

# **GREATER CINCINNATI YOUTH** **FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

## **2025** **RULES & REGULATIONS**

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### **GCYFL Mission Statement**

The mission of the Greater Cincinnati Youth Football League (GCYFL) is to introduce the game of football to youth of all ages and skill levels with the purpose of providing the opportunity for each player to develop to their highest potential. The GCYFL strives to maintain an environment that embodies the core values of integrity, leadership, perseverance, respect and teamwork while enhancing self-esteem, promoting self-confidence and cultivating a lifelong passion for the game of football.

**GCYFL Vision:**

The Greater Cincinnati Youth Football League is a community based league that has been established to provide youth in the Cincinnati area with a league that is structured with multiple divisions to give players of different ages and skill levels a positive, competitive playing experience.

**Definitions**  
*(alphabetical order)*

**Board of Directors** – A group of individuals elected by the Governing Panel to conduct the daily business of the GCYFL.

**League Representative** – a representative, one from each Organization, who sits on the Governing Panel.

**Field Administrator** – an individual designated by an Organization to administer GCYFL Rules on Game Days.

**School District** – refers to a geographical area whose residents are designated to attend a particular High School.

**GCYFL** – means the "Greater Cincinnati Youth Football Conference".

**Governing Panel** – the governing committee of the GCYFL, comprised of Organization League Representatives excluding the Board of Directors.

**Limited Weight Positions** – those positions on Offense for which weight restrictions apply.

**Legal Guardian** – A documented court appointed guardian of a player participating in the GCYFL.

**LOS** – means "Line of Scrimmage".

**Officials** – refers to any Game Officials assigned to officiate GCYFL games.

**OHSAA** – the Ohio High School Athletic Association.

**Open Enrollment** – The ability for a School District to accept students from another school district.

**Organization** – a Youth Organization representing a School District that is an approved member of the GCYFL.

**Pod** – a Group of teams, typically in grades K1 through 6th, entered for play by an Organization.

**Unlimited Weight Players** - players whose official weight exceeds that allowed for Limited Weight Positions on Offense.

**Inaugural Member** – Anderson Wildcats, Edgewood Cougars, Fairfield Indians, Kings Knights, Lakota Tomahawks, Little Miami Panthers, Loveland Tigers, Mason Comets, Northwest Mighty Knights, Oak Hills Little Highlanders, Ross Rams, Sycamore Aves, Talawanda Braves

**New 2019 Members** - Colerain Cardinals, Milford Eagles, West Clermont Wolves

**New 2020 Members** – Northern Kentucky Bengals

**New 2024 Members** - Mason, Fairfield, Springboro, Middletown, Indian Hill

## **New 2025 Members** - Beaver Creek, Winton Woods, Little Miami, Lebanon

### **League Fees**

League fees are listed on Appendix B for 2025 season with no refund of the organizational deposit until all 2025 expenses are paid. All funds will be distributed to organizations in good standing according to Appendix B.

### **Organization Deposits**

All Organizations are required to pay a one-time deposit which is separate from any other fee assessed by the GCYFL including, but not limited to, annual fees. Deposits are due May 1, 2025 for any Organization that was a member of the GCYFL in 2024. Any Organization unable to pay the fee by March 31, may contact the Board and arrangements will be made for the Organization to pay a portion of the fee by May 1 and the balance prior August 15, 2025. All new Organizations are to pay the deposit upon being accepted as a new Organization and have no voting rights until they are off probation after year 1. Each organization shall only pay one deposit for their tenure in the GCYFL. Organizations will receive their deposit back upon exit from the league if they give written notice of exit to the Board prior to January 1, of the year they wish to leave. Any Organization that leaves the GCYFL after January 1 without notice will forfeit their deposit which shall be transferred to the GCYFL general account. The amount of the deposit is dependent on the amount of teams the Organization had in 2025. For new Organizations, the deposit is dependent upon the amount of teams the Organization had the year prior to entering the GCYFL. No Organization will be required to pay an additional deposit if they add teams after paying the initial deposit and no refunds will be given if an Organization has less teams than they had upon paying the deposit.

- \$1000 1-8 teams
- \$1500 9-14 teams
- \$2000 15+ teams

### **Player Eligibility**

#### **Exemptions**

1. Specific exemptions to the following Residency or Grade Level rules may exist in accordance with the By-Laws, or Resolutions, of the GCYFL.
2. All player eligibility exemptions must be filed with the GCYFL no later than **the second weigh-in**.

If an Organization has multiple teams in a grade, players are required to continue to play for that team if they are going to continue to play for the Organization in succeeding seasons. If a player wants to switch teams within the Organization, the President of the Organization must petition the Board for approval. The Board may approve the move by a majority vote. No player shall be granted more than one move. The intent of this section is to keep an organization from sweeping multiple quality players to one team. This does not apply to a player who does not play for one season and returns to football. Leniency will be given when an Organization is creating a new team due to an influx in registrations or eliminating a team due to a decrease in registrations.

3. Organizations may request exemptions due to roster size post July 1st and may be granted up to three based on size of roster. 14 or less 3, 15 would be 2 16 would be 1.

### **Player Eligibility**

1. All players must meet one of the two following criteria to play for an Organization.
  - a. reside within the official residential boundaries of a School District that is representative of a football participating member of the GCYFL.
  - b. attend a school, public or private, located within the Organization's District.
2. Any other player shall be considered an Exempted Player and must submit a Player Exemption Form to the Board.
3. If a player meets the above criteria while playing for an Organization, and in a succeeding year no longer meets the criteria, such player shall be considered an Exemption. The cut off shall be the GCYFL second regular season game. For example, if a player moves before the second regular season game, they will count as an Exempted Player. If a player moves after the second regular season game, they will not count as an Exempted Player.
4. Any player that has been granted an exemption for more than 2 consecutive seasons will be considered a grandfathered exemption and will be allowed to finish their career in the GCYFL. Unless a player has a change in need for exemption or changes original address exemption was granted to.

### **Residency**

1. Residency can be determined in the following manner.
  - a. address on file with the School District. Supporting documentation must be provided.
  - b. In the case of Kindergarteners, a county auditor page or leasing agreement of the Parent or Legal Guardian is acceptable.
2. The Colerain Rule – A Player who is using their school district as the program for which they are registering must be enrolled in that school district at the time of the second GCYFL regular season game. A Player using their address for the program for which they are registering must be living at the address at the time of the second GCYFL regular season game.
3. Player eligibility can also be established when a custodial Parent or Legal Guardian resides in the School District of an Organization. Proof of residency can be established by providing two documents such as a lease and or a county auditor page
4. Proof of guardianship shall be provided and kept in the Player's section of the Team Book if requested by the Board of Directors or Governing Panel.
5. Talawanda's residential district shall include the Talawanda School District and the Union County College Corner Joint School District.
6. Anderson's residential district shall include the Forest Hills School District and the neighborhood of Mount Washington.
7. Sycamore's residential district shall include Deer Park. .
8. Indian Hill residential district shall include - Terrace Park, Madeira and Mariemont

### **Player Exemptions**

The GCYFL is a community based League composed of Organizations that hold varying values and compete at different levels. Each Organization values the contributions of the others and recognizes the various community demographics that contribute to the uniqueness of each Organization. With that being said, there is a balance to be established that maintains community

based football while allowing Organizations to accept youth from outside their Organization thereby respecting the values of each Organization. The following policy has been adopted to create this balance.

1. Exempted Players are defined above in *Player Eligibility*.
2. If a player was on a 2020 GCYFL roster, then the player is eligible to play for that team until they have graded out of the league or leave the organization for which they had been registered. The 2019 season roster may be used for players who chose to sit out the 2020 season due to COVID-19. These players may not have played for any organization in 2020.
3. All player exemption requests for all grades will be submitted to the Exemption Review Committee in writing for approval.
  - a. Returning player exemptions should be submitted with required paperwork, and a copy of the 2020 season roster to provide proof of registration.
    - i. The 2019 season roster may be used for players who chose to sit out the 2020 due to COVID-19. These players may not have played for any organization in 2020.
4. Every Exempted Player must have a Player Exemption Form completed and signed by a member of the GCYFL Executive Board. The completed Player Exemption Form will be kept with the rest of the Player's paperwork in the Team Book.
5. Unless specified above, no player may play for one Organization and reside in another Organization's district unless the President of the Organization representing the school district where the player resides signs the Player Exemption form.

#### **Exemption Deadlines**

1. Any player that played for the GCYFL in 2024 and will be an Exemption in 2025, must submit a Player Exemption Form to the Board by the second weigh-in. The form may be submitted in person or by electronic means.
2. Any new player for an Organization that had multiple teams in the Organization in any one grade in 2024, must submit a Player Exemption Form to the Board by **the second weigh-in**.
3. Any new player for an Organization that had no more than one team in all grades in the Organization in which they fielded a team in 2024 must submit a Player Exemption Form to the Board by **the second weigh-in, 2025**.
4. The Board may accept Player Exemption Forms after the second weigh-in 2025 for teams and players that move out of a GCYFL district after the deadlines at the sole discretion of the Board. The decision to accept these Exemptions for review may not be appealed.
5. It is the responsibility of the Organization requesting the exemption to properly submit the request. The Board May deny any Player Exemption Form not properly completed, illegible or missing appropriate supporting documentation. A deadline may be extended at the sole discretion of the Board for any deadline missed due to incomplete, illegible or missing documentation and an extension or lack thereof may not be appealed.

#### **Player Grade Level:**

1. Teams competing within the GCYFL shall be Grade Level based and shall be solely composed of players entering scholastic grades K1, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th or 6th.
2. Verification of Grade Level for each player is required. For eligibility purposes, players may attend any public, parochial, private, or charter school, or be homeschooled.

3. No player may play down a Grade Level. Whenever a team is comprised of players of multiple Grade Levels, such teams must compete at the higher Grade Level. **EXAMPLE:** if a team is composed of 3rd, 4th and 5th graders, it must compete at the 5th Grade Level.
4. Any player, at the discretion of his Organization, may play up one or more Grade Levels.
5. No player promoted to seventh grade shall play football as a sixth grader if the Player's parents choose to have the Player repeat sixth grade.

As an exception to the rules above, any player moved up a grade by the school district due to scholastic achievement, after playing in the GCYFL one full season, may be granted the ability to continue to play in that grade for their remaining years of eligibility. However, when the player reaches their 7<sup>th</sup> Grade academic year, they are not permitted to play 6<sup>th</sup> Grade football.

### **Player Age**

1. August 1<sup>st</sup> of each year shall be the "Cut-Off" date to determine maximum age eligibility for each Grade Level participating in the GCYFL, as follows:
  - a. Grade K1 - cannot turn Age 8 prior to August 1
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade - cannot turn Age 9 prior to August 1
  - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade - cannot turn Age 10 prior to August 1
  - d. 4<sup>th</sup> Grade - cannot turn Age 11 prior to August 1
  - e. 5<sup>th</sup> Grade - cannot turn Age 12 prior to August 1
  - f. 6<sup>th</sup> Grade - cannot turn Age 13 prior to August 1
2. Any player born between August 1st and November 15th shall be considered an Unlimited Weight Player as defined herein and subject to the restrictions of Unlimited Weight Players.
  - a. Grade K1 - turns 8 between August 1 and November 15 is an Unlimited Weight Player
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade - turns 9 between August 1 and November 15 is an Unlimited Weight Player
  - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade - turns 10 between August 1 and November 15 is an Unlimited Weight Player
  - d. 4<sup>th</sup> Grade - turns 11 between August 1 and November 15 is an Unlimited Weight Player
  - e. 5<sup>th</sup> Grade - turns 12 between August 1 and November 15 is an Unlimited Weight Player
  - f. 6<sup>th</sup> Grade - turns 13 between August 1 and November 15 is an Unlimited Weight Player

Examples:

- a. If a K1 player turns Age 8 prior to August 1, the player will have to play up at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade level.
- b. If a 6<sup>th</sup> Grade player turns Age 13 prior to August 1, the player is not eligible to participate in the GCYFL.
- c. If a 5<sup>th</sup> Grade player turns 12 on September 4, the player is an Unlimited Weight Player. However, the player may play up to the 6th grade level and all weight and age restrictions apply as if the player is a 6th grader.

### **Miscellaneous Eligibility Rules:**

1. All players must participate in the GCYFL Certification and Weigh-In process.
2. No player may participate in a GCYFL game until his eligibility is officially Certified.

3. No player may be added to a Team Roster after 8:00 PM on Sunday of the second week of GCYFL regular season games.
4. No player may play in the GCYFL while, during the same season, participating in another football program. Proof of such activity in another league must be provided which may consist of an official Team Roster and/or confirmation from that team's head coach or organization representative.

*Falsification or misrepresentation of Player Eligibility, or the participation of an ineligible player, may result in the following:*

1. *forfeit of all games in which the subject player participated*
2. *termination of the subject player and his immediate family from the GCYFL*
3. *termination of the Head Coach from the GCYFL*
4. *sanctions against the Organization.*



## **Player & Team Certification**

### **Team Books**

#### **Player Documentation:**

1. Each Head Coach shall assemble the following documentation for each Player on his team's roster:
  - a. Player Agreement – signed by parent or guardian
  - b. Player Photograph attached to Player Agreement – 3" x 3" showing Jersey number
  - c. Birth Certificate copy – highlight name & birth date, print jersey # in upper right corner
  - d. Grade Level Verification – highlight name & grade info, print jersey # in upper right corner
  - e. Proof of Residency if needed – highlight name and address.
2. No Player may participate in the GCYFL until certified. Missing or incomplete documentation, until remedied, will result in the Player being ruled ineligible to play.

#### **Team Roster:**

Using a GCYFL prescribed spreadsheet form, each Head Coach shall prepare an accurate and detailed Roster for his team, listing each Player in numeric order by jersey number. Failure to properly complete and present this form at Certification will result in his team being turned-away at Certification.

#### **Certification Procedures:**

1. The GCYFL shall conduct "Certification and Weigh-In" dates. The dates and locations shall be determined by the organization and be worked by a member of the GCYFL Board of Directors.
2. The Certification and Weigh-In will be moderated by members of the Board of Directors and The Governing Panel with the assistance of the Executive Board of each Organization as well as members of another participating GCYFL Organization. All Organizations must provide a reasonable number of representatives to facilitate the process who must be 18 years or older.
3. Each team must have a minimum of 12 Players on its official roster to be Certified. Less than 12 Players may weigh-in at the first date, but the balance of 12 Players must weigh-in at the second weigh-in.
4. Head Coaches shall be provided the location and time to have their team assembled. Players are to be aligned in numerical order (by jersey number).
5. The Head Coach must be present at the initial certification and weigh-in.
6. Either a Head Coach, Assistant Coach or Team Mom must be present at subsequent weigh-ins for players who missed the initial weigh-in.
7. Absent Players cannot be Certified.
8. For each Player, assemble documentation in the following order:
  - a. GCYFL Player Agreement (on top),
  - b. Birth Certificate
  - c. Grade Level Verification
  - d. Proof of Residency, unless included in the Grade Level Verification
9. Head Coaches shall organize and present Player Documentation in numerical order by jersey number to Organization Representatives. The player agreement, birth certificate, grade level verification and proof of residency will be checked for validation. A distinct mark will be made on the player agreement to notate compliance with the documentation requirement. The Team Roster shall reflect proof that valid documentation was provided.

10. Any team whose documentation is not prepared as listed above will be asked to step aside to properly prepare the documents. Delays attributable to a disorganized Head Coach may result in being asked to attend makeup weigh ins
11. A Player Agreement is certified when the Player Agreement is stamped to indicate all documents have been reviewed and are in compliance and there is a seal imprinted onto the picture and Player Agreement.
12. The Team Roster shall remain at the site of the Certification and Weigh-In. Rosters will be distributed to teams after the Exempted Player calculation is done and the GCYFL imprinted seal is applied.
13. Organization Representatives shall have access to all Team Rosters.

**Weigh-In Policy:**

1. Upon completing the above process, players will be weighed-in. No Player will be weighed if documentation is missing or incomplete.
2. Only a scale approved by the GCYFL shall be used.
3. Organization Representatives will verify the Player pictured on the Player Agreement is the player stepping on the scale. If so, the Organization Representative will use a stamp that partially leaves an impression on the picture and partially leaves an impression on the player agreement.
4. Players may be in street clothes. Shoes are not required, but Players may not step on the scale barefoot.
5. Players will be allowed only ONE opportunity to weigh-in. The recorded weight will become official. No secondary pre-season weigh-ins shall be permitted.
6. The player weight shall be recorded on the Player Agreement and Team Roster.
7. Roster Players not certified during the Certification and Weigh-In, regardless of reason, will be ruled ineligible to play "Limited Weight Positions", as defined in these rules, for the entire season. The Player's apparent size will have no bearing on this ruling, and no subsequent weigh-in shall be permitted.

*Falsification or misrepresentation of Player Eligibility, or the participation of an ineligible player, may result in the following:*

- 1. forfeit of all games in which the subject player participated*
- 2. termination of the subject player and his immediate family from the GCYFL*
- 3. termination of the Head Coach from the GCYFL*
- 4. sanctions against the Organization.*

### **Limited Weight Positions - Defined:**

1. "Limited Weight Positions" apply to Offense only, and shall include all Backfield positions, plus any Wing, Flanker, Slot Back, Wide Receiver, Split End, Punter, Kicker or Holder positions.
2. There shall be no "Limited Weight Positions" or weight restrictions for Defense.
3. The maximum weight, per grade level, for "Limited Weight Positions" shall be as follows: a. Grade
4.
  - a. K1 – 80 pounds
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade – 90 pounds
  - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade – 105 pounds
  - d. 4<sup>th</sup> Grade – 115 pounds
  - e. 5<sup>th</sup> Grade – 125 pounds
  - f. 6<sup>th</sup> Grade – **Unlimited**

### **Unlimited Weight Players**

1. Defined: "Unlimited Weight Players" are those players whose official recorded weight exceeds the maximum allowed to play the "Limited Weight Positions", for their grade level, as defined above.
2. Participation Restrictions on Offense:
  - a. May not play, align in, motion to, or shift to that of any "Limited Weight Position".
  - b. Must align on the Line of Scrimmage as an Offensive Lineman or Tight End, and with a split (or separation) no greater than two yards from the alignment of the nearest Lineman to either side.
  - c. Are not permitted to advance the ball via handoff. However, a Tight End as defined in 2b may catch a forward pass beyond the line of scrimmage and advance the ball.
  - d. May possess or advance a loose ball, but only if the ball first touches the ground.
3. Participation Restrictions on Defense:
  - a. There are no restrictions for Unlimited Weight Players on Defense.
4. Violations of Weight Restriction Rules:
  - a. Illegal Offensive participation by an "Unlimited Weight Player", that is inadvertent in nature, shall be ruled as "Illegal Participation" and penalized by "5 Yards" from the spot of the foul.
  - b. Illegal Offensive participation by an "Unlimited Weight Player", that is deemed "intentional", as evidenced by play design, player alignment, or by the repetitive nature of inadvertent participation fouls, shall be ruled as "Unsportsmanlike Conduct" against the Head Coach and penalized by "15 Yards" from the previous spot.
  - c. Willful violations of a fraudulent nature, or by attempting to conceal an "Unlimited Weight Player", will result in game forfeiture and/or the suspension, or termination, of the offending player and/or the Head Coach, as determined by the Board of Directors of the GCYFL. The sanction imposed by the Board of Directors may be appealed to the Governing Panel whose decision shall be final.

### **Team Books:**

1. Each Head Coach is required to maintain a Team Book containing team records, assembled as follows:
  - a. First Page – a copy of the certified team roster, listed in numerical order by jersey number. The roster shall include the Player's jersey number, name, grade, and High School District.
  - b. Section 1 – a separate sheet protector for each player in numerical order by jersey number containing the following documents in the order listed:
    - i. Certified GCYFL Player Agreement (on top),

- ii. Birth Certificate
  - iii. Grade Level Verification
  - iv. Proof of Residency, unless included in the Grade Level Info
  - v. Copies of any special Medical Authorization Clearances for Player participation.
    - required if Player must wear a special orthodontic mouth guard.
    - required if Player is wearing a cast or similar protective device, per OHSAA specifications.
    - required when Player resumes participation per Ohio Concussion return to play protocols.
  - c. Section 3 – a sheet protector with the GCYFL Coach Roster and a letter from the Organization President certifying that each coach has passed a background check followed by a separate sheet protector for each coach containing copies of the USA Football Youth Tackle Certification, Concussion Certifications, and Lindsay’s Law Certifications for all football coaches. CPR and Rules Acknowledgement for head coaches.
  - d. Section 4 – one sheet protector for all Cheer Coaches containing the background check, concussion certification and Lindsay’s Law Certification. A Coach Roster shall be the first page. If Football and Cheer Programs are not administered by one Organization, each Head Cheer Coach must keep this paperwork with them just as each football team must have their book with them.
2. Team Books should be a ringed binder with contents inserted into sheet protectors. The outer cover shall clearly identify your Organization and Team, in the event it is misplaced.
  3. Inspections
    - a. Team Books must be available for inspection up to 30 Min prior to games on Game Days; no exceptions!
    - b. Incomplete, or non-certified, documentation for any Player will result in disqualification of that Player.
    - c. Failure, or refusal, to produce the Team Book, on demand, shall result in automatic Game Forfeit.

### **Practices**

#### **Practices:**

1. The official GCYFL start date to begin practices is: **July 7 2025**
2. All GCYFL coaches must complete the USA Football Youth Tackle Certification prior to coaching.
3. The first 3 practices after **July 7 2025**, must be in shorts and helmet only. No contact is permitted.
4. The first 3 practices after **July 7 2025** must fall on separate days. Two-a-days will not count for 2 of the 3 required practices.
5. The following forms of football instruction are the only ones that may occur in the off season:
  - a. Flag football teams,
  - b. 7 on 7 games
  - c. Organizational Combines and similar pre-season activities hosted by an Organization.
  - d. High School camps
  - e. Practices with a 7:1 player to coach ratio
6. Violations of this section shall result in the forfeit of the first regular season game(s) by the offending team and/or Organization at a minimum.

## **Coaches - Rules & Conduct**

### **Coaching Standards:**

1. All football coaches, within the GCYFL must possess the following up to date certifications:
  - a. USA Football Youth Tackle Certification.
  - b. Concussion Certification from an OHSAA recognized organization.
    - i. National Federation of State High School Associations.
    - ii. National Alliance for Youth Sports
    - iii. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  - c. Lindsay's Law Certification form an OHSAA recognized organization.
  - d. Head coach and one assistant coach must be CPR certified and Head coach must sign rules acknowledgement
2. All cheer coaches, within the GCYFL must possess the following up to date certifications:
  - a. Concussion Certification from an OHSAA recognized organization.
    - i. National Federation of State High School Associations.
    - ii. National Alliance for Youth Sports
    - iii. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  - b. Lindsay's Law Certification form an OHSAA recognized organization.
3. All Coaches shall have a bi-annual background check conducted. The following organizations may complete the background check:
  - a. National Center For Safety Initiatives
  - b. Identity Innovations
  - c. Protect Youth Sports
  - d. USA Football
  - e. Organization Presidents shall write and sign a letter for each team book certifying that each coach, listed by name, for that particular team has passed a background check that met the League's minimum criteria. If requested by the Board, the Organization President shall present the actual background check results to the League President for review.
4. All coaches within the GCYFL shall be held to the highest standards regarding conduct and sportsmanship.
5. Failure to adhere to the rules of the GCYFL, or to those of the OHSAA, shall bring stiff consequences, which may include reprimand, forfeit, probation, suspension, or termination.
6. In order for any coach, including Cheer (except as noted above) to be on the sidelines as a coach and get into games free of charge, each coach must provide proof that the above certifications were obtained and a successful background check was completed. The GCYFL Coach Rosters will be available to all Organizations. Host Organizations may print a roster on game days and require coaches and team administrators to provide proof of identification prior to entering in order to be granted free entry.
7. Coach Rosters must be readily available to show to any Field Administrator, Host Organization Board Member, member of the GCYFL Board of Directors or Governing Panel member when requested.

### **Head Coaches:**

1. Shall be held accountable for the appropriate conduct of their players, staff and spectators.
2. Shall assure that their team follows all Game Day procedures for the various GCYFL game sites.
3. Shall assure that his/her team is staged and ready to take the field 10 minutes prior to scheduled game start.
4. Shall assure that his Field Book is complete and available for inspection on all Game Days.

**Football Sideline Staff:**

*The intent of rules related to sideline and cheer staff are to eliminate the presence of unnecessary people on the sidelines. It is understandable that there are circumstances that will necessitate more personnel on the sidelines at certain times such as extremely hot days and large cheer teams in younger grades. The Field Administrator has the final decision with regards to this subject but should consider the intent of the rule when making a decision.*

1. A maximum of eight (8) football coaches may be on a sideline, or within the team box.
2. Each team may have one trainer on the sidelines. The trainer in no way shall be permitted to coach unless the trainer is registered as one of eight football coaches.
3. Each team may have one person to help with water on hot days. The person is in no way permitted to coach unless the person is registered as one of eight registered football coaches.
4. Each team may have one (1) person on their sideline to take pictures.
5. No other persons shall be permitted on the sideline or within the team box. Excess personnel shall be given one notice to relocate to the spectator area.
6. After one warning, violations of the above rules shall result in a 15-yard Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty.

**Cheer Staff:**

1. A maximum of two (2) Cheer Coaches may be staged with their cheer squads. Other people may assist the Cheer Coaches as necessary.
2. Cheer coaches shall position their squads in the designated area at each venue.

**Ejections:**

1. Officials and Field Administrators shall have full authority to enforce the rules of the GCYFL and the OHSAA.
2. Any coach, upon receiving his second Unsportsmanlike Penalty within a game, shall be ejected.
3. Any coach ejected from a game shall immediately leave the playing field and vacate the game site premises. If the coach has a child playing the child is also removed from the game. The coach is automatically suspended from the following game.
4. Any coach ejected shall have his actions reviewed by the Board of Directors. If the Board of Directors finds that the ejection was valid, the Board of Directors shall take the following action:
  - a. Place the coach on Probation for the remainder of the season. If the offense occurs during post-season play, the coach will remain on Probation through the following season.
  - b. Assess a fine of \$100 to be paid to the league. The coach may only return if the fine has been paid.
  - c. A second ejection occurring within the same season shall result in a permanent suspension of all coaching privileges for the balance of the season. If the offense occurs during post-season play, the coach shall be suspended for the following season.

**Suspensions and Terminations:**

1. Any willful or intentional violation of rules pertaining to player eligibility, or any act of gross misconduct with respect to Sportsmanship or the rules of the GCYFL, shall result in suspension for the remainder of the season; and, upon review by the Board of Directors, may result in the permanent termination of the offending party and/or the Head Coach.

2. Any intentional illegal participation by an ineligible player at a "Limited Weight Position" shall result in game Forfeit and suspension of the Head Coach for the remainder of the season.

#### **Coaches on the Playing Field:**

1. Coaches shall be permitted on the Playing Field to advise and assist younger players, as follows:
  - a. K1 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade can have two on-field Coaches per team.
  - b. 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade can have one on-field Coach per team.
  - c. 4<sup>th</sup> thru 6<sup>th</sup> Grade may not have a coach on the field.
2. On-Field Coaches shall adhere to the following special sportsmanship and conduct rules:
  - a. On-Field Coaches must cease all player communication, including alignment adjustments, when the Quarterback moves under Center or, if in a Shotgun formation, moves to his pre-snap alignment.
  - b. On-Field Coaches must move to a minimum of 10 yards beyond the deepest player at the time the quarterback is set.
  - c. On-Field Coaches may not communicate to players, in any way, while a play is in progress.
  - d. On-Field Coaches may not interfere with the movement of the ball, or of any player.
3. The following penalties shall apply to On-Field Coach conduct violations of Section 2, above:
  - a. Violation of 2(a) ... Delay of Game ... one warning | 5-yard Penalty thereafter | loss of On-Field coaching privileges with third occurrence.
  - b. Violation of 2(b) ... Illegal Formation ... one warning | 5-yard Penalty thereafter | loss of On-Field coaching privileges with third occurrence.
  - c. Violation of 2(c) ... Unsportsmanlike Conduct ... one warning | 15-yard Penalty and loss of On-Field coaching privileges with second occurrence.
  - d. Violation of 2(d) ... Interference ... no warning - 15-yard Penalty | 15-yard Penalty and loss of On-Field coaching privileges with second occurrence.
4. On-Field Coaches who become belligerent or argumentative with Officials, or opposing coaches, may be relocated to the sideline for the remainder of the game by the Official.
5. Sideline Coaches shall not be constrained, or restricted, from communicating to players on the field prior to the snap or while a play is in progress.

#### **Game Day Procedures**

##### **Team Uniforms:**

1. Each Team Pod of an Organization, and all teams within such Pod, shall wear uniforms which are representative of its Organizational colors. Organizations shall submit jersey designs to Board to ensure there is enough contrast between the base color of the jersey and the numbers.
2. Teams may wear alternate jerseys if all players have the same number as listed on the Team Roster and the jersey is approved by the Board.
3. If the jersey has a name, it shall be the last name of the player. An identifying initial may be used if two players have the same name.
4. Two players from the same team may not have the same number and be on the field at the same time unless the conflict arises from playing Supplemental Players pursuant to the Rules; page 16.

##### **Player Equipment:**

No player may participate in a GCYFL game wearing a uniform void of the following equipment:

1. Helmet with substantial face mask and chin strap connected at four points.
2. Shoulder pads.
3. Football pants containing substantial knee and thigh pads.

4. Football pants, or girdle, containing substantial tail and hip pads.
5. Adequate gym shoes, turf shoes or football cleats.
6. Football Cleats: metal tips and visible metal are strictly prohibited.
7. Guardian Caps, protective helmet covers, are approved for wear in GCYFL games, on an individual basis.
8. Mouth Guards: must be substantial and colored. Solid white and clear mouthpieces are prohibited.
9. Prohibited Equipment includes jewelry, watches, rubber wrist or arm bands and tinted face or eye shields.
10. Clear eye shields are permitted

#### **Casts and Injury Protective Equipment:**

1. All casts and similar protective equipment must conform to OHSAA rule specifications.
2. Casts may only be worn during game play if they are below the elbow.
3. No metal braces may be worn on the arms or legs.
4. All such protective devices must be inspected by Game Officials prior to the beginning of the game and the opposing coach is to be notified prior to the game beginning.
5. A Medical Authorization clearing a Player to participate must be in the Team Book and presented to Game Officials.

#### **Team Procedures on Game Day:**

1. All players, cheerleaders and coaches must enter the game site via the admission gate.
2. Teams may bring in coolers with water, water bottles and granola bars or similar snacks to be consumed by players as necessary during games.
3. Teams may bring in a post-game snack and drink to be consumed by the players after the game.
4. Teams must warm-up in areas designated by each site; check with the Field Administrator for instructions.
5. Teams must be staged, ready to take the field 10 minutes prior to scheduled game start.
6. Head Coaches shall have available for the Official's use as needed upon request a *Quick Reference Rule Sheet* created by the League.

#### **Team Book Inspections**

1. Team Books must be ready and available for inspection by the Field Administrator, and the opposing Head Coach or representative.
2. Any coach wishing to complete an inspection, shall declare intent to inspect a book at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the game. The declaration shall be made to the opposing Head Coach or Field Administrator. The inspection will occur 10 minutes before the start of the game.
3. Players should be assembled in numerical order, with helmets in hand, for validation.
4. Typically, a comparison of the photo in the book to the player presented will be satisfactory.
5. If there is a question concerning the identity of the player, the Field Administrator may ask the player for their full name, address, school, grade or birthdate. Individuals conducting an inspection should keep in mind the age of the child being questioned.
6. If there is a discrepancy, the opposing Head Coach shall bring the discrepancy to the attention of the Field Administrator who shall try to resolve the matter. If the matter cannot be resolved, either the player does not play the game, or the game can be played under protest for the matter to be reviewed by the Board of Directors.
7. Failure to have your Team Book available for inspection shall result in a Forfeit.

#### **Supplemental Players**



1. Not Enough Players On Hand:
  - a. No game may commence if a team has fewer than 11 "eligible" players. The game shall be ruled a Forfeit.
  - b. No scheduled game start may be delayed, without penalty, while waiting for Players to arrive.
  - c. If a team falls below 11 players after Regulation Play commences, the game may continue without penalty.
2. Temporary Drafting of Supplemental Players
  - a. Upon realizing a Player shortage, regardless of team size, the Head Coach shall advise the Field Administrator and opposing team. In order to play the game, Supplemental Players may be drafted from the next "youngest" Grade Level team from the same Pod.
  - b. No more than 3 players may be drafted.
  - c. Supplemental Players must be presented to the Field Administrator for validation.
  - d. Supplemental players may not play a Limited Weight Position.
  - e. Any team that adds players, and has at least 11 players, shall not have the game ruled a Forfeit.

### **Game Site Procedures**

#### **Site Standards:**

1. The playing field must be a regulation size football field, properly lined and allowing for Team Boxes.
2. There shall be water accessible for team water bottles to be filled and ice or ice packs for injuries.
3. There shall be an operational game clock.
4. A public-address system is preferred, but not required.
5. There shall be adequate restroom facilities.
6. There shall be a designated spectator area parallel to at least one sideline. If a stadium or other facility is used to play the game with the ability to place spectators from opposing teams on opposing sidelines, spectators from opposing teams shall be placed on opposing sides. The home and visitor spectator areas shall be designated with signage.
7. Spectator areas shall be separate from the Team Box.
8. There shall be a designated area sufficient for Cheer squads to perform.

#### **Gate Admissions:**

1. For all GCYFL Regular Season and Playoff games:
  - a. Adult Admission: \$7/\$8(Playoffs)
  - b. Student and Senior (62 and older) Admission: \$3/\$4(Playoffs)
  - c. Age 12 and Under: Free
2. For GCS Championship games:
  - a. Adult Admission: \$10
  - b. Age 12 and Under: Free
3. Players, Cheerleaders, Officials, Football Team Managers and Football and Cheer Coaches (subject to coaching roster requirements) shall not be required to pay a gate admission
4. Organizations shall pay Game Officials directly from daily receipts.

#### **Game Site Rules:**

1. Teams may bring in coolers with water, water bottles, fruit and granola bars or similar snacks to be consumed by players as necessary during games.

2. Teams may bring in a post-game snack and drink to be consumed by the players only after the game.
3. No other food or beverage is permitted to be brought in.
4. No alcohol, or use of tobacco products, shall be permitted.
5. No pets, whether leashed or not, shall be permitted; unless they are certified service animals.
6. Drones are allowed but must be approved by home team and film must be shared within 48 hours
7. Concessions are an integral component of an organization's finances ... Your patronage is appreciated!
8. Organizations hosting games are required to have a Field Book which at a minimum shall include the following:
9.
  - a. GCYFL By-Laws
  - b. GCYFL Rules
  - c. GCYFL Ejection Report
  - d. Officials Sign-in Form

**Chain Operators:**

1. Three Chain operators must be furnished by the Home Team.
2. Operators must be age 16 or older.
3. Chains shall be positioned opposite the press box.
4. A delay of game penalty may be assessed if the chain crew is not present to begin the game or resume the game after half-time
5. A 15 yard penalty may be assessed if any chain worker is seen using a cellphone while the game is going on. That chain worker is also subject to being removed from the game if action continues.

**Scouting**

1. Scouting, including video scouting, is permitted.
2. Any person Scouting shall wear a shirt with their Organization's logo and notify the Field Administrator they are present.
3. The Field Administrator shall promptly notify the Head Coach of each team the Organization that is scouting the game.
4. Any coach listed on a Coaching Roster with all stamps next to their name will be granted free admission.

## **Field Administration & Officiating**

### **Field Administrators:**

1. Each Organization shall designate a qualified person to be Field Administrator whenever hosting games.
2. All Field Administrators should have a fluid knowledge of these GCYFL rules and a working knowledge of OHSAA rules and the game of football.
3. The duties and responsibilities of Field Administrators shall include the following:
  - a. Assuring the Game Site is prepared and ready for play.
  - b. Monitoring the conduct of all participants and spectators for conformity to GCYFL rules.
  - c. Assisting Game Officials in the interpretation and administration of GCYFL rules.
  - d. Collaborating with Game Officials in the event of bad weather, relative to the suspension of game play.
  - e. Inspection of Field Books and validation of team rosters 10 minutes prior to the beginning of each game as requested.
  - f. Submitting a report to the GCYFL detailing any Forfeits, Ejections, Postponements, or other events.
  - g. Submitting game results and scores to the GCYFL Secretary at the end of the day.
4. Field Administrators should always have a copy of these GCYFL Rules & Regulations available for reference.
5. Field Administrators shall immediately notify the GCYFL President of any Postponed or Cancelled game.

### **Game Officials and Officiating:**

1. Officials shall sign in.
2. The GCYFL shall adopt the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) rules for Football, as they may be amended from season to season, as its guide for game rules and their interpretation.
3. Provided they are not less restrictive and intended to enhance safety or quality of youth play, the GCYFL may adopt modifications or changes to the OHSAA rules, as provided herein.
4. The GCYFL shall endeavor to employ the most qualified Game Officials to officiate GCYFL contests. In so doing, the GCYFL shall demand utmost professionalism in the fairness and interpretation of all rules.
5. Game Officials shall be prepared and have a thorough understanding of GCYFL and OHSAA rules.
6. A monitoring system shall exist to monitor the effectiveness of officials.
  - a. Coaches shall have the ability to provide feedback regarding officials.
  - b. Officials shall sign in at the gate upon arrival at the field.
7. Officials shall be OHSAA certified.
8. The number of Officials to be employed per game shall be as follows:
  - a. for K1 thru 6th Grade games: 3 Officials.
  - b. for Championship games (all grades): 4 Officials.

### **Games Delays due to Officials:**

1. In the event one or more Game Officials are absent, or late, for a scheduled game start:
  - a. K1 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade ... game shall begin and may be officiated with two Officials.
  - b. 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 6<sup>th</sup> Grade ... game shall begin and may be officiated with two Officials.
  - c. Championships ... game shall begin and may be officiated with three Officials.

2. No game start shall be delayed for more than 15 minutes to wait on Officials. The game shall be postponed and rescheduled by the Competition Committee if less than two officials are present.

### **Game Rules**

#### **Minimum Number of Players:**

1. Including those needed for "Limited Weight Positions", all teams must have a minimum of 11 eligible players to begin a game. (See page 16 for adding Supplemental Players)
2. If a team is reduced to fewer than 11 eligible players, the game may be played without penalty.

#### **Game Scheduling, Starts & Delays:**

1. During the Regular Season, Teams will be scheduled to "host" or "travel" some will travel as pods others may be pulled from pod and play at different locations usually for competitive balance.
2. Games may be scheduled for Saturday or Sunday, and, whenever possible, commencing at the following times: Some organizations may choose to start early due to field or lighting issues or because they are hosting more than 6 games. Also organizations may choose a later start to allow older grades to play under lights.
  - a. Grade K1 – 10:00am
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade – 11:20am
  - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade – 12:40 pm
  - d. 4<sup>th</sup> Grade – 2:00pm
  - e. 5<sup>th</sup> Grade – 3:20pm
  - f. 6<sup>th</sup> Grade – 4:40pm
3. All games shall commence at their scheduled starting times, unless delayed by weather or other uncontrollable circumstances, as determined by the Officials or Field Administrator.
4. No game shall begin prior to its scheduled start time unless mutually agreed upon by both Head Coaches, the Field Administrator and the Game Officials.
5. If a team's Captains are not present for the coin toss within 5 minutes after the scheduled start of the game, the game shall be ruled a forfeit.
6. No team may intentionally delay its game start when it has 11 eligible players available.
7. If, for any reason, a team is unable, or refuses, to timely take the field to begin its game:
  - a. Officials may impose a Delay of Game Penalty for the initial ball spot.
  - b. After a 5-minute delay, impose an additional Unsportsmanlike Penalty of 15 yards.
  - c. After a 15-minute delay, the game shall be ruled a Forfeit. If the aggrieved coach agrees to play the game and it can subsequently begin, it shall be played with a "running clock", but the Forfeit ruling shall stand.

#### **Game Length:**

1. All games, for grades K1-6, shall consist of four 8 minute quarters, regulation clock, with a half time break not to exceed 8 minutes. The half time break may be shortened to 5 minutes if games are behind schedule.
2. Under certain situations, games may be played, or completed, using a "Running Clock" format.

#### **Game Ball - Specifications:**

1. Game balls shall be of leather or leather composite.
2. Full composite balls (rubber balls) shall not be permitted.
3. The following ball sizes are approved:  
K1 thru 4<sup>th</sup> Grade ... the ball size shall be a "K2".

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grades ... the ball size shall be a "TDJ".

4. Each team shall furnish its own game balls and be allowed to substitute its ball into play when on offense.
5. Officials may reject any ball that does not conform to the defined specifications.
6. See Appendix A for pictures of acceptable footballs.

#### **Point Scoring:**

1. Touchdown – 6 points
2. PAT Conversion from the 3 yard line (kick, run, pass) – 1 points
3. PAT Conversion from the 7 yard line (run, pass) – 2 points
4. Field Goal - 3 points
5. Safety – 2 points

#### **Spotting the Ball:**

1. No live Kickoff Plays shall be permitted in the GCYFL.
2. The Ball shall be spotted at the 35-yard-line of the Offensive team for each of the following: a.  
To begin a game.
  - b. To begin the second half of a game.
  - c. After the opposing team has scored a Touchdown.
  - d. After the opposing team has scored a Field Goal.
3. After a **Touchback**, the Ball shall be spotted at the 20-yard-line of the Offensive team.
4. For a **PAT** attempt, the Ball shall be spotted at the 3-yard-line of the Defensive team.
5. After a **Safety**, the Ball shall be spotted at the 50-yard-line.

#### **Blitzing:**

1. K1 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade
  - a. Inside Linebackers must be 3 yards off the LOS (line of scrimmage) when the ball is snapped.
  - b. All interior defensive players must be in a 3 or 4-point stance if aligned on the LOS.
  - c. This rule does not apply to Defensive Ends who are aligned outside the Tackles.
  - d. A violation of this rule may result in a 5 yard encroachment penalty.
2. 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 6<sup>th</sup> Grade
  - a. There is no limitation on blitzing.

#### **Punting:**

1. **K1 thru 3rd**
  - a. A "walk-off" punt of 25 Yards may be declared, as follows:
    - i. The offense shall advise an Official of its intent to Punt.
    - ii. Once the punt is declared, Officials shall walk off a 25- yard punt while running 15 seconds off the clock. After 15 seconds elapse, the clock will be stopped.
    - iii. No walk-off punt shall go beyond the opponent's 25 yard line.
    - iv. After the change of possession, the clock shall start again with the snap

#### **2. 4th and 5th**

1. Punts are simulated not live. All coaches must punt. There is no gentlemen's agreement between coaches for walk off.
2. Once a team declares a punt the clock will stop.

All players except the center, punter and 2 returners will kneel for the punt.

3. The punter will be given time to get the ball and kick in the case of a bad snap.

4. The ball will be blown dead where it is fielded by returner or stops rolling and is blow dead by referees.

5. There will then be a 15 second run off.

**3. 6th Grade - All Punts are live and will follow OHSAA rules.**

**Field Goal or PAT Kick**

1. K1 thru 3rd Grade
  - a. There is not kicking in K1 thru 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade.
2. 4-6th grade
  - a. All Kicks will be simulated during regular season
  - b. There may be no direct defensive contact with the Center on the kick snap if the center's head is down.
  - c. All kick attempts shall be considered live plays during the playoffs, per OHSAA rules.
  - d. The holder may utilize a kicking block to elevate the ball a maximum of 2".
  - e. If the snap, or hold, is muffed, the play shall be blown dead and the ball shall be spotted where it was to be held for the kick.
  - f. If a Field Goal is attempted and missed the ball will be returned to the original line of scrimmage for the change of possession.

**Mercy Rule**

1. The purpose of the Mercy Rule is to promote sportsmanship.
2. When a 30-point differential is reached in the second half of play, a running clock shall commence. The clock can only be stopped by an official for an Official's injury time out or a Coach's time out.
3. If a game ends with a differential of more than 36 points. The losing coach may file a complaint with the league indicating a purposeful violation of the mercy rule occurred. The violation will be investigated and if found guilty the offending coach will be assessed a fines as follows:
  - a. First offense: \$100 fine
  - b. Second offense: \$250 fine
  - c. Third offense: \$250 fine and one game suspension of the head coach.
  - d. The Head Coach may not attend games until the fine is paid.
4. A fine may not be assessed if 36 points are exceeded with the scoring of a defensive touchdown as the last scoring play.

**Ties & Overtime Rules:**

1. No games may end regulation play in a tie. All tied games (all Grades) shall proceed into Overtime and be played in accordance with OHSAA overtime rules, with the following specifications:
2. Each team shall be allowed one timeout per Overtime period. Unused timeouts shall not carryover from regulation play, or from prior Overtime periods.
3. Each team shall be allowed one Offensive possession per Overtime period. The game shall be final when a tie no longer exists at the conclusion of an Overtime period.
4. Spotting the Ball
  - a. K1 thru 3rd Grade

- i. For the first overtime period, the initial ball spot shall be the 10-yard-line.
  - ii. For each subsequent overtime period, the initial ball spot shall be the 5-yard-line.
- 4th thru 6th Grade
- i. For the first overtime period, the initial ball spot shall be the 20-yard-line.
  - ii. For a second overtime period, the initial ball spot shall be the 10-yard-line.
  - iii. For each subsequent overtime period, the initial ball spot shall be the 5-yard-line.

**Running Clock Format:**

1. Certain situations exist where the Game Clock will change to a "running clock" format. In such cases, the game clock may be stopped only for the following events:
2. a. A typical Team Timeout, per normal OHSAA rules.
- b. An Official's Timeout to address an injury on the field.
3. Once a running clock has commenced, the rest of the game shall be played with a running clock.

**Delayed, Suspended or Postponed Games:**

1. Game Officials, or the Field Administrator, shall be empowered to delay, suspend or postpone game play due to weather, diminished light, or other uncontrollable circumstance.
2. A Suspended or Delayed game does not need to be resumed when the Head Coaches and Field Administrator agree the likely game outcome has been determined. Victory shall be awarded to the team leading at the time play was suspended and the score shall become final.\
3. For any game that is to be resumed, the score, quarter, game clock, possession, ball spot, and the down and distance to gain shall be recorded and applied when play resumes.
4. Definitions
  - a. Delayed games – teams shall remain at the game site until play is ordered resumed. Teams shall be allowed a 10-minute warm-up period prior to resumption of play.
  - b. Suspended game – play has commenced but will not continue on the same day.
  - c. Postponed game – play has not commenced and shall be rescheduled
5. When a game must be rescheduled for Suspended or Postponed games, the Competition Committee shall reschedule the game. Every effort will be made to schedule the game at the original hosting site. If not completed prior to the final weekend of the regular season. The Board of Directors shall declare one of the following for each such game:
  - a. A victory to the team who was leading at the time play was suspended.

**Communication Devices**

1. No electronic communication devices, cameras or cell phones are permitted to be used on the sidelines to record or communicate between coaches on the field or from the booth to the field or with players on the field of play including electronic signage to signal plays or information from the sideline.
2. At a minimum, a violation of this rule shall result in the forfeit of the game, fine and a one game suspension of the Head Coach.

## **Playoffs and Championships**

### **Playoffs**

1. GCYFL teams will be ranked during the season in a college football “BCS” style ranking to determine playoffs.
2. Rankings will take place after the regular season week 4, week 6, and week 8, with a final ranking occurring after the last game of the regular season has been played for each grade.

### **Playoffs:**

1. All teams will qualify for postseason Playoffs.
2. There will be four Championships: GCYFL Championship, Buckeye, Bearcat, Bobcat. Each team will be placed in a bracket.
3. Criteria to be used to determine placement:
  - a. Record
  - b. Strength of schedule
  - c. Anything else that may come to the attention of the Board.

### **Facility Requirements:**

1. All Championship games shall be played on turf fields with permanently mounted lights.
2. If all requirements herein are met, all other games may be played at any site. However, sites without permanently mounted lights must start at 9:00 AM.
3. The playing field must be a regulation size football field, properly lined and allowing for Team Boxes.
4. There shall be an operational game clock.
5. A play clock is preferred for the Championship games, but not required.
6. A public-address system is preferred, but not required.

### **Site Selection:**

Championship Game Sites will be selected based on the Alphabetical Order of the Inaugural Members. New Organizations will be added to the rotation of hosting Organizations consistent with the chronological order of membership status. Two organizations granted Organization status at the same meeting shall be ranked in alphabetical order. No Organization voted in shall host a Championship game in their first year of membership.

The Organizations eligible to host the Championship games based on the preceding paragraph will be randomly drawn for assignment of a Championship series. The first name drawn will host the Bukey Championship games, the second name drawn will host the Bearcat Championship games and the Bobcat Championship games will be awarded to the third organization. Organizations may trade hosting the entire series of Championship games, after the drawing, upon mutual agreement of the organizations making the trade.



Playoff games will be granted to Organizations who meet the criteria based on a random draw. No team hosting Championship games may host Playoff games unless all interested Organizations have hosted one series of games already and a second drawing will occur. Then, the Organizations hosting Championship games may be entered in the drawing for the second round of selections.

**Officials:**

Championship games shall be officiated with 4 Officials. A 5th Official shall operate the game clock and play clock if available.

**Championship Game Awards:**

1. Awards will be selected by the Board. Awards for all levels of championships will be similar in stature.
2. Awards shall be purchased by the Board.
3. Trophies will be substantial in size to reflect the GCYFL and shall be issued to both teams in every Championship Game.
4. Players and Cheerleaders from both teams in all Championship Games shall receive a medal. The medal shall be at least 2" in diameter and placed on a ribbon representative of the hosting organization's colors.
5. For GCYFL playoffs and GCYFL Championship games:
  - d. Adult Admission: \$7
  - e. Student and Senior Admission: \$4
  - f. Age 12 and Under: Free

**Sportsmanship | Disciplinary Actions | Protest**

**Sportsmanship:**

1. The GCYFL shall strive to be family friendly, promoting a safe and healthy environment for all participants and spectators. All participants are encouraged to invite family and friends to be supportive fans of GCYFL football.
2. Accordingly, all players, cheerleaders, coaches, parents and spectators shall be held to the highest standards of positive Sportsmanship at all GCYFL events and game sites.
3. No person may consume alcohol, or be in an intoxicated state, at any GCYFL event.
4. All persons shall obey the instructions given by Field Administrators or persons tasked with such authority.
5. No person shall become unruly, disorderly, belligerent or display obnoxious behavior, including any remarks to harass, intimidate or ridicule opposing coaches, players, cheerleaders, their spectators, or Game Officials.
6. If offensive behavior persists, or becomes physically threatening or violent, or is perceived to be intoxicated, the offender shall be asked to vacate the game site.
7. Any person "ejected" by a Game Official or Field Administrator shall immediately vacate the game site. If they have a child playing the player must leave the game as well.
8. Any spectator ejected from a game site may be suspended from attending all GCYFL events and games for the remainder of the season at the Discretion of the Board of Directors.
9. If, in their sole opinion, their ability to control and manage a game is threatened, Game Officials shall have the authority to halt the game and/or award the game to the offended team by **Forfeit**.

**Disciplinary Actions:**

1. These Rules & Regulations, together with the By-Laws of the GCYFL, identify various rule violations, events, situations or conditions for which, in the event of their occurrence, shall result in penalty or Disciplinary Action taken against an offending Organization, team, coach, participant, parent and/or other persons involved.
2. The extent of any penalty or Disciplinary Action may include, but shall not be limited to, verbal or written warnings, in-game yardage assessments, game ejection, game forfeit, probation, suspension or termination.
3. The harshest of Disciplinary Actions shall apply to the participation of ineligible players, the blatant disregard of GCYFL rules and/or gross misconduct with respect to Sportsmanship.
4. An Organization found in violation by the Board of Directors may be subject to sanctions, which may include suspension of game hosting privileges, game forfeitures, suspension from playoff participation, probation, or termination.
5. Any person or Organization may request, and shall be granted, a hearing to present mitigating circumstances. The decision of the Governing Panel shall be final.
6. Any Organization placed on Probation as a disciplinary action is ineligible to host a Championship or Playoff game and shall not have a vote in any matter of the Governing Panel. Probation shall be for a period of six to twelve months as determined by the Board from the date of the decision. Pursuant to point #5 above, the Governing Panel may review Probationary term.
7. Any fine shall be paid by check or proof of electronic transfer to any GCYFL Board member prior to commencement of the next game unless the issue is still under review by the Governing Panel.

**Protest:**

The correct procedure for playing a game under protest for a non-judgment call will be as follows:

1. If the infraction occurs before the game begins, the Field Administrator will be advised of the Protest. The opposing Head Coach and Officials will be notified prior to the start of the game by the Field Administrator or other Hosting Site Representative. If the Protest can be resolved prior to the start of the game, without delay, the game shall commence without penalty. If the issue cannot be resolved and the Head Coach wishes to continue with a Protest, a fine of \$50 will be assessed to the Head Coach.
2. If the infraction occurs during the game, the Head Coach shall notify the Official of the intent to Protest. The Official will call an Officials Time Out. Efforts will be made to notify the Field Administrator or other Hosting Site Representative as well but if unavailable, the Field Administrator will be notified upon completion of the game. The Officials and/or the Field Administrator and both Head Coaches will be brought to the center of the field and informed that the game is being played under protest. A fine of \$50 will be assessed to the protesting Head Coach. If the Officials feel that it would not be in the best interest of sportsmanship for the Head Coaches to meet, the Officials will relay the cause for the protest to the other coach.
3. Excessive delays in the game by either team will be cause for a delay of game penalty.
4. The Field Administrator shall email the President of the Board of Directors of any Protest by midnight, the day of the Protest. The President shall forward the email to the Board of Directors and both Head Coaches.
5. Within 12 hours of the scheduled start of the game, the Head Coach filing the Protest will email the GCYFL President and opposing Head Coach with the details of the Protest. It is the responsibility of the President to forward the email to the Board of Directors and to ensure the Opposing Coach got the email. The opposing Head Coach will have 24 hours from the time of the Protesting Coach's email to file a response. The Board of Directors will have 48 hours from the

- time of the Opposing Coach's email to make a decision. The following actions can be taken:
- a. Uphold the Protest and the opposing team forfeits.
  - b. Deny the Protest and the outcome of the game is unchanged.
  - c. Make a recommendation to the Governing Panel for a rule change.
6. If either side disagrees with the decision by the Board of Directors, within 24 hours of the email notification by the Board of Directors, the side in disagreement must email the President of the Board of Directors who will immediately forward the email to the Governing Panel. The Governing Panel must vote within 24 hours of the President's email to uphold or overturn the decision of the Board of Directors. Their decision will be final. The Board will decide to let the game stand or be replayed from the point of Protest.
  7. It is the responsibility of the person sending an email to ensure the recipient received it.
  8. Any Protest Fee shall be paid by check or proof of electronic transfer to any GCYFL Board member prior to commencement of the next game.

## **Appendix A**

### **League Fees**

The membership fee for each Organization is \$100 per team, minimum \$600 per organization, after

10 teams, \$25 per team. Any returning Organization that submits their letter and/or check between

March 1, 2025 and March 31, 2025 will be assessed a \$25 late fee per team, no max. Returning Organizations that submit their letter and/or check between April 1, 2025 and April 30, 2025, will be assessed a \$50 late fee per team, no max. Returning Organizations that submit their letter and/or check after April 30, 2025 will be assessed a \$100 late fee per team, no max. Organizations have until April 30, 2025 to change the amount of teams they will field at every grade level without penalty.

However, after April 30, 2025, every Organization will be given grace for a variance of only one team. Additional variances will result in a \$100 fine per team dropped or added in addition to the fee for the additional team. Refunds and credits will not be issued for teams declared prior to May 1, 2025, but not fielded.

The GCYFL has no reason to carry a surplus of funds from year to year but a nominal amount of money is needed to remain in the account in the off season to keep the account active and conduct business as needed, predominantly to cover clerical costs such as the PO Box. Once the season is over and all expenses are paid for, the remaining funds, less \$500 will be distributed amongst the

Organizations with the following exception. Any organization that signed their letter of intent or paid for the teams declared in the letter of intent after February 28, 2025 is not eligible for the refund. All eligible Organizations will receive a proportionate refund based on the amount they paid.

These are the 2025 Rules of the GCYFL all organizations are expected to inform and educate their participants on these rules and the consequences of violating them. Also while the GCYFL tries to cover all situations something may arise that isn't covered. In this case we expect all participants to not try to circumvent or find loopholes in the rules. This violates the spirit of the rules and can be subject to penalties.