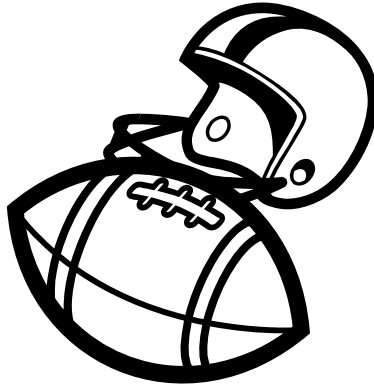


BERKSHIRE YOUTH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



By-Laws and Rules

Version 1.4 – May 2, 2010

www.berkshireyouthfootball.org

1. **Name** - The organization shall be called the “Berkshire Youth Football Association.” Any community in Berkshire County may join by paying the annual fee established by the Board of Directors and agreeing to abide by these By-Laws.

2. **Mission Statement** - The BYFA’s mission is to teach the basics of clean, fundamental football in a safe atmosphere, for all participants. The youth participants’ experience and safety will always be the BYFA’s highest priority. Cooperation among parents, coaches, teams or administrators will always enhance the experience of each participant. It is our duty as Administrators, Coaches, Parents, Fans to promote the physical and mental well-being of each participant while striving to make each individual a better football player and more importantly, a better person. To achieve its mission, the BYFA will provide a supervised program under the Rules and Regulations as set forth by these By-Laws. The BYFA shall operate exclusively as a non-profit educational organization providing a supervised program of competitive football.

3. **Board of Directors** - The Board of Directors (the “Board”) shall oversee the Association and promote the mission statement.

Commissioner:	Elected by Community Delegates (2 years)*
Assistant Commissioner:	Appointed by Commissioner (non-voting member)
Community Delegate (1 per community)	Appointed by Community
Community Delegate Alt. (1 per community)	Appointed by Community (non-voting member)
Treasurer/Secretary:	Elected by Community Delegates* (non-voting member)
Coaches Representative:	Elected by Community Delegates* (non-voting member)
Officials Representative:	Appointed by Officials Association (non-voting member)
H.S. Coaches Representative:	Appointed by H.S Coaches Association (non-voting member)

* If possible, each elected position will be held by a different Community’s member. The Community Delegate Alternate should attend Board meetings and participate in any discussion, but shall be entitled to vote only if the Community Delegate is not present. In the event that neither the Community Delegate nor Community Delegate Alternate cannot attend a meeting, a Community may have a temporary Delegate attend Board Meetings and vote on behalf of that Community. There shall be no limit on the number of terms an officer may serve.

The Board is responsible for administrating all activities pertaining to the operation of the BYFA, including but not be limited to player registration, season scheduling, enforcement of rules and regulations, and maintenance of the BYFA operating procedures. Funds of the BYFA shall be spent only with the approval of the Board. All checks shall require the signature of the Commissioner and the Treasurer.

The Board of Directors shall meet at least monthly from May to November and more frequently and by telephone conference at the discretion of the Commissioner. Actions by the Board of Directors shall be by simple majority vote of the present voting members. Any coach, parent, guardian, or official may attend meetings of the Board of Directors, but may not vote and may speak only at the discretion of the Commissioner. The Board may vote to conduct an Executive Session as needed.

4. Team Registration Procedure – Teams shall be registered to play as follows: All participating communities shall organize their own programs and teams and shall establish their own fees and registration procedures, provided that no player shall be precluded from playing on the basis of financial need.

No player shall change from one team to another team after the Jamboree.

All participating communities are required to submit at time of registration a signed acknowledgment form accepting the responsibility to abide by the Rules and Regulations in these By-Laws.

The entrance fee to the BYFA is \$150.00 per community payable on registration day.

Insurance is compulsory for all teams and proof of it shall be presented on registration day. Insurance coverage must be in effect as of the first day of practice.

All Board Members, Coaches and Assistant Coaches shall agree to be bound by the Coaches Code of Conduct adopted by the Board. Each Head Coach, Assistant Coach and other mandated volunteers shall submit to a CORI check completed by the Board and must be determined by the Board to be eligible to coach or otherwise participate. CORI check applications shall be completed by August 1st, for returning volunteers and prior to participating for new volunteers.

All Head Coaches shall be required be members of USA Football (at the League's expense) and to compete any online training required by the Board and must attend a pre-season training session to be held each year sometime between August 1st and the date of the Jamboree. Assistant Coaches are strongly encouraged to attend the training session.

An individual playing in BYFA cannot play or practice with any other organized football team or league. Violation of this rule will result in suspension from BYFA play for the remainder of the season. Scrimmages against other leagues and programs are permitted.

There is to be no charging of admission at any of the games.

There shall be no try outs or practice before the second Monday in August.

After the first day of school, practice sessions will not exceed six hours weekly and any weekday practice session shall not exceed two hours.

All players must maintain a satisfactory academic standing in school.

All players must have at least two weeks of contact fully equipped, before playing his or her first game.

Adult supervision is to be provided at each practice.

The equipment used by the players in the BYFA must meet national safety standards. Each community participating in the BYFA will be required to provide proof at registration day that their equipment is recertified on an annual or bi-annual basis.

5. Player Eligibility – Players shall be eligible as follows:

Flag Division: Each community shall set their own requirements for flag football. If a community does not have a flag program, players from other communities may participate in nearby flag programs. Flag is intended for ages 5 - 7.

Pee-Wee Division:

1. Minimum age is 6 years old as of August 31.
2. Maximum age is 9 years old as of August 31.
3. Minimum weight is 50 lbs.
4. Maximum weight is 105 lbs, with an in season growth allowance of 1 lbs per weigh in.
5. No Maximum weight for Restricted Player (defined below),
6. Players shall be required to re-weigh only if with in 5 lbs of the maximum weight.

Junior Division:

1. Minimum age is 10 years old as of August 31.
2. Maximum age is 11 years old as of August 31.
3. Minimum weight is 55 lbs.
4. Maximum weight is 125 lbs with an in season growth allowance of 1 lbs per weigh in.
5. No Maximum weight for Restricted Player (defined below)
6. Players shall be required to re-weigh only if with in 10 lbs of the maximum weight.

Senior Division:

1. Minimum age is 12 years old as of August 31.
2. Maximum age is 13 years old as of August 31.
3. If a Player is entering 8th Grade, and is 14 years old as of August 31, the player will be eligible, but 14 year olds 130 lbs and over shall be Restricted Players.
4. Minimum weight is 60 lbs.
5. Maximum weight is 150 lbs with an in season growth allowance of 1 lbs per weigh in.
6. No Maximum weight for Restricted Player (defined below).
7. Players shall be required to re-weigh only if with in 10 lbs of the maximum weight.

Players can elect to “play up” a division if their skill level permits and Restricted Players shall be encouraged to play up if they are 9 years old (play up to Juniors) or 11 years (play up to Seniors) and capable of playing at the upper level. An individual Community may require a player in its program to play up, but the Board may not overrule a Community’s decision to require or not require any particular player to play up. A player that elects to “move up” may move back down to the lower division (but then must may not move back up).

RESTRICTED PLAYERS:

Players exceeding weight limit will be allowed to play, but will be shown on the team roster as a "Restricted Player".

Restricted Players shall wear a helmet sticker designated by the Commissioner and must play in an interior line offensive or defensive position. No more than 3 Restricted Players per team may be on the field at any time.

Before the start of every game, Coaches shall meet with their restricted players and the officials to: (a) confirm that the Restricted Player has a visible helmet sticker; and (b) confirm the Restricted Player's jersey number.

Restricted Players must be in a 3 or 4 point stance at the snap of the ball. A Restricted Player cannot carry the ball, advance a fumble, intercepted pass or play on kick off or kick return teams. A Restricted Player may kick an extra point or field goal and may play their line positions during punts or PAT attempts (but may not advance the ball). On a punt, a Restricted Player may not cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.

On Offense, no more than 2 Restricted players shall be on either side of the Center (offences using an unbalanced line may not use all 3 Restricted Players on the strong side). The center may be a Restricted Player. Restricted Players playing guard and tackle may pull.

On Defense, Restricted Players cannot play head up on an Unrestricted Center, but can play the Center/Guard gap. If the Center is a Restricted Player, the Defensive Restrictive Player may play head up on the Center. Defensive tackles may not line up outside the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle.

A 5 yard penalty shall be assessed if a Restricted Player violates these rules without handling the ball (i.e. lining up off the line of scrimmage or not in a 3 or 4 point stance); a 10 yard penalty shall be assessed if a Restricted Player violates these rules by handling the ball (i.e. advancing a fumble).

There shall be 3 official weigh in dates: one before the first game, the second after the 4th game and the 3rd the week before the first Junior and Senior Playoff Games. The Commissioner may not schedule additional weigh in dates and no player shall be required to weigh in other than on the official weigh in dates. A Restricted Player may become an unrestricted player, if the player meets the required weight (including the in season growth allowance) at the second weigh in. No Restricted Player shall be allowed to become an unrestricted player after the second weigh in. A Restricted Player who initially weighs in at 10 lbs or more above the required weight shall be a Restricted Player for the entire season. (For example, a Pee-Wee who starts the season at 108 as a Restricted Player and who is weighted in at 104 at the 2nd weigh in would no longer be a Restricted Player, but a Senior who weighs in at 175 may not become an unrestricted player)(the Board does not promote rapid weight loss to "make weight"). Players shall be required to re-weigh only if within 5 lbs of the maximum weight for Pee-Wees and 10 lbs of the maximum weight for Juniors and Seniors. An unrestricted player who is required to re-weigh and who does not re-weigh shall become a Restricted Player for all games following the re-weigh in. New players may be weighed in and added to a team's roster at any time. A Coach or Assistant Coach must attend the 2nd and 3rd weigh in to ensure that the Player does not miss the reweigh in date.

Officials and the Commissioner shall have the authority to remove a Restricted Player from a game if that particular player's ability and size poses an undue risk of injury to other players.

All Coaches shall be responsible to ensure that the use of Unrestricted Players does not result in a one team's ability to dominate a game. Pee Wee Coaches should make a conscious effort to be certain that Restricted Players are matched up against Restricted Players to the greatest extent possible.

Any Restricted Player caught violating the Restricted Player rule, will be ejected from the game. The Head Coach may also be subject to sanctions approved by the Board.

The goal and intent of the Restricted Player rules is to allow all community members to play whenever possible, but to recognize the need for safety and the desire to promote competitive games.

If the Board finds that the any Coach has consistently used the participation of Restricted Players to gain an unfair advantage in a game and has "run up" the score in multiple games, the Board may take disciplinary action against that Coach, up to and including suspending the Coach.

6. Player Registration Procedures – All individuals who desire to participate as a player in the BYFA are required to report in person on Registration Day for eligibility confirmation. The time and place of registration will be established by the Board on a year to year basis. The Registration Day may be different dates for each Community (between August 10th and August 31st), but all players shall be given a final opportunity to register and be weighed on the date of the jamboree. Prior to Registration Day, each team shall submit a proposed roster indicating the name, grade, birth date, age as of August 31st and, if possible, email address for each player, and the name, telephone numbers and email address for the Head Coach and Assistant Coaches. At registration, the representative of the Board (from a community other than the community registering) shall: (a) record each player's date of birth by receipt of an official birth certificate (Unofficial copies may be accepted at the discretion of the Commissioner)(Once a player's birth certificate has been reviewed and the player's date of birth has been recorded on in the official BYFA database (maintained by the Commissioner and Webmaster), the Player does not need to present an original birth certificate again); (b) record each player's weight by certified weigh-in; (c) record each player's jersey number (may be updated at the Jamboree); and (d) verify individuals eligibility based on eligibility requirements. If a player is permitted to appear on a roster who has misrepresented his age or eligibility requirements: (a) that player shall be permanently expelled from the BYFA; (b) the Head Coach shall be suspended for 8 games; (c) that Team shall be ineligible for any post season play and forfeited all games in which the ineligible player played; and (d) the Community shall be fined \$500.00.

All players who have registered and met the eligibility requirements will be considered on the "Official Team Roster" for that community, assuming the number of players on the roster does not exceed 33 for Peewee teams; 35 for Junior teams and 40 for Senior teams. The Board can vote, with an affirmative majority, to permit a community to exceed the maximum number of players on a roster for a given year only.

Prior to the start of the first game of the season, the Commissioner will post on the BYFA web site copy of the Official Team Rosters. It will be the responsibility of the Delegates and Coaches to have an up to date printed copy of their Roster at each game during the season.

7. Game Day Procedures – Prior to the start of each game, the coaches of the participating teams are required to exchange Official Team Rosters. These rosters must accurately account for every player who is properly suited for contact and attending that particular game. These rosters must be the exact duplicate of the Roster posted on the Association's website with any modifications approved by the Commissioner.

The home team for each game is responsible for assuring that a certified and properly equipped Emergency Medical Technician is at each game. If an E.M.T. is not present, the game shall not be played and is considered a forfeit by the home team. Final disposition of the game will be at the discretion of the Board.

The home team for each game is responsible for assuring that at least one registered Football Official is at each game. If an official is not present, the game shall be played under protest with the possibility of forfeit by the home team. Non-registered Football Officials may be used for Pee Wee games. Final disposition of the game will be at the discretion of the Board.

If during a game one team goes ahead by 28 or more points, that team is awarded the win and the rest of the game is played as a controlled scrimmage. The losing team will get the ball on the 50 yard line. If after 4 downs they do not gain 10 yards, the ball is returned to the 50 yard line and they try again. At the discretion of the losing team's coach, the controlled scrimmage may be conducted following normal game rules except with a running clock.

The following game rules apply to all three divisions (except as modified for Pee-Wees below).

All games are to be played under NCAA rules unless modified by these By-Laws;

The Pee-wee division games shall normally start by 11:30 a.m.

The Junior Division games shall normally start at 1:00 p.m.

The senior division game shall normally start at 2:30 p.m. or 15 minutes after the Junior game, whichever is later.

Special starting times for games must be mutually accepted by the teams involved and approved by the Commissioner.

The time for quarters shall be 10 minutes each for the senior division, and 10 minutes each for the junior division.

Each team will be allowed 4 time-outs per half.

The time allowed between halves is 15 minutes.

If a team fails to appear for a scheduled game, they will forfeit the game after a 30 minute wait, unless there is a justified cause and proper notification. Final decision on the forfeit will be made by the Board.

In case of rain or increment weather on the day of a scheduled game, the home team will make the decision whether to play or not by 10:00 a.m., and notify the opposing team and the Commissioner. The Commissioner reserves the right to cancel any game.

Yard lines must be properly marked. If yard markers are used they must be made of rubber or other soft material.

If goal posts are available, Points-After and Field Goals are allowed.

The ball used at the Senior division games must be a Spaulding J5V, Baiden 500 or 550, a Wilson TDV, or the equivalent composite.

The ball used at the Junior division games must be a Spaulding J5Y, a Baiden 500Y, a Wilson TDY, or the equivalent composite.

If the score of a game is tied at the end of regulation time, the NCAA tiebreaker system implemented by the MIAA will be used except the series will start at the opponent's 10-yard lines. During the regular season, if after two extra periods the score is still tied, the game will be over and ruled a tie. During play-off games, the tiebreaker system will continue until a winner is declared. If a team elects not to participate in the tiebreaker, that team will be deemed to have forfeited the game.

The Home Team is responsible to post the final score (Junior and Senior games only) on the BYFA website and reporting the score by email to the Commissioner. The team standings in Junior and Senior Divisions will be determined by a point system. A team will get 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, and zero points for a loss. If at the end of the season there are teams at the top of the standings with an equal amount of points, then there shall be co-champions. If a playoff game is schedule, the standings will determine which team plays each other. If there are ties in the standing, then the Head-on-Head results will be used to determine playoff seating.

The location of the home field for the playoffs will be determined by the standings at the end of the regular season. The team with higher standing will have the home field. In the event of a tie, head to head standing will prevail. If head to head records results in a tie, a flip of a coin will determine the home field.

If weather or other unforeseen circumstances causes the season to end prior to completing the championship playoffs, the championship will be awarded to the team that had the best record in the regular season and is still active in the playoffs. A tie will result in co-champions. For playoff games, the Commissioner will be responsible for making the determination if a game will be played, re-scheduled, or cancelled.

SPECIAL RULES FOR PEE-WEE DIVISION

15 minute running quarters (clock stops on change of possession and at ½ time).

Each team will be allowed 2 time-outs per half (clock stops).

Games must be completed at 1:00PM for Junior Game start.

A guideline of one (1) minute in the huddle is encouraged.

Coaches should be on the field during play.

There is a mandatory must-play rule. The second quarter has been designated for this purpose and each team will assure that all players that are not playing at least 8 minutes in other quarters will play this entire quarter.

Jr. PeeWee Mini-Game – If both teams have 25 or more players, the teams may elect to play a “Jr. Pee Wee Mini-Game” consisting of a 20 – 30 minute scrimmage played by the first year players and others who will not play at least 8 minutes in the regular game. Only second and third string players shall play in the mini game and the scrimmage should be played with an equal amount of time on offence and defense for each team. The mini game can be played either before or after the regular game at the election of the home team coach.

Play restrictions:

No man on center

No Blitzing unless defense is backed up within its 20 yard line

Only two (2) valid defense. 6 man head-to-head: Or 6 man Gap with only one man in center Gap.

No punts will be allowed, but the Offensive team may elect to spot the ball on the opposing team’s 35 yard line.

Instead of Kickoffs the ball will be spotted on the 35 yard line.

Players can use footballs that are one or two sizes smaller than Junior Division youth size.

Scores may be displayed at the game, but no scores or records will be posted on the BYFA website.

No tie-breakers are allowed.

No Playoffs are allowed.

Practice should be kept fun with the focus on learning the basics of football and providing opportunities for all kids to experience the satisfaction of working as a team.

Pee-Wee Practices MUST NOT exceed 6 hours per week after school starts.

8. Violation of Rules – If it is determined by a participating Coach that the roster of the opposing team is not in order or does not accurately reflect the players suited and attending that game, the following steps shall be taken:

- Attempt to reconcile with other coach by conducting a one-on-one conference away from the players and fans. If successful, document agreement on the roster and have delegate pursue any issue if needed. Game shall be played.
- If issue can not be reconciled, the coach will document his complaint and forward it to his Delegate for action. Game shall be played under registered protest.
- If at game time, a coach of a participating team does not have available an Official Team Roster to exchange, the following steps should be taken: A temporary roster will be generated to include the full names and jersey numbers of each player at the game. Game shall be played. The temporary roster should be forwarded to the commissioner for review and determination of potential infraction of the rule

If at any time any member of the Board becomes aware of evidence that leaves him to believe an infraction of the rules has occurred he or she shall notify the Commissioner who will take the following steps: Discuss and review potential evidence with the Board Member. Determine the validity of the infraction. Report to the Board on his findings and make recommendation to the Board on any action to be taken. The Board will vote on final action. Any member of the Board has the right to approach any player at a game for purpose of confirming proper eligibility.

If the Board determines that a Coach intentionally permitted a Restricted Player to play as a Non-Restricted Player (without a helmet sticker and in violation of the Restricted Player requirements), that Coach shall be suspended for the season and shall resume coaching the following season only if approved by the Board. If the Board determines that Restricted Player (or the Restricted Player’s parent) intentionally plays as a Non-Restricted Player (without a helmet sticker and in violation of the Restricted Player requirements), that Restricted Player shall be suspended for the season and shall resume playing the following season only if approved by the Board.

The following action will be considered appropriate for infractions of the Eligibility Requirements and Procedures:

INFRACTION:

ACTION:

NOT HAVING ROSTER AT GAME

1 WARNING; THEREAFTER
CONSIDERED CRONIC PROBLEM

HAVING AN UNREGISTERED PLAYER*
PLAY AT A GAME UNINTENTIONALLY

FORFEIT GAME.
LETTER OF REPRIMAND TO
COACH
2nd VIOLATION CONSIDERED
INTENTIONAL.

HAVING AN UNREGISTERED PLAYER*

FORFEIT ALL PRIOR GAMES.

PLAY AT A GAME INTENTIONALLY

SUSPEND COACH FOR SEASON

CHRONIC PROCEDURAL INFRACTIONS

LETTER OF REPRIMAND TO
COACH AND DELEGATE.
IF PROBLEM PERSIST, CONSIDER
COACH SUSPENSION

* Includes having a Restricted Player play as a Non-Restricted Player (not wearing a helmet sticker).

9. Coaching Conduct -

The coaching staffs of each team in the BYFA have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that generates a positive environment for all participants in the BYFA. It is considered the responsibility of the individual communities to establish a high standard of conduct for their coaching staffs and formally communicate these expectations to them each season. When accepting the position of a coach within the BYFA, each individual must agree to conform at a minimum to the following conduct rules:

- the use of obscene language is prohibited while interacting with the players or other BYFA participants (games and practices)
- the use of personally abusive language is prohibited while interacting with players or other BYFA participants, and officials (both at games and practices)
- it is expected that coaches will refrain from arguments with officials during the game. If there becomes an issue concerning the quality of the officiating, they should be brought to the attention of the commissioner and the president of the Official Association after the game. Initiating and/or participating in prolonged heated arguments with game officials, other coaches or parents is considered detrimental to the BYFA and prohibited.
- instructing and/or allowing players to intentionally inflict physical harm to another player is prohibited.
- the use of alcohol or any tobacco products (including chew) while interacting with the players is prohibited.
- verbal interacting that incites unacceptable parent/fan actions is prohibited.
- taunting any player during a game is prohibited
- It is expected that all coaches will demonstrate sportsmanship at all time while interacting with the players. Traditional displays of sportsmanship like greeting the opposing coach before and after the game as well as assuring that the participating players "shake hands" after the game is the responsibility of the coach. Serious or chronic displays of un-sportsman-like conduct are prohibited.

If a coach has been found by the Board to be in serious violation of any conduct regulation, the following action will be taken;

- On the first occurrence, the coach will be on probation for that year. The community represented by the coach will be required to write a letter of apology to their team, the opposing team when appropriate as well as anyone else deemed appropriate by the commissioner.
- On the second occurrence within a year, the coach will be suspended and not allowed to participate in the BYFA.
- Based on the severity of the violation the Board reserves the right to take unique action and/or modify the designated action.

10. Parents and Fan Conduct - The parents and fans play a very critical role in providing a positive experience for the players. They need to set the example of how to properly accept success as well as defeat. It is the responsibility of each community to clearly communicate to the parents the standard of conduct that is expected. The parents and fans who attend the games of the BYFA are expected to accept this responsibility and as a minimum abide by the following regulations.

- the use of obscene language is prohibited while interacting with the players or other BYFA participants
- the use of personally abusive language is prohibited while interacting with players or other BYFA participants and officials (both at games and practices).
- Encouraging players to intentionally inflict physical harm to another player is prohibited.
- the use of alcohol at any BYFA game is prohibited.
- verbal interacting that incites unacceptable fan or player actions are prohibited.
- taunting any player during a game is prohibited

It is expected that parents and fans will, in a calm and controlled fashion, take an active role in encouraging all fans to act responsibly.

If a fan has been found in violation of any conduct regulation, the following action will be taken;

- Violation recognized by an Official. Game still in progress: A free time-out will be called, the appropriate coach will be notified of the infraction by the fan and warned that the first subsequent occurrence will result with the team being penalized 15 yards for misconduct. If the fan problem appears uncontrollable, the Official can end the game with a forfeit by the team with the uncontrolled fans. The decision of the Official cannot be overruled.

- Violation reported to the Commissioner after the game. Based on the severity of the violation the commissioner reserves the right to take action when he feels it is appropriate and in the best interest of the BYFA. The actions to be considered will be declaring a game forfeited; suspension of all subsequent home games for the offending community; letter of notification/reprimand to the corresponding community leaders (eg. Selectmen, Mayor, youth program organizers); forfeit of corresponding game. All action by the Commissioner can be overruled by a majority vote of the Board.

11. Amendments - These By-Laws shall be amended by the by a simple majority vote of the Community Delegates with each participating community being entitled to one (1) vote, except that any change in the player eligibility requirements must be approved by a 2/3 vote. The Commissioner shall vote only in the event of a tie. The remaining members of the Board of Directors shall not be entitled to vote on amendments to these By-Laws.

Adopted: v1.1 June 1, 2008
Amended: v1.2 September 8, 2008
Amended: v1.3 May 17, 2009
Amended: v1.4 May 2, 2010