**northern stark Youth Football League**

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**2023 Manual**

***Updated July 2023***

  

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**Section 1: NSYFL Philosophy**

***The Northern Stark Youth Football League strives to create an atmosphere of positive instruction in a competitive environment, encouraging participation, sportsmanship, and scholastic achievement, while engaging in youth football activities in and around its surrounding communities.***

**Section 2: Governance**

The governing board will consist of two members from each of the respective communities participating in the NSYFL.

The board will elect one official from each community to serve as President, Vice President and Director of Football Operations annually at the December board meeting. The term for each position shall be a period of 2 years.

1. Responsibilities will include:
	1. Ensuring consistency with the mission and purpose of the NSYFL
	2. Planning
	3. Scheduling
	4. Rules
	5. League Website
	6. Enforcement and Disciplinary Action
2. NSYFL membership shall be deemed a privilege and responsibility. Communities are expected to respect and adhere to the rules and by-laws set forth in this manual in their entirety, without exception.
	1. Any violation of NSYFL by-law can result in result in consequences that may include: forfeiture of a game and/or a season, loss of vote on voting matters, suspension and/or removal from the NSYFL, subject to the voting by-laws stipulated in this manual.

1. Each community that participates in the NSYFL must have and present evidence of insurance coverage for accident, general liability and director liability.

1. Officers will be elected on an annual basis, with 2-year terms.
	1. One representative will be elected for each of the 4 officer positions:
		* 1. President
			2. Vice President
			3. Director of Football Operations
			4. Treasurer
2. Voting
	1. Each community has 1 vote on all voting matters.
	2. Majority Vote: For matters requiring action, a majority vote (greater than 50%) must be achieved to pass.
	3. The President’s vote will break any and all ties
3. Officer Roles and Responsibilities
	1. **President:** Shall call, organize, set the agenda and preside over the meetings of the Board. The President will be responsible for creating all the league’s schedules. The President will be in charge of recording all minutes and votes of the NYSYFL Board.
	2. **Vice President**: Shall, in the absence of the President, assume the role of President. The VP will oversee the league’s website.
	3. **Director of Football Operations**: The Director will facilitate all football operations, including rules meetings, official weigh-ins, and official rosters. Shall facilitate the escalation and resolution of all coaching matters/issues. The Director shall be responsible for updating, maintain, interpretation of and adherence to the official manual of the NSYFL.
	4. **Treasurer**: The Treasurer shall be in charge of keeping any and all monies held by the NSYFL, shall collect any and all annual dues from the communities and shall write any and all checks necessary. The treasurer shall also perform all duties as website administrator.
4. Coaching
	1. **Background Checks**: All communities are responsible for performing background checks for all coaches. The results of the background checks are to be submitted to the NSYFL board for review and approval. Lack of adherence can result in disciplinary action prescribed in Section 2B of this manual.
	2. **Code of Conduct**: All coaches are required to sign and return the NSYFL Code of Conduct form. Lack of adherence can result in disciplinary action prescribed in Section 2B of this manual.

**Section 3: Format and Rosters**

1. League Format:
	1. The NSYFL consists of one league:
		1. Individual Grade Format
			1. 4th Grade
			2. 5th Grade
			3. 6th Grade
			4. 7th Grade
2. Rosters:
	1. Official rosters must be submitted by Wednesday, August 11, 2023 with player names, dates of birth, grade in school, height and weight. This data should be captured and recorded at the time of each community’s evaluation/combine.
	2. Player information will be validated and updated by the Director of Football Operations prior to August 20, 2023.
	3. In order to ensure competitive balance, rosters shall not exceed 22 players per team for all leagues, unless approved by a majority vote of the NSYFL board.
	4. Each community has a fiduciary responsibility to evaluate its players and divide talent equally, as “Stacking” will not be tolerated. Any community that attempts to “stack” will be required to redistribute its players and will be subjected by disqualification from the NSYFL, post-season play, or both.

**Section 4: Season Timeline**

The length of the season, which includes the pre-season, regular-season and post-season will be determined by the board of the NSYFL on an annual basis.

1. A mandatory meeting should be held annually to discuss and review rules, scheduling, safety and point-of-emphasis for the forthcoming season. Attendance will include:
	1. NSYFL Board Members
	2. NSYFL Head Coaches (Assistant Coaches are welcome)
	3. Head Referees from each community
2. Pre-Season: Teams shall not be permitted to begin organized practices with assigned teams until a date that is determined by the approval of the NSYFL Board of Directors, which is Monday, August 7 for 2023.
	1. Session/s may be held prior to the start of the pre-season in conjunction with player evaluation and draft.
	2. Weigh-ins are to be witnessed by the NSYFL league commissioner, or a designated representative of the NSYFL board of directors.
	3. The league sets a limit of 3 Scrimmages before the 1st game of the regular season.
3. Regular-Season: The regular season will be comprised of a 6-7 week schedule.
	1. Teams will be divided into conferences with the majority of games being played within their respective conference.
	2. Conference standings will be maintained for all grade levels.
	3. Final regular season standings will be determined by the conference standings at all grades, with ties being resolved in accordance with the following criteria, in order of priority:
		* Overall record (i.e., winning percentage)
		* Head to head winner
		* Record verses common opponent
		* Total points scored against
		* Coin Toss
	4. The top teams in each grade, as determined by the conference standings (see above) will advance to the Playoffs.
4. Post-Season:
	1. Once the pool of playoff teams is determined for each grade (from the standings), they will be seeded by the NSYFL Board on the Sunday immediately following the Regular Season using guidelines determined by the NSYFL Board.
	2. The post-season schedule for each division is as follows:
		1. All grades will be comprised of a 3-week schedule, as follows:
			1. Playoff Week 1 (higher seeded team will have home field advantage):
				1. Quarter-finals 1v8, 2v7, 3v6 and 4v5
				2. Consolation games for all teams that do not qualify for playoffs will be matched-up according to seed.
			2. Playoff Week 2 (higher seeded team will have home field advantage):
				1. Semi-finals determined by outcomes (higher seeded team has home field advantage)
			3. Championship Week 3 (higher seeded team will have home field advantage):
				1. Finals (top 2 teams).

**Section 5: Age and Weight Limitations**

1. Age Requirements:
	1. Playing up from a lower grade (i.e., 3rd grade) is highly discouraged, but done so at the discretion of the community based on the mental and physical development of the corresponding player.
	2. Playing up from 2nd grade or lower is not permitted.
	3. Age requirements per grade
		1. A player that turns 11 years of age prior to August 1st is ineligible to play in 4th grade and must move up to 5th grade.
		2. A player that turns 12 years of age prior to August 1st is ineligible to play in 5th grade and must move up to 6th grade.
		3. A player that turns 13 years of age prior to August 1st is ineligible to play in 6th grade and must move up to 7th grade.
		4. A player that turns 14 years of age prior to August 1st is ineligible to play.
		5. Playing up a grade level from the grade the player is in to start the school year is not permitted. Siblings playing together must be 1 year apart and must be approved by a majority league vote.
2. Official weigh-ins will take place at the NSYFL pre-season round robin scrimmage on a date designated by the NSYFL board.
	1. Weigh-ins must be logged on a designated roster sheet provided by the NSYFL.
	2. Weigh-ins must be witnessed by the NSYFL league commissioner, or a NSYFL board member that is designated by the commissioner.
	3. A player’s weight on the designated weigh-in date serves as their official weight for the season. If the weight-limit is exceeded, a stripe must be placed on their helmet for the entire season.
		1. A player can remove clothing for the official weigh-in.
		2. A player is not authorized to leave the room/area where weigh-ins are being recorded
			1. *Example: A player weighs-in and is ½ pound over the weight limit, so they leave the area to shed weight and return to weigh in again….this is not authorized under any circumstances.*
3. To advance the ball, a player cannot exceed the following weight limits
	1. 4th grade – 105lbs
	2. 5th grade – 115lbs
	3. 6th grade – 125lbs
	4. 7th grade – 135lbs
4. Players that exceed the imposed weight limits must have a stripe centered front to rear placed on their helmet and cannot advance the ball on offense & under any circumstances.
	1. A Striped player can advance fumbles and interceptions on defense only (no laterals allowed to a striped player)
	2. Striped players cannot play any **position** that allows advancing the ball. (i.e., offensive backfield, offensive ends). Striped players are allowed to punt but cannot advance the ball past the line of scrimmage.
5. **Weight Challenges are not permitted**:We will do official weigh-ins at the preview.

**Section 6: Rules of the Game**

***The Ohio High School Athletic Association rules shall apply with the following clarifications and/or exceptions:***

1. **TEAM/SPECTATOR AREA:**
	1. Team Box 25-to-25 yard lines.
	2. All Coaches are responsible for the conduct of all persons in the box and must remain on the sideline.
	3. Spectators must be behind designated sideline marker 4 yards from the field.
	4. Home team is responsible for providing scorers, line markers, chains, etc., as well as associated volunteers.
2. **FIELD OF PLAY:**
	1. 50 yards wide by 100 yards with 10 yard End Zones.
3. **GAME LENGTH (All grades):**
	1. NSYFL football games shall be comprised of: 4 quarters-8 minutes per quarter-10-minute half-time.
	2. To prevent lopsided scores the NSYFL will use the Continuous Clock Rule, whereby if a team is ahead by 24 points or more in the second half of a game, then a continuous running clock will be used.
		1. If at any point during the 2nd half that the spread becomes less than 24 points, normal clock rules will be reinstated until the spread exceeds 24 or more points.
	3. 25 second play clock will start at the spot of the ball. Delay of game will result in a 5yd penalty.
4. **PERSONNEL & PLAYING TIME**
	1. The primary focus and spirit of the NSYFL Varsity/JV format is to provide a meaningful experience and to develop **ALL** participating players.
	2. Players are limited to 4 quarters per day.
	3. Even if a team is short players, a JV team should not gain an advantage by playing a key Varsity contributor in a JV game. Head coaches will make reasonable efforts to have each player participate a minimum of 25% during each game. The following factors could decrease playing time:
		1. Safety
		2. Practice attendance and participation may impact playing time
5. **GAME REFEREES:**
	1. Each community needs to secure the preferred number of **licensed game referees**.
		1. All Grades: 4 preferred, 3 referees minimum
6. **TIMEOUTS OHSAA Rules/ Exception**:
	1. Each team is granted 3 timeouts per half and 1 additional timeout during overtime periods.
	2. Only two coaches are permitted on the field of play at one time, unless attending to an injured player.
7. **FIELD CLOCK:**
	1. Referee will notify coaches @ 4, 2 and 1 minutes left in each half without a clock on the field.
8. **OSHAA PENALTY EXCEPTION:**
	1. 10-yards for all major penalties, including unsportsmanlike violations on all length fields. (i.e., no 15-yard penalties)
	2. A player receiving 2 personal fouls in 1 game will be ejected for the remainder of the that game and be suspended for the game the following week. The suspended player can practice with their team.
	3. 4/5th – Holding is only a 5-yard penalty
9. **NO “KICKOFFS”:**
	1. The ball is placed on the on the 35-yard line for 100 yard field
10. **SAFETY:**

## Following a safety, the ball will be placed at the 50-yard line.

# PUNT IS LIVE IN 6/7th (NOT IN 4/5th):

## In the 4/5th, a coach must designate his intent to “Punt” or “Go for It” to the officials, but only on 4th down, so that the referee announces “punt” to both coaches. Punter must follow their call.

1. No more than 3 players allowed back to field the punt.

## If timeout is called, the referee will announce the intent to “punt” after the time out.

## Teams will align in punt formation and punt return formation, but punt will be a free kick (no rush by the defense).

## The ball is down and the play is over when possessed by the punt return team,

## PARENT/FAN BEHAVIOR

## Each community is responsible for the behavior of their fans. A parent/fan that persists in an effort to distract the game in any way will be removed from the premises and not permitted to return that day.

## A parent/fan that demonstrates escalated behavior that is viewed detrimental to the league, players, officials, coaches and/or other parents, will be banned from any and all NSYFL facilities for a period of time determined by the NSYFL board of directors.

# EXTRA-POINTS:

## The referee informs the scorekeeper one or two extra points.

## A team is awarded 1 point when the ball is placed on the hashmark and is converted by a pass or run

## A team is awarded 2 points

## when the ball is placed on the 5 yard line and is converted by a pass or run

## with a successful kick

## If a team kicks an extra point, or a field goal, the play is live.

## No defender can align over the center on Level 1.

# OVERTIME GAMES:

# For All Grades games, OHSAA rules are used, except the ball is placed on the 10-yard line with 4 downs to score. Each team shall have 4 downs to score, or an equal number of opportunities/possessions to score. Double overtime and beyond teams must go for 2.

# OHSAA EJECTION:

## Exception: The referee ejects the player or coach has the final ruling. We encourage officials to be proactive to avoid escalation.

### The player/coach will not play or coach a game the following week, however the league permits an ejected coach to be at (and coach at) practice. This ruling covers the next game.

# OFFENSE:

## A lineman is considered “interior” when there is another lineman on their outside.

## The 5 “interior” linemen must be in a 3 or 4 point stance.

## An “interior” lineman that does not have an offensive lineman on his outside may line-up in a 2-point stance. (E.g., if there is no Tight End, Slot Back or Wing Back on the same side as the right tackle, he may line up in a 2-point stance for purposes of blocking a naked Def. End).

## The 5 “interior” offensive linemen may split a maximum of 1-yard

## “O” ends must be eligible to advance the ball and under the weight limit (No stripe).

* 1. **OTHER RESTRICTIONS (4th and 5th only)**
		1. No Trips
		2. No Chop Block – All Grades

## DEFENSE (See 2018 NSYFL Rules Addendum for Defensive Diagrams)

## Defensive formations are governed by alignment off the ball and the number of players that are allowed on each of 3 levels (see exceptions below\*):

1. **Level 1 (Down Linemen):**
	1. 1 yard off the line of scrimmage
	2. 4, 5 and 6 man fronts are allowed
	3. Interior Line: must be in a 3 or 4 point stance at all times
	4. Defensive Ends: may be in a 2, 3 or 4 point stance
		1. Aligned directly over or shaded the Offensive End (i.e., Tight End, Slot Back or Wing Back (whomever is most outside)
		2. If the Offensive End splits more than 1 yard, the Defensive End may line up anywhere outside of the Offensive Tackle or End.
2. **Level 2 (Linebackers/Corners):**
	1. A minimum of 3 yards and a maximum of 5 yards off the line of scrimmage
	2. When in a 40-Front: 3-5 level 2 defenders allowed
	3. When in a 50-Front: 2-4 level 2 defenders allowed
	4. When in a 60-Front: 1-3 level 2 defenders allowed
3. **Level 3 (Defensive Backs):**
	1. A minimum of 7 yards off the line of scrimmage (no maximum)
	2. 2, 3 and 4 defensive backs are allowed
4. **Exceptions**
	1. Goal line (inside the 15-yard line): Any defensive formation is allowed.
	2. 4th down: Any defensive formation is allowed.
	3. When Offense is in Trips: Only 1 defender is required on level 3.

## NO BLITZING (All Grades):

# Blitzing is not allowed in either league. Blitzing is defined as any forward movement by a Level “2” or “3” defender prior to the snap of the ball.

#### This includes rocking or running starts by L-Backer, Safety, or D-Back. D-Back, LB or Safeties may move backward or parallel to the line only if O-back is in motion or shifting prior to the snap.

* 1. **OTHER RESTRICTIONS (4th and 5th Only)**
		1. No stemming-Defensive line must be set when offense is set.
		2. No stacking-Linebackers cannot be stacked directly behind defensive linemen
		3. No gapping – Defensive line cannot line up in gaps, but can be shaded to shoulder of Offensive lineman
		4. 40/50/60 Fronts
		5. No Prevent defense allowed (Cannot move level 1 and 2 defenders to Level 3)
	2. At no time can any team have more than 7 players in the box. The box is described from the end of the offensive line tight end to tight end. The 8th man has to be outside of the end man on the line.

**PENALTY FOR ABOVE DEFENSIVE RULES:**

## Any violation of the above rules shall be considered an “illegal defense”.

# First Violation: The official will notify the head coach with a warning

# 2nd violation and more: A 10-yard penalty will be imposed.

#

1. **FILMING**:
2. Filming a game without the express written consent of the head coach of the team being filmed is strictly prohibited.
	1. Exchanging film with other teams is permitted if both teams’ head coaches agree to it.
3. Per OHSAA rules, no drone filming is allowed under any circumstance, even with head coach approval.
4. Filming a game or practice of an opposing team without the express written consent of the head coach of the team being filmed, at the direction of a coach of an opposing team, and with the intent of sharing that film with a coach or player of an opposing team to obtain an advantage in game strategy or planning is strictly prohibited.
	1. First filming offense – Filming a game or practice of an opposing team without the express written consent of the head coach of the team being filmed, at the direction of a coach of an opposing team, and with the intent of sharing that film with a coach or player of an opposing team to obtain an advantage in game strategy or planning, will result in:
		* 1. a one game suspension of the next scheduled game of both the filming person & the head coach of the team(s) on which the filming person has a child on the roster, and
			2. both the subject coach and the filming person will not be permitted to attend the next scheduled NYSFL game of the head coach’s team and the team(s) on which the filming has a child on the roster.
	2. Second filming offense – Anyone caught for a second time filming a game or practice of an opposing team without the express written consent of the head coach of the team being filmed, at the direction of a coach of an opposing team, and with the intent of sharing that film with a coach or player of an opposing team to obtain an advantage in game strategy or planning, will not be permitted to attend any NSYFL game for the remainder of the season and will be permanently banned from acting as a coach in the NSYFL, and:
		* 1. the head coach of the team(s) on which the filming person has a child on the roster will be banned from attending any NSYFL game for the remainder of the current football season and will be permanently banned from acting as a coach in the NSYFL.

**Section 7: Equipment**

1. All players must wear full legal equipment. It is strongly recommended that each player wear an athletic supporter and cup
	1. All face shields must be clear (un-tinted)
	2. All mouth guards must be attached to the face mask of helmets.
	3. Face paint is not allowed
	4. Solid steel/metal cleats are not allowed.
2. Official Footballs (Composite and/or leather are acceptable):
	1. A-League: No brand preference, however, the ball should be official “Youth” size, or it will be removed.
	2. B-League: No brand preference, however, the ball should be official “Junior” size, or it will be removed.
3. Each community is responsible for supplying their teams with a first aid kit for all practices and games.

**Section 8: OHSAA Concussion Protocol**

As of April 26, 2013 Ohio’s return to play law (ORC 3707.511) requires the following for youth sports organizations:

1. Requires a youth sports organization to provide to the parent or other guardian of an individual who wishes to practice for or compete in an athletic activity organized by the organization, a concussion and head injury information sheet created by the Department of Health.
2. Prohibits an individual from acting as a coach or referee for a youth sports organization without successfully completing a free online training program every three years in recognizing the symptoms of concussions posted to the Ohio Department of Health’s web site or holding a pupil-activity program permit from the State Board of Education.
3. The youth sports organization for which the individual intends to act as a coach or referee shall inform the individual of the training requirements.
4. Ohio’s return to play law requires a coach, referee, or official of a youth sports organization to remove an athlete exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury from practice or competition.
5. Prohibits a coach, referee or official of a youth sports organization from allowing an athlete to return to play on the same day as he/she is removed.
6. Prohibits a coach, referee or official of youth sports organization from allowing an individual to return to practice or competition from which the individual was removed or to participate in any other practice or competition for which the coach, referee, or official is responsible until the individual has been assessed and cleared for return by a physician or by any other licensed health care provider authorized by the youth sports organization.

**Who can clear an athlete to return to play?**

* + Under Ohio Law (ORC 3313.539 and ORC 3707.511), a physician must provide WRITTEN clearance for an athlete to return to play. A school district or youth sports organization may also authorize a licensed health care provider who is not a physician to make an assessment or grant clearance to return to play if the provider is acting in accordance with one of the following, as applicable to the provider’s authority to practice in Ohio:
	+ In consultation with a physician
	+ Pursuant to the referral of a physician
	+ In collaboration with a physician
	+ Under the supervision of a physician
1. **Can a child return to play on the same day if he/she is cleared to return by a physician or other authorized health care provider?**

**NO**. Ohio law prohibits a child to return to play (practice or competition) on the same day that he/she is removed on suspicion of having sustained a concussion, regardless of whether he/she has been cleared by a physician or other authorized health care provider. He/she may return the following day if cleared in writing by a physician (MD or DO) or other authorized health care provider.

**SECTION 9: Football Practice Guidelines to Minimize Concussions**

1. **Preseason Practice (all practices prior to the first regular‐season game)**

Note: the following regulations apply to individual student‐athletes. Position groups, etc., can alternate contact to adhere to the regulations. Also, contact with soft equipment such as bags, shields, sleds, etc., does not count toward contact limitations. Additionally, the task force noted that preseason practices may require more full‐contact time than practices occurring later in the regular season to allow for teaching fundamentals with sufficient repetition:

**Acclimatization Period:** Already the rule in Ohio, a five‐day acclimatization period is mandatory prior to any contact drills:

* **Days 1 and 2:** Only helmets are permitted
* **Days 3 and 4:** Shoulder pads may be added on days three and four.
* **Day 5:**  Full pads may be worn on the fifth day.
* **Day 6:** Full contact is permitted on the sixth day.
1. **Practice During the Season (all practices after the first regular‐season game)**

Note: the following regulations apply to individual student‐athletes. Position groups, etc., can alternate contact during the week to adhere to the regulations. Also, contact with soft equipment such as bags, shields, sleds, etc., does not count toward full contact limitations:

* Consider limiting full‐contact on consecutive days.
* A student‐athlete is limited to 30 minutes of full contact in practice per day.
* A student‐athlete is limited to 60 minutes of full contact in practice per week.
* A student‐athlete can be involved in full contact in a maximum of two practices in a seven‐day span.

**SECTION 10: OHSAA Lindsay’s Law: Sudden Cardiac Arrest in Youth Athletes**

 Lindsay’s Law, Ohio Revised Code [3313.5310](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3313.5310), [3707.58](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3707.58) and [3707.59](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3707.59) went into effect in 2017

1. **3313.5310 Information and training regarding sudden cardiac arrest.**

(A)

 (1) This section applies to both of the following:

 (a) Any school operated by a school district board of education;

 (b) Any chartered or nonchartered nonpublic school that is subject to the rules of an interscholastic conference or an organization that regulates interscholastic conferences or events.

 (2) As used in this section, "athletic activity" means all of the following:

 (a) Interscholastic athletics;

 (b) An athletic contest or competition that is sponsored by or associated with a school that is subject to this section, including cheerleading, club-sponsored sports activities, and sports activities sponsored by school-affiliated organizations;

 (c) Noncompetitive cheerleading that is sponsored by school-affiliated organizations;

 (d) Practices, interschool practices, and scrimmages for all of the activities described in divisions (A)(2)(a), (b), and (c) of this section.

(B) Prior to the start of each athletic season, a school that is subject to this section may hold an informational meeting for students, parents, guardians, other persons having care or charge of a student, physicians, pediatric cardiologists, athletic trainers, and any other persons regarding the symptoms and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest for all ages of students.

(C) No student shall participate in an athletic activity until the student has submitted to a designated school official a form signed by the student and the parent, guardian, or other person having care or charge of the student stating that the student and the parent, guardian, or other person having care or charge of the student have received and reviewed a copy of the information developed by the departments of health and education and posted on their respective internet web sites as required by section [3707.59](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3707.59) of the Revised Code. A completed form shall be submitted each school year, as defined in section [3313.62](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3313.62) of the Revised Code, in which the student participates in an athletic activity.

(D) No individual shall coach an athletic activity unless the individual has completed, on an annual basis, the sudden cardiac arrest training course approved by the department of health under division (C) of section [3707.59](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3707.59) of the Revised Code.

(E)

 (1) A student shall not be allowed to participate in an athletic activity if either of the following is the case:

 (a) The student's biological parent, biological sibling, or biological child has previously experienced sudden cardiac arrest, and the student has not been evaluated and cleared for participation in an athletic activity by a physician authorized under Chapter 4731. of the Revised Code to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine and surgery.

 (b) The student is known to have exhibited syncope or fainting at any time prior to or following an athletic activity and has not been evaluated and cleared for return under division (E)(3) of this section after exhibiting syncope or fainting.

 (2) A student shall be removed by the student's coach from participation in an athletic activity if the student exhibits syncope or fainting.

 (3) If a student is not allowed to participate in or is removed from participation in an athletic activity under division (E)(1) or (2) of this section, the student shall not be allowed to return to participation until the student is evaluated and cleared for return in writing by any of the following:

 (a) A physician authorized under Chapter 4731. of the Revised Code to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine and surgery, including a physician who specializes in cardiology;

 (b) A certified nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, or certified nurse-midwife who holds a certificate of authority issued under Chapter 4723. of the Revised Code;

 (c) A physician assistant licensed under Chapter 4730. of the Revised Code;

 (d) An athletic trainer licensed under Chapter 4755. of the Revised Code.

The licensed health care providers specified in divisions (E)(3)(a) to (d) of this section may consult with any other licensed or certified health care providers in order to determine whether a student is ready to return to participation.

(F) A school that is subject to this section shall establish penalties for a coach who violates the provisions of division (E) of this section.

(G) Nothing in this section shall be construed to abridge or limit any rights provided under a collective bargaining agreement entered into under Chapter 4117. of the Revised Code prior to March 14, 2017.

(H)

 (1) A school district, member of a school district board of education, or school district employee or volunteer, including a coach, is not liable in damages in a civil action for injury, death, or loss to person or property allegedly arising from providing services or performing duties under this section, unless the act or omission constitutes willful or wanton misconduct.

This section does not eliminate, limit, or reduce any other immunity or defense that a school district, member of a school district board of education, or school district employee or volunteer, including a coach, may be entitled to under Chapter 2744. or any other provision of the Revised Code or under the common law of this state.

(2) A chartered or nonchartered nonpublic school or any officer, director, employee, or volunteer of the school, including a coach, is not liable in damages in a civil action for injury, death, or loss to person or property allegedly arising from providing services or performing duties under this section, unless the act or omission constitutes willful or wanton misconduct.

Amended by 132nd General Assembly File No. TBD, HB 49, §101.01, eff. 9/29/2017.

Added by 131st General Assembly File No. TBD, SB 252, §1, eff. 3/14/2017.

**SECTION 11: OHSAA LIGHTNING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

* **Recognition -** Coaches, athletic trainers, athletes, administrators and contest officials shall be educated regarding the signs indicating thunderstorm development. Since the average distance between successive lightning flashes is approximately two to three miles, ANYTIME that lightning can be seen or heard, the risk is already present. Weather can be monitored using the following methods:
* **Monitor Weather Patterns** – Be aware of potential thunderstorms by monitoring local weather forecasts the day before and morning of the competition, and by scanning the sky for signs of potential thunderstorm activity.
* **National Weather Service** – Weather can also be monitored using small, portable weather radios from the NWS. The NWS uses a system of severe storm watches and warnings. A watch indicates conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area; a warning indicates severe weather has been reported in an area, and everyone should take proper precautions. Any thunderstorm poses a risk of injury or death even if it does not meet the criteria for severe weather. Therefore, anytime thunderstorms are in the forecast (even if it is only a 20 percent chance), event organizers shall be at a heightened level of awareness to the potential danger of lightning.
* **Management**
* **Evacuation** – If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators shall evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced and displayed on placards at all athletic venues.
* ***THIRTY-MINUTE RULE***

Competition or practice shall be suspended once lightning has been recognized or thunder is heard. It is required to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming practice or competition. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10-12 miles away from the area. This significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes. Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.

**SECTION 12: Coaching ethics and Conduct**

The primary goal of coaches should be the development of boys and girls to become better citizens. The players must be taught sportsmanship and fair play, and these teachings should always govern their behavior while at practice and at games. Coaches shall be responsible for the conduct of all players, members of the coaching staff and spectators. This includes the time periods before, during and after league games and other events. Improper conduct, in the judgment of the game officials, on the part of the players, coaches or spectators may result in penalties, expulsion and suspension or forfeiture of the game. Any coach that is removed from a game (Varsity or Junior Varsity), will be removed from the following week’s games (both Varsity and Junior Varsity).

**NSYFL coaching ethics:**

* The coach will not criticize players in front of spectators.
* The coach will accept the decisions of officials.
* The coach will not criticize the officials, the opposing team, the coaches, fans or parents through language or gesture.
* The coach will emphasize that good athletes are good students, and both are physically and mentally alert.
* The coach will strive to make every football activity serve as a training ground for life and as a basis for good mental and physical health.
* The coach will emphasize that winning a game is the result of teamwork.
* The coach shall not use abusive or profane language in front of anyone connected with the game.
* The coach will refrain from “running up” the score against an opponent. This includes keeping in the first defense at all times.
* The coach shall not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
* The coach will set an example in personal conduct at all times.
* The coach will not smoke or use any form of tobacco while on the field of play during games, scrimmages or practices.
* The coach will treat each player, opposing coach, parent and commissioner with respect and dignity.
* The coach will learn the strengths and weakness of his/her players in order to place them into situations where each has a maximum opportunity to achieve success.
* The coach will protect the health and safety of his/her players by insisting that all of the activities under his/her control be conducted for their psychological and physiological welfare, rather than the interests of adults.

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**Organization League Team**

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**Coach Name (Print) Coach Name (Sign) Date**

**SECTION 13: Parents/Spectators Code of Conduct**

**Parents and Spectators are expected to:**

1. Support the coaches, players, and/or cheerleaders and help teach the value of commitment to the team, sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
2. Support my child's team and help my child and NSYFL make athletic contests a positive educational experiences
3. Direct constructive criticism of my child's team program to the head coach and/or association officials at an appropriate time. I will work toward a positive result for all concerned.
4. Accept decisions of the game officials (including coaches) on the field as being fair and called to the best ability of said officials. The officials are in charge of all games; their decisions are final.
5. Exhibit exemplary sportsmanship at all times.
6. Emphasize that good athletes strive to be good students that are physically and mentally alert.
7. Strive to make every football/cheerleading activity serve as a training ground for life, and a basis for good mental and physical health by being present to support the children.
8. Abstain from being under the influence of or in possession of and/or drinking alcoholic beverages and the possession or use of any illegal substance on both the game and practice fields.
9. Stay behind the designated spectator line during a game.

**As a parent or spectator, I will not:**

1. Interfere/interrupt the coaching staff during games or practices.
2. Criticize officials or coaches, direct abuse or profane language toward them, or otherwise subvert their authority.
3. Criticize an opposing team, its players, coaches, or spectators by word of mouth, by gesture, or by deliberately inciting unsportsmanlike behavior.
4. Undermine, in work or deed, the authority of the coach or NSYFL.

**Consequences of Behavior**
At any NYOFC youth football event, practice, or competition, any adult who verbally abuses, attempts to intimidate, is flagrantly rude to, or does not control their language or actions with a player, official, coach, spectator, or NSYFL board member will be asked to leave the event. He or she will receive written warning regarding their behavior. If the spectator fails to leave upon request, law enforcement authorities may be called to remove the spectator.

Any adult that commits a second similar offense will be banned from NSYFL events for the remainder of that season.

Any adult who physically assaults an official, coach, or NSYFL board member will be banned from NSYFL for one year from the date of the offense. After one year, the parent may apply for re-instatement. If the adult commits a second offense, he or she will be permanently banned from the NSYFL.

The term physical assault includes, but is not limited to: hitting, slapping, pushing, spitting, kicking or striking in any way with any part of the body or any physical implement.