



2026 Metro East Youth Football

7th & 8th Grade League Rules

Certified as of 08/26/2026 and supersedes any rules prior to this date.

General Rules Outline

INTENT AND SPIRIT OF THE RULES AND STRUCTURE: The Intent and spirit of MEYFL is to simulate and to teach the basic fundamentals needed to play the game of football. MEYFL is not intended to supersede the community organization programs, but to create a unified and agreeable format for teams from various member communities' youth to play football. We do have a number of basic rules that must be adhered to. Individual organizations may have more specific/detailed rules, however, those rules may not specifically apply to other communities.

***This is a DEVELOPMENTAL league**, not a "Win at all Costs" league. The intent is to provide an environment to expose all players to all aspects of the game. Throughout these rules, you may find that certain situations are not spelled out – at that point we refer to the Minnesota State High School Rules. With that said, this is not high school where an expected level of knowledge and expertise are assumed. Please attempt to simulate game situations – however keeping in mind the level of player that you are coaching and abide by the rules, goals, intent and spirit of the program. If an issue arises during a game, the referee has the final say on ANY rule interpretation. PLEASE do not argue the point. We would however ask that you refer any questions or issues to your organization's MEYFL Representative. Please remember that as coaches and adults we are to teach and facilitate, not dictate and manipulate a game that is intended to be a fun and learning experience for ALL players.

Registration and Eligibility

	Each player must satisfy the participation guidelines of his or her association
	Each player must be a student enrolled in the applicable grade and not be under suspension from school.
Team Balance	The Program Director from each member association will strive to create balanced teams from his or her association by Draft or similar means (e.g., no All-Star or A, B or C teams).
Trades/ Exchange	The exchange of players between teams is prohibited except for very unusual circumstances and with the approval of the MEYFL Governing Committee.
Playing Up/Down	Players may, with the approval of the player's association and the MEYFL Board, play up or down grade levels. Any approved player playing down a grade must be labeled as a "Blue Stripe" player regardless of weight.
Recruiting	No member Association may recruit or register a player who resides within the geographical boundaries of another member Associations Program, unless it is approved by both programs and has the approval of the MEYFL

Team Size and Selection

Registration & Roster Dates	Official team rosters must be submitted to the MEYFL Commissioner prior to first game with identifying the names, dates of birth, weights, jersey numbers, school attended and grade of each player. No player may be added to the official roster of any team after September 1st without the approval of the MEYFL Board
Team Size	Each team shall consist of no fewer than 20 players and recommended no more than 40 players.

Equipment

Player	• Helmet: Must be approved and certified by the manufacturer in accordance to all manufacturers safety standards. • Mouth Guards: Are to protect not only dental injuries, but also prevent concussions, if a player does not have an approved mouth guard they will not be eligible to play until they do. • All mouth guard MUST be attached to the facemask AND must be of a color other than clear or transparent/translucent unless they have a specialty fitted dental mouth guard. • Footwear: No removable cleats, metal or otherwise. Shoes are limited to studs, which are made with non-abrasive rubber, or rubber-like material, which does not have and will not develop a cutting edge.
Field	The HOME team will be responsible for the down marker and chains. The Visiting coach may request to have one attendant be on 'Chain Gang'. Check game schedule for Home Team.
Football	A game football must be either leather, leather composite or rubber. Note each team may have their own football, but any football used in the game may be used by the other team.
Football Size	Official Sized or youth ball is required
Emergency Preparedness	• Coaches are to have readily available at each football event (game and practices) a current roster with all parental contact and emergency contact information. • Also included should be any notes of any medical conditions or special needs. All coaches should be made aware of these issues and a discussion should occur with the parents/guardians for potential needs (i.e. medications etc...) Recommendation is to have a copy located with the team's First Aid Kit.

Fields

Field size	Regulation 100 yard field with 10 yard end zones. Midfield = 50 yard line.
Coach's Box	25 yd line to 25 yd line
Field Lines	10 yard lines - preferred every 5 yards if possible.
Team Location	Team benches will be on opposite sides of the field.
Inspection & Maintenance	Pre game field inspection – the Home team coach is to do a brief overview of the field and equipment. If anything is considered to unsafe, they must correct or contact the field coordinator prior to game play.

Weight Limitations

Weigh In Rules	Weight rules are in place for no other reason than safety issues. Players will be weighed by their respective associations and the player's official weight will be identified on the official team roster. Coaches can not weigh in their own players. The weigh in must be done by a person on the local football association board or their representative. All players will be weighed in at time of registration, or at a designated time after registration, and their weight recorded on their official registration form.
Official Weight	• Official Weight is the weight of a player in T-shirt, Shorts and without shoes.

Scheduling

Season	Practices: Begin anytime after August 1st. Each organization may have their own rules/regulations on starting dates, length, quantity, etc. Number of Games: Maximum of (nine) 9 regular season league games.
Cancellations	The Program Director of the association where a game is scheduled to be played, in conjunction with the field owners will determine whether a game should be cancelled because of weather or field conditions before the start of the game. Each member association is responsible for the condition of the fields and field equipment it provides for the games. The officials have the authority to cancel a game or delay a game that is in progress. Check MEYFL.org website or hotline (651-342-7194) for information.
Inclement Weather	• Lightning – If you see it and hear it – CLEAR IT! Lightning can strike up to 10 miles ahead or behind a storm. Games are to be postponed IMMEDIATELY and all players/spectators and officials are to seek appropriate shelter. Games are to resume no sooner than 30 minutes after the last sight and sound of a thunder and lightning storm. • Other weather – Games will be called at the field by the referees after a discussion with both Head Coaches. Please do not assume a game will be cancelled and not show up – it will result in a forfeit.
Rescheduling	• Games may be rescheduled only due to weather cancellations. It is considered a game if 3 quarters have been completed. • Due to field permit issues and rescheduling of referees, please go to the MEYFL.org website for weather cancellations reschedule game information.

Coaches and Fans

Coaches Requirements and Conduct.	• Each association is responsible for providing coaches for each team and no more than five (5) coaches may be on the sidelines during a game. • If Bleachers or grandstand arrangements are available at games (ie: HS stadiums). Parents MUST be seated in the stands regardless of side. 5 Coach rule in effect. Delay of Game penalty may be enforced if not in compliance. • Parent and spectators must be at least 7 yards beyond the sidelines and stay out of the player areas at all times. Head coach must enforce this rule. Game will be stopped until it is corrected. If not corrected in timely manner, the game will be forfeited. • Each team must have a minimum of one coach who is currently certified by a Nationally or MEYFL approved Community Board recognized and accepted youth sports coaches training program. All Coaches must be in good standing with all member organizations of MEYFL.
	• Every Team's Official Coaches (those on the team's bench area) must have a signed MEYFL – or equivalent, Coaches Code of Conduct form on file with their organization or MEYFL. • Disciplinary - If a Coach or a member of a Coaching team is ejected from any game, regardless of the situation, they are prohibited from being on the same side line as their team for a minimum of one game (the next game), two ejections in a season – the coach is subject to their organization's disciplinary code and may also be brought before the MEYFL Board for further disciplinary action if deemed necessary.
General-Coaches, Players and Fans	• Cheering and positive encouragement of players, coaches and fans embodies the spirit of athletics. Any conduct that is in direct conflict of good sportsmanship, by players, coaches and fans can result in ejection from the game and sporting area. • No coach, player or fan will disrespectfully argue a decision of a referee. Discussing and trying to understand a referee's decision is allowed as long as it is done in a respectful, calm and civil manner by coaches only. • No coach, player or fan will yell obscenities at or denigrate any player, coach, referee or fan. • Physical or verbal abuse by any coach, player or fan is cause for dismissal from current and future MEYFL games. • Players, Coaches nor Fans are not to chastise, give hints, help or instruct referees.
Coaches on Field	Coaches are only allowed on the field during timeouts.

Referees

Referee Authority	• There will be two referees assigned to each 3rd-6th grade game. • Referees will only be communicating with the Head Coach, Head Coach designate or coach on the field to eliminate confusion and other potential issues. • In a situation where any player, coach, or spectator is displaying Unsportsmanlike conduct, the referees shall have the right to request that the HEAD Coach or any coach designee remove the offender(s) from the playing and viewing area, and can suspend play until this is done. If a suitable resolution is not resolved in a reasonable amount of time (as determined by the referee), the referee has the right to call a forfeit. • Referees will officiate each game in accordance with League rules. If league rules do not specifically address a specific situation, Minnesota State High School Rules will apply. • Referees have final decision-making authority during the course of a game. (Also see Cancellations)
Pre & Post Game Meeting with Coaches	Each referee is required to review the rules on MEYFL Referee Card with one coach from each team prior to beginning the game. Referees are not allowed to start the game until the meeting has taken place. Following the game: Referees and coaches are required to meet to confirm final score of the game and the referee is responsible for calling the score into the MEYFL Hotline.
Referees and Rules	Please note that the referees also referee at various levels. Certain rules have been modified to accommodate the goals of our league. At times there may be confusion as to specific rules and rules modification. Also consider that due to the number of referees vs. the number of players and various actions on the field, it is nearly impossible to see everything that happens on the field. • We ask referees to understand the level and ability of the kids – though it is optional, we give them the authority to offer ‘warnings’ to teach and make kids aware of potential infractions (i.e.: lining up offside’s, holding etc...). • The referees are to try when possible to communicate the warning to the Head Coach as well. • Coaches must remember that the Referees do not have any stake in the outcome of the game. • Regardless of the situation that the adults involved show a mutual respect towards each other and set a positive example of sportsmanship for the players.
Rules 'Review' Moved From General Rules	If during a game, a coach believes that a ruling by a referee is not correct in accordance with the rules, a coach may call a timeout. At that time BOTH Head Coaches and the referees are to come together to calmly and professionally discuss & review the rule. It is the responsibility of the Coach who called the timeout to have the proper documentation to address the rule. If the ruling is overturned due to the timeout and discussion, the timeout is not charged. If the ruling on the field stands, the timeout will be charged to the team who called the timeout. Referees have final decision-making authority during the course of a game.

If Referees are a "No-Show"	If Referees do not show up for your game, we ask that you notify your MEYFL Organization Coordinator soon after your game on the MEYFL Hotline. • Please do not hold up your game... especially if there is another game scheduled after your game. We want to limit the number of avoidable late starts. **Recommended Solutions**- If there is another game near by that has two referees, please contact them and notify them that you do not have a referee and ask for their assistance. Note that there is a difference between 3rd/4th grade referees and 5th/6th grade. *If an official referee is not an option, coaches should get together. We ask that they mutually agree to each select one responsible adult representative from each side to referee the contest.
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Rules- General

Ejection	All player and coach ejections need to be reported to the MEYFL within 12 hours of the event, preferable at the end of the game. The reported information will include, name, team, jersey number, and reason for ejection. Any person ejected will not be allowed to play or coach at the next scheduled game. If the ejection occurs at the end of the season and there are no more games scheduled, the player will be ineligible for the first scheduled game of the next season. In the event that a person is ejected a second time in a season, they will no longer be eligible to play for the remainder of the season. Coaches are responsible to report all ejections for both teams when reporting the score. Failure to report an ejection will result in a single game suspension.
Game length	Game Clock - Consists of four 12-minute running time quarters. The clock will be stop time for the last 2 minutes of each half. Clock will stop for injuries or timeouts (1 min), after scoring drive until the referee has spotted the ball for the kickoff, when the clock will start to run again. If one team has a 21-point or better lead running time will continue during the final 2 minutes of the fourth quarter.

	TABLE OF GAME CLOCK TIMES <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>PERIOD OF TIMING</th><th>CLOCK TIME</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>First Half:</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>First period</td><td>12 minutes</td></tr> <tr> <td>Intermission between periods</td><td>1 minute</td></tr> <tr> <td>Second period</td><td>12 minutes</td></tr> <tr> <td>Halftime Intermission:</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>When teams leave the field</td><td>10 to 20 minutes</td></tr> <tr> <td>Mandatory Warm-up Period:</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Following halftime intermission</td><td>3 minutes</td></tr> <tr> <td>Second Half:</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Third period</td><td>12 minutes</td></tr> <tr> <td>Intermission between periods</td><td>1 minute</td></tr> <tr> <td>Fourth period</td><td>12 minutes</td></tr> <tr> <td>Charged Time-outs</td><td>1 minute</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	PERIOD OF TIMING	CLOCK TIME	First Half:		First period	12 minutes	Intermission between periods	1 minute	Second period	12 minutes	Halftime Intermission:		When teams leave the field	10 to 20 minutes	Mandatory Warm-up Period:		Following halftime intermission	3 minutes	Second Half:		Third period	12 minutes	Intermission between periods	1 minute	Fourth period	12 minutes	Charged Time-outs	1 minute
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Play Clock	Referees will maintain a 35 second play clock from the referee's 'set of the ball' to the snap of the ball. Over 35 seconds = Delay of game penalty.																												
Time Outs	3 timeouts per half. No carryover. Timeouts are minute in length.																												
Overtime	- Three Minute Intermission - Each team is given one-30 second time out. No Timeouts carry over from regulation. - A coin toss will determine who goes first. All "skill position" players become eligible in the overtime. - Referee decides which 10 yard line will be used. Same 10-yard line will be used for the entire Overtime. - Ball placed at the 10-yard line – 1st and Goal. - Each team will be given a 1st and Goal from the 10, opportunity attempt. - If a team scores, the rules for points are listed below in the scoring section. Running/Passing extra point parameters will apply same as in regulation. - If a turnover occurs and the defense gains possession offensive possession ends immediately. - A maximum of one overtime attempt will be allowed. After completion of the overtime period if the score is still tied, the game will be considered final and end in a tie. Exception – in a playoff/tournament game, where a winner must be determined to continue the event.																												
1st Down Measurements	A coach has the right to request a 'first-down' measurement at any time. If a referee believes that the right is being 'abused' he may not allow requests.																												

Lop Sided Score	Lopsided Score Rule: "Lopsided Score" = one team leads by 21 or more points. • Passing attempts are allowed by a team leading by 21 or more points. All passes are to be downfield. No screen passes allowed. • No sweeping the ends. • No running outside the tackles when score difference greater than 21. Ball carrier must run between the tackles. No fumble-rooski's allowed. • No 2-point conversion attempts are allowed by a team leading by 21 or more points. If you run the ball it or place kick it is only worth one point. • See Game Length for further clarifications.
Penalties	Full penalties
Swearing	Any player who swears will be ejected from the game. (Unsportsmanlike conduct). Swear words include SH* & t, F* & k, Damn, or as****ole. Crap does not count.
Playing Time Rules	This is intended to be a Youth developmental league. It is to give players the opportunity to learn and play the game of football regardless of skills and ability. It is not a "Win at all costs" league. Our goal is to develop kids and expose them to all concepts (blocking, tackling and running/ball carrying). Our league's philosophy is to give all players opportunities.

Electronic equipment on the field	At no time shall any coach, player, or spectator have any electronic communication or recording equipment on the field. This includes video camera, radios, computers, and any other equipment that can be used for communication between player and coaches and or spectators. Personal cell phones are allowed on the sidelines, but are not to be used to facilitate communication for the purposes of coaching in the game. Anyone in violation of this rule will be removed from the game and reviewed by the MEYFL Board for further action. Parents that are videotaping the game must do so from the at least 7 yards back from the sideline and cannot review the tape with any players or coaches during the game.
Parent/Spectator Conduct	Parents and spectators. Rule 9-Sec.9-Art.1: A player or non-player or person not subjected to the rules shall not hinder play by an unfair act, which has no specific rule. (Penalty-the referee enforces any penalty he considers equitable including the award of a score. Warnings are recommended but optional.)