

2019 YOUTH FOOTBALL PHILOSOPHY, RULES & PROCEDURES

Program Philosophy: All persons are invited to participate and use facilities of the City of Savannah Parks and Recreation Services Department, regardless of race, sex, color, national origin or handicapped condition. This program is operated for the benefit of the children who play in it and **not the adults**. Players should be able to enjoy practice and/or games at all times in an atmosphere of athletes first, winning second. Participation is the overall purpose with emphasis on positive results to include fun, fitness, skill development, teamwork, commitment and sportsmanship.

1. The Parks and Recreation Services Dept. rules and regulations and the National Federation rules will govern playing of the game.
2. The following **mandatory** items must be on file with Leisure Services before a player may participate in any game:
 - **Signed** parent consent form
 - **Signed** code of ethics form
 - **Signed** concussion information form
 - Current picture of the player
 - Copy of birth certificate (if not on file)
3. **Insurance:** Players should be insured with either their family or organization. No claims should be filed through the Parks and Recreation Services Dept.
4. **Age Cut-off Date:** September 1st will be used as the age cut-off date.
5. **Roster Limits:** Teams may not have more than 30 players. There must be no less than five (5) roster players absent on game day. **The penalty for not having the required number of players, will result in awarding your opponent one (1) point for each player short of the requirement. AT the end of the 1st quarter the field supervisor will notify both coaches of this value before the game begins.**
(Example: You have 30 players on your roster. You must have 25 players present on game day. For every player you are short, your opponent will be awarded one (1) point. If only 22 roster players on your team are present, your opponent will start the game with three (3) points, one point for each player you were short).
 - **Minimum** number of players to make a roster is **16 players**.
6. A player may play for only one team in the Parks and Recreation Services Dept. program.

7. **SCHOOL TEAM PARTICIPATION:** No boy or girl in the ninth grade that is 15 years of age or older may participate in the same sport of GRPA competition and school activities during the same period of time if the school activities are with another school or with students from another school or with students from another school (even within the same system) that the child does not attend regularly. This applies to both public and private schools. Middle School/9th grade athletes that are 14 years of age or younger are eligible to participate in GRPA athletics provided all other GRPA eligibility requirements are met.

Basketball/baseball – Football does not fall under this ruling. The ages in football are 4U – 12U.

- a. “Periods of time” shall be interpreted to mean from the time a player participates with a school team until the end of the GRPA season in that sport. NOTE: periods of time shall include activities from August 1 through May 31.
- b. School clubs are not affected. (Example: Hi-Y, 4-H, FHA, etc.)
- c. A child in the ninth grade that is 15 years of age or older shall be allowed to participate in a school team’s immediate preseason tryouts provided the school has announced it as a tryout. If the child fails to make the team, the child may then participate with a recreation agency; and if all other eligibility requirements are met, may also compete in GRPA functions provided that during these immediate preseason tryout sessions, the participant in question did not represent his or her school as a team member in a game with another school.
- d. These restrictions apply to both public and private school. Special Note: Participation is defined as dressing out, listed on roster, or sitting on bench or sideline in team uniform (whether the player enters game or not). If a player makes the team and quits before the team’s first game against another school, he/she is eligible for GRPA play.

NOT FOOTBALL

8. Players reporting to games late may enter the game if they arrive before the end of the 1st quarter.
Players arriving late must
- a. **Report to the weigh in station.**
 - b. **Be escorted by Personal at weigh-in-station to the field.**
 - c. **A city employee will check and be responsible for each age group.**
9. **The deadline for adding players to rosters is September 9th.** This is the final deadline for additions to rosters. **If a player is on the roster but missing paperwork, their paperwork must be turned in 24 hours before the game to be eligible.**
10. **Players changing teams must do so 24 hours prior to the first scheduled game with approvals of both coaches and the City of Savannah Athletics Administrator.**
- **LAST DATE TO DROP PLAYERS FROM ROSTER IS OCTOBER 8**
11. **Forfeits:** Teams are expected to adhere to their game schedules. Teams that forfeit more than one (1) game for attendance will not be permitted to participate in the remainder of the season, including the City Playoffs. All schedule conflicts should be reported to the Athletic Administrator before the first game.

12. The use of an ineligible player constitutes a **forfeit of game or games** participated in by the ineligible player. Head coach and ineligible player(s) will be suspended for the entire season.

13. The suspension period resulting from any flagrant violation will be for an extended period of time in all City activities.

14. Weight Classification:

Age	Division	Max. Weight Allowance	Max. Weight for Ball Carriers	STATE
5-6	6U	No Limit	70 lbs or less	
7-8	Flea	No Limit	108 lbs or less	100 lbs or less
9-10	Mite	No Limit	133 lbs or less	125 lbs or less
11-12	Midget	No Limit	158 lbs or less	150 lbs or less

- Five yr. old players will be accepted on a discretionary basis, determined by appropriate size of individual. **NO FOUR YEAR OLD PLAYERS ALLOWED.** Except in the 4 and under league.
- Eight (8) lbs have been added to weight requirements to allow for equipment in all divisions **but** 6U; therefore, no equipment is to be removed during weigh-in.
- Once player has been weighed in, he may not change equipment.

15. Overweight Players

- Overweight players shall not be allowed to line up in a position that would make them an eligible receiver or ball carrier.** If an overweight player intercepts a pass or recovers a fumble, it should be downed immediately.
- EXCEPTION: An interior lineman is exempt as long as the player has a lineman number 50-79. The interior lineman is always ineligible.
- Any player ineligible to carry the ball must wear a red stripe (unless a team has red helmets and Then the stripe will be white) diagonally on the back of their helmet. Players who exceed the maximum weight are ineligible to run the ball. They must play as a down lineman and line up **(Tackle to Tackle)** on the line of scrimmage or in a **3 or 4 point stance**. Coaches will be responsible For maintaining the stripes and making sure players are in correct playing position. If lined up incorrectly, there will be a 5 yard penalty.
(Players with striped helmets are eligible to punt and kick on kick-offs/field goal attempts.)
(Players should not remove this tape from their helmet at any time)
PENALTY: Unsportsmanlike conduct, resulting in AUTOMATIC EJECTION FROM THE GAME

16. Mandatory Play Rule

# Players	Min. Play Count
26-30	8 Plays
20-25	10 Plays
16-19	12 Plays

A. Violation of Mandatory Play Rule

1. 1st Violation: Forfeit Game – written warning
 - a. 6U – coach suspension for next game.
2. 2nd Violation: Forfeit Game – Coach suspension from the next two (2) scheduled football games.
 - a. 6U – coach suspension for next two (2) games.
3. 3rd Team will not be allowed to participate in the city playoffs

B. Violations Resulting in Forfeit

1. Use of ineligible players
2. Any other rule violation warranting forfeit of a game.

17. Conduct: Any coach/player/manager or anyone else associated with a team who is found guilty of fighting, cheating, making threats, intentionally hurting opponents or any other forms of unsportsmanlike conduct will be subject to disciplinary action by Parks and Recreation Services Dept. This will be strictly enforced.

18. Weigh-In Procedure: Each team will be given a scale time. Weigh-in time will be twenty (20) to thirty (30) minutes before the scheduled game time. Please be on time.

We will put your rosters in alphabetical order.

19. National Federation –Parks and Recreation Services Dept. Game Rules – Length of Quarters: Clock will start and stop according to the official's signal:

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|------------------|-------------------------|
| A. 6U | 10 Minute Running Clock |
| B. Flea (8U) | 8 Minutes |
| C. Mites (10U) | 8 Minutes |
| D. Midgets (12U) | 8 Minutes |

20. Time between Quarters and Half-Time

- A. Between Quarters (All Classifications) 1 Minute
- B. Half-Time:
 1. 6U 5 Minutes
 2. 8U 5 Minutes
 3. 10U 5 Minutes
 4. 12U 5 Minutes

21. Charged Time Outs

- A. (3) Time outs per half (No carry over of time outs from the game to overtime)
Each teams receives one (1) time out per possession. (Including overtime)
- B. Length of time out: one (1) minute.
- C. Head Coach or players in the game may call time out. If the head coach has been disqualified, a “new” head coach may be designated for the purpose of requesting time outs.

22. Scoring and Extra Points

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| A. Touchdown | 6 Points | Extra Point (Kick) | 2 Points |
| Field Goal | 3 Points | (8 & U)Extra Point (Run or pass) | 1 Point 3 yd line |
| Safety | 2 Points | (8 & U) Extra Point (Run or pass) | 2 points 5 yd line |
- B. No kicks will be permitted in the **6U & 8U division**

MERCY RULE- Beginning in the fourth quarter or any time in the fourth quarter a team gains a 21 point lead the clock will run continuously for the balance of the game except after touchdowns and during timeouts, injuries, penalties and scores. If the losing teams gets within seven points the clock will return to regulation.

- C. The playing field shall be 100 yards in length for 12 & under and 80 yards for 8 and 10 under. City of Savannah Teams 10 & under will use 100 or 80 yard field. **Kick-offs will be from the 30 yard line for 10 & under if using 80 yard field and 40 yard line for 12 & under. There is no kick-offs in the 8 & under division. The ball will be placed on the 20 yard line to begin play.**

All kick-offs out of bounds will be placed on the 35 yard line or at the point of the out of bounds whichever is greater. If the receiving team fumbles the kick-off out of bounds, the ball will be placed at that point.

10 and 12 under Teams- The offensive team must verbally state their intention of punting before leaving their huddle. After a verbal declaration of punting, the clock will stop until the change of possession. The ball cannot be spotted deeper than the 10 yard line. **10 and under division punts will be a dead ball kick; all the defensive players will take a knee during the kick except for the defensive punt receiver. The ball will be spotted where the receiver catches or controls the ball. All punts must be from long snapped formation. Delay of game can still be called even though punts are dead ball.**

In 12 & under division, starts out as a dead ball and once the punter is in control of the snapped football the official blows the whistle and the play becomes live, the defense must have seven men on the line of scrimmage and two players whom cannot be no more than 5 yards off the line of scrimmage, this allows for two punt receivers for the punt return team. The intent of the rule is to keeps teams from developing a wedge prior to the ball becoming live, and to help aid in the realism of the punt return portion of the game. By Rule, 12 & under Division punts become live once the official whistles in that the punter has control of the snapped football which at that moment makes the punt returnable or gives the opportunity for a blocked punt. **No fake punts will be allowed.**

23. The time allowed to snap the ball after it has been declared ready for play is 30 seconds. In the 8 & under, the football may be placed parallel to the line of scrimmage to assist in snapping the ball.

24. OVERTIME: 8, 10 & 12 under divisions if a game ends in a tie, the 15 yard line overtime procedure will be used with the ball being placed on the 15 yard line each team gets a series. 1st and 2nd overtime will use 15 yard procedure and 3rd overtime the ball will be placed on the 3 yd line, each team will be given ONE play score (No extra attempts in the 3rd OT or any successive OT periods).

25. Defensive linemen must be in 3 or 4 point stance- any player tackle to tackle is considered a lineman on the line-of-scrimmage. Linebackers (tackle to tackle) must be off the line-of-scrimmage- depth must be the back of the farthest lineman position. The penalty for this infraction is the same as being off sides.
- 26. Coaches on Sideline**
- Only certified coaches are allowed on the sideline.
 - Coaches must be certified by at least one of the following: NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, USA FOOTBALL, and must have ID cards.
- 27. Coaches on Field**
- 6U Division:** Two (2) coaches per offense and defense. Coaches may direct players. Defense **will not** be allowed to line up over the center.
 - (8U):** One (1) coach per offense and defense is permitted on field.
(10U): Two (2) coaches may line up kicking team. Coaches must give direction in huddle or when lining up players. Coach must then stand back at least five (5) yards behind closest back. Violation will result in a five (5) yard penalty. Repeated violation will result in the coach being removed from game.
 - 12 & under:** No coaches will be allowed on the field
 - At the state level:** There is a limit of 5 coaches on the sideline and all 5 should have the same color shirt on.
- 28. There will be no blitzing in Flea (8U) or 6U play during any down. Only a maximum of six (6) players can rush at all times. A coach cannot blitz linebackers.**
- In the 8 & Under division, a defensive player is not allowed to line up over the center. As a result of this rule, there will be no quarterback sneaks. The QB must be led by a running back if running up the middle. The QB may run outside the guards and there are no direct snaps to anyone other than the quarterback. The penalty for this infraction is the same as illegal formation.**
 - 1st Violation: Warning and 10-yard penalty from line of scrimmage for unsportsmanlike conduct charged to head coach.
 - 2nd Violation: 10-yard penalty from line of scrimmage Plus, Ejection from game (both coach and player).
29. **Team Area:** All team members and coaches must stay in the team boxes.
- Team box spans between the 20 yard lines on an 80 yard field.
 - Team box spans between the 25 yard lines on a 100 yard field.
30. **Practice Time:** Each team will be allowed ten (10) hours per week. No more than 2 ½ hours per day until Labor Day. After Labor Day, each team will be allowed six (6) hours per week with a two (2) hour per day maximum. A mandatory 3 minute break is required each hour and break time does not count against allowed practice time. Length of each break is at least 3 minutes.
- 31. Scrimmages: No scrimmaging out of weight or age group is allowed.**
32. **Awards:** Team trophies and individual trophies will be awarded to the League Champion and League Runner-Up. Individual trophies (no team trophy) will be awarded to 1st and 2nd place teams in the City Championship tournament. 6U will receive participation medals.
33. **Protests:** Protests should be made by the next working day.
- Rule Interpretation
 - Eligibility
 - A protest fee of \$50.00** is due at the time protest is submitted. If protest is upheld, the fee will be returned in full.

D. Protests are **not** permitted for judgment calls made by the official.

34. Standings/Tie-Breaking Procedures

a. Two-Way Tie between two teams: If the teams have played **one time** during the regular season, the winner of the game will have the higher placement.

b. In cases where there are two (2) teams that played more than once during the regular season, **both games will count and will use score differential in case of a tie between the two.**

c. Three-Way Tie: A coin toss will determine the order of play:

A. When three (3) teams are tied for one open spot, the following format will be used:

EXAMPLE:

1. Team "A" plays Team "B" and the winner qualifies.
2. Team "C" then plays the loser of Game 1, and the winner qualifies.
3. If Team "C" wins Game 2, the regular season winner between Team "C" and the winner of Game 1 will have the higher placement.

B. When three (3) teams are tied for two open spots, the following format will be used:

EXAMPLE:

1. Team "C" gets a bye.
2. Team "A" plays Team "B" and the winner qualifies.
3. Team "C" then plays the loser of Game 1, and the winner qualifies.
4. If Team "C" wins Game 2, the regular season winner between Team "C" and the winner of Game 1 will have the higher placement.

C. When four (4) teams are tied for one open spot, the pairing will be determined by a draw, and the following format will be used:

EXAMPLE:

1. Team "A" plays Team "B" in Game 1.
2. Team "C" plays Team "D" in Game 2.
3. Winner of Game 1 plays the winner of Game 2. Winner of Game 3 qualifies.

D. When four (4) teams are tied for two open spots, the pairings will be determined by a draw and the following format will be used:

EXAMPLE:

1. Team "A" plays Team "B" in Game 1, and the winner qualifies.
2. Team "C" plays Team "D" in Game 2, and the winner qualifies.
3. The winner of the regular season game between the two winning teams will have the higher placement.

E. When three (3) teams are tied for three open spots, the following format will be used:

EXAMPLE:

1. If one of the tied teams has defeated the other two teams, that team will receive the higher placement.
2. The winner of the regular season game between the two remaining teams will have the higher placement.
3. If no one team has beaten the other two teams, the following format will be used (same as "B" above).

F. When four (4) teams are tied for three open spots, the following format will be used:

EXAMPLE:

1. If one team has defeated the other three teams, that team will receive the higher placement.
2. Then, refer to "E" above.
3. If no team has defeated the other three teams, we use the following procedure:
 - a. Team "A" plays Team "B" in Game 1
 - b. Team "C" plays Team "D" in Game 2
 - c. The winning teams will have the two higher placements (the winner of the regular season game will receive the higher placement).

35. Ejection Procedure:

Any player, coach, team attendant or spectator who is ejected from a City of Savannah contest for a sportsmanship violation shall be suspended from competing in all levels of competition in that sport or activity until the period of suspension has expired.

Judgment calls by an official are not open for protests.

- A. A coach shall have no role nor be in attendance at pre-contest, warm-ups or activities, and shall not be in attendance at contests until the suspension period has expired.
- B. A player or team attendant may not be on the competitive area or in the team bench area during any contest until the period of suspension has expired.
- C. The suspension period resulting from an ejection will expire as follows:
 1. Football: after the individual has been withheld from the next-scheduled game at the level at which the ejection occurred.
 2. Youth Baseball/Youth and Adult Basketball/ Adult Softball: after the individual has been withheld from the next two (2) scheduled contests at the level at which the ejection occurred.
- D. To satisfy the penalty of the sit-out game(s), those games must have been scheduled at the time of the ejection and must be played to completion.
- E. **Ejected coach, manager or team attendant will not be allowed to coach with any other team in the organization until suspension has expired.**
- F. **A spectator who has been ejected will be held to the same standards as player, coaches, managers and team attendants and should be encouraged by the organization not to attend any contest until suspension has expired.**

***Please see attached handout concerning Player Equipment
& Policy for Heat and Humidity***

A youth football uniform shall include helmet with face guard, 2 or 4 point chin strap snaps, shoulder pads, football pants with pads protecting the hips, thighs and knees, and a jersey with numbers on the front and back. It is mandatory that all players wear such uniforms. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on the uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal equipment.

Mouth pieces must be worn by all players in the game and meet GSHA requirements. They should be attached to the helmet and visible to the game officials. They cannot be clear.

Practice policy for Heat and Humidity:

- (a) City of Savannah teams must follow the statewide policy for conducting practices and voluntary conditioning workouts in all sports during times of extremely high heat and/or humidity that will be signed by each head coach at the beginning of each season and distributed to all players and their parents or guardians. The policy shall follow modified guidelines of the American College of Sports Medicine in regard to:
 - (1) The scheduling of practices at various heat/humidity levels
 - (2) The ratio of workout time to time allotted for rest and hydration at various heat/humidity levels
 - (3) The heat humidity levels that will result in practice being terminated
- (b) A scientifically-approved instrument that measures the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature must be utilized to ensure that the written policy is being followed properly. *WBGT readings should be taken every hour, beginning 30 minutes before the beginning of practice.*

WBGT Activity Guidelines and Rest Break Guidelines:

Under 82.0..... Normal Activities – provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 3 minutes each during the workout.

82.0 – 86.9..... Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise; watch at-risk players carefully. Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 minutes each.

87.0 – 89.9..... Maximum practice time is 2 hours. For Football: players are restricted to helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts during practice, and all protective equipment must be removed during conditioning activities. *If the WBGT rises to this level **during** practice, players may continue to work out wearing football pants without changing to shorts.* For All Sports: Provide at least four separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 minutes each.

90.0 – 92.0..... Maximum practice time is 1 hour. For Football: no protective equipment may be worn during practice, and there may be no conditioning activities. For All Sports: There must be 20 minutes of rest breaks distributed throughout the hour of practice.

Over 92.1..... No outdoor workouts. Delay practice until a cooler WBGT level is reached.

- (c) Practices are defined as: the period of time that a participant engages in a coach-supervised, city approved sport or conditioning-related activity. Practices are timed from the time the players report to the practice or workout area until the players leave that area. *If a practice is interrupted for a weather-related reason, the “clock” on that practice will stop and will begin again when the practice resumes.*
- (d) Conditioning activities include such things as weight training, wind-sprints, timed runs for distance, etc., and may be a part of the practice time or included in “voluntary workouts.”
- (e) A walk-through is not a part of the practice time regulation, and may last longer than one hour. This activity may not include conditioning activities or contact drills. No protective equipment may be worn during a walk-through, *and no full-speed drills may be held.*
- (f) Rest Breaks may not be combined with any other type of activity and player must be given unlimited access to hydration. These breaks must be held in a “cool zone” where players are out of direct sunlight.

Concussion Policy: In accordance with the *Georgia law* and national playing rules published by the NFHS, any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest and shall not return to play until an appropriate health care professional has determined that no concussion has occurred. (NOTE: An appropriate health care professional may include: licensed physician (MD/DO) or another licensed individual under the supervision of a licensed physician, such as a nurse practitioner, physician’s assistant, or certified athletic trainer who has received training in concussion evaluation and management).

- (a) No athlete *is allowed* to return to a game or practice on the same day that a concussion (1) has been diagnosed OR (2) cannot be ruled out.
- (b) Any athlete diagnosed with a concussion *shall* be cleared medically by an appropriate health care professional prior to resuming participation in any future practice or contest. The formulation of a gradual return to play protocol *shall* be a part of the medical clearance.
- (c) It is mandatory that every coach in each city sport (including volunteer coaches) participate in a free, online course on concussion management prepared by the NFHS and available at www.nfslern.com at least every two years – beginning with the 2013-14 year.
- (d) *Each team will be responsible for monitoring the participation of its coaches in the concussion management course, and shall keep a record of those who participate.*
Each school must distribute to every athlete and his/her parent/guardian an information sheet that includes: the dangers of concussion injuries, the signs/symptoms of concussion, and the concussion management protocol outlined in this by-law. This sheet must be signed by the parent/guardian of each athlete and a copy kept on file with the City of Savannah Athletic Office