

Stamford Youth Foundation

2016 Middle School Football League Rules

(Children entering grades 6-8 in the fall)

Updated 4/28/17- Updates in RED

Introduction:

The primary goal of SYF Middle School Football is to teach the youth of Stamford football techniques, teamwork and responsibility to oneself and the team. *The players and coaches must know that their participation in the league is a privilege, not a right.* As such, their privilege to remain on the team is constantly evaluated against a list of criteria that include, but are not limited to: grades, on field behavior, behavior in school and in practice, school/practice attendance and being good citizens. Player position will be determined by the football teams coaching staff.

Parent's Responsibility

The parents are expected to uphold and support the agreement they made, with their child, in the Player and Parent/Guardian online Contract.

Parents are required to have their child's registration fees current before equipment will be distributed. **Requests for refunds will be honored before July 31 and will incur a \$75 processing fee, requests for refunds after July 31 will NOT be honored. IF A CHILD REGISTERS AFTER JULY 31, THEY WILL BE ASSESSED A \$20 LATE CHARGE.**

Parents are required to either pick up, or make alternate pick up arrangements, for their children that coincide with the schools ending practice time. A 15-minute grace period should be allowed for any particular student on an occasional basis. Pick up after the 15-minute grace period can be cause for the coach filing an Incident Report. Parents who do not arrange for pick up, or are habitually late in pick up, put their child at risk of being removed from the program. Basic and accepted common football rules will be utilized except with the league modifications noted below. Any change or modification to the league rules noted below require a SYF BOD member approval.

It is within the coach's right to request that a player be removed from his roster for habitually late pick up or lack of appropriate pick up arrangements. If a Coach is requesting a player be removed from the program for this reason, documentation, in the form of completed Incident Reports, must be submitted to the League Director. The Director will consider the request and if the request is approved the Director will inform the player and his parents/guardian.

In the spirit of good sportsmanship, it is expected that parents and other spectators will cheer for their team, not against the opposing team. Taunting, verbal abuse or profanity directed at any participant, coach, official and support staff of SYF **will not be tolerated.** A parent and/or spectator identified in one Incident report will be suspended, and barred from entering a Facility hosting a SYF activity for the following week's game/activity and potentially dealt with by the police. A second offense will result in a season long suspension for that parent/spectator. The player's eligibility could be affected. If the suspended parent/spectator attempts to attend an SYF event while under suspension, the player will then be suspended for the remainder of that season. In such an event, the player's name will be forwarded to the Foundation Board that will consider the player's eligibility in other SYF activities and for future years eligibility.

Players that have NOT returned their equipment from the prior football season OR any other SYF sport will NOT be allowed to participate unless every item is returned or the league is reimbursed for missing items.

The police will deal with any parent/spectator, who physically assaults a referee, player, spectator or coach in a game, or in a practice. The Football Committee will determine eligibility status of said person's child as well as the parent/spectators immediate and future status within the Stamford Youth Foundation range of activities.

PARENT/GUARDIAN AFFIRMS CHILD HAS SEEN A DOCTOR IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS AND HAS BEEN CLEARED TO PLAY A CONTACT SPORT.

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Player Eligibility- Responsibility:

In order to participate in a game, a player must be of good standing academically, no exceptions due to in or out of school behavior and be able to perform on the football field physically as determined by the league's athletic trainer. They must also have attended the minimum required practices
Players will be eligible to play in the league based on the following criteria:

1. A student resides in Stamford and attends a public school within the city or Trinity Catholic/ Rogers Middle School. In this instance the student will play for the school at which he is enrolled.
2. A student is eligible to play in SYF if they live in the City of Stamford and attend a private school within or outside Stamford. In this instance that player will be placed on the Trinity Catholic/ Rogers Middle School roster.
3. A student is eligible to play in SYF if they live outside of Stamford, but are a current student of good standing in a private school in Stamford or at Rogers Magnet School. In this instance, the player will be placed on the Trinity Catholic/Rogers Middle School roster.
4. Any middle school player who participates in SYF and also plays for any other football team due to school requirements must notify the SYF League at registration. All middle school players must comply with SYF rules pertaining to practice time. No middle school player may play more than one scrimmage or game in a weekend (a player that dresses for a scrimmage or game, regardless of their playing time will use up their weekend eligibility); therefore, a player who plays for SYF on Saturday may not play for another team on Sunday, and a player may not play for SYF on Sunday if he has played for another team on Saturday. This multi-team exception is ONLY allowable for children that attend a school that requires team sports as a scholastic requirement.

A player may be deemed ineligible to play at any point during the season by their middle school's administration—The league will honor any type of request from the school's administration and will NOT over-rule their requests. (Also noted in registration player code of conduct). Any exception of game play does not qualify for any type of refund. THE LEAGUE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO COMBINE PLAYERS AND TEAMS WHENEVER NECESSARY

A player who has been suspended from school is not allowed to participate in practices or games until the student has been re-admitted into the school and the school administration advises that the player may re-join the team. The Football Committee and or Director reserves the right to remove a player from the league based on the severity of the act that led to the suspension. The player is to have participated in a minimum of three (3) of the team's five practices for the week to be eligible for that week's game.

It is the responsibility of the school Principal or school representative to advise the head coach or the league director when a student has been suspended. A player or coach that is ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended from the next scheduled game. He will **NOT** be allowed to practice with the team while under game suspension. If a player or coach is ejected from a second game during the season, the player or coach will be removed from the roster for the remainder of the season. To be eligible, a player can be no older than 15 years old during the entire season, including play offs. A player can be suspended by the League for poor/improper conduct while attending a game as a spectator.

Students can only play for the school at which they are enrolled (except for private, out of town or Rogers Magnet School students— eligibility requirements noted above). A mid-season school transfer within the city limits requires the player to turn in the game equipment for the old school and the issuance of new game equipment for the new/current school. If a player moves outside Stamford and no longer attends a school within the Stamford city limits, they become ineligible. A player that is found to have played for a school that which he is not or no longer enrolled or ineligible will cause that team to forfeit ALL games played while he was ineligible.

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Both player and their parent/guardian must sign the Player and Parent/Guardian Contract before he is issued any equipment. (Noted during online registration)

Attendance must be taken at every practice. Habitual absence and/or tardiness are sufficient reasons for removing a player from the squad. Documentation must be provided and the Football Board notified before any player is removed from the squad.

AGE GROUPINGS

1. All players enrolled in the 6th grade will play on the Junior Varsity (JV) squad. Game play will be determined based upon overall team and league enrollment. All players will have a minimum of 6 games to compete in. Final game play scheduling will be performed in early September.
2. All players enrolled in grades 7 and 8 will play on the Varsity team. Normal game scheduling will apply.
3. Exceptions to the age groupings may only be approved by the Football Division director – NO EXCEPTIONS And will only be permitted in cases that pertain to the safety of the players.

Coaches Eligibility- Requirements:

All coaches must sign the Coaches Code of Conduct. At least one coach must remain at the practice field until all players are picked up or have left the field in accordance with the transportation instructions provided by the parents in the Player/Parent Contract. Coaches must read, understand and follow the guidelines set forth in the Stamford Youth Foundation Safety manual.

A maximum of six coaches are allowed on the sidelines during the game two of which will be designated MPR coaches. The use of cell phones, walkie-talkies or any other means of electronic communication by a coach is prohibited during the game.

Any coach that is ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike behavior will also be suspended for the following week's game(s). A coach that is ejected - must **immediately** leave the **field/playing area/stadium**. They will NOT be allowed to coach their remaining games during that weekend (if any). **A SUSPENSION INCLUDES ALL COACHING DUTIES THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND, PLAYOFFS AND CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES INCLUDED. AFTER BEING EJECTED FROM A GAME AND WHILE SERVING THEIR SUSPENSION - THE SUSPENDED COACH WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN (or, BE IN) THE STADIUM OR STANDS. THIS INCLUDES ALL GAME DAY ACTIVITIES INCLUDING ANY PRE-GAME WARM-UPS OR PREPARATION. COACHES TRYING TO CIRCUMVENT THIS RULE WILL RECEIVE AN INDEFINITE SUSPENSION AND THEIR TEAMS' GAME(S) ARE SUBJECT TO FORFEIT.**

If a team plays an ineligible player in a game, that school/team will forfeit that game and that teams Head Coach will be suspended from the following weeks game.

Coaches or the Team Manager must take attendance at practice every day. Students who stop attending practice must be reported to the Middle School Commissioner so that they can be formally removed from the team and arrangements made for the return of their equipment. Coaches MUST maintain Good Citizenship on and off the field. Any type of legal issues, abusive language aimed at the children or any other type of behavior that the football director deems detrimental to the welfare of the children could be cause for immediate suspension.

It is the responsibility of the coaches to enforce the League Rules and to conduct themselves according to the Coaches Agreement they have signed. Infractions of the rules will require disciplinary action to be taken by the SYF Football Director. The extent of the sanction or punishment will be determined by the Director under advisement from the Football committee. Sanctions or punishments could range from warnings to suspension, game forfeiture or

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removal of the coach from the league. **Any coach that physically assaults a referee, player, spectator or opposing coach in a game or in a practice will immediately and permanently have his coaching privileges revoked and possibly subject to Criminal Prosecution.**

In addition to the basic football equipment, coaches must insure that the following items are available at the practice field for every practice:

- Cell Phone
- Water
- Medical Kit

At least one coach must remain at the practice facility until the last player has been picked up. The coach is not required to put up with habitual tardiness from a parent picking up a child. Habitual tardiness on the part of a parent is sufficient grounds for removing the child from the squad. A coach must document this using the Incident Report Form and present his request for removing the player to the Football Board before taking any action.

Practice/Scrimmages

A practice is defined as a meeting between the players and the coach in which football technique and/or strategy are reviewed, practiced and/or discussed. This would include meetings and film sessions.

A player must attend 10 hours of conditioning practices before he can be issued equipment and participate in contact drills and 10 hours in pads before he can participate in a scrimmage or a game

A player must be eligible to play in a game by the second week of the season. If by that time they are not eligible, they will be removed from the roster.

A practice week is designated as Monday- Sunday.

Practice limitations/ guidelines MUST be adhered to as follows:

- **Aug 15- Equipment Distribution UPTO 6 days a week for NO more than 120 minutes per day**
- **Equipment Distribution- Week ONE game UPTO 5 Days per week, ONLY ONE DAY PER WEEK FULL CONTACT other days players may ONLY wear their helmet (NO OTHER GEAR) 120 minutes per day**
- **PRACTICE CONTACT DATE IS WENDESDAY LEAGUE WIDE (NO EXCEPTIONS)**
- **Week One- End of Season UPTO 5 days per week , ONLY ONE DAY PER WEEK FULL CONTACT (WEDNESDAY FOR 90 MINUTES ONLY) other days players may ONLY wear their helmet (NO OTHER GEAR) 120 minutes per day.**

If a coach violates these practice guidelines the below will be the consequences:

- 1st offense- Head Coach Suspended One COMPLETE WEEK (Including ALL practices and games)**
- 2nd offense- Entire coaching staff Suspended One COMPLETE WEEK (Including ALL practices and games)**
- 3rd offense- Entire Coaching staff removed for balance of the season and the following game is forfeited**

Teams may scrimmage each other, however these scrimmages count as a practice for both teams and a **SYF approved trainer must be present (at the coaches expense) during the scrimmage. SCRIMMAGES ALSO COUNT AS THE ONE DAY IN THAT WEEK THEY MAY HAVE CONTACT.**

Scrimmages with other teams are allowed under the following conditions:

- A scrimmage counts as a practice.
- Only one scrimmage per week is allowed.
- Scrimmages with teams outside of the SYF Middle School league are not allowed.
- It is the responsibility of the coaches to arrange for the location and permits for scrimmages where required.

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Injuries

A Football Injury Reporting form must be completed for any player who requires medical attention from either the coaching staff or Emergency Personnel. **The form must be completed and submitted to the Safety Commissioner within 24 hours of the occurrence.**

Any injury that requires Emergency Personnel to be called to the field must be reported to the head trainer and commissioner immediately. In the event the commissioner is unavailable, the Coach should contact any other member of the Football Committee.

Game Day Requirements

Each team will arrange for parents at every JV and Varsity game, to help with the following duties

- Chains – 3/game, away team only
- Any team that visits SYF during the regular season will play in the Varsity division and the game results will NOT be used to determine playoff status.
- The athletic trainer or EMT will have final say for ALL game day injuries. The director or committee members have no authorization to override their decisions.
- Any injury that occurs will require an incident report (game or practice)
- The league does not condone the photographing or filming of games for commercial purposes.

Mandatory Play Requirement Rules and Procedure

Procedure:

1. Each team will assign coaches to be responsible for the MPR's and will provide three copies of their MPR sheets on game day. One copy for each sideline plus a copy for the MPR REFEREE.
2. One of the MPR coaches will remain on his team's sideline and will be responsible for assisting the MPR REFEREE ASSIGNED TO THEIR SIDELINE.
3. At halftime, the MPR Referees will report to the head Referee the status of the Both Teams players relative to their MPR status so that the Head referee can inform Both Head Coaches of all players still shy of the minimum play requirement.
4. At the start of the 4th Qtr, the MPR Referees on both sidelines will approach the Head Referee and advise him of any players still short of the minimum play. The Head Referee will instruct the coaches of Both Teams that they must **immediately** put all players into the game until they have completed their minimum plays. The Head Referee will also immediately assess a 15 Yard penalty to the team or teams that do not complete the MPR Rule by the fourth quarter. If both teams are in violation of the rule the penalty will be assessed when that team is in possession of the ball.
5. As soon as all players on a team have reached the minimum play requirement, both MPR REFEREES must sign the MPR sheet.
6. At games end, the signed MPR sheets must be turned in to the MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.
7. Special teams play count toward player total.
8. In cases when a team has 30 or more eligible and dressed players at kick off, that team is only required to play their players a minimum of 4 (four) plays each. The coach of the team with 30 or more players **MUST** make the opposing head and MPR coach aware of this **BEFORE** kick off. If a player arrives after kick off it does NOT have any bearing on the total number of plays or players.

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Rules:

1. All players dressed and at the field will play a minimum of 5 plays (or 4 if over 30 eligible and dressed players at kick off- see # 9 above)
2. Players arriving after the start of the game, but before the start of the second half must play 5 plays (or 4 if over 30 eligible and dressed players at kick off- see # 9 above). Players arriving after the first half ends must get a minimum of 3 plays
3. Each Head Coach is responsible for supplying the MPR sheet with their player's names and game jersey numbers neatly written. Any player that is injured or is otherwise ineligible to play must be noted on the MPR Sheet.
4. The MPR coach that is stationed on his own sideline has the responsibility to assist the MPR REFEREE.
5. The MPR REFEREE AND coaches should move together on the sideline and keep a respectful distance from the coaches on the sideline to allow for privacy
6. Plays must be from the line of scrimmage and will include special teams.
7. Any play ending in a dead ball penalty (illegal procedure, false start, delay of game) does not count as a mandatory play
8. **At the start of the 3RD Qtr, THE HEAD REFEREE WILL BE INFORMED OF ALL PLAYERS THAT HAVE NOT MET THE MINIMUM PLAY RULE. AT THE START OF THE 4TH QUARTER ALL THOSE PLAYERS THAT HAVE NOT MET THE MINIMUM PLAY RULE WILL BE INSERTED IMMEDIATELY INTO THE GAME AND STAY IN THE GAME UNTIL THEY HAVE MET THE MINIMUM PLAY REQUIREMENT. IN ADDITION THE HEAD REFEREE WILL ASSESS A 15 YARD PENALTY TO THE TEAM THAT HAS NOT MET THE MPR.**
9. The MPR REFEREES have the final say in the event that there is a question regarding a player's MPR count
10. If a Head Coach does not fulfill all the necessary MPR requirements for a game he may receive a one game suspension. A second infraction and the Head Coach will be suspended for the remainder of the season.
11. Any game in which a team does not fulfill their MPR requirements may result in a forfeit.
12. The football director and committee are NOT able to reverse any ruling, decision or suspension levied before during or after a game imposed by a game day referees.
13. The football director reserves the right to change or modify any rule before or during the season.
14. Any game that is declared a forfeit will be scored 7-0 in favor of the winner by default.
15. ALL male players shall supply and wear a cup during practice and games.
16. Official football: Composite football supplied by the league is the ONLY allowable ball for practice and games.
17. Any game that ends in a tie will be placed into a college football overtime system from the 20-yard line. If after two rounds of downs there is not a winner the teams MUST then kick for 2 points after a touchdown.
18. Registration cutoff date- Tuesday **September 8, 2017** (OR SOONER IF ROSTERS ARE FILLED) – NO EXCEPTION unless there is an out of area transfer. Out of area transfers must complete a two week conditioning period (NO EXCEPTIONS) with their new team before they may become eligible for SYF game play. Out of area transfers will not be accepted after the second game of the season.

22. Players MUST maintain good citizenship on and off the field. IN ADDITION, THE LEAGUE WILL NOT TOLERATE THE USE OF PROFANITY AND/ OR INCITEFUL LANGUAGE DURING THE COURSE OF THE GAME. IF ANY PLAYER, COACH OR SPECTATOR IS HEARD TO HAVE USED THIS INCITEFUL TYPE OF LANGUAGE, THE HEAD REFEREE WILL STOP THE GAME AND CALL BOTH COACHES TO THE CENTER OF THE FIELD AND GIVE EACH TEAM A WARNING. THIS WARNING WILL EXTEND TO THE PLAYERS, COACHES AND SPECTATORS. THE SECOND TIME THE REFEREE HEARS THIS TYPE OF LANGUAGE, THE TEAM RESPONSIBLE WILL BE ASSESSED A 15 YARD PENALTY. THE THIRD TIME THIS TYPE OF LANGUAGE IS HEARD DURING THE COURSE OF THE GAME, THE HEAD REFEREE WILL ASSESS A 15 YARD PENALTY TO THE OFFENDING TEAM AND THAT PERSON, (PLAYER, COACH OR SPECTATOR) WILL BE EJECTED FROM THE GAME AND FACILITY IMMEDIATELY. THAT PERSON WILL THEN BE SUBJECT TO HEARING TO DETERMINE THEIR ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE FOR THE REST OF THE SEASON AS A PLAYER, COACH OR SPECTATOR. ANY PERSON RECEIVING A SECOND OFFENSE WILL NOT BE ALLOWED AT AN SYF EVENT FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON AND WILL HAVE TO APPLY TO BE REINSTATED BY THE SYF COMMITTEE AND/OR BOARD. THE REFEREE MAY CHOOSE TO BYPASS THE ABOVE GUIDELINES AND USE WHATEVER PUNISHMENT THEY DEEM NECESSARY.

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23. There are NO limitations to offensive schemes.
24. **DEFENSE---** **NO Nose Guard (NEVER HEAD UP ON CENTER) the Only Permitted Defensive Formations are 4 x 4, 3 x 4, 3 x 5, and 6 x 3 (Inside the 10 yard Red Zone Only)**
- A. ALL defensive lineman must line Head-up one yard from the line of scrimmage in a three or four point stance inside the tackle box. NO BLITZING IN THE TACKLE BOX / INTERIOR LINE. NO EXCEPTIONS---***
- B. ALL defensive linebackers must be three yards or more from the line of scrimmage. If there is a wide receiver to cover, a defensive linebacker can line up 1 yard from the line of scrimmage head-up on the wide receiver. NO BLITZING IN THE TACKLE BOX / INTERIOR LINE. NO EXCEPTIONS---***
- C. ALL defensive backs must be seven yards or more from the line of scrimmage. If there is a wide receiver to cover, a defensive back can line up 1 yard from the line of scrimmage head-up on the wide receiver. NO BLITZING IN THE TACKLE BOX / INTERIOR LINE. NO EXCEPTIONS---***
25. A minimum of 13 players dressed and eligible to play are required at kick off. If the minimum is not met at kick off time a forfeit will be declared. The opposing teams head coach or league director may NOT under any circumstances over rule this requirement. The league director reserves the right to allow games to be played with less than 16 players as a scrimmage only—prior approval must be made.
26. IF A PLAYERS HELMET COMES OFF HIS HEAD DURING THE COURSE OF A PLAY THEY MUST LEAVE THE FIELD FOR THE NEXT PLAY
27. **KICKING/PUNTING-----THERE WILL NOT BE ANY KICK-OFFS. THE BALL WILL BE PLACED AT THE 30 YARD LINE TO BEGIN THE GAME, AFTER ANY SCORE OR HALF TIME POSSESSION CHANGE.**
28. **PUNTS ARE OPTIONAL—IF THE COACH CHOOSES HE MAY EITHER PUNT THE BALL OR ELECT TO HAVE A POSSESSION CHANGE 20 YARDS DOWN FIELD . (ball may not be moved inside receiving teams own 10 yard line). PUNTS ARE NON CONTACT. IF THE COACH ELECTS NOT TO PUNT THE BALL ON FOURTH DOWN, THAT PLAY SHALL NOT BE COUNTED TOWARDS A PLAYERS MPR. If a coach elects to punt, the ball shall be turned over at the point at which it comes to rest. Punts may not be returned (safety purposes) Since returns are not allowed, punts may NOT be downed and any ball that comes to rest inside their opponents 10 yard line will be placed at the 10. If a punt enters the endzone the ball shall be placed at the 20 yard line.**
29. **EXTRA POINT KICKS ARE ALLOWED AND ENCOURAGED--- PLUS THEY ARE NON CONTACT.**
30. **Blitzing is not permitted inside the tackle box.**
31. All decisions rendered by the football director and or the football committee are FINAL

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Weather Policy:

In case of LIGHTNING, THUNDER OR SEVERE WEATHER the league will follow a 30-minute delay after the last reported LIGHTNING STRIKE OR THUNDER. Games may be delayed up to 45 minutes.

If a game can not be continued the league will follow these guidelines:

If a game has been started and was called before the end of the second quarter due to weather or any other issue the referees deem necessary, a tie of 7-7 will be declared regardless of what the score was when play was stopped.

If a game is called after the end of the second quarter for the same reasons noted above, the final score will be whatever score was noted.

Games that are not able to start may or may not be made up. This will be handled on a game to game basis. If a game is not made up a tie will be declared of 7-7.

As with ALL game day situations, the referees have the final say and will act in the best interest of the children.

Playoffs

1. Playoff rosters must be provided by all teams that are still in contention of a playoff birth. Playoff rosters must be provided at the point that there is two weeks remaining in the regular season and ONLY apply to the playoffs.
2. In the JV and Varsity division the top four teams from the regular season will make the playoffs.
3. In determining ALL cases of a tie for the playoffs the following will be followed in order: Primary tie breaker-Head to Head game score . If needed the secondary tie breaker will be total amount of points ALLOWED during the entire season (NOT INCLUDING New Haven or any other non-league game), the third and final tie breaker if needed will be a coin toss.
4. Playoff schedule: Week one- 1st vs. 4th and 2nd vs. 3rd
Week two- Championship

All City Team

The MIDDLE SCHOOL VARSITY CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM WILL PLAY THE NEW HAVEN ALL STARS IN THE ANNUAL THANKSGIVING STAMFORD VS NEW HAVEN CHAMPIONSHIP. THE HEAD COACH OF THE WINNING TEAM MAY SELECT UP TO 5 (TOTAL) VARSITY PLAYERS FROM ANY OTHER STAMFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM (S) FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP GAME VERSUS NEW HAVEN. SELECTION OF EXTRA PLAYERS IS NOT MANDATORY AND IS AT THE SOLE DISCRETION OF THE HEAD COACH.