

RULES

Jefferson County Midget Football Association

2008 Season

SECTION I: ELIGIBILITY

RULE 1: AGE

League play begins at 2nd grade. Players will be placed on teams on their grade for the year of play. The Jefferson County Midget Football Association (JMFA) sponsors the following age groups for play: 2nd grade (7); 3rd grade (8); 4th grade (9); 5th grade (10); 6th grade (11); 7th grade (12); Seniors - 8th grade (13-14).

When special circumstances exist due to repeating a grade or being advanced a grade, the JMFA board will determine where the child will be rostered based on age as of July 31st of the current year.

At no time, will a player be allowed to play up or down in grade.

Any player who was previously rostered on a JMFA team with players one grade above or below that players school grade, may elect to move to that players school assigned grade level one time in that player's JMFA career.

RULE 2: LEAGUES

Teams will be grouped into the following seven leagues: 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade (Seniors). Seniors are defined as 8th grade (13 and 14 years olds by July 31st); High School students are ineligible to participate in the JMFA program.

No player participating in a tackle football program (including school programs) other than JMFA is eligible for participation in JMFA. Players found to be concurrently rostered to a JMFA team and participating in another football program shall be deemed illegal and **Section 1 Rule 8** will apply.

A child who turns 15 prior to November 30th is ineligible to participate in the JMFA program.

RULE 3: BACKGROUND CHECKS

Starting in the 2006 season, all coaches, team managers and team moms who participate in the JMFA program will be required to submit to a criminal background check. This rule includes area officers and county officers. Each area will be responsible for obtaining and monitoring these background checks. A designated area will be responsible for monitoring the county board member checks.

RULE 4: OFFICIAL ROSTERS

Rosters listing the players' names, complete addresses, telephone number, birth dates, and grade and **photo** of each player showing his/her jersey number will be prepared for each team and presented to the President of the JMFA County Board prior to the first official practice. The weight, height, jersey number

and patch designation of each player will be recorded on the roster in ink at the time of the official weigh-in. All 3rd – 8th grade players must reappear on their previous year's roster unless the parent has opted for the blind draft.

An official roster must be available at all games. The official roster must be signed by the County Board, Area President/Director, and Head Coach in ink at the official weigh-in. As part of the pre-game warm up and prior to the start of the game, the opposing head coaches or their designee will meet to review the official rosters as related to the patch players on each team. If it is found that any player required to have a patch does not, that player will not play until the patches are secured to their jerseys as set forth in **Section I, Rule 8**.

1. Team Books shall have all documents required for player registration and eligibility.
2. The Team Book shall be presented for review at the time of weigh-in.
3. If a team wishes to challenge an opposing players eligibility they must do so on the JMFA play count sheet prior to kickoff, and in writing to their Area Director who will make formal request to the JMFA President.
 - a. The team with the challenged player shall deliver the Team Book to the JMFA President or his/her designee with-in 4 hours of the game where the challenge was made.
 - i. Team Books contain sensitive information and as such no team is required to present the book directly to the challenging team but is required to surrender it to the JMFA president or his/her designee at any time it is requested.

Areas that have two or more 7th grade teams advancing into Seniors, may combine rosters to form a team if numbers are not sufficient to form two or more teams. Any combination of two or more rosters must be ratified by the county board by a majority vote. Any and all roster combination is subject to **Rule 12** placement.

If an official roster is not presented, the game is forfeited and counted as a loss by the team unable to or refusing to present their official roster. In the case that neither team has their official roster; the game is counted as a loss for both teams. This rule will be administrated and enforced by the referee. A roster can only be challenged before the beginning of a game.

An official roster(s) will be made available to any and all JMFA Board of Directors, Area President/Director or County Representatives for review upon written request to the JMFA executive board and Area in question at any reasonable time. A copy of the official roster(s) will be submitted from the County and from the Area in question.

RULE 5: PLAYER REQUIREMENTS

No player shall be eligible to play or practice until his/her registration fee has been paid or waived by the area, the doctor's certificate has been received, a copy of the birth certificate or US Passport or state issued Identification Card is on file and proof of grade/proof of residence is received, the parents code of ethics is received, the release of liability is received, and the player is equipped with certified equipment as approved by JMFA. Areas using Electronic Registration may use electronic signature of acceptance of the Parents Code of Ethics and the Release of Liability to satisfy receipt of the forms and proof of registration.

RULE 6: REGISTRATION

Registration will be officially closed at the time of the county bracketing, with the following exceptions:

A player may be accepted after the County Bracketing meeting date if the following procedure is adhered to:

Area President/Director assigns the player to the team with the smallest roster in his/her area with the signed approval of the County President.

If the area has full rosters in the player's age group, the player will go to the closest geographical area with an opening on a roster in the player's grade. **See Section II, Rule 2.**

The County President or his/her designee will perform weigh-in. A player cannot enter the program after the second game has been played by any team in the grade level (any division) in which that player will compete. Player cannot enter the program after the second regularly scheduled game has been played, *e.g.* a youth cannot enter the program during the playoffs only.

RULE 7: PHYSICAL EXAM

A current physical exam is required of each player prior to the player's first practice, with the certification by the doctor that the player is physically fit to play football. Violation of this rule will result in disciplinary action directed at the Area and/or Head Coach.

RULE 8: INELIGIBLE OR ILLEGAL PLAYER

If an ineligible and/or illegal player is discovered to be playing or has played on a team, the following process must be completed and disciplinary actions carried out.

The player shall not be allowed to participate in JMFA scheduled games from the time of discovery until process is completed or until the issues of eligibility are resolved, whichever occurs first.

A. the head coach of the team is directly responsible for his/her players and as such disciplinary actions will be directed by him.

B. The player and his family know the requirements of eligibility and as such disciplinary action will be directed to them.

A disciplinary hearing will be called and held by JMFA members prior to the team's next scheduled game to hear the facts of the case and render a decision concerning eligibility and determine disciplinary action for the head coach, player, and/or board member.

The disciplinary actions are as follows:

Coach:

A. First Offense: If the head coach has knowingly played an ineligible and/or illegal player said coach would be suspended for the next scheduled game (JMFA post-season play included) and any games the player had played will be forfeited.

- B. Second Offense: Three (3) game suspension and warning of dismissal from the program as a whole.
- C. Third Offense: Dismissal from the program, can reapply the next season only through an official meeting of JMFA members.

Player: Suspended for the season. All games he/she played in will be forfeited.

Board Member: If a board member knowingly entered an illegal/ineligible player, he/she will be suspended for that year.

The above rule and hearing shall be done in a timely manner and is comprehensive, *e.g.*, the coach and the player are both disciplined, one is not exclusive of the other, if the JMFA board finds sufficient proof to direct disciplinary action. An area should remain free to hear and discipline their own individual cases prior to them reaching the JMFA level.

RULE 9: BACKFIELD LIMITATION

Backfield limitations shall be as follows:

2nd grade, 75 lbs.

3rd grade, 80 lbs.

4th grade, 90 lbs.

5th grade, 100 lbs.

6th grade, 110 lbs.

7th grade, 125 lbs.

8th grade Seniors have no backfield weight limitations.

- A. All players whose weight as entered on the official JMFA roster exceeds the backfield limit for the players' age group by .01 lbs shall be designated a patch player.
- B. A patch player shall be designated with a 2-inch diameter circular cloth contrasting color patch affixed to the player's jersey. Placement of the patches shall be on both upper arms, below the shoulder of the player's game jersey.

Patch players are allowed to:

- A. Play as an offensive or defensive lineman on the Line of Scrimmage (LOS).
- B. Play as a tight end or wide receiver on the LOS and receive a forward pass thrown beyond the LOS.
- C. Run with the ball after having intercepted a pass that was thrown by the opposing offense.

- D. Line up in the offensive backfield for the purpose of being the kicker of a punt, extra point attempt, or field goal. In the event of a muffed snap, the patch player may cover the ball, or block to protect the holder.
- E. Perform a kick-off or free kick following a safety or line up at any position on a kick-off or free kick.
- F. Play on the front line on a kick-off return and may advance the football if receiving on onside kick.

Patch Players are NOT allowed to:

A. Line up in an offensive or defensive backfield position except as defined in Paragraph B above. Patch players are not allowed to retreat upon the snap or during the play into a typical linebacker or defensive back position. *Note: Patch players are allowed to chase a ball carrier downfield.*

- B. Line up in a linebacker position.
- C. Hand off, run, pass or receive a pass when lined up in the offensive backfield to perform a kick.
- D. Be a part of a fake play when lined up in the offensive backfield to perform a kick.
- E. Play a position on the kick-off receiving team except the front line.
- F. Take a hand-off in the offensive backfield for an end around play when the patch player is playing a tight end or receiver position.

Any violation of the rule pertaining to a patch player shall be an unsportsmanlike penalty. Repeated violation of the rule shall be grounds for the expulsion of the player and/or coach as it is unsportsmanlike conduct. There are no backfield limitations for the senior teams.

RULE 10: ROSTERING

Area Presidents/Directors have prime responsibility to roster players on teams and to do so within the association rules, verifying the following:

- A. Make sure player's residence is within the area boundaries, verified by school enrollment or verified with an Xcel Energy Co. bill or telephone bill as of July 31, or gets written release from the President of the area of residence and county approval.
- B. The county board approval of the proof of residence when an Xcel Energy Co. bill or telephone bill cannot be provided.
- C. When a child/player is attending a school in an area other than their home area, they are eligible to play football for the area that the school is located in. Proof of enrollment is required (report card, CSAP score, letter from school stating enrollment). A child/player must have attended the school the previous school year to be eligible for this option. ***Refer to Section 1, Rule 1.***
- D. Patch and backfield weight limitations.

E. Parent's signature on official registration form releasing the area and JMFA from liability for injury.
See Section I Rule 5

F. Doctor's certificate stating the player is released to participate in football.

G. A state issued Birth Certificate or a valid US Passport.

H. Proof of grade.

I. A signed parent(s) code of ethics. *See Section I Rule 5*

J. Equipment as approved by JMFA.

K. Payment of fees.

L. Returning players should appear on their previous team's roster.

M. No area registration forms can have a space for requesting a different coach or team for returning players. For returning players wishing to change teams it will be clear that the players will be entered into the blind draft at the parents request, no guarantee of movement will be made.

May not add a player under the guise of the player's relative being an assistant coach, unless it is a rookie team of any age.

RULE 11: WEIGH-IN

All Players must attend their Official Area Weigh-in to be eligible to participate in JMFA. If any player will not be available for their scheduled weigh-in date, it is the responsibility of the Head Coach to notify the Area Director who will make arrangements with another Area President to weigh the player prior to the Official Area Weigh-in at a time and location determined by the that Area Director. Players who miss weigh-in due to illness or family emergency and supported by documentation of illness or emergency will be weighed in by the JMFA President or his/her designee at a time and location determined by JMFA. Teams must have their Team Book at weigh-in and the book must be complete. Failure to present the team book at Weigh-in may result in a suspension of the head coach and possible disciplinary action directed at the Area.

The weigh-in shall be in accordance with JMFA approved guidelines, which shall be provided to all area board members on or before the last meeting preceding the official weigh-in. **TO CLARIFY, PLAYER WEIGHING .01 POUNDS OR MORE ABOVE WEIGHT LIMIT WILL BE DESIGNATED AS PATCH.**

Each area must conduct its weigh-in in conjunction with at least one other JMFA area. Each weigh-in must be monitored by a JMFA representative appointed by the JMFA President and not affiliated (past or present) with the areas conducting the weigh-in. Each area must insure that their official JMFA rosters for the previous season are present at their weigh-ins for review by the other participating areas and the JMFA appointed monitor for the weigh-in. Any change to the date/time/location of a weigh-in must be communicated to the JMFA President with a minimum of five (5) business days notice, so as to allow a JMFA representative to be in attendance.

RULE 12: SWEATDOWNS

JMFA is opposed to sweating a child down to make weight. It is unhealthy for a child to lose significant body weight. Patch limits are in place to protect the smaller children from injury due to significant weight differentials.

A. To discourage coaches and parents from sweating down a child, each coach will be given three (3) player challenges per season.

B. A challenge must be filed prior to a game and if the player in question plays in the backfield and is determined by re-weigh to be more than 10% over their weigh-in weight, the game will be forfeited.

C. If a challenge is filed, the player in question will be re-weighed by a county official and will be given no more than 24 hours notice of re-weigh. Time and place of re-weigh will be determined by county official and shall take place no more than 72 hours after challenge. All challenges must be filed prior to game time – this is not to exclude challenges filed midweek prior to a game.

D. A player who does not comply will be automatically patched. Any player found to weigh 10% over their weigh-in weight and over the weight limit in their age group will be patched for the remainder of the season.

RULE 13: BRACKETING AND SCHEDULING, DIVISION 1 AND DIVISION II

All Member Areas will submit copies of all rosters as they stand on that day at the JMFA Bracketing meeting.

DIVISION I –

1. **Seeding:** Teams will be seeded for Division 1 as follows: Division 1 teams will be split into two 5-team conferences with the Carnation Bowl winner seeded #1 and the Carnation Bowl Runner-up seeded #2. The remaining teams will be seeded based on their previous year's records. The 9th and 10th place teams in Division 1 shall move to Division II. The Carnation Bowl winner and Carnation Bowl Runner-up in Division II shall move to Division I and be seeded at the bottom of each league based on previous year's record. When there is space available in Division 1; upon request of coach and with approved area director and majority vote of the county board, new teams may enter into Division I and be randomly seeded at the bottom of Division I.

A. A team with 12 or more returning players constitutes a returning team regardless of coach change.

B. Division I teams with 11 or fewer players shall be dropped to Division II. If a team is dropped to Division II due to lack of returning players, their roster shall be frozen and no more returning players may be added to the roster. **EXCEPTION** – If at the coach's request, the area director's recommendation and county board approval, a team may retain a Division I seed.

C. In grades 3 – 8 Division I will consist of at least 10 teams. If any Division I Team is disbanded in grades 3 – 8, the county will determine which team shall be seeded in 10th place using the remaining seeding of the previous year's record – keeping 10 teams in Division I. The teams designated

to drop may be required to remain in Division I or Division II semi-finals teams from the previous year may be required to advance to Division I.

2. Scheduling: All teams will play every one in their own conference plus their remaining games against the other conference as necessary to complete their schedules.

3. Playoff Bracketing: The top 8 teams from Division I will advance to the playoffs and will be seeded based on their overall record. Playoff schedules for Division I will be as follows: 1 vs 8; 2 vs 7; 3 vs 6; and 4 vs 5.

DIVISION II

1. Seeding: Teams will be seeded for Division II as follows: Division II teams will be split into at least two 5-team conferences with the dropping Division I #9 team seeded #1 and the dropping Division I #10 team seeded #2. The Division II teams dropping to Division III shall be seeded at the top of Division III based on last year's record. The remaining teams will be seeded based on their previous year's record. The Carnation Bowl winner and Carnation Bowl Runner-up in Division II shall move up to Division I and be seeded at the bottom of each league based.

A. A team with 12 or more returning players constitutes a returning team regardless of coach change.

B. In grades 3 – 8 Division II will consist of at least 10 teams. If any Division II Team is disbanded in grades 3 – 8, the county will determine which team shall be seeded in 10th place using the remaining seeding of the previous year's record – keeping 10 teams in Division II. The teams designated to drop may be required to remain in Division II or Division III semi-finals teams from the previous year may be required to advance to Division II.

C. The number of teams in all grade levels must be even. When a team wishes to remain in Division II they must achieve a .500 record or above.

1. Scheduling: All teams will play every one in their own conference plus their remaining games against the other conference as necessary to complete their schedules.

2. Playoff Bracketing: The top 8 teams from Division II will advance to the playoffs and will be seeded based on their overall record. Playoff schedules for Division II will be as follows: 1 vs 8; 2 vs 7; 3 vs 6; and 4 vs 5.

DIVISION III

1. Seeding: Teams will be seeded for Division III as follows: Division III will be split into two conferences with the dropping Division II #9 team seeded #1 and the dropping Division II #10 team seeded #2. The remaining teams will be seeded based on their previous year's records. The Tournament winner and Runner-up in Division III shall move up to Division II and be seeded at the bottom of each league. When there is space available in Division II, upon request of coach and with approved of area director and majority vote of the county board, teams may enter into Division II and be randomly seeded at the bottom of Division II.

A. A team with 12 or more returning players constitutes a returning team regardless of coach change.

(i) In grades 3 – 8, Division III will consist of at least six teams.

B. Scheduling: All teams will play every one in their own conference plus their remaining games against the other conference as necessary to complete their schedules.

C. Year-End Tournament: At the conclusion of the Division III season there will be a single elimination tournament of the top 4 Division III teams to determine who shall move to Division II. The remaining Division III teams shall play a round-Robin Tournament to end the season. All Division III teams will be seeded according to regular season records for tournament placement. The tournament shall take place at a location determined by the JMFA Board and shall conclude the Sunday preceding Carnation Bowl weekend *See Section II, Rule 3*.

D. Team Play: Teams will play Saturdays and Sundays for the purpose of the tournament and there shall be 20 plays per quarter regardless of grade for Teams 4 – 6 grade. 7th and 8th grade teams shall use a running clock in the tournament -- clock will only stop for timeouts and injury.

2. 2nd advancing to 3rd grade: At the time of bracketing if there are 19 or more total teams in 3rd grade the top 10 teams (based on the previous year's record) advancing from 2nd grade shall become 3rd grade Division I.

Games will be played as scheduled; all reschedules will be done by the JMFA scheduler. A coach may NOT reschedule a game. Schedule requests may be made to JMFA at the bracketing meeting but no guarantee of accommodation will be made. Any request made after the official schedule is released will not be accepted.

TIEBREAKERS -

DIVISION 1 and DIVISION II Tiebreakers are listed below.

Tie Breakers:

- A. Head-to-head match up
- B. Conference Record
- C. Points allowed v. common opponents
- D. Total points allowed
- E. California Play-off

The highest-level tiebreaker that applies to all/remaining teams should be applied. If all teams have not played Head-to-head, then conference record should be used to exclude teams from the tie. The remaining teams will then be seeded using Head-to-head. If remaining teams have not played Head-to-head and Conference Record does not produce a clear winner, then total points allowed should be used to exclude teams from the tie and elevate one team to the first available seed. The remaining teams will then be

seeded using Head-to-head if possible or the cycle will repeat. If, and only if, no other higher-level tie breaker can be applied to remaining teams, a California Play-off will be played.

Example: Teams A, B, C are all tied for 7th place at 4-4, A is 3-3 in Conference, B is 4-3 in Conference, C is 3-3 in Conference.

A – Beat B, Lost to C

B – Beat C, Lost to A

C – Beat A, Lost to B

Head-to-head is a circle so conference record is used and B becomes the 7th seed. Now Head-to-head resolves the remaining tie between A & C. C is 8th and A is 9th.

Example: Teams A, B, C, D are all tied for 6th place at 4-4, A is 4-3 in Conference, B is 4-3 in Conference, C is 4-3 in Conference, D is 4-3 in Conference.

A – Beat B, Lost to C, Did NOT play D

B – Beat C, Lost to A and D

C – Beat A, Lost to B and D

D – Beat B & C, Did NOT play A

Head-to-head is not used yet because they did not all play each other so conference record is used and the tie remains. So Points allowed v Common Opponents is used

A – Allowed 88

B – Allowed 79

C – Allowed 91

D – Allowed 93

B wins the 6th seed, we must stay with Points because D did not play A, so A wins the 7th seed.

Now we return to Head-to-head and D wins the 8th seed, C- is the 9th seed. Now Head-to-head resolves the remaining tie between A & C. C is 8th and A is 9th.

RULE 14. PLACEMENT

Establishment of 2nd and 3rd grade teams is determined by JMFA geographical area with the recommendation to keep the number of players on each team in balance. All teams in a grade level shall be numerically balanced at the time of draft, this shall mean within 15%. Any player registering after the draft shall go to the team with the fewest players in the grade as stated in *Section I Rule 6*.

All new players and returning players wishing to change teams must be placed by draft when there is more than one team in a grade level.

3rd grade through 8th grade returning players must remain on the same team, this includes players who do not play for one year but wish to return unless they wish to transfer to another team in their area with county approval. Former JMFA players who have not played for two years or more are considered new players to be placed in the blind draft. *See restrictions.*

Players from another area must return to their home area. New players or those desiring to transfer to another team (after county approval) will be used to numerically balance out existing rosters or to form new teams.

Selection should be accomplished by players remaining unidentified with the exception of grade and backfield eligibility. This constitutes a draft.

Draft Cards may contain the following information:

1. Grade
2. 'P' if the player is over the backfield limit in the age group
3. A random player identified # known only to those administrators conducting the draft.
4. High school identifier - Only if the area builds 2nd and 3rd grade teams along high school lines.
5. '1' - Only if the child is a returning player and has requested, in writing to the Area Director, a Division 1 placement.

Draft Procedure may be done in one of the following ways as determined by the Area Board. All age groups in the Area's draft will be done the same way.

1. The team with the most returning players will select first, each team in the age group will make one pick in order, until rosters are full and all children have been selected.
2. The team with the worst record/seed will select first, each team in the age group will make one pick in order, until rosters are full and all children have been selected.
3. Rookie teams will select first, then the longest standing teams in order, each team in the age group will make one pick in order, until rosters are full and all children have been selected.

Information that may be given to individual coaches at the time of the draft - confidential and may not be shared with any other coach.

1. A 'Do Not Pick List' - given only if a parent has requested in writing to the Area Director that a child be moved from a team for personal reasons. The Area Director and the County President must approve and sign this request.
2. A 'Recruit list' of new players - Given if:
 - a. The coach has submitted a list of specific NEW players to his Area Director at least two (2) days prior to the draft; and
 - b. The parent has confirmed in writing to the Area that the child has been recruited.

No child is guaranteed placement on any particular team regardless of any recruiting or draft requests.

Each area must give notice of the date, time, and place of any impending draft to the JMFA president, with a minimum of five (5) days notice, so as to allow a JMFA officer(s) (not affiliated with the area conducting the draft) to be in attendance for purposes of monitoring the draft as deemed necessary. Players not rostered by areas will be placed on a county-wide waiting list and placed as needed.

RESTRICTIONS:

- A. No coach may recruit returning JMFA players.
- B. No coach may recruit players from other teams or areas.

C. No coach may select a player before the draft or official rostering.

D. No coach may take part in team assignments.

E. No player may choose a team assignment.

F. No player may be placed on a predetermined team.

G. **Recruiting:** Coaches may recruit new players to their specific team. (New players are defined as any player who has not been rostered on a JMFA roster for 2 years.) Placement of recruited player must be accomplished through the draft and teams must remain balanced.

Example: Area has 3 teams in 4th grade with a total of 66 players in the age group. The Area has determined prior to Draft that each team will have 22 players. Team A has 19 returning players, team B has 14 returning players and Team C is a rookie team. All players shall be placed in the blind draft, If a Team has "recruits" the Area may provide the coach with a "Recruit List" but cannot guarantee placement.

SECTION II: PLAYING PERIOD

RULE 1:

Each 2nd - 6th grade team is limited to four (4) playing periods a week, and each 7th and 8th grade team is limited to a maximum of five (5) playing periods per week. A playing period is hereby defined as a practice or a game in which one or more players are engaged in organized instruction or play or practice of play. Each 2nd - 6th grade teams shall have no more than three (3) contact practices, plus one (1) game per week. Each 7th and 8th grade team shall have no more than four (4) contact practices, plus one (1) game per week. A week is defined as Monday through Sunday. No team may practice **OR PLAY** on Sunday, **EXCEPT AS PROVIDED BELOW**. Infraction of this rule will result in the head coach being suspended from all JMFA activity for a period of one (1) calendar year. There will be exceptions made to the Sunday rule when a game must be rescheduled due to weather postponement and in the case of playoff or championship rules. **EXCEPTIONS TO THE SUNDAY RULE MAY ALSO BE GRANTED IF A TEAM WHO WISHES TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EVENT OBTAINS APPROVAL OF THE JMFA BOARD TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH EVENT. IN SUCH INSTANCES, EXCEPTIONS TO THE PLAY PERIOD LIMIT RULES MAY ALSO BE GRANTED BY THE JMFA BOARD. During the playoffs and championship weeks teams may have unlimited practice days with a 2-hour practice limit per day Monday through Saturday.**

RULE 2:

NO TEAM SHALL PRACTICE PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF OFFICIAL PRACTICE.

Infraction of this rule will result in the head coach being suspended from all JMFA activity for a period of one (1) calendar year. The first day of official practice shall be designated by the county President. The first week of practice for all players, regardless of date of entry to the JMFA program, shall consist of conditioning and non-contact practice. Non-contact is defined as no physical contact: player to player, player to coach, or player to dummies and/or bags. For the first week of practice players are to wear helmets, cleats, t-shirts, and shorts only, no shoulder pads or leg pads. Contact practice shall begin the second week and follow those procedures as indicated in **Section II, Rule 1**. A week of practice is defined and must consist of a minimum of three 90-minute sessions. All JMFA players must participate in at least

three (3) non-contact practice sessions and at least three (3) contact practices sessions before participating in any game session.

RULE 3:

PLAYOFF AND CHAMPIONSHIP SCHEDULING. Every effort will be made to schedule playoff games on the same field in any grade and division and to schedule the start of those games at or after 11:00 a.m. when and where field availability permits. From time to time, it may be necessary and therefore allowable to schedule games on separate fields and at times earlier than proscribed. Games may be played on Sundays when deemed necessary by the JMFA board.

The Carnation Bowl shall be scheduled by the JMFA board for the 11th weekend following the 1st scheduled games of the season, with a ‘fall back date’ of the 12th weekend, not to conflict with the weekend immediately following Thanksgiving, when completion of the season is hindered by weather or other unforeseen and uncontrollable factors.

No division, grade, or team shall be given priority treatment in the scheduling of the Carnation Bowl. Games shall begin at 8 am with the youngest teams playing first and processing chronologically through the day. Every effort will be made to schedule the Carnation Bowl in a stadium. In the event that no stadium is available, the JMFA will determine the most appropriate venue to conduct the championship game. The JMFA board shall determine annually the necessity to charge a nominal admission fee to all spectators of the Carnation Bowl.

In years ending in even numbers – the Division I championships shall be played on Saturday and the Division II championships on Sunday. In years ending in odd numbers – the Division I championship shall be played on Sunday and the Division II championships on Saturday. When possible Friday night games will be scheduled and the teams/grade/division scheduled to play on Friday night shall be determined by the JMFA board.

SECTION III: PLAYING FIELD

RULE 1: SIZE.

The playing field for **2nd - 5th** grade shall be 60 yards long and 40 yards wide, plus end zone 10 yards behind the goal lines, making the total area within the lines 80 yards by 40 yards. The playing field for **6th - 8th** grade teams will be the official high school size, marked in accordance with the high school rules.

RULE 2: MARKINGS

The 60-yard field will be properly marked and designated at 10-yard intervals and also with 25-yard lines. There shall be inbound marks 40 feet in from each sideline. The 100-yard fields will be marked in accordance with official high school rules. Spectators’ boundary lines should be a minimum of three (3) yards out from the sidelines and designated by ropes, painted lines or burned lines. Colored flags or sideline markers will be used as corner markers, sideline markers will be used every 10 yards on at least one side of the playing field. All side-line and corner markers shall conform to JMFA requirements.

The players box shall be at least three yards deep (if there is not reasonable room to accomplish this the area will determine the depth of the box) and be clearly marked on both sides of the fields. On the 60-yard

field the box will extend from the 20-yard lines in. On the 100-yard field the box will extend from the 25-yard lines in.

A clearly marked spectator boundary shall be provided on all fields, it is the responsibility of the Area Field Representative and Team Manager to keep spectators behind the boundary.

RULE 3: GOAL POSTS

The 2nd - 6th grade teams shall have goal posts placed seven (7) yards behind the goal lines. Size and spacing of posts shall be 15 feet apart with the top of the crossbar nine (9) feet above the ground. For 7th and 8th grade teams, the high school rules apply. All goal post vertical sections must be padded.

If goal posts are not seven (7) yards deep the playing field must be clearly marked with a broken line three (3) yards deep in the end zone. This will be discussed during the pre-game meeting with both coaches and officials.

RULE 4: GAME EQUIPMENT

The host area shall furnish the down box, 10-yard chain and field setup. The home team will furnish the stop clock for 7th and 8th grade teams. The home team will furnish two qualified adults for the down box; the visiting team shall furnish one qualified adult for the down box. Each team will provide the game ball when playing offense. The home team shall furnish down box at neutral fields when notified one week in advance that down box will not be provided since there is no home area.

RULE 5: SIDELINE

The home team shall have a choice of sideline. During the playoffs, if there is not a designated home team, the team with the best overall record shall have a choice of sidelines. During the playoffs, if both teams have the same record, choice of sideline shall be determined by coin flip.

RULE 6: CONDUCT

There is no tobacco use of any kind allowed on JMFA fields. There is no alcohol use allowed on JMFA fields. Spectators shall remain behind the spectator boundary at all times. Berating or verbally abusing officials, players, coaches or spectators is unacceptable and will result in ejection from the facility and suspension the following week. Refer to the following documents: NFHS Official Rules, JMFA Coaches Code of Ethics, JMFA Parents Code of Ethics.

SECTION IV: GAME RULES

RULE 1: OFFICIAL RULES.

Where applicable and with changes and additions listed herein, the official rules will be the rules of the National Federal State High School Athletic Association, referred to in these rules and regulations as "Official high school rules".

RULE 2: GAME OFFICIALS.

TWO paid officials are assigned for the **2nd - 5th** grade games. The game may be played with only one official. Three paid officials will be supplied for the **6th - 8th** grade games. The game may be played with only two officials. JMFA shall make every effort to meet this expectation, however the number of available officials is beyond the control of the association and as such some fields may have only the minimum number of officials.

RULE 3: LENGTH OF GAMES.

Each game shall consist of four (4) quarters. Each quarter shall consist of 20 plays for 2nd - 4th grades and 24 plays for 5th and 6th grades, without regard to the actual time involved. Only point after attempts, both sides penalized and any penalties (unless refused by opponent) do not count as plays. The Mercy Rule will become effective at any point at any point in the game when the disparity in the score is 50 points or greater for 100-yard fields and 30-points or greater on the 60-yard fields. If at any time the deficit narrows to less than 24 points, normal game rules apply. 7th and 8th grade games shall consist of four (4) 12-minute quarters. Three (3) time-outs per half will be permitted for the 2nd – 5th grade teams. Official high school rules will apply for the 100-yard teams.

After the first half, if the score disparity exceeds 60 points or greater during the game for 100-yard fields and 40 points or greater for 60-yards fields, the referee will call the official game and freeze the points on the score board as the official score. With the referees still officiating, play will continue as a scrimmage but in an unofficial scoring capacity.

RULE 4: POSITION OF THE BALL AND START OF PLAY.

For the games on 60-yard fields; Kickoff - 25-yard line; safety and touchbacks - 12 yard line; try for points - 2 yard line. For games on 100-yard fields, official high school rules apply.

RULE 5: A-GAP

JMFA defensive players cannot lineup in the “A” Gap or head-up on the center during a punt, point after touchdown, and field goal attempt.

The “A” Gap is defined as the space between the center and guard on offense.

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike conduct

RULE 6: 2ND & 3RD GRADE TACKLE BOX

JMFA teams playing 2nd and 3rd grade football can have a maximum of eight (8) defensive players within the 10-yard tackle box from 10-yard line to 10-yard line.

Defensive players that line up inside the offensive tackle or tight end must begin play in a 3/4 point stance. Maximum number of down lineman, including defensive ends is six. Defensive ends outside the offensive tackle box or tight end are allowed to line up in a standing position.

Blitzing is allowed between goal line and the 10-yard line, any blitz scheme and defensive alignment is allowed. Defensive linemen are required to be in a 3/4 point stance.

Penalty: 3-yards from a positive down position or the line of scrimmage and replay the down

RULE 7: POINTS FOR SCORING

For all grades, except 8th grade: Two (2) points shall be scored for a successful kick or drop kick after touchdown; one point shall be scored for any other successful play after touchdown. For 8th grade one (1) point shall be scored for a successful kick or drop kick after touchdown, two (2) points shall be scored for any other successful play after touchdown. If there is a tie at the end of a scheduled game (including regular season, playoff and championship games), the tie will be resolved by the 10-yard overtime procedure used in high school.

OVERTIME PROCEDURE.

An overtime round will consist of the following:

1. Each team having an offensive possession of the ball from the ten (10) yard line.
2. A coin flip will determine which team is to receive the first possession.
3. Each team will have four downs to score. Scoring will follow regulation games rules, including extra points.
4. At the conclusion of an overtime round if the game is still tied, another overtime round will be played.
5. During the regular season the game will end in a tie if the score is still tied after the completion of two (2) overtimes.
6. During the playoffs and Carnation Bowl, overtime rounds will continue to be played until an overtime round does not end in a tie.

RULE 8: PENALTIES.

For **2nd - 5th** grade, all penalties in the official high school rules shall be reduced to 60 percent of their stated value, *e.g.*, 15 yards will be 9 yards, 10 yards will be 6 yards, 5 yards will be 3 yards, etc. **6th - 8th** grade will use penalties set forth in official high school rules. With this exception: Any player, coach (head or assistant) who is ejected from a game by the officials, or causes a game to be forfeited due to unsportsmanlike conduct, will automatically be suspended for the next game (schedule, playoff, or Carnation Bowl) on the first offense. A second offense will cause such player or coach to be automatically suspended for the remainder of the season (playoffs and Carnation Bowl included), including JMFA post season play.

RULE 9: PLAY RECORDERS AND TIMEKEEPERS.

Two play recorders and timekeepers, one representing each team, shall stay together during the game, and shall record the plays, or time, thus determining when the quarters are completed. The play recorders or timekeepers shall notify the referee, who shall notify both team captions and coaches at five (5) plays or two minutes before the end of each quarter. Any discrepancies between the play recorders and timekeeper's shall be resolved by a flip of a coin by the referees. One time clock shall be used by the timekeepers. The officials shall not keep game clocks, provided there is one qualified timekeeper from each time. If the timekeepers refuse to stand together on the same sideline, the play count or timekeeping will revert to the home time. The Chain crew is also part of the officiating crew and may not coach or

provide instruction during the game. Infractions of this rule will result in being penalized with an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

RULE 10: GAME BALLS.

Game balls shall be in conformity with the JMFA approved requirements. Because the availability of certain brands of footballs varies from year to year, game balls will be approved on a yearly basis. Teams will use game balls issued to them when playing offense. The county board has approved more than one brand of football for JMFA use.

- A. 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades will play with a K2 or its equivalent;
- B. 5th and 6th grades will play with a TDJ or its equivalent; and
- C. 7th and 8th grades will play with a TDY or its equivalent.

RULE 11: CLEATS.

Detachable cleats of up to 3/4 inch as defined by the NFHS rules are allowed for 7th and 8th grades.

RULE 12: MOUTHPIECES.

Mouthpiece is mandatory with the color consistent with the latest revision of CHSAA Rules.

RULE 13. UNIFORMS.

If there is a damaged jersey requiring a change of jersey, the player's number must remain the same. If a number change is required, the county President or designee must initial the change on the official rosters before the use of a jersey in a game. NFHS Rule 7-2-5 SPECIFYING APPROPRIATE UNIFORM NUMBERS FOR LINEMEN, SHALL NOT APPLY.

All players must wear an official jersey with number corresponding to their individual roster number. When two teams meet from the same area, contrasting jerseys will then be permitted with emphasis on matching numbers as much as possible for the visiting team.

No slit sleeves will be permitted and any player with such modification to the jersey is ineligible for play in that game. If the sleeve must be slit for proper fit with equipment, a material insert (gusset) must be sewn in to give the jersey sleeve support.

If a jersey is damaged during a game and the official deems the damage capable of causing a potential injury or a number is no longer distinguishable, the official may assign another jersey to that player for that game only. The official will discuss this with both coaches, and the name of the player and both jersey numbers will be noted on the play counter and timekeeper sheets of both teams by the official.

All JMFA players will be allowed to wear any type of glove provided the gloves do not have any metallic or protruding surfaces. Game officials shall have the right to inspect player's gloves and rule whether or not a player's gloves are suitable.

RULE 14: FORFEITED GAME.

A scheduled game is automatically forfeited by any team that cannot field 11 eligible players within 30 minutes of the schedule game time, unless the game is officially postponed.

RULE 15: POSTPONEMENT OF GAMES.

In general, the Association tries to discourage the postponement of games due to inclement weather. Games may be postponed by the County President or the home team's Area President or designee. A game may be postponed or suspended by an official if he or she deems the playing surface or conditions to be potentially hazardous to the players. If a game is suspended during play, the County Board will have the final determination as to whether the game will be resumed from that point or if the results are to be final.

RULE 16: RESCHEDULING OF GAMES.

Rescheduling of games will be done as soon as possible by mutual agreement of the scheduling committee. (In the event of bad weather, the Area Presidents/Directors are to contact the County President and a special meeting will be called to make all necessary changes). It will be the responsibility of the Area Presidents to contact their own teams involved in schedule changes.

RULE 17: CODE OF CONDUCT.

Each team shall be responsible for keeping the spectators orderly and off the playing field and behind the spectator's boundary. Shouting abusive language at a player, officials, or spectators is strictly prohibited, and violation shall result in enforcement of the high school rules.

At the immediate time of any incident or physical abuse of an official by a spectator, the officials will meet with the head coaches of both teams in order that every effort is made to identify the assailant. Physical abuse of an official by a coach will result in suspension of the coach from all JMFA activities for the entire calendar year or 365 days, commencing with the date of the infraction.

Officials will enforce official high school rules pertaining to coaches, boundaries and conduct, except that coaching from the sidelines by the team coaches will be permitted. Only the head coach may ask for a rule interpretation or clarification of a penalty from a game official provided the coach does so in a professional manner.

A maximum of seven (7) coaches will be allowed inside the box on game day. All coaches must pass a background check.

EJECTION: Any player, coach (head or assistant) who is ejected from a game by the officials, or causes a game to be forfeited due to unsportsmanlike conduct will automatically be suspended for the next game (scheduled, playoff or Carnation Bowl) on the first offense. A second such offense will cause such player or coach to be automatically suspended for the remainder of the season (playoffs and bowl games included).

RULE 18: PROTESTS AND GRIEVANCES.

A protest committee consisting of at least three (3) members will be appointed by the County President to consider complaints of Rule and By-law infractions. Each area will submit the name of one person each year that will be available to serve on the protest committee during the year.

Filing a protest: The proper procedure for filing a protest on a misapplication of the rules, not a judgment call, is to mark the following on a score sheet or play counter form before the snap of the ball for the next play. The game officials shall be required to stop play when advised by either coach that a protest is to be filed.

Items a through e must be complete and correct:

- a. Quarter - time left or number of plays left in quarter
- b. Position of ball - down, direction, distance and who had it - going which way
- c. Score at this point
- d. Description of protest - be brief
- e. Signature of both coaches, (or only protesting coach and referee)

The game officials shall notify both coaches that a protest has been filed

The Area President/Director and team scorekeeper shall be allowed to attend the protest meeting

All protests of Rule or By-law infractions will be submitted in writing to the Area President, along with the score sheet or play counter form as designated above. The protest and the necessary record must be submitted to the protest committee by the Area President within two (2) days of the alleged infraction. The County President will serve as a chairperson of the protest committee; the protest committee will then render a decision of protest allowed or protest not allowed within two (2) days. The protest committee's decision is final. The officials furnished by the Association are paid officials. Protests regarding judgment calls will not be permitted insofar as the outcome of any game is concerned.

RULE 19: CORRECTIVE ACTION.

If any JMFA area member consistently disregards the Rules and By-laws of the JMFA, their membership may be rescinded. The JMFA President shall appoint and chair a review board to impose and monitor corrective action such that the membership might be retained. If such corrective action is not forthcoming, the area membership may be rescinded by a two-thirds vote of the remaining members.

RULE 20: MANDATORY PLAY.

1. Players participating in JMFA shall participate in every game including playoffs and the Carnation Bowl, with the following minimum play requirements:
 - a. All players, regardless of grade (2nd - 8th grades)
 - b. 15 plays including kickoff, kickoff return and extra point conversions.
2. Reasons for not participating in mandatory play are:
 - a. Illness
 - b. Injury
 - c. Unexcused absent one practice (or more) per week without cause
 - d. Poor school performance as related by the parent
 - e. Attitude (justifiable), and
 - f. Official ejection.

3. If a child is not eligible prior to the start of the game, the player eligibility form must be completed and present at the pre-game meeting of the head coaches. Players who are ineligible are not required to meet this rule.
4. If a player becomes ill, is injured or has an attitude problem at any point during the game, the head coach shall notify the head official and the play-counters who will note the minimum play count sheet. In this case, the Area Director will exercise final say if a violation of this rule is alleged.
5. Each area shall provide one scorekeeper/play counters. That person will be part of the "officiating crew", along with timekeeper, and chains personnel.
6. Each play counter (one per team per game) is required to use the league-standard play-counting sheet. Play counting sheets are to be signed by each play counter at the conclusion of the game.
7. All play counters are to meet at midfield at the beginning of halftime to consolidate notes and agree on status of all players. This shall take place in the presence of the head referee. Play counters will then inform their respective head coaches of status of all players before the start of the 3rd quarter.
8. Failure to comply with mandatory play shall not be a forfeitable offense in the regular season
9. Failure to comply with mandatory play in the playoffs or Carnation Bowl shall result in a forfeit. The JMFA County Board shall provide play counters at the Carnation Bowl.
10. Failure of coach to comply with the mandatory play rule shall be reported in writing to the Area President and team manager, or appointed team representative keeping account of players and plays. This complaint is to be delivered to the respective coach along with a warning.
 - a. The Area Director at his/her discretion may review film to determine that the play count violation did/did not occur.
11. A second reported offense should be brought before the board or its designated committee. If the committee or board determines that the coach in question has violated the mandatory play rule, then the coach shall be barred from participation or attendance at the team's next game.
12. A third reported offense, with a determination by the Area President or designated committee that the coach in question has violated the mandatory play rule, shall result in the coach being barred from coaching in the JMFA program for the remainder of the calendar year and an additional one calendar year beginning on January 1 the following year.
13. Failure of play counter to sign play-counting sheet at conclusion of the game may result in one-week suspension for their team's head coach, as determined by Area President/Director.
14. At NO TIME shall a coach approach a parent or player and make an agreement to reduce the number of plays one game and increase the number of plays in subsequent games to make up the difference.
 - a. If it is determined by an Area Director and/or board that the above statement has occurred, the head coach of that team shall be suspended for one calendar year from the date of infraction.

RULE 21: ON FIELD INSTRUCTIONS.

One 2nd grade coach will be allowed on the field during games for the entire season, including playoffs and Carnation Bow. One 3rd grade coach will be allowed on the field during the first three (3) games of the JMFA scheduled season, one coach from the team on offense and one coach from the team on defense may be on the field for the purpose of instructing the players. Coaches on the field may only talk to their own players and may not discuss officials' calls, and must stop talking or giving instructions when the offensive team gets in the set position. Infraction of the above guidelines will subject the coach to dismissal to the sidelines.

RULE 22: USE OF VIDEO EQUIPMENT.

The use of video equipment or filming equipment will be permitted under the following conditions:

1. Videotaping or filming or scouting must take place on lines from goal-line to goal-line.
2. No taping/filming or scouting from the end zones.
3. Taping/filming cannot impede/restrict the officials in the performance of their duties.
4. Taping/filming by either of the participating teams cannot in any manner impede safe play, as determined by the game officials.
5. No ladders, scaffold, or other elevation devices may be placed inside the spectator's boundary line.

Failure to comply with the above conditions at the request of the game official will result in the delay of the game until safe conditions can be established and safe play can continue.

RULE 23: ELECTRONICS AND ELEVATION DEVICES.

The use of electronics by any player, coach, or chain crewmember, including but not limited to: walkie-talkies, headsets, and cell phones, is strictly prohibited. All coaches must be in the box at all times; no use of ladders, scaffolds, or other elevation devices is permissible by any member of the coaching staff. Use of any electronic or elevation devices shall subject the Head Coach to ejection from the game. *See Section IV, Rule 15 Ejection*