game.
  - C. Have paid the full registration fee.
  - D. Have their parent or legal guardian **SIGN AN OFFICIAL AUTHORIZATION** for their child/ward to participate in the program. Signed authorization must be **TURNED IN TO THE LEAGUE REGISTRAR** prior to participation in the program. **“NO SIGNATURE - NO PRACTICE.”**
  - E. Not be allowed to play after sustaining any apparently serious injury unless a physician determines that it is not harmful for the player to participate in games or practices. Physician must issue a **WRITTEN RELEASE** to the Head Coach. The Head Coach is to give the signed release to a member of the MYFA board of directors.
  - F. Have practiced with full equipment for six (6) practice sessions before competing in a game. Late registrations must have at least three days of conditioning before the use of equipment (excluding helmet). This does not count toward the 6 practices for competing in a game. To allow a player to compete in at least four (4) games, no new registrations will be taken after the completion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of practice.
  - G. Players who have made no contact with the coach by the sixth practice may be dropped by the registrar. **It is the responsibility of the head coach to notify the registrar regarding inactive players.**
  - H. Any athlete ejected from a game will also serve a one game suspension during the next scheduled game.

### ***SECTION III - COACHES CONDUCT***

- 1) They Metro youth Football Association will approve the appointment of all head coaches.
- 2) The players in our program are at a very impressionable age; therefore these rules of conduct for the Coaches will help to set a favorable example for these players. All Head Coaches are **Responsible** for their Assistant Coaches following these rules.
- 3) Head Coaches will be required to sign the MYFA Coaches Conduct Statement and agree to the disciplinary action guidelines outlined in this document that pertain to the behavior and actions of the teams coaching staff, players, chain gang, relatives, and fans.
- 4) No betting between Coaches.
- 5) No alcoholic beverages are allowed within 2 blocks of practices or games. This rule includes parents. Coaches are to make sure parents understand this rule. Coaches violating this rule are dismissed from the program immediately. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Parents violating this rule will be warned once and then their child may be removed from the program by action of the Board of Directors.
- 6) Coaches will refrain from the use of any tobacco products in the presence of players.
- 7) No swearing or losing your temper in front of the players.
- 8) No striking of the players for any reason. These are young children, not young adults, treat them accordingly.
- 9) **Game films or videotapes, etc. can be used for coaching or scouting purposes.** Clarification: Coaches may view videotapes, make cut-ups, break down the tape for coaching purposes and show video to their team.
  - A. Video can be filmed of your own team/players only during practice, games or scrimmages in accordance with practice time rules (Sec IV-1).
  - B. Video can be filmed of opposing teams only in accordance with scouting rules (Sec III-9).
  - C. Video can only be shown to players during team practice times. No coach shall assign a player to view video outside of practice time.
  - D. No video will be taken from the score towers. Video recording will only be allowed from the spectator area.
  - E. Drone Video cameras will not be permitted on Metro facilities or practice sites.
- 10) Scouting of other teams is permitted when:
  - A. The other team is playing a league-scheduled game.
  - B. Your team is scrimmaging the other team.

**Intent: Limit when it is permissible to study other teams. Incidental observations by one team of the other do not constitute scouting.**
- 11) No criticizing officials or Scorekeepers at any time, on or off the field. This can only hurt the program.
- 12) One Coach is allowed on the field for an injury at the Official's request. In a game, first-aid will be administered by the attending medical official only. Medical Official (trainer) must authorize return of the injured player in the game.
- 13) Head Coach is responsible for the conduct of their Assistants and the parents of players on their team.
- 14) Show **SPORTSMANSHIP** at all times.
- 15) **Coaches will inform the Registrar within 24 hours when a player drops from the program or if a player has not contacted the coach by the sixth practice.**

- 16) **USA Football Certification: All tackle coaches (Head and Assistants) will be required to become Level I Certified through USA Footballs Heads Up program.**
- 17) **All tackle head coaches will be required to become licensed by the Iowa High School Athletic Association.**
- 18) BACKGROUND CHECKS: All coaches (both flag and tackle), Executive and General Board members will submit to an annual background check.
  - A) Coaches and members will sign a form authorizing the performance of the background check. In addition, coaches and members are required to sign a form stating that they have never been convicted of a crime of any kind against a minor. Head flag and tackle coaches are responsible for securing signatures on the background check paperwork of their assistant coaches and have them turned in no later than picture night. **Failure to sign the required forms, secure signatures from assistant coaches and/or turn them in constitutes grounds for dismissal.**
  - B) The results of the background checks are confidential and will only be viewed by the Executive Board. Excepting conviction of crimes against a minor, the Executive Board will use its discretion in determining what behavior is and is not acceptable for persons who wish to coach or be a member of Metro Youth Football. **Any and all convictions against a minor are automatic grounds for dismissal.**
- 18) ASSISTANT COACHES: All assistant coaches will be chosen at the discretion of the head coach for each team. A team may have as many assistant coaches as the Head Coach desires.
  - A) All assistant coaches are held to the same code of conduct as the head coach and shall pass the required league approved background check.
  - B) During games only 1 head coach and a maximum of 4 assistant coaches will be allowed on the field side of the ropes. All others must remain behind the ropes in the bleacher area.
  - C) Assistant coaches shall be 18 years of age or a High School graduate. This does not remove the ability to have high school players assist teams during practices.
  - D) The Metro Youth Football board has the authority to remove/deny they appointment of an assistant coach from any team.
- 19) **INFRACTIONS OF THE ABOVE RULES ARE SUBJECT TO A VARIETY OF DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS BY THE BOARD, UP TO AND INCLUDING DISMISSAL FROM THE LEAGUE.**
- 20) Any suspended coach may not participate in game day activities. In this situation, the offending coach will be permitted to attend the game and required to observe as a spectator outside the 20s and the designated bench area. Additionally, they will not be permitted to be a member of the chain gang.

## *SECTION IV – PRACTICES & TOURNAMENTS*

### 1) PRACTICES:

- A) All teams will be limited to 5 practices a week prior to the first scheduled game. After the first scheduled game, the teams are limited a maximum of 4 practices per week. Only one practice session per day is allowed, and, each practice session is limited to a maximum of 2 hours. A scrimmage shall be counted as a practice for that week and is limited to the 2-hour maximum, as are regular practices.
- B) Dates of first practice, and first practice with full equipment will be assigned by the Board of Directors at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.
- C) Practice scrimmages after the first game are permitted, not to exceed 1 scrimmage per week, against a team in the same division. Length of scrimmage is not to exceed 2-hour maximum, and is counted as 1 practice for that week.
- D) Equipment to be used in the first 3 practices will be football, mouthpiece and helmet only. The remainder of the first week full equipment may be used. Beginning the second week of practice, full equipment may be used with blocking dummies only the first three days. After those eight days are up, full equipment and full contact are allowed.  
NOTE: Person(s) designated by the Executive Board will have the authority to immediately suspend a practice or dismiss a Coaching Staff found guilty of violating this rule.
- E) Contact Drill Guidelines: “Full Contact” Drills will be limited to no more than 30 minutes per day and no more than 120 minutes per week. The first three contact levels of USA Football of “Air”, “Bags”, and “Control are not subject to these time limits. However the drill contact levels for “Thud”, which involves initiation of contact at full speed with no pre-determined winner and no take-down to the ground, and “Live Action” will be subject to these time limits.
- F) Registration cards (completely filled out, see II-2-D) must be **IN THE POSSESSION** of the MYFA Registrar before the player will be allowed to practice. The Registrar will furnish up-to-date rosters to coaches before the first game.

### 2) EXCEPTIONS TO PRACTICE RESTRICTIONS:

- A) Players participating on an MYFA sanctioned tournament team may practice with the tournament team in addition to their “assigned” team.
- B) The total practice time for a tournament player may not exceed five, two hour practices periods per week