

2019

Rules for Participation



ARANSAS PASS



PANTHERS



Region IV Youth Football R4YFA
Rules for Football

RULES: The Region IV Youth Football Association (“R4YFA”) will follow the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) with the following additions, exceptions and clarifications.

I. COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

All coaches, football and cheerleading participants will abide by a Code of Conduct, which includes the following provisions. If any of these rules are broken, the Region IV Youth Football R4YFA governing board shall have the authority to impose a penalty, including, but not limited to immediate suspension of a minimum of one game.

Coaches shall:

- A.** Not smoke or use smokeless tobacco at the “R4YFA” facility or any “R4YFA” function.
- B.** Not criticize player’s/cheerleading participants in front of spectators, but reserve constructive criticism for later, in private, or in the presence of team/squad members if others might benefit.
- C.** Accept decisions of the game officials, judges, individual association Board of Directors and/or the “R4YFA” Governing Board on the field, in competitions and at “R4YFA” Governing Board meetings as being fair and called to the best ability of said officials.
- D.** Not criticize an opposing team, its players, cheerleading participants, coaches, officials, fans, or Board Members of any of the “R4YFA” individual associations or Governing Board by word of mouth or by gesture. Criticism shall be allowed in writing to the individual association Board of Directors and/or the “R4YFA” Governing Board only!
- E.** Emphasize that good athletes strive to be good students and that they are both physically and mentally alert.
- F.** Strive to make every football and cheerleading activity serve as a training ground for life, and a basis for good mental and physical health.
- G.** Emphasize that winning is the result of good “teamwork.”
- H.** Together with game officials is jointly responsible for the conduct and control of team, fans and spectators. Any fan who becomes a nuisance and out of control will be asked to leave. This code of conduct must be followed at “R4YFA” sponsored event, (i.e. games, practices, camps, etc.). Failure to comply will result in sanctions as detailed in Section VI.
- I.** Not use abusive or profane language at any time.
- J.** Not receive any payment, in cash or kind, for services as a coach in the “R4YFA”. This includes any coach, expert, consultant or choreographer, regardless of his/her roster status.
- K.** Not permit or encourage “sweating down” tactics in order for a player to make the R4YFA rules for “ball carrying” weight.
- L.** Not recommend or distribute any medication, controlled or over the counter, except as specifically prescribed by participant’s physician. (Only the legal guardian may distribute medication of any kind.)
- M.** Not permit an ineligible player or cheerleading participant to participate in a game.
- N.** Not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
- O.** Abstain from the possession and drinking of alcoholic beverages and the possession or use of any illegal substance at any “R4YFA” facilities.

P. Remove from a game or practice any participant when even slightly in doubt about his/her health, whether as a result of injury, until competent medical advice is available.

Q. Control their fans. Remember, as a team coach, you're responsible for your team, and fan reaction will usually be in step with your reaction. Coaches must **apply** a reasonable effort to control their fan base.

R. Not allow pets at the "R4YFA" facilities.

S. Not allow glass containers at the "R4YFA" facilities.

T. Not allow firearms at the "R4YFA" facilities.

U. Prevent children from climbing trees, fences, bleachers, or entering the press boxes on "R4YFA" facilities without adult supervision.

V. Not allow skateboards, bicycles, roller blades or skates in the park.

W. Uphold all rules and regulations provided by the "R4YFA" in conjunction with all and NCAA rules.

X. Adhere to the Coaches Conduct as listed in the then-current season Parent Handbook. To the extent the coaches conduct listed in the "R4YFA" Rules conflicts with the Coaches Conduct listed in the then-current season Parent Handbook, the "R4YFA" Rules shall control. All participants must sign a parent/ player code of conduct agreement form.

II. RULES APPLICABLE TO ALL DIVISIONS:

A. Season Start Dates

1. The Region IV Youth Football Association will align its seasons to match the dates set by the Texas UIL. Each season, practices (non-contact and contact), scrimmages, and games will all be set to match the dates set by the Texas UIL, unless otherwise voted on by the R4YFA Board. These dates will be presented at the beginning of each season to all associations participating in the Region IV Youth Football Association during the month of July each year. The Region IV Youth Football Association will use dates "with no spring training" to set their season dates.

B. Events

1. All players may participate in a maximum of four (4) events per week during the regular season. During playoffs teams will be permitted to a maximum of 5 events per week. An event is Defined as a meeting with more than three (3) players and a coach engaging in football related activities (including, but not limited to, practice, football games, or viewing film). An official game counts as one event. Team parties not involving practice or instruction are permitted and are not counted as an event. An official game counts as well as preseason scrimmages will count as an event.

2. There will be no scheduled events for Sundays except for games scheduled as post-season tournament play and/or make up games.

3. At the finish of the regular season teams who are in the playoffs have the option of five events per week.

C. Divisions (Age Groups)

Freshmen: 5 & 6 years of age
Sophomores: 7 & 8 years of age
Juniors: 9 & 10 year of age
Seniors: 11 & 12 year of age

1. Player age eligibility shall be determined by using **May 1st** of the current year as the cutoff date. Parents may opt to have their child "play up" one year in play (for example, a 6-year-old playing with the 7 & 8-year-olds). **PLAYING DOWN IS ONLY PERMITTED**

ON A CASE BY CASE SCENARIO BY THE R4YFA. Exceptions may be reviewed the R4YFA Board and Commissioner with a physician's recommendation and signed letter. The R4YFA still reserves the right to deny all requests.

If a player requests to play up or down a division, they must first fill out the Waiver Release Form. This form is provided by the Commissioner of the R4YFA upon request. The R4YFA Commissioner must make the final decision to Grant or Deny the Waiver Release Request. The Commissioners decision is final.

Players are eligible to play within their own respective age group based on age eligibility. **7th graders are not allowed to play in the Region IV Youth Football R4YFA.** *In the event a child in 7th grade attends a school that does not offer football, or they are home schooled, they are eligible if they meet the age requirement.*

2. Proof of Age: A certified copy of a birth certificate bearing the seal of the Issuing office of the state of birth is required. Absent a birth certificate, a Document that is approved by the "R4YFA" Governing Board is required.

3. Participants who choose to compete in the Region IV Youth Football R4YFA must register with the association in the community where they reside, that is represented in the R4YFA. Participants, who reside in a community that is not represented in the R4YFA, are free to register with any one of the R4YFA associations that they choose. If a child wishes to be granted a transfer to another association, so that they can participate in an "out-of-district" association, must be granted approval by the R4YFA Commissioner.

4. "Transfer" Process: In order to initiate the transfer process for review by the R4YFA Commissioner, the following steps must be taken:

a) The participant must fill out a Registration Form and Transfer Form with the association that they wish to participate in.

b) The association must then submit a copy of the Registration Form and Transfer Form to both the R4YFA Commissioner and the association that operates in the community where the participant resides.

c) The R4YFA Commissioner shall then notify all associations involved in the transfer process, of when and where a transfer hearing will take place, if needed. The R4YFA Commissioner will make a final determination of the player's eligibility and notify all parties involved of the final decision.

D. The Division Weight Limitations for Players Who Can Run The Ball

1. All player weights are without helmet, shoes/cleats or pads.

2. A medical scale shall be used to weigh every player. The medical scale shall be one that is preset to the applicable Division Weight Limitation.

3. Coaches shall provide a team roster for review by a Board Member from one or more individual associations and both coaches must be in attendance and supervise weigh in. Each team shall have all of its players weighed prior to the start of each game during the season to ensure the weight limitation is being maintained. To prevent controversy, the game day weigh-in is mandatory and cannot be waived or modified by anyone, including the coaches. Weight check by challenge or other than the above-prescribed method is not acceptable. **A coach who plays a player who exceeds the applicable weight limitation in a game shall forfeit the game and shall be suspended from participating in the next scheduled game. A player who violates the above weight limitation shall be suspended from playing in the game and the next scheduled game.**

4. Football players weighing over the applicable weight limitation may not line up in the backfield for any reason (i.e. they may not line up anywhere but on the line of scrimmage). No player that exceeds the weight limit by more than twenty pounds may line up anywhere except on the front line in a kick return formation. A player exceeding the weight limit by a maximum of 20 pounds may line up as the tight end and be eligible to catch a forward pass thrown past the line of scrimmage (screens, laterals, etc. are NOT permitted!). **For the purpose of "R4YFA" rules, the "tight-end" position shall be defined as a player on the line of scrimmage outside the offensive tackle and lined up no more than the 3 yards from the offensive tackle.** Any violation of the "tight end rule" shall be the loss of a down and a 15-yard penalty. In addition, players weighing over the applicable weight

limitation may advance the ball on a fumble, kickoff, punt, blocked punt or interception that they recover or that falls into their hands. Players who weigh over the applicable weight limitation may not line up deep in kickoff or punt formations to accept the ball. Tight end Rule: Tight ends may weigh no more than 20 lbs. of the established running back weight limits.

5. All coaches, regardless of chapter affiliation, shall provide the official "R4YFA" weigh-in form at the time of weigh-in. The official weigh-in form shall be maintained throughout the season and will be in the team book.

6. All coaches regardless of chapter affiliation shall have their players ready for weigh-in forty-five minutes before the scheduled start of their game. This shall be the official weigh-in time, unless an "R4YFA" Governing Board official approves a change. All players must be weighed in AT LEAST 15 minutes prior to the start of their scheduled game time to avoid penalty.

*Any team that has a player who is weighed inside the 15-minute window prior to the game shall be penalized with a 15-yard penalty to start the game. If both teams have a player(s) that weigh inside the 15-minute window, the penalties shall be offsetting.

* Any player who is not present at the scheduled start of the game but arrives within the first quarter of play shall be weighed in and allowed to participate in the game; however, **they will not be eligible to line up in the backfield or at tight end for the remainder of the first half. The player will be allowed to line up in the backfield and at tight end for the second half of the game.**

* Any player who does not show up for weigh-in within the 1st quarter of play (2nd quarter or later) shall be weighed in and only allowed to participate, so long as he; **does not line up as a running back or tight end for the remainder of the game.**

Explanation of "R4YFA" Team Books

The following is a list of items that shall be maintained in an official "R4YFA" Team Book. All teams regardless of chapter affiliation shall create, manage, and maintain an official "R4YFA" Team Book. The coaching staff or team Mom shall carry the book and shall be present at all weigh-ins. Failure to have the book available at weigh-ins will result in an automatic forfeiture by the team without a book. The game can be played with agreement by the head coaches and an "R4YFA" Board member. Without an agreement, the game shall be listed as forfeiture on the official "R4YFA" schedule. The team book shall consist of the following:

1. Official "R4YFA" roster sheet.
2. A copy of the associations registration form (for each player)
3. A copy of the birth certificate (for each player)
4. An individual player picture in uniform without helmet (picture in uniform must be in book no later than the second regular season game).

In addition, all coaches regardless of chapter affiliation shall deliver to the various chapter presidents a copy of their official roster before the first game of the regular season. This roster weigh in page must match the roster weigh in page that is maintained in the team book. Any additions after the first game of the regular season must be approved by the various association presidents.

A copy of all rosters shall be maintained at all locations where "R4YFA" events are conducted. At the time of weigh ins any additions to the team roster that do not match the official roster shall be excluded from playing in the game. Any coach playing a player that is not on the official roster will be suspended for the next game and his team will forfeit the current game being played.

E. Length of Games

Freshmen:(4) 6-minute quarters. Clock is not continuous.

Sophomores: (4) 7-minute quarters. Clock is not continuous.

Juniors: Four (4) 8-minute quarters. Clock is not continuous.

Seniors: Four (4) 9-minute quarters. Clock is not continuous.

- A team that is down by 28 points **during the 4th quarter** may ask for a running clock and that request will be granted.

- Any time **prior to the 4th quarter** the team down by a 28-point margin may ask for a running clock. The running clock is only granted if the opposing team agrees to having a running clock.
- If any team ask for a running clock when down by 28 points at any point during game, they are forgoing any right to any protest for any reason at any point during the game. By asking for a running clock it is assumed that you are throwing in the towel or waiving the white flag.
- At any point during the game the score goes under a 28-point deficit, the running clock is immediately removed and the game resumes under a normal play clock. The team that requested the running clock still forgoes their right to protest regardless
- It is still possible and legal for the trailing team to erase any deficit during the 4th quarter at any time and win the game. By requesting a running clock, it does not admit to a forfeit of the game by either side. The outcomes of the game will be the same as it would be for any other game.

F. Regular Games

1. A regulation game is the completion of play of a game in its entirety.
2. Games halted for inclement weather may be rescheduled by the "R4YFA" and will be played in the following week. Resumed games will be started where play was suspended. The hosting association (or their authorized representative) on duty at the park will be responsible for weather decisions and game time changes. Game times may be changed in the event of inclement or unforeseen circumstances and are subject to same day or alternate day postponement. Example: A thunderstorm forces the postponement of the first game of the day. The storm passes, and the first game of the day is now rescheduled to the last game of the day. All other game times remain the same.
3. If at the end of regulation play a tie exists, both teams will return to their sidelines and the team captains responsible for calling the coin toss will meet with the referees. The visiting team is responsible for calling the first coin toss/flip. The winner of this coin toss may choose to accept (start on offense) or refuse the ball (start on defense). The loser of the coin toss will decide which end zone overtime will be played in. Each team will receive the ball on the 25-yard line. A first down can be made in this scenario. If a tie still exists after both teams have attempted to break the tie each from the 25-yard line, the ball will be placed on the 10-yard line of the same end zone, change of possession will take place and play will resume. There will be no flip-flop of end zones unless field conditions dictate a need for change. The referees will determine this. Each team will again receive the ball for four (4) offensive plays. There is no chance of a first down being made at this point to extend the numbers of plays to more than four (4). A turnover by mishap (fumble, interception, failed kick attempt, etc.) or loss of possession (loss on downs, penalty, etc.) concludes a team's possession of the ball in all situations. A tied game will be played until a winner is declared. The ball will be moved to the five (5) yard line on the third tiebreaker attempt and remain there until a winner is determined. Each team receives one timeout per tiebreaker attempt.

G. Minimum Playing Time: (All teams must field at least 10 players except for a freshmen team; *see section VI for roster limits.*)

1. Every player must play at least seven (7) plays, either on offense or defense or special teams. Exceptions will be made only for a verified injury, disciplinary action or player absence. A coach who plays a player less than seven plays shall be suspended for the next game.
2. The substituting of players is permitted and will be done at the coach's discretion, if every player meets the minimum playing time for a game. A player voluntarily leaving the game is acceptable as well.
3. A player who does not participate in regularly scheduled practices and/or needs to be disciplined for his/her conduct can be suspended for a game (or on a per quarter basis) by his/her coach. The coach must provide written notice (prior to game day) to their association Board of Directors for a ruling before the suspension to be carried out. Only the suspended player or "R4YFA" Governing Board may appeal the disciplinary action. All decisions made by the "R4YFA" Governing Board on such suspension shall be final.
4. Parents (and only parents) may voluntarily withhold their children from participating in the game.
5. Failure to comply may result in game forfeit. Video is critical criteria of proof. Parents are responsible for providing video proof.

H. Uniforms and Equipment

1. Only association issued uniforms are allowed during games.
2. All R4YFA players must wear mouthpieces at all contact practices and games.
3. All players must wear a properly fitting helmet with facemask meeting safety standards. Shoulder, hip, knee, thigh, and tailbone pads are required for all contact practices and games. Shoes are to be of molded rubber type of sole/cleat. Metal cleats are not permitted.

I. Coaches

1. Coaches submit an application to the Association requesting the opportunity to coach a team.
2. The board will conduct interviews and back ground checks to determine qualifications of applicant.
3. A subcommittee of the individual associations' Board of Directors (The Football Committee) shall select coaches deemed appropriate.
4. Once a coach is selected, the head coach or a associations individual Board of Directors may choose one official assistant coach prior to the first tryout and that selection must be approved by the Football Committee.
5. Once the season has started, other assistant coaches may be allowed to participate and up to 7 coach's/team mom/trainer may be on the sidelines of an official game.
6. Any individual association within our "R4YFA" may choose a coach out of necessity during the tryout period. In the event of this situation, the head coach will be allowed to select an official assistant coach at that time.
7. The individual associations will determine the number of tryouts held prior to the start of the season for the opportunity for coaches to observe the registered players.
9. **No select teams** will be allowed to participate in the "R4YFA". A select team shall be defined as any team that has the majority of its players that did not participate in a draft in their respective division and/or any team that, in agreement with another team, attempts to build an "A" team (superior) and a "B" team (inferior) through the draft. All players registered with a member association of the "R4YFA" shall participate in a draft when their respective registration exceeds the approved roster limits. Individual associations, in conjunction with the "R4YFA", shall take the necessary precautions to ensure that all teams are created with the intent of being fair and true to the ideals of a recreational and developmental association. Teams participating "R4YFA" must be approved by the "R4YFA" Governing Board. The "R4YFA" Governing Board has final approval on all teams participating within the Region IV Youth Football R4YFA.

J. Tryouts

1. Individual associations within the "R4YFA" shall offer as many tryouts prior to the start of the season as deemed necessary for the coaches to observe the registered players.
2. Players are required to be weighed and measured. Individual associations participating in the "R4YFA" shall set their own guidelines for conducting a tryout. In the tryout, the players may be required to (but not limited to) run a timed 25-yard or 40-yard dash and run a timed agility test.
3. Before the players are dismissed, the coaches will have an opportunity to ask each player a few questions.
4. Players are required to make a minimum of 1 tryout to be a part of the draft. Should a player not meet this minimum requirement, they will be placed as a "Hat Pick" in the draft. Hat Pick's will be chosen by random draw at the end of the draft process.

K. The Draft

1. Prior to the draft each Association will determine at this point how many teams per division. The number of teams per division are LOCKED in now. **No other teams can be added after the draft.**
2. The associations can continue to take registrations until each team has reach its capacity of 31 max players. **No new teams can be added.**
3. Registration may stay open until the "official rosters" for the season are due (date determined every year by R4YFA commissioner) to the R4YFA commissioner and board.
4. An "R4YFA" Board member (not affiliated with the drafting association) must be present at all associated chapter drafts. It is the association chapter's president's responsibility to notify the "R4YFA" Governing Board of the draft dates and times.
5. The draft for each division will be held separately after the tryouts. Each coach will draw numbers for draft positions prior to the start. Once a team has picked their draft position, teams will be allowed to trade this draft position before the draft starts.
6. If the HEAD coach is returning in the same division, he will keep ALL his returning players.

Each team will draft in the first 2 rounds. Each team will then list their freeze picks for picks 3, 4, and 5. The snake draft will be used for all picks. (i.e. First Round: 1-2-3-4; Second Round: 4-3-2-1; Third Round: 1-2-3-4; etc.)

Next, at pick number 6, all other teams without returning players, will draft to make each roster meet the same number of players that the returning coach(s) has. Once all teams are equal in player count, the returning coach(s) may reenter the draft process with the other coaches once again.

The draft will continue until all players have been selected that were in attendance at tryouts.

7. If **ALL** coaches are **NEW HEAD COACHES** to the division each coach will start the draft with Freeze picks, three (3) players, picks 1, 2, and 3. Then the snake draft will be conducted until all players are placed on a team. (See definition of "freezes" and eligibility – Below)

Definition of a "freeze": A player that is defined as a "Freeze" will be removed from the free draft and automatically be placed on a specified team. In return, the coach relinquishes a pick in the draft during a specified round for each frozen Player. "Freezes" shall be placed in the 3-4-5 spots in the draft respectfully.

"Freeze" Eligibility: Any player may be eligible to become a "Freeze". To become eligible, all potential "Freezes" must be submitted in writing or verbally (over the phone) to a board member of their respective association, by a parent or legal guardian of that player prior to the 1st tryout of that division. A coach's child must be labeled as a "Freeze" and is subject to the same guidelines regarding "Freezes" or he is otherwise considered draft eligible. Any team who chooses to freeze a player who has a brother option as well, will have to give up their next available pick in the draft following the "freeze" picks. *Example: If a team has three freezes and one of the freezes has signed up with a brother option, then the team will lose its' 3, 4 & 5 pick to the freeze selections and then lose its 6th pick in its draft to the brother option. Multiple brother options with "frozen" players will, in turn, require a loss of the next available draft pick in association's draft.*

8. Hat Pick's... If there is a new player who is registered but cannot or did not make the designated minimum of one tryout, they will be assigned to a team after all players who are eligible to be drafted have been selected. The Coaches will pick these players via a hat draw at the end of the draft.
9. There will be a designated period following the draft when coaches can trade players between teams. Any trades must be approved by the drafting association's President or their board of director's representative(s). This time limit may be adjusted by the drafting associations Board of Directors or their acting representative.

10. All late sign-ups will follow the snake draft format during the draft. It will start with whichever team was next in line for drafting.

L. Coach, Player and Parent Behavior

Coaches, players, parents, and spectators are always expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner. The use of profanity, obscene gestures, derogatory remarks, or name-calling is prohibited and can be grounds for violator's removal from park and punishment by

1. Coaches Responsibilities

a. Coaches will make every attempt at a minimum to teach fundamental blocking, tackling, and basic offensive plays and defensive plays.

b. All coaches must instruct their players to initiate contact while their heads are up. The R4YFA will not tolerate any deliberate initial contact by the top of the helmet (spearing) in a practice or game. Such infraction occurring a maximum of two (2) times in a game by a single player will result in immediate ejection of the player from the game. The referee on the field has full authority in this matter.

c. Coaches are responsible for player hydration. Practices will have no less than three (3) water breaks and water must be made available always during games.

d. Seven (7) adults are allowed on each team's sidelines during games. The first violation in a game shall result in a warning being issued. Any acting board member from all chapters participating in the "R4YFA" shall be allowed on the sidelines at any "R4YFA" sponsored event with the understanding that they are not allowed to interfere or involve themselves with any coaching activity unless they are acting in the capacity of a designated coach for a game.

e. Each team is allowed up to (2) ball boys/girls on the sidelines. They are not permitted to be a coach or coach in any way. Minimum age to be a ball boy/girl on the sidelines is seven (7) years of age.

f. All head coaches and one assistant coach are required to attend the pre-season coaching meeting(s) and any other meeting requested by the "R4YFA" Governing Board or R4YFA Commissioner. **Mandatory!** Failure to comply **may** result in the revoking of sideline privileges for the entire year.

g. Any violation of any R4YFA rule may result in a minimum 1 game suspension.

h. Coaches are responsible for their player's parent's behavior and can be penalized by the officials during a game for unsportsmanlike conduct if deemed necessary.

i. The Home Team is to provide the announcer and scorekeeper. The Visiting Team is to provide the chain gang crew. Chain gang crew must be at least 13 years old or older. If any team fails to provide volunteers for their respective duties, a personal foul will be assessed on their first offense. A second offense may result in a forfeiture of their next game.

j. Practice time per division is as follows (including breaks):

Freshmen: 1 hour 15 min
Sophomore: 1 hour 45 min
Junior & Senior: 2 hours

M. Field Dimensions and Restrictions

1. Field Dimensions: All divisions will play on a regulation 100-yard field.
2. One person from each playing team is allowed in the press box for filming the game. Opposing team coaches or parents are prohibited from the press box during the games. Parents can film their games. Coaches are permitted to film other games, so long as they do not share the video to coaches from either side during the game they are filming.

N. Game Officials

1. All Divisions: 3- Field Officials, 1- Clock Official

III. FRESHMAN DIVISION RULES

A. Two coaches are allowed on the field to call plays and assist in quick alignment of the players. After such assistance, coaches will back away and maintain a 10-yard distance from the line of scrimmage. Once the quarterback is under center, no further instruction is to be given by either coach of either side until the play is whistled dead.

Should such assistance take place, the coach will receive a warning from the referee for the first offense; a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct for the second offense, and his removal from the game for the third offense. Encouragement or motivational comments are not considered instructional. If coaches do not bring their players into playing position in a timely manner at the discretion of the umpire delay of game penalties shall be assessed.

B. There are NO kick offs in this division. The “receiving” team of the kick off, will assume possession at their own 30-yard line each time instead of a physical kick off with a kickoff return.

C. There are NO punts in this division. Should the offense decide to punt, the coach must declare a punt to the head official for that game. The head official will then announce the decision to punt and advance the ball 20 yards for the offense and turn over possession to the opposing team.

** No punts can be placed inside the receiving teams own 20-yard line. Example: An offense is on their opponents 21-yard line and it is 4th down and 10 yards to go, should they choose to punt, the ball would be placed no further than their opponents 20-yard line. This rule is to keep with the spirit of the rule to reduce injuries and not pin opponents deep into their own territory.

D. Games are to be played with 11 players (11 on 11). If a team’s “Official Roster” has been turned in and that official roster has 13 players or less, that team will play all its games as 8 on 8. If a team’s roster has 13 or less players, they must play 8 on 8, the formation will be as follows.

Three backs are allowed in the backfield (quarterback and two running backs) and both ends are eligible provided all parties are under the weight limit to carry the ball.

Teams with “official rosters” of 14 or more players will play 11 on 11, regardless if players do not show up for their games, unless the opposing team has an “official roster” of 13 or less and is required to play 8 on 8.

E. Ball carrier weight limit is **75 lbs**. Tight ends may not exceed **95 lbs**.

F. Extra Points:

Run – 1 point

Pass – 2 points if caught in the end zone

1 point if caught and run into the end zone

Kick – 3 points

*All extra point attempts is live contact.

G. Any team leading by 28 points or more at any time during the game, must replace their starting or “Key” backfield personnel. The purpose of this definition shall be removal of said players to the bench or to the offensive line. Simply changing a player’s backfield position to another backfield position is not sufficient and is a rule violation. For example, a team utilizing a 3-running back formation such as a traditional “Wishbone” shall remove 4 backfield personnel (3 running backs and one quarter back.) A team utilizing a 2 running back formation such as the “Pro I” shall remove 3 backfield personnel (2 running backs and one quarter back.)

“Key” personnel for this rule shall be defined as the backfield personnel who have played most of the offensive plays leading up to the 28-point scoring margin. It is the coach’s responsibility to keep with the “spirit of the rule” for the intent of not purposely running up the score by utilizing his best players in the backfield once the 28-point margin has been established. Because this rule can be difficult to define since different teams run different offenses and utilize different substitution practices, coaches are required to use their best judgment and eliminate any doubt as to whether a player should be replaced under this rule. The governing board shall utilize game film to determine if a coach is keeping with the “spirit of the rule” in cases that may require the governing board’s attention.

1. The removed backfield may not return to the backfield until the margin is less than 28 points.
2. A team that goes ahead by 28 points at any time during the game may leave their starting backfield in to attempt the extra point conversion.

H. No player shall line up on the center. (No nose guards) Freshman division only. This rule prohibits any player from lining up in the “A” gaps to the right or left of the center. Linebackers shall be 3 yards off the line of scrimmage. Violation of this rule is an automatic first down.

1. QB Sneaks are not allowed as it would take advantage of the Nose Guard Rule. A QB sneak is any play in which the QB takes a direct snap from under center and immediately rushes up field behind the Center or in either of the “A” gaps. Violation of this rule is a 5-yard penalty and loss of down.
2. QB Draws will be allowed. A QB draw is any play in which the QB takes a direct snap from under center and immediately withdraws into the backfield for no less than 3 yards before turning up field and running behind the Center or in either of the “A” gaps. QB’s receiving the snap from the “shotgun” position, will be allowed to immediately turn up field behind the Center or in either of the “A” gaps, so long as he receives the snap from no less than 3 yards from behind Center.

I. All other rules will be in accordance with UIL and NCAA guidelines.

J. All Freshman teams shall use the **K-2** football for all “AOL” sponsored events.

IV. SOPHOMORE RULES:

All rules are the same as the Freshmen Division with the following exceptions:

A. All games are played with 11 players and no less than 10 at any time. There are no 8-man teams allowed! A team will be forced to forfeit should they not be able to field at least 10 players on either offense or defense. The opposing team does not have to field 10 players if one team only has 10 players.

B. No coaches are allowed on the field at any time. Coaches must stay between the 20-yard lines and are not allowed to cross over this boundary.

C. All punts are live except for a team declaring a free kick within its own 20-yard line. Such kick must be declared to the referee and neither side may advance until the ball is kicked. No fakes are allowed on free kicks.

D. Maximum weight limit is **100 lbs.** to carry the ball (backfield). Tight ends may not exceed **120 lbs.**

E. You can have a nose guard line up on the center.

F. Sophomores shall use the **K-2** football for all “AOL” sponsored events.

G. The “Nose Guard” Rule and “QB Sneak Rule” do not apply to this division.

V. JUNIOR AND SENIOR RULES

All rules are the same as the Freshmen Division with the following exceptions:

A. All games are played with 11 players and no less than 10 at any time. There are no 8-man teams allowed! A team will be forced to forfeit should they not be able to field at least 10 players on either offense or defense. The opposing team does not have to field 10 players if one team only has 10 players.

B. No coaches are allowed on the field at any time. Coaches must stay between the 20-yard lines and are not allowed to cross over this boundary.

C. All kicks are live.

D. Maximum weight limit to carry the ball (backfield): **Juniors = 125 lbs.** and **Seniors = 145 lbs.** Maximum weight limit to line up at Tight end: **Juniors = 145 lbs.** and **Seniors =165 lbs.**

E. Juniors shall use the **TDJ** football for all “AOL” sponsored events.

F. Senior shall use the **TDY** football for all “AOL” sponsored events.

G. The “Nose Guard” Rule and “QB Sneak Rule” do not apply to these divisions.

VI. Rosters

A. Maximum Number of Players per Team

Any team may field a roster of up to 31 players. No team shall be allowed to field a roster of more than 31 players. Having more than 31 players registered in any one local association, in the same division would necessitate a draft to field another team for that division.

B. Minimum Number of Players per team

All teams must field at least 10 players, except for the Freshman Division. Freshman teams must field at least 7 players.

Teams with an “official roster” of 13 or less players will play 8 on 8, regardless of the number of players on the opposing team.

Teams with an “official roster” of 14 or more players will play 11 on 11, unless they are playing a team with an “official roster” of 13 or less, at which time they will play 8 on 8 against those teams.

C. Roster Deadlines

The Region IV Youth Football R4YFA board shall determine, prior to the start of each season, a cut-off date for adding players to a team roster. The “R4YFA” board may elect to implement a “minimum roster cap” which would allow teams to continue to add players to their roster until they have reached a set minimum number of players.

VII. ENFORCEMENT OF RULES AND POLICY

A. Contact with Officials

If a player or adult should strike (hit) a game official, the player or adult shall be temporarily or permanently suspended from the "R4YFA".

B. Radios and Communication Devices

No radios or other communicative devices shall be allowed during game situations to relay information to the coaching staff on the sidelines. This includes cellular telephones. Coaches may use their telephones for business or personal issues, but in no way can use their phone to communicate to others in the stands or anywhere for game time assistance. The R4YFA Commissioner has the right to remove the coach from the sideline and up to game suspensions if necessary.

C. Blocking and Tackling Restrictions

Nose guards (except in the Freshmen Division) may blitz or use slants. However, leg whipping, chop blocking, (offensive player engages defensive player above the waist and a second offensive player blocks the player below the waist); face tackling or spearing techniques shall not be permitted. If a coach teaches a player these prohibited techniques, the coach may be suspended from the "R4YFA".

D. Formal Protests

Coaches may only formally protest the eligibility of a player (i.e. issues dealing with weight or age). The "R4YFA" Governing Board shall decide all other actions addressed herein. Protests must be made writing to the "R4YFA" Governing Board and shall require a \$50 fee. Protests will then be addressed and ruled upon by the "R4YFA" Governing Board.

E. Minimum Mandated Penalties

1. Endangerment of juveniles: Suspension for one (1) year, to permanent suspension upon repeated offenses.
2. Coaches Fighting: Suspension for one (1) year, to permanent suspension upon repeated offenses.
3. Cheating: Suspension for one (1) year, to permanent suspension upon a second offense.
4. Threats: Suspension for one (1) year, to permanent suspension upon a second offense.
5. Lack of Cooperation/Obstruction: Suspension until compliance is achieved.
6. Player/Cheerleader Fighting, or Disrespect for Authority: Suspension for one (1) game/competition. A second suspension during the same season shall result in the player/cheerleader being removed from the team for the balance of the season.
7. All disciplinary action listed in these rules shall be enforced as written.

VIII. POST SEASON PLAY

In order to determine teams that shall advance in the playoffs the following shall be used to determine the finish order:

Divisions with No Split Conferences – The top 8 teams from each conference will be taken to the playoffs. If there are less than 8 teams, the top-ranking teams will receive a bye for the first round of the playoffs. A 7-team conference will give a bye to the #1 ranked team. A 6-team conference will give a bye to the #1 and #2 ranked teams.

1. Best overall record
2. Head to Head (Winner)
3. Greatest Point Differential in "Head to Head" (if Head to Head is split)
4. Greatest Point Differential in "All Games"

5. Points for (Total points scored in “all games”)
6. Points Against (Fewest total points allowed in “all games”)

Divisions with Split Conferences – The top 4 teams from each conference will be taken to the playoffs.

1. Best “Conference Record”
2. Head to Head (winner)
3. Best Overall Record (All Games)
4. Greatest Point Differential in “Head to Head” (if Head to Head is split)
5. Greatest Point Differential in “Conference Games”
6. Greatest Point Differential in “All Games”
7. Points for (Total points scored in “all games”)
8. Points Against (Fewest total points allowed in “all games”)

**** “Point Differential” = Points for – Points Against***

X. LEAGUE I.D. BADGES

1. All “R4YFA” approved coaches, board members and association volunteers must have, in their possession at any “R4YFA” sponsored event, a league issued I.D. Badge for identification. Anyone requiring an I.D. Badge who cannot present it at an “R4YFA” event may be limited in their capacity to participate. (This includes, but is not limited to; coaches, assistants and board members.) Exceptions may only be made when an “R4YFA” governing board member can vouch for the person’s eligibility to participate.
2. All Badges must have the photo ID, association affiliation, title, full name, and year.