

# Elko Junior Football League Bylaws

## Amended May 23, 2019

### Article I

#### General Objectives

#### Mission Statement

The mission of the Elko Junior Football League (EJFL) is to develop and deliver a quality youth football program by:

1. providing a wholesome, enjoyable experience for youths from age six (6) to fourteen (14) years of age, while teaching: the basic fundamentals of the game; teamwork; good sportsmanship; discipline and response to leadership,
2. encouraging participants to maintain satisfactory grades in school and to emphasize the importance of maintaining a proper balance between scholastic and athletic activities,
3. providing a satisfying and rewarding experience for coaches, sponsors, program administrators, and other volunteers through their relationship in teaching and working with youth, and
4. delivering a program that is appreciated and favorably received by parents and the community.

#### Board of Directors

The EJFL is maintained and operated by the EJFL Board of Directors (Board). The Board confirms all responsibility and authority for the operation of the program. Decisions can be made with majority vote of members present in Board Meetings, Special/Emergency Meetings and Games. The EJFL League Board shall, at a minimum, consist of the League President, the League Commissioner, the Division Commissioner, the League Secretary, and the League Treasurer. The Board may create, designate, appoint, or elect such other voting or non-voting positions as is deemed necessary. Voluntary Service—No Board member shall receive monetary or other compensation for his/her services to the EJFL.

#### Board Members

- |     |                                     |                             |
|-----|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1.  | League President                    | Voting position Dale J.     |
| 2.  | League Vice President               | Voting position Scott K.    |
| 3.  | League Secretary                    | Voting position Kourtney M. |
| 4.  | League Commissioner                 | Voting position Scott S.    |
| 5.  | League Commissioner                 | Voting position Ely De J.   |
| 6.  | League Commissioner                 | Voting position Mike M.     |
| 7.  | Fund-raiser Coordinator             | Voting position Michelle    |
| 8.  | Website Player/Parent/Coach Liaison | Voting position Keith O.    |
| 9.  | Medical Officer                     | Voting position Todd W.     |
| 10. | Concession Manager                  | Voting Position Kristina G. |
| 11. | Spring Creek Officer                | Voting position Mike P.     |
| 12. | Administrator                       | Voting position Felicia O.  |

1. The League President shall serve a term of two years. The League President may serve multiple terms so long as he or she is nominated and appointed as indicated below in Item 7. All terms shall begin on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year and shall expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the same year.
2. The League President shall appoint Board members annually. All terms shall begin on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year and shall expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the same year. League Board members must reside within the City of Elko and/or reside within the boundaries of the City of Elko schools unless approved by a majority of the Board.
3. The EJFL may include teams from the City of Elko and surrounding areas. Any community league will be required to notify the Board in writing of its desire to become a member of the EJFL and may be added to the league by a majority vote of the Board without amendment to these bylaws.
4. The EJFL Board will determine the size and composition of the league based on a majority vote.
5. Before the expiration of the League President's term, or whenever there is a vacancy, the Board shall constitute a nominating commission. The nominating commission shall submit its recommendations of one or more candidates for the position of League President to the Board. The Board shall, by a majority vote choose the League President.
6. Any activities not sanctioned by the Board in advance will not be covered under the EJFL's insurance policy.
7. Board decisions will be based on the majority vote of members present at meetings and league events.

## Team Composition

- A. BASIC UNIT OF ORGANIZATION: The team is the basic unit of the organization where a group of players is organized under the direction of a coaching staff in order to participate in football. There will be **five (5)** divisions of play: **GIRLS FLAG**, **FLAG**, **ROOKIE**, **JUNIOR** and **SENIOR**. **In Rookies a minimum of 15 players** and Junior and Senior divisions, teams must have a minimum of 18 players on the team. **Less than the 15 (Rookies) and 18 (Jr's and Sr's) players** is not a team and should either be spread out on the association's other teams or put on a waiting list.
1. FLAG DIVISION
    - a. Players will be ages of six (6) through seven (7) years old.
  2. ROOKIE DIVISION
    - a. Players in the Rookie Division will be 8 and 9 years of age. The upper Weight limit for a 9-year-old is 130 lbs at preseason weigh-in with an allowance of a 5-pound weight gain during the season.
    - b. Players must be 8 years old but not older than 9 years old before August 1<sup>st</sup> of the current playing season. Players may turn 10 after August 1<sup>st</sup> and still be eligible to play in the Rookie Division.
    - c. No player weighing more than **84.9** pounds can play in a position which can advance the ball.

d. Red or green tape must be placed on the helmets of players not allowed to advance the ball. This designation is based on the player's weight.

e. All players must be weighed by a member of the Board of Directors. Weigh-ins will be conducted prior to the first weeks game.

4. JUNIOR DIVISION

a. Players in the Junior Division will be 10 and 11 years of age. The upper weight limit for an 11-year-old is 160 lbs at preseason weigh-in with an allowance of a 5-pound weight gain during the season.

b. Players must be 10 years old but not older than 11 years old before August 1<sup>st</sup> of the current playing season. Players may turn 12 after August 1<sup>st</sup> and still be eligible to play in the Junior Division.

3. SENIOR DIVISION

a. Players in the senior division will be 12, 13, and 14 years of age. A player enrolled in high school **or junior high 9<sup>th</sup> Graders** are ineligible to play in the EJFL. The age cutoff for EJFL players is midnight on August 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year. Also, registrants turning 15 before October 31<sup>st</sup> of the current playing season are not eligible to play in the EJFL.

b. Players must be 12 years of age prior to August 1, but not older than 14 years of age before October 31 of the current playing season.

c. All players must be weighed by a member of the Board of Directors. Weigh-ins will be conducted prior to the first weeks game.

## Coaches

A. EJFL rejects the premise that rough football must serve as a vehicle to prepare youngsters for a competitive way of life. **Coaches do not make policy, they carry it out.** However, on the field, in all practices and games, the coaching staff, under the direction of the head coach, is completely in charge and will determine the organization of the practice and drill assignments and for the games, all plays to be run, players to start, and substitutions to be made. When and if coaching excesses are experienced, they will be dealt with immediately, including the possibility of summary removal from a volunteer position. All adult team personnel will be of unquestionable moral character and will serve on a non-compensated basis. No coach or staff will be removed because the team is experiencing a poor season in terms of wins or losses.

B. COACHES SPECIFIC: A team coaching staff will consist of one head coach, **a minimum of two (2) assistant coaches**, but NO MORE than five (5) assistant coaches, who will be chosen in accordance with the following: **Teams are allowed to have the Head coach and up to 5 assistant coaches, which includes a stat keeper. In addition, your Team Mom can be on the sideline. All others must be off the field and sideline area.**

1. Head Coaches and assistant coaches must be 18 years old or older and not attending high school. All head coaches and Assistants must be Heads Up Certified, Register as a coach on the EJFL Website and complete a background check prior to the start of the

first game of each season. Any coaches not in compliance may not be on the field and will forfeit all games until they comply.

2. Coach-Trainee: Teams are permitted to carry a coach trainee who must be at least 16 years old. These persons must conduct all coaching under the eyes of at least one assistant coach and must not handle children independently. Normally the coach trainee will assist the other coaches at various phases on instruction and will gain most of their knowledge by observation not initiative.
  3. The head coach is responsible for all actions involving himself, his staff, and all his players from the time the team arrives at the field until they leave.
  4. The head coach is responsible for issuing and maintaining all EJFL equipment provided to his team. When the season is over the head coach is obligated to return all equipment to the equipment coordinator.
  5. All head coaches are required to attend **PSC Clinics**. If a head coach is unable to attend he must notify his league commissioner and must have one of his assistant coaches attend the clinic.
  6. If a coach is ejected from any game, he must leave the field completely and will be suspended from coaching in the next scheduled game and he will not be allowed to coach during the week to prepare for the next game. In addition, the coach will be reviewed by the Board of Directors and will be on probation for the remainder of the season. If a coach is suspended for two games in any one season, he will be immediately suspended for the rest of the season and all of the following season. At the end of the suspension, he must reapply for admission back into the program. If approved by the Board of Directors he will be on a two year probation period.
  7. A coach may be asked to resign his position or may be removed whenever, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, the coach is not capable of handling young players, or cannot properly assume the duties and responsibilities required for this position. Coaches may appeal such decisions as directed herein.
  8. All coaches involved in EJFL football program must be approved by the Board of Directors.
  9. COACH EVALUATION: Coaches will be evaluated prior to the beginning of the season and may be reappointed to serve again with no maximum time limit upon their years of service. An evaluation of a coach will not be based on win/loss records but on his ability to teach, hold the interest of his players, and impart skills, knowledge, and fundamentals to them, as well as overall fairness in assignments and playing time. A coach's attitude toward referees, parents, and EJFL officials will also be considered.
- C. Team Parent Advisor: One parent advisor will be designated by the second week of practice. The team advisor will be the spokesperson for the team to handle all complaints, etc. This person will report to the Parent Advisory Chairperson. **All complaints brought to the Parent Advisory Chairperson must be submitted in writing.** It is mandatory that all teams have this position filled by a parent other than a coach's spouse or relative. A team may not play a league game without this position filled.

1. All stats and information on games will be turned into the team advisor. The team advisor will contact the Public Relations Chairperson who will be responsible for contacting the newspaper for all information pertaining to games.

D. ALL ADULT TEAM PERSONNEL

1. NO smoking or use of any form of tobacco will be allowed on the field during practice or a game.
2. Reserve constructive criticism for a private moment or in the presence of the team if others might benefit, but NEVER in front of spectators. Do not criticize players or speak to them in a demeaning manner at any time. All players are to be encouraged and instructed in a way that builds confidence and self-esteem.
3. Refrain from excessive sideline coaching and remain in the designated coaching boxes on the sidelines.
4. **NO PROFANITY!**
5. Do not allow any player to use steam rooms, rubber sweats, weight reducing drugs, etc. in an effort to make the weight requirement.
6. NO "running up" the score against the opponent will be allowed. Avoid getting in a position where a coach encourages his team not to score in order to comply with the "mercy rule." This includes keeping the first defense team in at all times. Intentional running out of bounds, dropping passes, fumbles, etc will not be tolerated in order not to score.
7. Coaches, parents and game officials, are jointly responsible for the conduct and control of the team, fans, and spectators. Any fan who becomes a nuisance or out of control must be asked to leave. If complaints continue about a particular team, all games will be played in Elk under E.J.F.L. supervision or the team may be expelled from the league.
8. Coaches and parents must uphold the EJFL rules and regulations, the philosophy of the program and the requirements of the committee.
9. Abide by a player's doctor's decision in all matters of player's health and physical ability to play.
10. No criticizing an opposing team, its players or coaches by words or gestures.
11. Accept the decisions of officials on the field as fair and called to the best ability of said official. The coach must remain off the field and remain in control in order to set a good example to the players and fans. A decision based on judgment should never be questioned. In a case of apparent misinterpretation or violation of rules, the officials will be addressed as gentlemen.
12. Coaches may observe the playing of opposing teams only at scheduled games, so long as observation does not interfere with the playing of the game.
13. Any infractions of the above rules by a adult personnel will subject person or persons to an investigation by the Board of Directors. Punishment can vary from a verbal warning to termination from the league.

## Article II Playing Personnel

### Registration of Players

1. A parent or guardian must accompany each child at the time of registration and must sign the registration form. Since the registration form documents the consent and permission of a parent or guardian, proxy signatures are not acceptable. A player cannot begin practice with a team until a registration form has been submitted and the registration fee collected. The player must also furnish the following prior to being able to play:
  - a. Parental or guardian consent
  - b. Proof of age (Official birth certificate)
  - c. Hold Harmless/Insurance statement
2. Registrations can be held at any time prior to the season, however, all teams playing in EJFL will start first tryouts or practice on a day designated by the Board of Directors. No early team practices or conditioning drills are permitted. Teams conducting any early practices before designated dates will be suspended from the EJFL.
3. EJFL REGISTRATION: At least two members of the EJFL Board of Directors will be present at every registration. Players who have played in the EJFL program the previous year will be reassigned to the same team on which they played. The only exceptions to this rule are:
  - a. The player does not meet the weight classification for his/her previous team.
  - b. Player or parents of the player requesting a change to a different team, in which case player will be put back in the draft upon approval of the Board of Directors. All requests must be in writing.
  - c. Players moving up from flag to tackle, a rookie to junior or from Junior to Senior division will be put into the draft in their new divisions.
4. All players are required to register and participate in the league affiliated with the town or area in which they reside. Any exceptions must be approved by EJFL Board of Directors only if extenuating circumstances are involved.
5. Once a team reaches its maximum number of players (10 for flag, **18 for rookie** and 23 for tackle) the roster is considered full. Any association adding players beyond the maximum number are still responsible for meeting the play rule for all eligible players on the roster.
6. The Board of Directors will have, at their discretion, the option to assign any/all new players to teams as required to balance out the number of players on each team.
7. REGISTRATION FEES: Registration fees cover insurance, field maintenance, equipment, officials, etc. No refunds of registration fees will be made unless authorized by the Board of Directors.
8. LATE REGISTRATION FEES: Late registration dates will be determined by the Board of Directors. Acceptance of late registration is not a guarantee of being assigned to a team unless an opening exists. Late registration fees will be added to the initial registration fee.

9. INSURANCE FEES: Insurance payments will be paid one (1) week prior to the first scheduled practice set by the EJFL Board of Directors. Failure to pay insurance will result in that league's suspension for that season.
10. OFFICIAL REGISTRATION DATES: Official registration dates will be scheduled and published each year by the Board of Directors. August 1<sup>st</sup> of each year is the date for all outlying leagues to inform the board of the number of teams to be included in the current schedule. If the board does not receive the number of teams to be included from outlying areas by the said date they will not be included in the EJFL schedule.
11. Once a player has been drafted to a team he will not be allowed to transfer to another team unless approved by the Board of Directors.
12. No player may start practice without being registered, insured and assigned to a team. Failure to comply with proper registration will constitute a forfeiture of any games in which the player played and removal from the program.
13. AGE CUT-OFF: The age cutoff for EJFL players is midnight on August 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year. Also, registrants turning 15 before October 31 of the current playing season are not eligible to play in the EJFL. **No high school kids or 9<sup>th</sup> grade Junior High kids are permitted to play in the EJFL.**
14. DETERMINATION OF AGE: All registrants must provide legal proof of age at the time of registration upon request of EJFL. Ages will be determined by birth certificate or proof of birth as received in official forms from the state in which the child was born.
15. AGE EXCEPTIONS: Exceptions to the age requirements are only permitted with approval by the Board of Directors and the parents involved.
  - a. When a player's weight exceeds the maximum limit for his age, he will advance to a higher league and must meet weight requirements for that league.
  - b. A player will not be advanced to a higher age level without the written consent of his parents or guardian. If consent is not given the player is ineligible to participate in EJFL.
  - c. The Board can make exceptions for weight and age for any player on a case by case basis.

## Article III

### Certified Weigh-in and Re-weigh-ins

1. All players will be weighed at the beginning of the season and those between, 84.9-109.9 lbs for the Rookie Division prior to playing in a scheduled game. **Weigh-ins will be conducted prior to the first games in Elko, Spring Creek, Wells, Carlin, and Owyhee.**
2. Players being weighed will be in their Jerseys with shorts or football pants, with 3 pounds being allowed for the weight of the pants and pads and 7-pound allowance for shoulder pads and

pants. **SHOES MUST BE WORN DURING WEIGH-INS.** Determination of weight by a member of the Board of Directors is final.

3. Strip weight checks will be done in suitable undergarments with a coach present.
4. The upper weight limit for an 11-year-old player is one hundred sixty (160) pounds at preseason weigh-in. If an 11-year-old in the Junior Division weighs in at over 160 pounds with an allowance of a five (5) pound gain during the season, the EJFL Board of Directors has the authority to reassign that player to a Senior Division team. Once the weight limit is exceeded, the player will not be allowed to return to the Junior Division.
5. Any player weighing over 84.9 in the Rookie Division and 109.9 in the Junior Division will not be allowed to carry the ball for the current season. All ball carriers within weight ranges described in #1 will be weighed at the beginning of the season. They will be weighed as described in item #2. Any player not making weigh-ins weights will be red striped for the remainder of the season.
6. Ball carrying players must be at or under the set weight limit at the official weigh-in set by the Board of Directors or they will be striped for the entire season.
7. RE-WEIGH LIST: Any player who does not make the official weigh in set by the Board of Directors will be required to come to Elko to have the weigh-in completed by a Board member. All re-weigh dates will be set and given to the affected teams at least three days prior to the scheduled date. If a player does not make the re-weigh date they are not allowed to carry the ball that year.
8. In the Rookie Division, a player weighing up to **84.9** lbs. has no position restrictions. Any player weighing between 85 lbs. and **109.9** lbs. will be designated with a red stripe on their helmet. A "red stripe" player cannot play in a ball-carrying position and cannot advance the ball. In the event of a fumble recovery or interception, they are required to down the ball by dropping to their knee. Any player weighing between 110 lbs. and 130 lbs. will be designated with a green stripe on their helmet. A "green stripe" player can only play on the interior offensive and defensive line and cannot advance the ball. Red stripe players are allowed to punt: however, they cannot advance the ball.
9. In the Junior Division, there are no weight restrictions.
10. In the Senior Division, there are no weight restrictions.
11. All scales must be calibrated and certified once a year. At no time will any coach, parent or player be allowed to set, adjust or tamper with the league scales in any manner. Only EJFL Board of Directors will weigh players.

## Article IV

### Player Draft and Player Participation

- A. **PLAYER DRAFT:** The Board of Directors will supervise the player draft in their respective communities. Prior to the draft, the Board of Directors will set guidelines for the player draft. **Any league having more than one team in any division is required to have a draft for those teams.** There will be no player draft in the flag league. Players will be randomly picked by the Board of Directors.



1. In the player draft, no bidding system will be used in determining team assignment. Players who are not at the draft tryouts cannot be drafted. *Players that are signed up, but not at the draft will be put into a hat and added to teams in the draft order.*
2. The Head Coach's child will be allowed to be a protected player. That player will remain protected for the entire time he plays in that division. He will be the last pick in the draft. The Board of Directors must approve all head coaches prior to the draft. *Head Coaches must participate in 75% of all practices and games.*
3. Two Assistant Coaches per team will be allowed to protect their children. They must be drafted within the top 4 rounds of draft. If an Assistant has more than one child his children must be drafted by the second round and the other sibling will automatically be their fourth-round pick allowing the other assistant coaches child to be drafted during the third round.
4. Siblings not of an Assistant Coach will be taken consecutively if they are not already on a team, or a brother/sister will join the team his sibling is already on as the last pick.
5. If a player has a sibling moving up he would be placed on the team as a non-drafted player.

#### B. PLAYER PARTICIPATION

##### MINIMUM PLAY RULE:

##### ROOKIE DIVISION MINIMUM PLAY RULE

All eligible players must play at least 8 plays from the line of scrimmage in each half.

A player may be denied his mandatory plays for disciplinary reasons, such as violations of league policies. Violations and disciplinary actions must be approved at least 1 day prior to the game by the league Commissioner or an E.J.F.L. Board member. The league President must be informed on any matter that involves a player being denied his mandatory play.

##### JUNIOR and SENIOR DIVISION

All eligible players must play at least 8 plays from scrimmage in each half of the game. Kickoffs are considered plays from the line of scrimmage. PAT's are considered a play in the Senior League but not in the Junior League. A player may be denied his mandatory plays for disciplinary reasons, such as violations of league policies. Violations and disciplinary actions must be approved at least 1 day prior to the game by the league Commissioner or an E.J.F.L. Board member. The league President must be informed on any matter that involves a player being denied his mandatory play.

1. During the 2-minute warning in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of each game, the head official will pull all the players, remaining players and both coaches to determine if all players have their minimum plays.
2. It will be the responsibility of each coaching staff to see that any players who have not played the minimum required plays at the 2-minute warning, do so in the remaining time.
3. Any infraction will be called to the attention of the Board of Directors. Violators will be suspended for 1 game.
4. A repeated infraction (two or more per season) will be considered flagrant and referred to the Board of Directors for disposition. Deliberate attempts to circumvent this rule will be considered sufficient cause for dismissal from the program.

6. The head coach will be required to keep a log of each player and their plays during games. This log will be available to any Board member at any time during the game. Head coaches may assign a parent or other adult to keep this log. Logs must be turned into the head official immediately after their game.

C. Drops and Additions

Players may be dropped from a certified roster only by the Board of Directors for a valid reason such as injured and out for the season, moving out of the area, etc. Additional players may be added to a certified roster only to replace those dropped for valid cause. A player may not be added to temporarily cover the loss of a player who will return prior to season end.

1. Any player added to the waiting list will be listed in order of when they signed up. The player with the most time on the list will be placed on a team with an opening first. There will be no additions to the waiting list after the second game of the year. All leagues will need to retain a copy of their own waiting list.

2. LATE REGISTRANTS: A late registrant will be assigned to a team if an opening exists.

3. PLAYER TRADES: Players may not be traded between teams.

## **Article V Playing Rules**

A. Except as specifically modified for the EJFL, all games are to be played under the state rules for varsity football on the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations. It is recommended that each Head Coach be provided a copy of the current year's high school rule book.

B. All assigned officials will be provided a current copy of EJFL Rules and Regulations by the EJFL prior to the start of the regular season to ensure that all officials are aware of pertinent EJFL rules. All official's calls are final and will not be reviewed.

C. All Tackle Teams will provide a referee during games, if needed, to minimize complaints about missed calls. This referee will work under the head referee for that field and the head referee will have the final say on all calls. This person does not need to be an expert in the rules but must have a general knowledge of the game. The league will still provide high school refs with 1 being the Head Ref.

D. Field and Markings: The home team is responsible for preparation of the playing field and required accessories for a game in accordance with high school guidelines. The markings must be non-caustic material, No Hydrated Lime, Lime Oxides, etc.

E. The bench area is a 10 by 40-yard box paralleling each sideline and is reserved exclusively for players, coaches, and authorized team personnel. The sidelines are for game crew and EMT. No other personnel is allowed on the field or sidelines.

F. Kicking Extra Points

A kicked extra point is worth 2 points in the junior division. Junior Division teams that are going to attempt an extra point must declare so to the official. The official tells both teams. There will be no rushing by the defensive unit. The offensive unit will have 5 seconds after the snap of the ball to get the kick away or the play is blown dead. Once a kick is declared the offensive unit cannot advance the ball. In the Senior Division, an extra point does not have to be declared and will be played out the same as in high school rules.

G. Field Goals: kicking a field goal is considered no rush in Senior leagues and is played out the same as high school rules.

1. An 80 or 100-yard field is permissible.

2. The ball will be a good grade of leather or rubber with specifications in the following areas:

a. Flag Division / Rookie Division – Official Pee wee Football

b. Junior Division – Official Youth Football

c. Senior Division – Official Intermediate Football

3. The referee will decide where the clock will be kept if the field is not equipped with a scoreboard timing device. In any event, the referee has final authority to have the clock kept on the field if in his judgment the home management's clock operator is not qualified.

E. BLOCKING AND TACKLING

**Butt Blocking** is a technique involving a blow driven directly into an opponent to the face mask, frontal area, or top of the helmet as the primary point of contact either in close line play or open field.

**Chop Block** is a delayed block at the knees or below against an opponent who is in contact with a teammate of the blocker in the free blocking zone.

**Face Tackling** is driving the frontal area, or top of the helmet directly into the runner.

**Spearing** is the intentional use of the helmet in an attempt to punish an opponent.

**Head Tackling** is intentionally trying to tackle a runner above the shoulders.

The above are serious infractions of the rules. There may be a fine line between spearing and face tackling, a fine line which is left totally for the covering official to determine. If any of these techniques are taught by an EJFL Coach, that coach will be subject to dismissal from the program upon a finding of guilty following a hearing.

F. TIE GAME AT END OF REGULATION

If a game is tied at the end of the regulation time, there will be an overtime period. This period will be run as followed:

a. There will be a coin toss, called by the visiting team. The ball is placed on the 10-yard line and the offensive team (Team A) starts with a 1<sup>st</sup> down. If Team A does not score on or before their 4<sup>th</sup> down, Team B will get a chance by placing the ball on the 10-yard line and trying until their 4<sup>th</sup> down. If Team B scores the game ends. If both have scored the cycle

continues a second time. If the score is still tied after 2 overtime attempts, the cycle will continue but both teams must kick extra points only, no running the extra point in.

## Article VI

### Equipment for Tackle

- A. The physical contact in football demands that each player wear a full complement of protective equipment. This makes participation relatively expensive in comparison to other youth sports. To achieve maximum player protection, while realizing a genuine economy by spreading the higher initial cost of quality equipment over several seasons of reliable wear and tear, no item should be purchased which is not at least in the middle-priced line of a recognized manufacturer of quality athletic equipment. **ALL EQUIPMENT MUST BE LEAGUE ISSUED (EXCEPT WHERE SPECIFIED) ANY EQUIPMENT NOT ISSUED BY THE LEAGUE MUST BE APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS BEFORE USE.**
1. **REQUIRED EQUIPMENT:** The following items will be worn by players in leagues requiring physical contact, and will meet the required standards as noted. Recommended standards are listed in parenthesis.
    - a. **HELMET:** May be of one or two-piece construction, of ultra high impact plastic-type (polyethylene) shell, head cushion or six-point suspension type, and will provide adequate neck protection, horizontal double bar (cage mask) face guard attached and chin strap required. *Helmet color needs to be uniform with the rest of the team.* **ONLY HELMETS BEARING THE "NOCSAE SEAL OF CERTIFICATION" WILL BE WORN AS OF 1978.**
    - b. **NO CHANGING OF FACE MASK BETWEEN HELMETS OR HELMETS BETWEEN PLAYERS IS ALLOWED. PLAYERS MAY BE CHARGED FOR COST OF HELMET IF MASK IS IMPROPERLY CHANGED AND WARRANTY IS VOIDED.**
    - c. **SHOULDER PADS:** May be of corrugated, molded fiber or plastic-type (high-density polyethylene) material with a coated (poly-vinyl) washable padding, heavy hinges, and adjustable underarm straps.
    - d. **PANTS:** Maybe one-piece or shell construction. One-piece pants must feature removable snap out hip and kidney pads, knit or cotton/nylon material is recommended with tunnel loops or attached web belt. Shell pants should feature standardized knee guard and waist-suspended thigh guards. Make allowances for hip pads when ordering.
    - e. **HIP AND KIDNEY PADS, THIGH PADS, KNEE PADS:** May be of corrugated, molded fiber or plastic-type polyethylene material, covered on the inside with shock-absorbing poly-foam material, not less than ½ thick.
    - f. **JERSEYS:** For game purposes, maybe of solid or mesh type material. All game jerseys will be required to have 10" numbers on the back. Jersey colors **MUST** be approved by the E.J.F.L. Board of Directors to avoid duplication.

- g. **TEETH PROTECTION:** Protector will be the intra-oral, custom or self fitted impression type. A mouthguard is to be worn at all games and practices during any type of contact.
- h. **RIB PROTECTORS:** All players will be required to wear rib protectors.
- i. **ATHLETIC SUPPORTER:** will be of high quality elastic with woven mesh pocket, plastic cup optional. This item is not provided
- j. **SHOES:** In all leagues, tennis shoes or rubber cleats are required. This item is not provided.
- k. **EYEGLASSES:** eyeglasses will be of athletic approved construction with non shattering glass or plastic. This item is not provided.

## **Playing Fields, Periods, Scoring Values**

- A. **FIELD PREPARATION:** The home teams and their League Officials are responsible for preparation.
  - 1. A standard 80 X 33½ yard or 100 X 40-yard field is authorized for all programs. The maximum penalty on an 80-yard field is 15 yards.
  - 2. The Flag field will be 70 X 30 with 3 no run zones, 1 across the middle of the field with 5 yards each side of center and 1 at each end zone 5 yards prior to the end zone. End Zones will be 10 yards each with 50 yards of play.
- B. **LENGTH OF PERIODS:** The EJFL has made the following changes to the length of periods.
  - 1. **SENIOR DIVISION:** Eighteen (18) minutes continuous quarter. High school timing under 2 minutes in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.
  - 2. **JUNIOR DIVISION:** Sixteen (16) minutes continuous clock, except 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters when the clock stops in the final 2 minutes and on official timeouts.
  - 3. **ROOKIE DIVISION:** Sixteen (16) minutes continuous clock. The clock only stops on official timeouts or team timeouts.
  - 4. **FLAG DIVISION:** Ten (10) minutes continuous clock, stopping only on official timeouts.
  - 5. **HALF TIME:** Between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter there will be a 1-minute intermission. Halftime will be 10 minutes for all leagues. The clock will stop at 4 minutes before the end of each half to check the minimum play rule.
  - 6. **CHARGED AND OFFICIAL TIMEOUTS:** In all leagues, a team is permitted only three (3) timeouts per half. The timeouts will be 1 minute in length.
- C. **SCORING VALUES:**
  - 1. **TOUCHDOWNS:** SIX (6) POINTS

2. POINTS AFTER TOUCHDOWN:
  - a. RUN: three yards out; one (1) point
  - b. KICKED PAT: three yards out; two (2) points
  - c. FIELD GOAL: three (3) points
  - d. **Senior League is High School Rules  
(Run 2 Points, Kicked PAT 1 Point, Field Goal 3 points)**
3. SAFETY: Awarded to the opponent; two (2) points
4. FORFEIT: Offended team wins one (1) to zero (0)

## Schedules

- A. SCHEDULED GAMES: The number of games for the regular season will be five(5) to eight (8) games. These games may or may not include playoff or championship games. Playoffs and championship games may extend the season and will be at the digression of the board of directors. If teams do not participate in playoff or championship games they will forfeit their season records in the official EJFL record book. The purpose of regular season game limitations to protect the children participating in the program from excesses and to provide a balance among all teams within the E.J.F.L. program. Recognizing that the children who participate in the program are likely to participate in other sports programs ie, basketball, baseball etc. The limitation also strives to confine the program to a portion of the year which will not result in serious overlap of sports programs. Children should not be exposed to the excessive pressure of having to choose between school and or overlapping sports programs. Every effort should be made to develop schedules which minimize the potential for overlapping.
- B. SCHEDULING PROHIBITION: No team may schedule a scrimmage or practice against another team that 1) is in a division other than theirs, 2) against a team or group of players not involved in the EJFL program. Under no circumstances shall a scrimmage or game be scheduled or held without approval from the EJFL Board of Directors.
- C. REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE OF GAMES: The EJFL has the responsibility to furnish each of its teams with a complete game schedule no later than 3 days prior to the opening of the regular season. Individual teams and/or associations may not develop independent schedules. All teams must work with the EJFL scheduler. Associations must notify the EJFL of their intent to participate by July 1<sup>st</sup> each year. Any association that fails to notify the EJFL of their intent to participate will not be added to the current season schedule.
- D. WIN/LOSS/TIE RECORDS: For the purpose of determining the order of finish for all teams, a win/loss/tie record will be maintained by the EJFL No team or association may promote or advertise a win/loss/tie record other than the official record of the EJFL.
- E. No team may arrange a game on its own. All games, regardless of type, must be arranged through the Division Commissioner and approved by the EJFL Board of Directors.
- F. A period of at least 2 full days (48 hours) will elapse between the end of any game and the start of the next scheduled game for any given team. This rule does not pertain to tournament play.
- G. Teams in the EJFL will be assigned practice fields for practice time. Teams will only be allowed to practice on their assigned fields. At no time will a team be allowed to practice on any other field without permission from a member of the Board of Directors. There will be no practices allowed

on the High School field at any time. Any member or player in violation of this rule will be subject to immediate dismissal.

- I. Practice times for the EJFL and its associations will be as follows:
- II. 1. The practice guideline outlined below is to be followed.
- III. 2. We will allow a 4<sup>th</sup> day practice at the coach's discretion above and beyond what is outlined below after the season starts. This practice will follow the Level of Contact "**AIR**" **No Pads Allowed**.
- IV. Weekend practices are not allowed.

## **BACKGROUND**

USA Football is committed to advancing player safety to protect the health and well-being of every child. In addition to coaching education, a key element of player health and safety is the responsibility of all coaches to conduct organized practices and teach proper fundamentals in a safer environment. There are approximately 9,300 youth tackle football organizations in the United States. Within these are approximately 2.5 million young athletes who play and 400,000 adults who coach.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide youth football organizations (players age 6 to 14) with recommendations to establish consistent methods designed to limit the chance for injury during structured practice sessions. This document provides youth football commissioners and coaches with heat acclimatization guidelines, clear definitions of contact and recommendation on the number of practices per week and time limits on player-to-player full contact.

There is much to be learned about helmet impacts in youth sports. We remain committed to adopting the best evidence-based practices. We recognize that even with the latest research available, there is no clear consensus in this area. Accordingly, we will update these recommendations and guidelines in accordance with the evidence. Ideally, this emerging data will help us understand the potential for long-term adverse cognitive, emotional and/or neurological effects from concussions and/or other repeated head contact without associated symptoms. Based on what is known about concussions today, the guiding principles in developing these recommendations were to reasonably limit head contact and thus concussion risk.

### **Implementing a preseason youth football heat acclimatization period**

Reported cases of exertional heat stroke (EHS) currently rank among the top three causes of sport participation fatalities. Setting mandatory guidelines for heat acclimatization provides a vital standard to protect athletes against exertional heat illnesses and possibly save lives. The majority of EHS cases occur during summer workouts when athletes are unprepared to cope with environmental conditions and physiological demands placed upon them. Heat acclimatization guidelines recommend that athletes be introduced slowly to environmental stresses during practice sessions, resulting in a lowered risk for EHS. These guidelines call for a two-week period (10-14 days) when

coaches gradually increase the length and intensity of practice and the amount of equipment that can be worn. At all times, athletes should have access to fluids and have periods of rest throughout a practice.

### **Recommendations include:**

1. At no time throughout the preseason or regular season should teams practice more than once per day (No two-a-day practices). Teams should be allowed to practice a maximum of four times per week during the preseason.
2. During practice days 1 and 2 of the heat-acclimatization period, no more than 90 minutes of practice are allowed, a helmet should be the only protective equipment permitted. No form of player-to-player contact should occur during the first two practices.
3. During practice days 3 and 4, two hours of total practice time is allowed. Only helmets and shoulder pads should be worn. No full-contact drills should be allowed. USA Football defines full-contact as drills being run at “Thud” and “Live” tempo. Coaches are encouraged to limit player-to-player contact up to “Control” using USA Football’s Levels of Contact.
4. On practice days 5 and 6, two hours of practice time is allowed which would occur within the second week of a youth organization’s preseason schedule according to these guidelines. Teams have the option to wear full pads and full contact drills can begin and should be utilized within the recommended time allocation discussed below.
5. If a practice is interrupted by inclement weather or heat restrictions on any of the practice days, the practice should resume once conditions are deemed safe.
6. On days when environmental conditions (heat index or WBGT) are extreme, modifications should be made to the work-to-rest ratio (to allow for cool-down periods and rehydration) or rescheduled to cooler parts of the day (i.e. before 10am or after 6pm).

### **Ensure all youth coaches understand the definition of “full contact”**

Full-contact drills should be limited during the preseason and regular season as the number of exposures may increase the chance for injury to youth players. For purposes of these guidelines, full-contact consists of both “Thud” and “Live Action” using USA Football’s definitions of Levels of Contact.

Rationale: By definition, “Thud” involves the initiation of contact at full speed with no predetermined winner, but no take-down to the ground. Initial contact, particularly with linemen, is just as physical with “Thud” as with “Live Action.” USA Football recognizes that “Live-Action” likely carries a higher injury risk to the body than does “Thud.” The first three levels of USA Football Levels of Contact “Air,” “Bags,” and “Control” are considered no or controlled-contact, and thus no limitations are placed on their use in practice.

### **The recommended number of team practices and the amount of “full contact” drills per week**

#### **Preseason Recommendation**

Following the preseason acclimatization period, it is recommended youth teams conduct no more than four practices per week. Coaches are to limit the amount of full-contact to no more than 30 minutes per day and no more than 120 minutes per week. No two-a-day practices should be allowed at any point throughout the preseason.



Rationale: USA Football recognizes preseason practices may require more full-contact time than practices occurring in the regular season to allow for teaching fundamentals with sufficient repetition to prepare for the season. Coaches are encouraged to introduce contact through a progressive manner to ensure they are using the proper technique before full-contact (Thud & Live Action) drills are allowed.

**Regular Season Recommendation**

Once the regular season begins and games commence, USA Football recommends the number of practices per week is decreased to three to account for the weekly game. Coaches are to limit the amount of full-contact to no more than 30 minutes per day and no more than 90 minutes per week.

THE EJFL WILL ALLOW A 4<sup>th</sup> DAY OF PRACTICE WITHOUT CONTACT. NO PADS MAYBE WORN DURING THIS PRACTICE. IT IS DESIGNATED FOR CONDITIONING AND TEAM BUILDING EXERCISES.

THIS PRACTICE WILL FOLLOW THE LEVEL OF CONTACT “AIR”.

Rationale: At this point in the season, games have begun and full-contact exposure rates have increased on a weekly basis for players. To account for this, the recommendation to eliminate one practice per week and decrease the amount of time dedicated to full-contact drills decreases the number of exposures per week.

**Coaches need to use a practice plan and assign a “level of contact” for every drill according to USA Football’s Level of Contact chart**

USA Football defines contact using its Levels of Contact chart (see below) to help coaches assign a level of resistance for each drill period within their practice plan.

Properly employing the levels of contact during football practice is an important skill for youth coaches to learn. This is completed by adjusting the distance between players, the speed at which they conduct a drill and modifying the “winner” of a drill. In doing this, coaches can better accomplish specific teaching objectives during practices and decrease the chance for injury.

Planning when to teach, when to compete and when to adjust contact promotes a better experience for players and coaches. Proper usage of the Levels of Contact system will help players perform their contact skills at a high level while instilling confidence. Employing the Levels of Contact system also helps reduce player fatigue, which can advance player safety

**Explaining Levels of Contact**

Levels of Contact focuses on varying intensity levels throughout practices to build player confidence, ensure their safety and prevent both physical and mental exhaustion.

Five intensity levels are used to introduce players to practice drills which position them to master the fundamentals and increase skill development.

CONTACT	INTENSITY	DESCRIPTION
AIR	0	Players run a drill unopposed without contact.

<b>BAGS</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Drill is run against a bag or another soft-contact surface.</b>
<b>CONTROL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Drill is run at assigned speed until the moment of contact; one player is pre-determined the ‘winner’ by the coach. Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet.</b>
<b>THUD</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Drill is run at assigned speed to competitive speed through the moment of contact; no pre-determined “winner”. Contact remains above the waist, players stay on their feet and quick whistle ends the drill.</b>
<b>LIVE ACTION</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Drill is run in game-like conditions and is the only time players are taken to the ground</b>

ALL PRACTICES MUST BE CONDUCTED BETWEEN MONDAY AND FRIDAY. WEEKEND PRACTICES ARE PROHIBITED. ALL PRACTICES ARE LIMITED TO 2 HOURS.

- J. The EJFL will always try to schedule extra functions, clinics, etc that may benefit our teams coaches and players, in order to keep fairness in the league and to make sure that all teams and coaches will be treated equally all programs that are designed to help any EJFL team, coach or player will be approved by the Board of Directors before any member can attend. Any member in violation will be subject to immediate dismissal.
- K. **MERCY RULE:** No team will be allowed to win a game by 35 points or more.
  1. **ROOKIE AND JUNIOR DIVISIONS:** When the score reaches a 35 point differential the clock will run continuously except for official’s timeout and injuries. The team leading must run between the offensive line tackles. There will no longer be kickoffs. The trailing team will start from the 40 yd. line and winning team will start from the 20 yd. line. If the losing team brings the game within a 21 point differential the game will resume under normal play.
 

**SENIOR DIVISION: HIGH SCHOOL RULES; 35 points, No 2-minute warning, continuous clock with injury and official timeouts.**

2. Coaches should make every effort to change players if a substantial lead is occurring.  
Example: Team "A" leads Team "B" by 14 points and Team "A's" coach sees his team can score at will and stop Team "B" when on defense. The coach for Team "A" should not be using "first team" offense or defense. This presents the coach with a great opportunity to "experiment" with younger players in key positions and prepare his newer or younger players for the following year.

## **Article VII**

### **Personnel Resolution of Disputes And Discipline of Adults**

- A. The EJFL Board of Directors may be called upon from time to time to resolve disputes between member adults as well as provide enforcement of local rules and regulations. The EJFL has authority over all its teams and associations as well as all adults and juveniles having any official connection therewith when said groups or individuals are in violation of any published EJFL rule.
  1. **RIGHT TO DISCIPLINE:** It is proper for the EJFL Board of Directors to discipline and expel its own personnel, member associations, teams and adults connected to the programs as the need may arise. Likewise, an association may discipline member teams and adult personnel connected to their programs.
  2. **PRESIDENT'S POWER:** The EJFL President or EJFL Board members are empowered to impose any penalty deemed appropriate as provided herein in a private informal hearing for the cause. However, a person or association thus penalized may demand an open hearing before the Board of Directors as set forth below. The decision of the President or Board member will stand until action is taken by the entire Board of Directors. The EJFL President can veto any Board decisions at his discretion and make decisions without Board approval in the best interests of the league, thus using **PRESIDENTS POWER.**
  3. The EJFL Board of Directors will conduct all investigations for all rule violations. Any member of an outside association may have 1 witness and their league President sit in on the hearing. E.J.F.L. members who are brought before the Board of Directors may have two witnesses for their defense. The EJFL Board of Directors will have the only votes at the hearings.
  4. **RIGHT TO APPEAL:** Every adult participant who feels aggrieved by a local decision is entitled to appeal through the courts.
  5. All disputes, complaints, or comments must be in writing and given to your Parent Advisor. The Parent Advisor will then contact that league's commissioner or if no commissioner then that league's president.
  6. The EJFL Board of Directors holds all outside associations responsible for handling any problems that involve coaches, players or parents in their area. All outside areas will be responsible for the conduct and functions of their leagues. Outside leagues are assuring EJFL Bylaws are enforced as well as the parent's and coach's code of conduct rules at all times.

## EJFL Youth Football Parent's Code of Conduct

- A. Coaches, referees, and parents form a trio of role models from which these young players learn behaviors they will carry into adulthood. The EJFL has a code of conduct for both the coaches and referees. It is equally important that the parents also have a Code of Conduct. Cooperation, respect, and maturity among all the adults in the league will encourage those qualities in the players themselves.
1. Children play football for fun. They are not there for your entertainment, they are not miniature athletes and this is not a “farm club” for an athletic career.
  2. Encourage fair play. Always play by the rules. Be supportive, be sure the player attends practice, is on time and is picked up on time.
  3. Show respect for everyone involved in the program, especially the referees and the opposing team. Wait until after the game before approaching the coach with questions.
  4. Recognize the value and importance of your child's coaches. They are volunteers who donate a tremendous amount of time and effort to make this a positive experience for your child.
  5. At games, make positive comments or no comments at all. Applaud good plays and efforts of all players. Never ridicule or scold a child for making a mistake during a game.
  6. Condemn unsportsmanlike conduct in any way shape or form.
  7. **Respect the decision of the referees—even if you do not agree with them.** We do promote a junior referee program, this is their training ground as well.
  8. Remember as a parent you are a role model. Do not use profanity or harass the players, coaches or referees.

## EJFL Coaches Code of Conduct

- A. This guide is issued so common objectives can be achieved by all. This guide is required reading by all coaches in the program. Failure to abide by any of these policies could result in dismissal from the program.
1. DESIGN: The EJFL Football Program is designed to be an activity for grade school and Jr. High school boys and girls. This project, because of its size, requires good management, solid support and complete cooperation of all who participate. The teams are composed of the following:
    - a. PLAYERS: Each team has between 20 to 23 players insofar as practical.
    - b. COACHES: Each team must have 1 head coach and should have at least 2 assistants.

2. OBJECTIVES: The primary goal of EJFL Football Program is “development of boys and girls to be better citizens”. This is primarily accomplished by the coaches as they work with boys and girls. The players must be taught sportsmanship and fair play, and these teachings should always govern their behavior while at practice and at games. Most boys and girls desire to be fair and just in their actions, but it is up to the coaches to make “SPORTSMANSHIP” have a very clear meaning. Unsportsmanlike conduct of a nature has a tendency to reflect adversely upon the coaching staff. Teaching the proper fundamentals of the game is also very important, as improper playing can result in:
  - a. Injuries to the player
  - b. Lack of interest in the game

This does not mean the coaches need to know all the plays, positions and how to play them. They do, however, owe it to the players to have a coaching staff that can give them guidance and instruction needed to play the game properly. Most boys and girls want to learn to play by the rules. The correct way is the only way they should be taught. Remember, this program is for the players, their safety and welfare must always be paramount with this objective in mind.

3. DUTIES TO REMEMBER: The EJFL Football program is an excellent indoctrination program into football. To set a fine example, all coaches and staff members MUST conduct themselves with good sportsmanship manner at all times when they are in the presence of the players in the program. To ensure the success of the program, guidelines have been adopted regarding the behavior of coaches and staff.

4. DUTIES TO REMEMBER: Know the game rules (high school rules apply except for a few exceptions).
  - a. Have your team ready to play on time and at the designated field.
  - b. At the end of each game ensure your Team Parent Rep. has seen your player log that tracks minimum plays for each player. Should you fail to get all required minimum plays for each player the League President will need to be informed. (See Article IV Section B)
  - c. The team listed as “Home” to provide the chain crew to work the chains and the down markers.
  - d. Maintain equipment in good repair and condition.
  - e. DO NOT USE TOBACCO AT PRACTICE AND GAMES
  - f. Follow the advice of your league representatives and the Board of Directors.
  - g. Any EJFL Director has the authority to enforce any of the rules prescribed by the Board of Directors.

## **Juvenile Offenses**

- A. The following juvenile offenses are examples that will carry a penalty of one week of suspension to dismissal from the program. All penalties will be up to the discretion of the Board of Directors.
  1. HITTING, KICKING, STRIKING, OR OTHERWISE ABUSING OPPONENTS WHILE DOWN, DURING THE COURSE OF OR AFTER A PLAY.
  2. VERBAL OR PHYSICAL INTIMIDATION OF OPPONENTS OUTSIDE NORMAL TALK ACROSS THE LINE INCLUDING PROFANITY AND NON-PROFANE ABUSE.
  3. ANY ACT OF DISRESPECT FOR THE TEAM, EJFL AUTHORITY OR GAME OFFICIAL.

4. OFFENSES OF A NON-ROUTINE NATURE, SUCH AS THIEVERY OF TEAM PROPERTY, PICKING OF FIGHTS, SMOKING, ETC. THIS INCLUDES PLAYERS WEARING JERSEYS TO SCHOOL AND FIGHTING WITH PLAYERS FROM ANOTHER TEAM. THESE ARE OF A SERIOUS NATURE LEADING TO A POSSIBLE SEVERANCE FROM THE TEAM. WHEN SEVERANCE IS THE PENALTY, A HEARING BEFORE THE EJFL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MUST BE HELD.
5. TAUNTING OR SPIKING OF THE BALL AFTER A GOOD PLAY OR SCORE OR "SHOWBOATING".
6. NOT WEARING PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT REQUIRED BY EJFL RULES SUCH AS RIB PROTECTORS, MOUTHGUARDS, PADS ETC.
7. SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL
8. INVOLVED IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

## **Team/Association Offenses**

- A. LACK OF KEEPING FAITH WITH JUVENILES OR PARENTS: This charge is designed to cover any deliberate practice of a team or association which is of a nature that places the health and safety of juveniles in jeopardy or exploits juveniles and or their parents or treats either the juvenile or parent in such a way that the juvenile or parent becomes a tool of the team rather than being the purpose for which the team was organized. This charge may also be made to charge failure to supervise the mandatory play rule and the intentional running up of the scoring rule.

Mandated penalties will be:

1. First offense: Probation for team/association coupled with the permanent suspension of President of Association and all other individual adults who participate in practices.
  2. Second offense: Suspension of Association until all officers are changed.
- B. FIGHTING/RIOT/INCITEMENT TO RIOT: At games or scrimmages between different associations, any fight or riot between teams (as opposed to one on one) will be judged a team/association offense rather than an individual offense. Incitement to riot is defined as any team heckling or "egging on" the opponent in a manner that may result in a fight or riot. The mandated penalty will be forfeit of the game and/or season.