



# 2023 Youth Football Operations Manual

## **Mission Statement:**

The Greenville County Rec football league encourages youth development by providing opportunities for personal and athletic growth based around the game of football. The league promotes sportsmanship, fellowship, fair play, self-esteem, responsibility and life skills through a safe, fun, positive, and competitive youth football program. Greenville County Rec values the benefits of participating with a team that include accountability, respect and personal development.

## **Youth Associations and Partial Member Organizations:**

### **What is a Youth Association?**

A youth association is an independent, volunteer non-profit or 501(c)(3) entity that organizes players, coaches, and teams to play in youth sports leagues with Greenville County Rec. With a county department that serves the recreational needs in a community of over 500,000 citizens, Greenville County Rec partners with youth associations to help deliver youth sports opportunities. Greenville County Rec works especially close with youth associations to provide youth flag and tackle football.

### **Youth Association Requirements:**

1. Provide proof of non-profit 501(c)(3) status
2. Provide by-laws that govern your association
3. Provide a list of active board members, along with their contact information (email and phone number)
4. Complete a seasonal Youth Association Agreement
5. Have an active website and/or Facebook page
6. Have a point of contact that will be shared on the Greenville County Rec website for the public to contact your association
7. Provide a certificate of liability insurance with the County of Greenville listed as additional insured or certificate holder
8. Must be an active participant in at least the youth tackle football league
9. Must attend one of the pre-season book/admin meetings
10. Complete all registration requirements
11. Submit a seasonal Athletic Field Rental Request as part of your seasonal agreement (if your association wishes to utilize Greenville County Rec fields for practices). Practice space is not guaranteed; Greenville County Rec will try to meet the needs of all associations
12. Have a designated representative and 2 alternates that serve on the Greenville County Rec Youth Sports Advisory Committee (YSAC). All associations are required to be active participants on the committee
13. Comply with all rules and guidelines of the Greenville County Rec youth football leagues
14. Agree to run your association with a safety-first and kids-first approach

15. New associations must complete a successful first year prior to having a vote on the YSAC, but may sit in on the meetings during this probationary period
16. To remain a voting member of the YSAC, associations must:
  - remain in good standing, with no board members serving a penalty resulting from disciplinary action,
  - have no more than one absence from a YSAC meeting in the past year,
  - and have no outstanding balances

#### **Can teams participate in Greenville County Rec youth football leagues without being an association?**

- Yes, teams may participate in the Greenville County Rec Youth Flag and/or Tackle Football Leagues without being an association. These teams do not have an active seat on the YSAC and are not listed on the Greenville County Rec website.

#### **Minimum Requirements to Participate (Non-Youth Association):**

1. Have a designated representative and 2 alternates (phone number and emails required for all 3)
2. Provide a certificate of liability insurance with the County of Greenville listed as additional insured or certificate holder
3. Must attend one of the pre-season book/admin meetings
4. Complete all registration requirements
5. Submit a seasonal Athletic Field Rental Request as part of your seasonal agreement (if your association wishes to utilize Greenville County Rec fields for practices). Practice space is not guaranteed; Greenville County Rec will try to meet the needs of all associations
6. Comply with all rules and guidelines of the Greenville County Rec youth football leagues
7. Agree to run your organization with a safety-first and kids-first approach

#### **When is a Youth Association considered inactive and what happens when they wish to return?**

- An inactive youth association is defined as a youth association that did not participate in 2 consecutive seasons. A season is defined as either fall tackle football or spring flag football. Inactive teams will be removed from the youth association list. Inactive teams will retain their spot on the YSAC, provided all of the youth association requirements are still being met and the association remains in good standing.

#### **What happens to a Youth Association removed from the league due to non-compliance with league rules or that is inactive for more than 2 consecutive seasons?**

- Youth associations can be removed from the league and YSAC for not complying with league rules and deadlines. Once this happens the youth association is considered NOT in good standing. Associations not in good standing will lose their vote on the YSAC. If these teams wish to return for future seasons and return to the YSAC, they have to start out as a new association and go through the probationary process.
- Youth associations can be removed from the league and YSAC for being inactive for more than 2 consecutive seasons. Once this happens the youth association is considered NOT in good standing. Associations not in good standing will lose their vote on the YSAC. If these teams wish to return for future seasons and return to the YSAC, they have to start out as a new association and go through the probationary process

## **What is the Youth Sports Advisory Committee (YSAC)?**

- Greenville County Rec staff has the authority to make all decisions regarding the administration of youth sports in Greenville County, including rule interpretations, rule changes, discipline, and protests associated with the youth football program. The Youth Sports Advisory Committee is a group comprised of representatives from youth football associations in good standing, along with community members and Greenville County Rec staff. The primary objective of the committee is to advise Greenville County Rec on youth football policies and procedures and provide helpful insight to guide the youth football league.

**Meeting schedule:** The YSAC will meet at least once every three months. The annual meeting schedule will be publicized at the first meeting each year. In the event a meeting needs to be called outside of the set quarterly schedule, Greenville County Rec will notify the YSAC members at least 48 hours in advance. One representative from each association must be in attendance at all meetings.

### **YSAC Yearly General Meeting Schedule**

Late-January  
Mid-May  
Late-July  
Mid-December

A Greenville County Rec staff person will take minutes at each YSAC meeting, and these will be shared with all YSAC members following each meeting.

### **YSAC Composition:**

1. Youth Associations
2. Greenville County Rec Staff
3. Community Members

## **What powers does the YSAC have and what do they vote on?**

- In addition to its main role of advising Greenville County Rec on youth football policies and procedures, periodically an issue may arise that requires specific feedback from the YSAC and/or a vote. In these instances, each Youth Association in good standing will have one (1) vote. Community Members that serve on the YSAC will also have one (1) vote each. Youth association(s) involved in an issue or appeal will be recused from deliberations and voting. Greenville County Rec representatives do not have a vote.

## **What is the appeals process and what role does the YSAC play in it?**

- Greenville County Rec retains the authority to make decisions on all matters based on guidelines, rules, and best practices, including decisions on ejected players/coaches, ineligible players, and any situation that impacts the safety and well-being of players in the league. In the event the individual or association in question does not agree with a decision made by Greenville County Rec, an appeal to the YSAC is the next step. The individual or association must submit the appeal in writing (see below) within 48 hours from the time Greenville County Rec communicates a decision. Once the appeal is received, it will be brought before the YSAC. An appeal can be brought before the YSAC either via email, conference call, or a full YSAC meeting depending on the circumstances of the matter.

**What should you do if you ever have a concern or situation that you feel needs to be brought to the attention of Greenville County Rec?**

1. Gather your facts and verify that they are accurate, and from a trusted, reliable source.
2. Verify that your concern goes against the Greenville County Rec Youth Football Guidelines and Rules. If your concern poses an immediate threat to the safety or well-being of a minor in the football program, please contact the appropriate emergency services first and then notify Greenville County Rec.
3. Once you have a valid, verified concern supported with documentation, please submit it to Greenville County Rec via email to [rdixon@greenvillecounty.org](mailto:rdixon@greenvillecounty.org) or drop it off at the Greenville County Rec administrative office (4806 Old Spartanburg Road Taylors, SC 29687). Submission must be in writing, and be accompanied by supporting evidence.
4. Once received, Greenville County Rec will review the situation, and take the next appropriate steps, which may include any of the following:
  - a. Greenville County Rec will make a final decision
  - b. Greenville County Rec will seek input from the YSAC, and then make a final decision
  - c. Greenville County Rec will request an email, phone, or in-person meeting with the YSAC to discuss and/or vote on the matter in question
    - i. For any issue that is voted on by the YSAC, whether at the request of Greenville County Rec or as the result of an appeal, the YSAC's vote is final and the matter will be considered closed after the vote. There are no further appeals or protests related to that matter
5. See pages 18 for further information on game protests

Please Note: This is a youth league that involves minors. Greenville County Rec takes the privacy and safety of minors in its programs with the highest level of caution. If the concern involves the name(s), picture(s), birthdate(s), or other personal information, do not distribute the information and treat it with the utmost privacy.

# Spring 2023 Youth Flag Football Administrative Guidelines and Rules

***Purpose:** The purpose of this league is to provide an enjoyable and safe environment to play the game of flag football. This league is designed to teach the fundamentals and basics of the game of football, and provide a format where a new player can be exposed to the game, while returning players can further develop their football skills.*

## **IMPORTANT 2023 DATES:**

<b>Registration</b>	<b>January 9<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Practice start date:</b>	January 30 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Administrative Book Meeting ^</b> <b>via Zoom @ 7:30 pm. Please rsvp via email to</b> <b><a href="mailto:rdixon@greenvillecountv.org">rdixon@greenvillecountv.org</a></b>	January 30 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Team Books are due. Accepted via provided Unique Google Drive Link Only</b>	February 1 <sup>st</sup>
<b>Initial Roster Minimum Deadline, 8 players with at least 75% of all paperwork (Players and/or Teams Dropped)^</b>	February 10 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Last Day to Drop and Still Receive a Refund</b>	February 10 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Coaches Clinic (mandatory)^</b>	February 22 <sup>nd</sup> @ 7:30 p.m. via Zoom video conference
<b>Rosters Freeze. No additions or changes accepted after this date^</b>	February 22 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>Final Roster Deadline. Minimum 11 players and 95% of paperwork (Players and/or Teams Dropped)^</b>	February 22 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>Final Paperwork Deadline (100% of Paperwork DUE) (Players and/or Teams Dropped)^</b>	February 24 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Last Day to Transfer. This deadline is only for players who are 100% eligible to play and are on a team that has been dropped from the league. This includes 100% of their paperwork already submitted.</b>	February 24 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Schedules Posted Online on IMLeagues</b>	February 27
<b>Season Begins</b>	March 4

^Mandatory for each organization to be eligible to play in the league. All dates subject to change.

## **I. ASSOCIATION REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Items to be turned in to Greenville County Rec by the Youth Association for youth football players and teams:

- A. Rosters
- B. Picture Pages
- C. Birth Certificate
- D. Parent/Player Code of Conduct
- E. Participant Waiver
- F. Coaches required paperwork:
  - a. USA Football Contact or Non-Contact Certificate.
  - b. Signed Coaches Code of Conduct
  - c. Adult Waiver
  - d. Coach's Pass.

Items to be turned in to Greenville County Rec by the Youth Association for youth cheerleaders:

- A. Rosters

- B. Parent/Player Code of Conduct
- C. Participant Waiver
- D. Coaches required paperwork:
  - a. Background check
  - b. code of conduct
  - c. Coach's Pass.

\*\*Roster templates, picture page templates, physical form, code of conduct and waiver forms are available online at [www.greenvillerec.com](http://www.greenvillerec.com).

A. **Youth Football Documentation Policy:** Youth Football Documents will only be accepted digitally. We will be utilizing the Google Drive platform to accomplish this task. Organizations will be given a Google Drive link once they register their teams.

1. Instructions on how the Google Drive will work:
  - a. A google link will be provided to you after registration for you to upload ALL paperwork. This includes initial submissions, missing paperwork, added players paperwork, and/or coach's paperwork. No paper copies, text messages, or emails will be allowed for paperwork submission.
  - b. The link will contain a separate folder for each age group you have a team registered for. Within each age group's folder, the association will be in charge of making each individual player their own folder.
  - c. To make a player's folder, complete the following steps:
    - i. Click the age group's folder that you would like to access.
    - ii. Right click and select "new folder".
    - iii. Title folder the following "Jersey number-full name". For example, "#0 John Smith". The association will be in charge of uploading all of John Smith's paperwork into his folder.
  - d. To upload paperwork, complete the following steps.
    - i. Click the player's folder.
    - ii. Right click and select "upload files".
    - iii. You will select the files you wish to upload into the folder.
  - e. Each player should only have one folder and paperwork should only be submitted into individual player folders. You may access the player's folder throughout the pre-season to upload/update missing paperwork.
  - f. An easy phone app that allows you to scan paperwork to electronic is Genius Scan.

## B. **Rosters**

1. Rosters must be typed and submitted electronically to **[gville.athletics@gmail.com](mailto:gville.athletics@gmail.com)**
2. The maximum number of players is 14 per roster.
3. The minimum number of players is 11 per roster.
4. **Initial Roster Minimum Deadline, Friday February 10, 2023.** Roster must have 8 players with at least 75% of completed paperwork is due by Friday February 10, 2023 (players/teams dropped if minimum requirements are not met with a refund).
5. **Final Roster Deadline/Roster Freeze, Wednesday February 22, 2023.** Minimum of 11 rostered players and 95% of completed paperwork is due (players/teams dropped if minimum requirements are not met).
6. **Last Day to Transfer, Friday February 24, 2023.** Only players who are eligible to play with 100% of their paperwork already submitted may transfer. Only players who are on a team that has been dropped from the league are eligible to transfer.
7. **Final Paperwork Deadline Friday February 24, 2023.** 100% of paperwork is due. Players/teams dropped if minimum requirements are not met.

8. Rosters must list all the coaches' names, telephone numbers and email addresses.
9. Rosters must be in numerical order by the player's jersey number.
10. Every roster must have the following information on each player:
  - a. Full Name (as appears on birth certificate)
  - b. Jersey Number
  - c. Birth Date
11. In accordance with the SCHSL rules, (schsl.org) no player will be eligible to play on multiple teams, in different age groups or in multiple football leagues. If discovered, the player is considered ineligible. Please refer to section IV. Rules of Conduct.

**C. Pictures**

1. Picture Template must be typed and submitted electronically to **gville.athletics@gmail.com**.
2. Player and Coaches pictures must be full color, digital pictures.
3. Player's faces must be clearly visible (only head shots, not full-body pictures).
4. Player's pictures must be from the current calendar year.
5. Players and Coaches must remove their hats for their picture.

**D. Birth Certificates**

1. Birth certificates must be turned in with the roster.
2. No originals will be accepted; copies only.
3. Copies must be clearly legible. Legibility is at the discretion of Greenville County Rec personnel.
4. Birth Certificates must be a copy of certified legal documents from the state of birth.
5. Government Issued IDs and Passports can be accepted in place of birth certificates.

**E. Code of Conduct and Parent & Player Waiver Form**

1. Parents and Players must sign the Code of Conduct and Waiver forms.
2. Forms can be found at [www.greenvillerec.com](http://www.greenvillerec.com).

**F. Coaches Requirements and Responsibilities**

1. Pass a comprehensive national criminal background and sex offender check. Please refer to the Coaches Background Check Guidelines located at the end of this Youth Football Operations Manual. Link to online form is also located on the Background Check Guidelines Page.
2. Sign the Coaches Code of Conduct.
3. Complete the USA Football Contact or Non-Contact Coaches Certification and turn in a copy of the Certificate.
4. Attend the Mandatory Coaches Meeting on **Wednesday, February 22, 2023 @ 7:30 pm via Zoom**. Details closer to the date.
5. Wear current season coach's credentials during games (must be visible at all times). Coaches who use passes from previous seasons will be subject to punishment.
6. Only 4 coaches per team allowed on the sideline during games.
7. No electronic communication devices can be used during games by the coaches (cell phones, radios, headsets, etc.).
8. Coaches are responsible for paying the officials before the game.
9. Head coaches are responsible for the conduct of themselves, their assistant coaches, their players, their chain crew, and their fans.

**\*\*\*Once documents are received by Greenville County Rec, it becomes the property of Greenville County. The documents WILL NOT be given back out once it is received. No exceptions!\*\*\***

## I. POLICIES AND LEAGUE PROCEDURES

**Age Limits-** Players will play in a division based on their age on **August 31, 2023**. Players are NOT allowed to play up OR down an age group. Any player, coach, or team associated with a person caught and proven guilty of cheating or misrepresenting any documents will be suspended indefinitely.

**Registration-** Full details and league information can be found at [www.greenvillerec.com](http://www.greenvillerec.com) .

### 1. Age Groups (Based on Player's age on August 31, 2023)

Ages	Football Size
5 & 6	K2
7 & 8	K2
9 & 10 (Spring Only)	TDJ
11 & 12 (Spring Only)	TDJ
13 & 14 (Spring Only)	TDY

2. **Game Officials-** Each team will be required to pay a \$35 Officials Fee for each game. If this is not paid by the start of the game, the game will result in a forfeit.

### A. Practice

- Greenville County Rec will attempt to provide practice space for teams that play in the league, however, space is limited. To use Greenville County Rec fields, groups must:
  - Complete the Youth Organization Agreement.
  - Provide a certificate of liability insurance with the County of Greenville listed as the additional insured or the certificate holder.
  - Register teams with the Greenville County Rec league and pay team entry fees.
  - Must have 2 coaches from each registered team that have PASSED a current background check.
- In the event of inclement weather, Greenville County Rec reserves the right to close fields and cancel any practices. Teams not abiding by these closures will be subject to league penalties.
- Greenville County Rec will cancel or modify practices/games due to extremely hot or cold weather. Please refer to the Weather Policies located on the Operations section of this document.
- Greenville County Rec recommends that there shall be no more than three (3) practices per week. Each practice equals 2 hours. Players should not participate in football more than 6 hours per week total. Once games start, each game will count as 1 practice or 2 hours.
- Teams cannot practice against or with different age groups. This includes scrimmages.

### B. Game Schedule

- Games will begin on **Saturday, March 4, 2023**. The game schedules will be prepared by Greenville County Rec, and will be posted on **Monday, February 27, 2023 at 5:00 pm**.
- There will be 6 regular season games per team.
- All games will be played at times and locations scheduled by the Greenville County Rec Athletic Department.
- Any team that forfeits during the regular season will not be eligible for the playoffs. Any team that forfeits twice during the regular season will be removed from the Greenville County Rec league for the remainder of the season without a refund.
- No game will be played unless there is at least one (1) official for Flag Football.
- Games cancelled due to inclement weather will only be rescheduled once.
- The decision to cancel games due to inclement weather will not be made until 4:30 pm for weekday games and 8:00 am on Saturdays. Some cancellations may be made at the field at the discretion of the officials and field supervisors.



8. Check the status of games the following ways: (1) Follow Greenville County Rec on Twitter at @gcrecfields and (2) Text “gcrecfields” to 844-792-1212 to receive text alerts regarding the status of games and field closures.

### C. Playoffs

- a. Greenville County Rec will take the top four (4) teams from each division.
- b. Trophies will be award to the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> place of the playoff.
- c. Tiebreakers: In the event there is a tie in the regular season standing, Grenville County Rec will use the following, in order, until the tie is broken:
  - i. Head-Head record
  - ii. Record v. Common Opponents (considers all games against common opponents)
  - iii. Point differential vs. highest ranked common opponent
  - iv. Point differential vs. Common Opponents
  - v. Points allowed (overall)
  - vi. Points scored (overall)
  - vii. Points allowed vs. common opponents
  - viii. Points scored vs. common opponents
  - ix. Current win streak

### D. The Game “An Overview”

- a. **The Field-** The game will be played on a field sized 80 yards x 40 yards. The field will be marked with 20 yard zones. The zones will be G, 20, 40, 20, G. The zones represent the first down lines and the end zones. The neutral zone is the area from the ball and 3 yards toward the defense. There will be cones placed on the sidelines indicating the end of the neutral zone (3 yards from the ball). The 5–yard “Offensive No Rush Line” will be clearly marked on the field. Please refer to section I. Game Play.
- b. **The Teams-** Each team must start a game with 7 players on the field at a time.
- c. **Time-** A game will be played with two (2) 20 minute halves and a 5 minute half-time. The clock will be a continuous running clock, except in the last 2 minutes of each half. During the last 2 minutes of each half, the clock will be stopped when there is an incomplete pass, the ball carrier goes out of bounds, change of possession, and on a timeout. Each team will have 2 timeouts per half. These timeouts will last 1 minute each.

#### d. Scoring-

- i. The extra point attempt will be returnable by the defense. In the event the defense intercepts the ball during an extra point attempt, they can return it to their opponent’s end zone for points. They will be awarded the points based on the type of extra point being attempted by the offense. For example, if the offense was going for 3 points and it was intercepted and returned by the defense, the defense will receive the 3 points based on the extra point try.
- ii. 5-6, 7-8 Divisions:

Type of Score	Worth
Touchdown	6 points
Extra Point from 3 yard line	1 point
Extra Point from 6 yard line	2 points
Safety	2 points

iii. 9-10, 11-12, 13-14 Divisions:

Type of Score	Worth
Touchdown	6 points
Extra Point from 5 yard line	1 point
Extra Point from 10 yard line	2 points
Extra Point from 15 yard line	3 points
Safety	2 points

- e. **Equipment-** Each player will be required to wear a team jersey. The team jerseys must match each other, and they must have numbers on them. Jerseys have to be tucked in to play. Each player in the league is encouraged to wear cleats. NO metal cleats are allowed. Players must wear pants/shorts without pockets. Greenville County Rec will provide the flags at the fields. The flag belts must be worn around the waist and may NOT be tucked in. NO Jewelry may be worn during the game. Players cannot wear brimmed hats during the game. Greenville County Rec will provide age appropriate game balls at the fields. Please refer I., 1 Policies and League Procedures, **Players are required to wear a mouth piece at all times during the game.**
- f. **Mercy Rule-** If a team is leading by 28 points or more at any point during the game, the clock will run continuously. Only injury timeouts will be allowed during the mercy rule.

## E. Game Play

There will be an “Offensive No Rush Rule” from the 5 yard line to the goal line. There will be no designed offensive rushing plays or handoffs in this zone. Only forward passes are allowed in the 5 yard zone. The 5 yard line will be clearly marked on the field. **In the “Offensive No Rush Zone”, the QB can only run the ball after at least one player on the defense has crossed the defensive line of scrimmage.**

### a. Offense Overview

- i. The field will be marked into zones. These zones represent the first downs. They will be marked as 20, 40, 20. Once a team crosses into a new zone, it will result in a first down. The offense will have four downs to get to the next zone for a first down. The offense will start at the 14-yard line at the start of the game/half and after a touchdown. The offense will have the option to punt the ball on 4<sup>th</sup> down. Please see Section I. E. for specific punting rules. Forward progress and ball placement will be established based on the location of the ball carrier’s hips.
- ii. The offense is allowed to advance the ball by running or passing. Once the flag is removed by a defensive player, the ball is dead at the spot of the flag removal. If a player’s flag falls off inadvertently before he/she catches the ball, after the catch, or while running the ball, the hand touch rule will apply. The hand touch rule allows a defensive player to use one-hand touch between the ball carrier’s shoulder and waist in place of pulling the flag when the flag has inadvertently fallen off. **NO FLAG GUARDING IS ALLOWED.**
- iii. The offensive play will start with the ball being snapped through the center’s legs. There must be at least 3 players on the line of scrimmage. Line players can be in a 2-point stance.

- iv. A fumble will never result in a change of possession. As soon as the ball hits the ground, or the ball carrier's knee touches the ground, the play is ruled dead.
- v. The neutral zone will be marked by 2 cones controlled by the referee on the sideline.

#### **b. Defense Overview**

- i. Tackling is strictly prohibited. All players must reach for the flags and not the body of the ball carrier. If a defensive player tackles or holds a ball carrier that, in the judgment of the officials, had an open field for a touchdown, a touchdown will be awarded. The officials have the authority to eject any player that intentionally tackles another player.
- ii. Defensive players will be allowed to defend the line of scrimmage. Defensive players must be 3 yards off the line of scrimmage (see neutral zone, Section I, H. a). Defensive players defending the line of scrimmage will be allowed to rush according to the "Rushing Specific Rules", see below (c).
- iii. The defense may defend short line situations during a game. These short line situations take place at the zone lines (20, 40, 20) and the goal lines. This means that the 3 yards off the line of scrimmage does not apply in these short line situations.

#### **c. Rushing Specific Rules**

- i. The defense can only rush a maximum of two players on any down.
- ii. The QB can only run the ball after at least one player on the defense has crossed the defensive line of scrimmage.

#### **d. Passing/Receiving Specific Rules**

- a. A pass that is intentionally thrown away (where there is no receiver near the ball, called at the discretion of the game official) will result in a 5-yard penalty (intentional grounding) and loss of down.
- b. Interceptions are allowed and can be returned by the defense, including interceptions that occur in the end zone.
- c. All offensive players on the field are considered eligible receivers.
- d. The QB can be considered an eligible receiver if he pitches, tosses, or hands off the ball behind the line of scrimmage. The lateral must be backwards. If a forward pass is thrown or handed by the QB, he is then an ineligible receiver.
- e. Players must have at least 1 foot inbounds when making a catch.
- f. Players who run out of bounds during a play are not eligible to come back onto the playing field to make a reception. This will result in the play being called an incomplete pass.

#### **e. Punting Specific Rules**

On 4<sup>th</sup> down the offense will have the option of “punting.” The ball will not actually be punted. Instead, the offense will notify the game official that they want to punt. When notified, the game official will mark off 25 yards or half distance to the goal line. If the ball has NOT crossed the 40-yard line (midfield), 25 yards will be marked off for a punt. Half the distance to the goal line will be marked off for a punt when the ball HAS crossed the 40-yard line (midfield).

## **F. Penalties**

### **a. 5-yard Penalties**

- i. **Illegal Procedure**-Either team moving into the neutral zone before the ball has been snapped, lining up in the neutral zone, or the quarterback in motion before the ball is snapped.

**Enforcement:** dead ball-5 yards from the line of scrimmage-replay the down

- ii. **Delay of Game**- Not snapping the ball within the allotted 25 seconds, taking too long to keep the game from proceeding

**Enforcement:** dead ball-5 yards from the line of scrimmage-replay the down

- iii. **Batting or stripping the ball**-any attempt to strike or grab the ball away from the ball carrier with forcible contact.

1. **When the QB is passing the ball.** The ball may be batted or attempted to be batted when the QB is passing the ball AND the ball has visibly left the QB’s hand. IF the ball is batted or an attempt is made to bat it while it is still clearly in the QB’s hand, the batting or stripping the ball rule applies.

**Enforcement:** Live ball-5 yards from the spot of the foul-replay the down

- iv. **Holding**- Keeping the ball carrier from advancing the ball without getting the flag

**Enforcement:** Live ball-5 yards from the end of the run

- v. **Illegal Forward Pass**-Throwing the ball from in front of the line of scrimmage or a second forward pass.

**Enforcement:** Live ball-5 yards from the spot of the foul and a loss of down

- vi. **Illegal Forward Lateral**-Handing or pitching the ball forward down field (past the line of scrimmage)

**Enforcement:** Live ball-5 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down

- vii. **Defensive Flag Guarding**- pulling the offensive player’s flags before the player receives the ball

**Enforcement:** 5 yards from the line of scrimmage if the play is incomplete-replay the down. If the pass is complete-5 yards from the end of the run, or result of the play

- viii. **Leaving your feet-** Hurdling or diving to gain yardage

**Enforcement:** Live ball- 5 yards from the spot of the foul- replay the down.

**b. 10-yard Penalties**

- i. **Illegal Contact** (on the line of scrimmage or incomplete pass) any contact initiated by a player, pushing a player out of the way or to the ground, or contact preventing players from running their routes

**Enforcement:** Live ball-10 yards from the end of the run-replay the down, or result of the play (incomplete pass-penalty will be assessed from the line of scrimmage).

- ii. **Illegal Contact (completed pass)-** Any contact initiated by any player, pushing a player out of the way, pushing a player out of bounds, screen blocking (setting a pick) at the line of scrimmage or down field

**Enforcement:** Live ball-10 yards from the spot of the foul-replay down or result of the play.

- iii. **Picking/Screen Blocking-** Taking a position too close to a player so they can't avoid contact. Taking a stationary position then moving before the opposing player does to force contact or block them from grabbing another player's flag. Running near the player with the ball to prevent the defense from getting to the ball carrier's flags.

**Enforcement:** Live ball-10 yards from the spot of the foul-replay the down

- iv. **Flag Guarding-**The ball carrier using parts of his/her body to prevent the defense from getting to the flags. This includes the ball carrier batting the hand of defenders going for the ball carrier's flags. (Players are encouraged to run with the ball in front to prevent flag guarding).

**Enforcement:** Live ball-10 yards from the end of the run. If the ball carrier made the first down, then the ball is spotted back 10 yards from the first down (the first down will count at this point).

- v. **Pass Interference-** Once a pass is thrown, and two or more players make contact attempting to catch the ball, pass interference will be called when one player pushes the other to gain an advantage or a player initiates contact to gain a competitive advantage on the other.

**Enforcement: A.** Defensive: 10 yard from the end of the play or the line of scrimmage- automatic first down.

**Enforcement: B.** Offensive: 10 yards behind the line of scrimmage-loss of down

- vi. **Roughing the Passer-** Contact made by the defense on the passer before, during, or after he throws the ball. This does not include incidental contact made by the

defensive player going for the flags. If the defensive player is overly aggressive going for the flag resulting in knocking down the QB, then roughing the passer will be called.

**Enforcement:** 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down, or 10 yards from the end of the play and automatic first down.

**c. 15-yard Penalties**

- i. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct-** Excessive, intentional contact, over-aggressiveness during a play, or disrespectful conduct to the game officials and other players.

**Enforcement:** 15 yards from the spot of the foul.

The consequences for receiving this penalty could be as severe as a player being ejected from the game and possible suspension for the rest of the season.

- ii. **Tackling-** Tackling of another player. This includes excessive contact as determined by the game officials. The officials have final authority to determine if contact is incidental or intentional.

**Enforcement:** 15 yards from the spot of the foul.

The consequences for receiving this penalty could be as severe as a player being ejected from the game and possible suspension for the rest of the season.

- iii. **Fighting-** will result in immediate expulsion from the league for the rest of the season. Any other behavior such as cursing, disrespect to game officials, or any action deemed inappropriate by game officials or league officials will not be tolerated. Any of these behaviors can result in the following: ejection from the game, suspension for the rest of the season, and expulsion from all Greenville County Rec leagues indefinitely.

# Fall 2023 Youth Tackle Football Administrative Guidelines and Rules

## 1. COMMUNICATION:

- Website: [www.greenvillerec.com](http://www.greenvillerec.com) for information on schedules and updates
- Follow Greenville County Rec on Twitter @gcrecfields to receive alerts about weather and the status of games
- Text “gcrecfields” to 844-792-1212 to receive text alerts about weather and the status of games
- 

## 2. CODE OF CONDUCT:

Parents, coaches and volunteers are role models of appropriate behavior both on and off the field. Please observe the following guidelines when attending games and practices:

- Remain seated in the spectator area during games
- Offer only positive comments and feedback to all
- Refrain from interfering with your child’s coach
- Refrain from using artificial noise makers at the games
- The Code of Conduct form (found at [www.greenvillerec.com](http://www.greenvillerec.com)) must be signed by all parents and players
- Remember, this football league is for the kids

### IMPORTANT 2023 DATES:

#### 2023 Football Book Meetings

Meeting #1	May 15 @ 7:30 pm via Zoom Video Conference
Meeting #2	June 4 @ 7:30 pm via Zoom Video Conference
Meeting #3	June 9 @ 1:30 pm via Zoom Video Conference
RSVP for Meetings @ <a href="mailto:rdixon@greenvillecounty.org">rdixon@greenvillecounty.org</a>	
*All associations and organizations must attend.	

Registration	June 1- June 23
Start date for Voluntary Conditioning	July 10 (no equipment)
Coaches Clinic (mandatory)^	July 19 @ 6:30 p.m. via Zoom video conference
Team Books are due. Accepted via provided Unique Google Drive Link Only	July 19 at 5:00 p.m.
Mandatory Practices May Start	July 24 (must start with 10hrs of conditioning)
Initial Roster Minimum Deadline, 12 players with at least 75% of completed paperwork is due (Players and/or Teams Dropped)	July 28
Last Day to Drop and Still Receive a Refund	July 28
Weigh-Ins^ Team will be assigned specific times to weigh-in starting @ 6:00 pm.	Trailblazer Park on August 3 @ 6:00 pm Conestee Park Shelter on August 7 @ 6:00 pm Pavilion Inline Rink on August 8 @ 6:00 pm
Rosters Freeze. No additions or changes accepted after this date.^	August 9
Final Roster Deadline. Minimum of 18 rostered players and 95% of completed paperwork is due (Players and/or Teams Dropped)	August 9
Last Day to Transfer. This deadline is only for players who are 100% eligible to play and are on a team that has been dropped from the league. This includes 100% of their paperwork already submitted.	August 14
Final Paperwork Deadline and Final Weigh-in Deadline. 100% of paperwork is due for coaches & players and 100% of players must be weighed in. (players/teams dropped if FINAL requirements are not met)	August 16
Schedules Posted Online on IMLeagues	August 21
Season Begins	August 26

^Mandatory for each organization to attend to be eligible to play in the league.

All dates subject to change

## II. ASSOCIATION REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Items to be turned in to Greenville County Rec by the Youth Association for youth football players and teams via the unique youth association Google drive link:

- G. Rosters
- H. Picture Pages
- I. Birth Certificate
- J. Physical Forms
- K. Parent/Player Code of Conduct
- L. Participant Waiver
- M. Coaches required paperwork:
  - a. USA Football Certificate
  - b. Signed Coaches Code of Conduct
  - c. Adult Waiver
  - d. Coach's Pass.

Items to be turned in to Greenville County Rec by the Youth Association for youth cheerleaders:

- E. Rosters
- F. Parent/Player Code of Conduct
- G. Participant Waiver
- H. Coaches required paperwork:
  - a. Background check
  - b. Code of Conduct
  - c. Coach's Pass.

\*\*Roster templates, picture page templates, physical form, code of conduct and waiver forms are available online at [www.greenvillerec.com](http://www.greenvillerec.com).

- G. **\*Important\* Youth Football Documentation Policy:** Youth Football Documents will only be accepted digitally. We will be utilizing the Google Drive platform exclusively for teams to upload documents. Organizations will be given a Google Drive link once they register their teams.
- 2. Instructions on how the Google Drive works:
  - a. A Google link will be provided to you after registration for you to upload ALL paperwork. This includes initial submissions, missing paperwork, added players' paperwork, and/or coach's paperwork. No paper copies, text messages, or emails will be allowed for paperwork submission.
  - b. The link will contain a separate folder for each age group you have a team registered for. Within each age group's folder, **the association will be responsible for creating a subfolder for each individual player**. All documents for that player must go in his/her folder only.
  - c. To make a player's folder, complete the following steps:
    - i. Click the age group's folder that you would like to access.
    - ii. Right click and select "new folder".
    - iii. Title folder the following "Jersey number full name". For example, "80 John Smith". The association will be in charge of uploading all of John Smith's paperwork into his folder.
  - d. To upload paperwork, complete the following steps.
    - i. Click the player's folder.
    - ii. Right click and select "upload files".
    - iii. You will select the files you wish to upload into the folder.



- e. Each player should only have one folder and paperwork should only be submitted into individual player folders. You may access the player's folder throughout the pre-season to upload/update missing paperwork.
- f. An easy phone app that allows you to scan paperwork to electronic files is Genius Scan.

#### **H. Rosters**

- 12. Rosters must be typed and submitted electronically to the Google drive via your association's unique link.
- 13. The maximum number of players is 30 per roster.
- 14. The minimum number of players is 18 per roster.
- 15. **Initial Roster Minimum Deadline, Friday July 29, 2023.** Roster must have 12 players with at least 75% of completed paperwork is due by Friday July 29, 2023 (players/teams dropped if minimum requirements are not met with a refund).
- 16. **Final Roster Deadline/Roster Freeze, Wednesday August 9, 2023.** Minimum of 18 rostered players and 95% of completed paperwork is due (players/teams dropped if minimum requirements are not met).
- 17. **Last Day to Transfer, Monday August 14, 2023.** Only players who are eligible to play with 100% of their paperwork already submitted may transfer. Only players who are on a team that has been dropped from the league are eligible to transfer.
- 18. **Final Paperwork Deadline and Final Weigh-in Deadline, Wednesday August 16, 2023.** 100% of paperwork is due and 100% of players must be weighed in. (players/teams dropped if minimum requirements are not met).
- 19. Rosters must list all the coaches' names, telephone numbers and email addresses.
- 20. Rosters must be in numerical order by the player's jersey number.
- 21. Every roster must have the following information on each player:
  - d. Full Name (as appears on birth certificate)
  - e. Jersey Number
  - f. Birth Date
- 22. In accordance with the SCHSL rules, (schsl.org) no player will be eligible to play on multiple teams, in different age groups or in multiple football leagues. If discovered, the player is considered ineligible. Please refer to section IV. Rules of Conduct.
- 23. Any player whose name is listed on a high school/middle school roster will be ineligible to play in the Greenville County Rec league.

#### **I. Pictures**

- 6. Picture Template must be typed and submitted electronically to the Google drive via your association's unique link.
- 7. Players' and Coaches' pictures must be full color, digital pictures.
- 8. Players' faces must be clearly visible (only head shots, no full-body pictures).
- 9. Players' pictures must be from the current calendar year.
- 10. Players and Coaches must remove their hats for their picture.

#### **J. Birth Certificates**

- 6. Birth certificates must be submitted electronically to the Google drive via your association's unique link and in the player's specific folder.
- 7. All documents must be clear and legible. Legibility is at the discretion of Greenville County Rec personnel.
- 8. Birth Certificates must be a scan of certified legal documents from the state of birth.
- 9. Government Issued IDs and Passports can be accepted in place of birth certificates.

## **K. Physicals**

1. Physicals must be submitted electronically to the Google Drive via your association's unique link and in the player's specific folder.
2. Physicals must be performed by a Licensed Physician, Physician's Assistant, or Nurse Practitioner.
3. The Greenville County Rec physical form can be found at [www.greenvillerec.com](http://www.greenvillerec.com).
4. Only Greenville County Rec physical forms will be accepted (document is 2 pages total).
5. Physical forms MUST be stamped by the physician's office and dated after **January 1, 2023**.
6. Once physicals are received, they become property of Greenville County and will NOT be given out for any reason.
- 7.

## **L. Code of Conduct and Parent & Player Waiver form**

3. Waivers and Parent/Player Code of Conduct Forms must be submitted electronically to the Google drive via your association's unique link and in the player's specific folder.
4. Parents and Players must sign BOTH Code of Conduct and Waiver Forms.
5. Forms can be found at [www.greenvillerec.com](http://www.greenvillerec.com).

## **M. Coaches Requirements and Responsibilities**

10. In order to receive a coaches pass and be cleared on a roster for the Fall 2022 Youth Football and Cheer Season, **ALL** coaches requirements must be met by the deadline of Wednesday August 16, 2023. Coaches will be dropped from the roster that are missing any requirements after this date.
11. Pass a comprehensive national criminal background and sex offender check. Please refer to the Coaches Background Check Guidelines located in section IIV.
12. Sign the Coaches Code of Conduct.
13. Sign Adult Waiver.
14. Pass the USA Football Coaches Certification and turn in a copy of the Certificate.
15. Attend the Mandatory Coaches Meeting on **Wednesday, July 19, 2023 @ 6:30 pm via Zoom**. Details closer to the date.
16. Wear current season coaches' credentials during games (must be visible at all times). Coaches who use passes from previous seasons will be subject to punishment.
17. Only 4 coaches per team allowed on the sideline during games.
18. No electronic communication devices can be used during games by the coaches (cell phones, radios, headsets, etc.).
19. Coaches are responsible for paying the officials before the game.
20. Head coaches are responsible for the conduct of themselves, their assistant coaches, their players, their chain crew, and their fans.
21. Requirements and details for Junior Coaches (16 & 17 years old):
  - a. Must 16 and up in order to coach. Verified by State Issued ID or Birth Certificate.
  - b. 3 letters of recommendations. Teachers, religious leader, coach, etc. May not be from a family member.
  - c. Must have a letter of recommendation from Youth Association Board
  - d. Signed the Coaches Code of Conduct.
  - e. Parent or Guardian signed Youth Waiver.
  - f. Pass the USA Football Coaches Certification and turn in a copy of the Certificate.
  - g. Attend the Coaches Clinic on Wednesday, July 20, 2022 @ 6:30 pm via Zoom. Details closer to the date.
  - h. Wear current season pass at all times.
  - i. Junior coach counts towards the team's 4 coaches allowed on the sideline during games.

22. All cheer coaches are required to complete all the requirements, except for the USA Football Certification.
23. **\*\*\*NEW FOR 2023\*\*\*** Photographers. Each team may have 1 photographer inside the fence to take pictures during the games. The photographer must wear a Media Pass and be listed on the team's roster in order to be inside the fence at games to take pictures. Photographers are not to be in the coaches or player's areas on the sideline. In order to obtain a Media Pass, the following must be completed:
  - a. Email confirmation from Association President that this person is cleared to the Teams' Photographer.
  - b. Photographer must be listed on the Team Roster.
  - c. Photographer must have a Media Pass listed on the Photo Roster. Similar to coaches.
  - d. Pass a comprehensive national criminal background and sex offender check. Please refer to the Coaches Background Check Guidelines located in section IIV.
  - e. Sign the Coaches Code of Conduct.
  - f. Sign Adult Waiver.
  - g. Wear their Media Pass at ALL TIMES while on the field.

**\*\*\*Once documents are received by Greenville County Rec, they become the property of Greenville County. The documents WILL NOT be given back out once it is received. No exceptions! \*\***

### III. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**Age Limits:** Players must play in a division based on their age on **August 31, 2023**. For example, if John Smith turns 9 on August 31, he would play in the 9/10 division. Greenville County Rec will offer tackle football for ages 7/8, 9/10, and 11/12. No players will be permitted to play up or down age groups.

**Weight Limits:** Players over the weight limit for their division must wear a 90# jersey. Players who wear 90#s cannot advance the ball. Please refer to the Specific Rules section II on page 13 for guidelines pertaining to 90#s. Teams may have a maximum of two 90#s on the field at the same time

### 2023 Season Information

Age	Birth Year (on August 31)	Weight Limit	Football Size	Official Fees per team/per game
7/8 Tackle	2014, 2015, 2016	110 lbs.	Wilson K2	\$75.00 (3 Officials)
9/10 Tackle	2012, 2013, 2014	125 lbs.	Wilson TDJ	\$75.00 (3 Officials)
11/12 Tackle	2010, 2011, 2012	150 lbs.	Wilson TDY	\$75.00 (3 Officials)

**NOTE: The forfeit fee is 2x the Officials Fees**

#### G. Weigh-In Procedures

1. A weigh-in date and time will be assigned when the team has registered with Greenville County Rec.
2. Players must weigh-in as a team; no individual weigh-ins.
3. At weigh-ins, coaches will line up their team in numerical order by jersey number (1-99)
4. Players who miss their team's designated weigh-in will be given another date to weigh-in.
5. Players who fail to weigh-in by the last designated date will be permanently removed from the roster.

6. Players will be weighed individually in the clothes and shoes they come in. Please note that heavy clothes and shoes can affect a player's weight.
7. Players will have only one opportunity to make weight for their age group; players will not be given a second weigh-in opportunity.

#### **H. Practice**

5. Greenville County Rec will work to provide practice space for teams that play in the league, however, space is limited. To use Greenville County Rec fields, groups must:
  - a. Complete the Youth Organization Agreement.
  - b. Provide a certificate of liability insurance (COI) with the County of Greenville listed as additional insured or the certificate holder.
  - c. Register teams with the Greenville County Rec league and pay team entry fees.
  - d. Must have 2 coaches from each registered team that have PASSED a current background check.
6. In the event of inclement weather, Greenville County Rec reserves the right to close fields and cancel any practices. Teams not abiding by these closures will be subject to league penalties.
7. Greenville County Rec will cancel or modify practices/games due to extremely hot or cold weather. Please refer to section III. Weather Policies and Guidelines.
8. Greenville County Rec recommends that there shall be no more than three (3) practices per week prior to school starting and no more than two (2) thereafter. Each practice equals 2 hours. Players should not participate in football more than 6 hours per week total. Once games start, each game will count as 1 practice or 2 hours.
9. Teams cannot practice against or with different age groups. This includes scrimmages.

#### **I. Game Schedule**

9. Games will begin on **Saturday, August 26, 2023**. The game schedules will be prepared by Greenville County Rec, and will be posted on **Monday, August 21, 2023 at 5:00 pm**.
10. There will be 7 regular season games per team.
11. Tackle divisions 7/8, 9/10, and 11/12 will be eligible for playoffs.
12. All games will be played at times and locations scheduled by the Greenville County Rec Athletic Department.
13. Two forfeits by one team over the course of the season will result in that team being removed from the Greenville County Rec league for the remainder of the season without a refund. Any team that forfeits at least once during the regular season will not be eligible for the playoffs.
14. No game will be played unless there are at least 2 officials for tackle.
15. Games cancelled due to inclement weather will only be rescheduled once.
16. The decision to cancel games due to inclement weather will not be made until 4:30 pm for weekday games and 8:00 am on Saturdays. Some cancellations may be made at the field at the discretion of the officials and field supervisors.
17. Check the status of games the following ways: (1) Follow Greenville County Rec on Twitter at @gcrecfields and (2) Text "gcrecfields" to 844-792-1212 to receive text alerts regarding the status of games and field closures.

#### **J. Playoffs**

1. Post-season playoffs will be offered for the following tackle age groups: 7/8, 9/10, & 11/12.
2. Greenville County Rec will take the top four (4) teams from each division.
3. In the event of a tie in a playoff game, the following procedure will be used to determine a winner: each team will have 4 downs from the opponent's 10-yard line to score. Each overtime period consists of each team getting 1 set of 4 downs. A coin flip will determine which team gets the ball first, and the teams will alternate possessions (for example, if Team A wins the coin toss and chooses to defer, then the overtime sequence will be:

Period 1: Team B's possession first, followed by Team A's possession second

Period 2: Team A's possession first, followed by Team B's possession second, etc. until a winner is determined

4. Trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in each division for all three tackle age groups (7/8, 9/10, & 11/12) for the regular season. In the post-season, the winner and runner-up will receive a trophy in all three age groups (7/8, 9/10, & 11/12).
5. During the play-offs, all 4 quarters will count for the 7/8, 9/10, & 11/12 age groups.
6. Tiebreakers: In the event there is a tie in the regular season standings, Greenville County Rec will use the following, in order, until the tie is broken:
  - a. Head-Head record
  - b. Record v. Common Opponents (considers all games against common opponents)
  - c. Point differential vs. highest ranked common opponent
  - d. Point differential vs. Common Opponents
  - e. Points allowed (overall)
  - f. Points scored (overall)
  - g. Points allowed vs. common opponents
  - h. Points scored vs. common opponents
  - i. Current win streak

## **2023 Youth Tackle Football Rules**

### **1. Code of Conduct and Expected Behavior**

Parents, coaches and volunteers are role models of appropriate behavior both on and off the field. Please observe the following guidelines when attending games and practices:

- Remain seated in the spectator area during games.
- Offer only positive comments and feedback to all.
- Refrain from interfering with your child's coach.
- Refrain from using artificial noise makers at the games.
- The Code of Conduct form (found at [www.greenvillerec.com](http://www.greenvillerec.com)) must be signed by all parents and players.
- It is the responsibility of the parents, coaches, and youth associations to adhere to all Greenville County Rec youth football rules and guidelines found in this Youth Football Operations Manual.
- Remember, this football league is for the kids.

### **2. Pregame Procedures**

#### **A. Game Check-In Procedures:**

1. At the beginning of each game, all players must line up in numerical order by jersey number (1-99) for the field supervisor to validate eligibility.
2. It is recommended that a coach from each team be present at all eligibility check-ins.
3. Coaches are responsible for filling out the line-up card provided by the field supervisor or providing a printed roster at the field.
4. To ensure that every player has an equal opportunity to participate, any player arriving after the opening kickoff must wait until the next quarter to be checked in by the field supervisor and the late-arrival will be noted on the line-up card.
5. If an ineligible player is discovered, or believed to be discovered playing in a game, the opposing team must follow proper procedures to protest the infraction in section V. Protest Procedures. No decision will be made at the field.

6. Head coaches are responsible for paying the officials before each game. Please refer to the Fees listed in the table on section II. 2023 Season Information.
7. A minimum of 11 players per team are required to start a game, no exceptions.
8. **Forfeit Rule:** In the event not enough players (11 players minimum) are present at game time, there will be up to a 10-minute grace period to allow the team to get the minimum of 11 players. The game clock WILL begin running during this period. Once the clock hits 10 minutes, the game will either begin from that point where the clock is or be immediately forfeited. This rule is in place for the regular season and playoff games.
9. **Forfeits-** If you know in advance that your team is not going to be able to attend a scheduled game, please contact Rich Dixon at 864-467-3460 or [rdixon@greenvillecounty.org](mailto:rdixon@greenvillecounty.org). This will allow a notification to be shared with the other team. Forfeit fees will be charged based on the age group of the forfeiting team. The forfeiting team will be required to pay the official's fees for both teams. All associations are required to complete a payment authorization form at the time of registration. In the instance of a forfeit, Greenville County Rec will automatically charge the credit/debit card on file the next business day following the forfeit for the appropriate amount to cover the official's fees. See the table in section II. for official fee rates and forfeit fees.

## I. PLAYING RULES

1. All games will be played under the official South Carolina High School League rules, (SCHSL). ([www.schsl.org](http://www.schsl.org)), except where otherwise noted in this document.
2. Quarters will be 12 minutes in duration for all age groups.
3. The clock will stop only in the last 2 minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters. On a change of possession within the last 2 minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters, the starting of the clock will be on the snap of the ball.
4. Scores and standings will be kept, and playoffs will be offered for the 7/8, 9/10, & 11/12 tackle age groups.
5. During the regular season, the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter in ALL age groups will not count in the final score. This is to get all players in the game.
6. During playoffs, all 4 quarters will count for ALL age groups.
7. Teams are limited to 3 time-outs per half. Unused time-outs will not be carried over into the next half or overtime.
8. If a regular season game ends in a tie, each team will have 4 downs to score from the opponent's 10-yard line. If the ball is fumbled or intercepted and is recovered by the opposing team, the opposing team gains possession. If neither team scores, or both teams score, the game will end in a tie. League Tie breaker rules will be used at the end of the season for playoff seeding purposes. Please refer to section II, 2, D, #6.
9. Teams will be allowed 4 coaches (with passes) on the field at game time. Anyone not having an official Greenville County Rec coaches pass for the current season will be asked to leave the sidelines. Coaches must use current season coach's passes only. All penalties for enforcement for this rule will be directed to the head coach.
10. The HOME team will be required to supply 3 volunteers responsible for working the first down chains during each game. Coaches are encouraged to have a "permanent" chain crew for their team.
11. Each player must participate in a full uniform. This includes: a helmet and facemask, football pants, thigh pads, knee pads, rear pad, shoulder pads, mouth piece, and a matching numbered jersey. **(No metal cleats allowed, including cleats with metal tips).**
12. A coach must be present at the coin toss prior to the start of the game.

13. No electronic communication devices may be used on the playing field. Violation of this rule will result in a 15-yard unsportsmanlike penalty and the ejection of the offending coach(es). Electronic devices include, but are not limited to: Radios, Headsets, Cell Phones, etc. This includes all cleared passed coaches, chain crew, and photographers that are cleared to be on the field during a game.

## **II. SPECIFIC RULES**

### **90 Number Rule:**

1. Players must wear a jersey numbered 90-99 if they exceed the weight limit for their age group.
2. Three 90# player's maximum are allowed on the field at the same time.
3. 90# players must play the down lineman positions on the offensive and defensive lines.
4. 90# players must be in a 3 or 4-point stance in the "Free Blocking Zone" (4 yards on either side of the ball) prior to the snap.
5. If a 90# player gains possession of the ball, it will be whistled down at that spot. 90# players cannot advance the ball.
6. 90# players will not be allowed to line up on a kickoff or a kick after a safety.
7. 90# players are allowed to line up on punts, field goals, and extra points.
8. 90# players are allowed to kick the following dead ball plays ONLY: #1 Field goals; #2 Extra Points. 90# players are NOT ALLOWED to kick on live ball plays such as Kick-offs, Punting; and Safety Kick-offs.

### **Line Of Scrimmage Rule:**

1. Any player lined up on the line of scrimmage within the "Free Blocking Zone" must be in a 3 or 4-point stance.

### **Extra Point Rule:**

1. Immediately following a touchdown, the officials will mark the ball for a 1-point attempt.
2. If the offensive team wants to try for 2 points. They have until the ball is whistled "ready for play" to communicate this decision to the referee. The first decision communicated to the officials will be the final decision, regardless of any following infractions or penalties.
3. A 1-point conversion will be either a run or pass play from the 3-yard line.
4. A 2-point conversion will be a dead ball kick from the 3-yard line.
5. It will be the head coach's responsibility to notify the official if his team will try for 1 or 2 points.
6. If the Coach does not inform the official, the ball will be placed for a 1 point try.

### **Horse Collar Rule:**

1. Players are prohibited from grabbing the inside collar of the back of the shoulder pads or jersey, or the sides of the shoulder pads or jersey.
2. A 15-yard penalty from the spot of the foul will be called against the offender when the official deems the offender has grabbed the opposing player underneath the pads or jersey as described above.
3. If the offender, while attempting to bring down the opposing player, continues with the horse collar tackle with such force that the player being tackled is slammed to the ground, an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will be assessed on top of the horse collar penalty.



### **Interception in the End Zone Rule:**

1. In the event the defense intercepts the ball in the opposing team's end zone, the ball will be blown dead and the ball will be brought out to the 20-yard line. It is considered a touchback

### **Punting Rules:**

1. **7/8:** On fourth down, the coach must tell the official what his team will do (punt or go for a first down). If punting, the ball will be placed 20 yards from the previous spot. This will count as a punt and the offensive and defensive teams switch. If a team decides to punt inside their opponent's 20-yard line, the ball will be placed half the distance to the goal line.
2. **9/10 and 11/12:** On fourth down, the coach must tell the official what his team will do (punt or go for a first down). If punting, the defense lines up 3 yards off the ball. The defense cannot come across the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. The offense cannot move down field until the ball is punted. In the event of a bad snap, the punter will retrieve the ball and have one step before he must kick the ball. A ball not punted will result in a delay of game penalty with the ball being turned over at the previous spot.
3. **Penalties are as follows:** If the defense crosses the 3 yard set-back line prior to the punt, a 5-yard penalty will be assessed. If the defense makes contact with the offense, then the offense has the option to kick or attempt a first down.
4. **Roughing the kicker:** If, in the judgment of the official, contact with the punter is ruled to be flagrant, the offending player will be ejected along with awarding a first down to the offensive team from the previous spot.

### **Kicking Field Goals/ Extra Points:**

1. Scoring: The point value for kicking field goals and extra points are as follows:
  - a. Extra points- 2 pts.
  - b. Field Goals- 3 pts.
2. The field goal and extra point kick will be considered a dead ball play. There will be no rushing on the play. The kick cannot be returned. If a field goal is attempted within the 20-yard line and the kick is missed, the ball will be placed on the 20-yard line for the opposing team to take over.
3. Field Goals can only be attempted off a football tee or the ground. Kicking off a teammate's toe is NOT ALLOWED.
4. Roughing the kicker: If, in the judgment of the official, contact with the kicker is ruled to be flagrant, the offending player will be ejected and the opposing team will be awarded a first down from the previous spot.

### **7/8 Coaching Rule:**

1. One coach will be allowed on the field for the purpose of helping speed up the game by assisting players in lining up.
2. Coaches will have 25 seconds to huddle their team and get them lined up. Going over 25 seconds will result in a delay of game penalty. Once the official blows the whistle and the huddle breaks, the coach must remain 15 yards behind the line of scrimmage for the remainder of the play. The coach cannot interfere physically or vocally in any way with the playing of the down. A penalty of 5 yards will be assessed for this infraction.

### **Injuries:**

A player who has been rendered unconscious during a game shall not be permitted to resume participation in the league until Greenville County Rec has received written authorization from a physician.



### **Delay of Game:**

1. 6:30pm games must end no later than 8:30pm.
2. 8:00pm games must end no later than 10:00pm.
3. Games not completed may or may not be rescheduled for completion. This decision is at the discretion of the Greenville County Rec Athletic Staff.
4. In the event of early termination, a game is considered complete at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.

## **III. Operational Policies for Youth Football and Flag Football**

### **Wearing a Cast during Play**

A player will be permitted to wear a cast while participating in a practice or league game only under the following circumstances:

1. Player with cast must have a signed physician's note clearing him/her to play tackle or flag football.
2. The cast must be covered with closed-cell, slow recovery foam padding no less than 1/2" thick.
3. The player/coach must present the physician's note to the field supervisor on duty and the head official at player check-in prior to the game. The head official will make the final determination if the player is eligible to play.

### **Weather Policy and Guidelines**

Football is a sport that is played outdoors during varying weather conditions. As such, it is essential to ensure players, coaches, and spectators are safe from extreme weather conditions. Games may be played in the rain, heat, and cold.

#### **Weather Cancellations:**

- Greenville County Rec will generally make all weather-related cancellations by 4:30 p.m. the day of a game during the week and 8:00 am on Saturdays
- Some cancellations may be made at the field at the discretion of the officials, field supervisors, and Greenville County Rec staff
- Follow Greenville County Rec on Twitter @gcrecfields to receive alerts about weather and the status of games
- Text "gcrecfields" to 844-792-1212 to receive text alerts about weather and the status of games.

Please see below for specific weather policies:

1. **Thunder and Lightning:** Once thunder is heard and/or lightning is seen, the game will immediately be delayed and the field and spectator areas must be immediately cleared. Players, coaches, and spectators must seek shelter or return to their cars. The delay will last 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is seen. Each time there is thunder heard or lightning seen, the 30-minute clock will restart. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> restart of delay time, the situation will be reevaluated to determine if the games will continue or not.
2. **Heat:** There is the potential that games and practices will take place on hot days. Greenville County Rec will adhere to the following chart in regards to heat and humidity:

## RELATIVE HUMIDITY (%)

Temp	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
105°	100	105	113	123	135	149				
104°	98	104	110	120	132	143				
102°-103°	97	101	108	117	125	139				
100°-101°	95	99	105	110	120	132	144			
98°-99°	93	97	101	106	110	125	132			
96°-97°	91	95	98	104	108	120	128			
94°-95°	89	93	95	100	105	111	122	128		
92°-93°	87	90	92	96	100	106	115	122		
90°-91°	85	88	90	92	93	100	106	114	122	130
88°-89°	82	86	87	89	93	95	100	106	115	125
86°-87°	80	84	85	87	90	92	96	100	109	111
84°-85°	78	81	83	85	86	89	91	95	99	105
82°-83°	77	79	80	81	84	86	89	91	95	96
80°-81°	75	77	78	79	81	83	85	86	89	91
78°-79°	72	75	77	78	79	80	81	83	85	86
76°	70	72	75	76	77	77	77	78	79	80

- a. **Red:** No outside activities will be permitted
  - b. **Yellow:** No equipment (helmets, pads, etc.) can be used during activity.
  - c. **Blue:** Equipment to be removed as often as possible (during rest breaks, on sideline, etc.). Careful monitoring of all athletes for signs of heat problems.
  - d. **White:** Adequate water supply at all practices and competitions, with breaks every 20 to 30 minutes for rehydration.
  - e. **Recommendations during hot weather:**
    - i. Later start time or delay game time.
    - ii. Extra water breaks during the game.
    - iii. Longer breaks between quarters and longer halftime.
    - iv. Players that are at risk for medical related issues due to hot weather are asked not to play.
    - v. Teams need to make sure to have extra water at the field.
    - vi. Team can bring pop up tents to provide shade on sideline.
    - vii. Rescheduling of games if it gets too hot to play or practice
3. **Cold Weather:** There is the potential that games and practices will take place in cold weather. Greenville County Rec's policy is not to play in temperatures with wind chill below 25 degrees Fahrenheit. A determination will be made based on the Real Feel temperature on the Weather Bug App. Also taken into account will be cold temperatures combined with wet weather, humidity, wind, and other conditions.
- a. **Recommendations during cold weather:**
    - i. Mandate that all players wear cold weather gear. Extra layers of clothes, warm gloves, etc. are highly recommended.
    - ii. Allow extra time for players to go to their cars to warm up.
    - iii. Keep games moving to limit the exposure to the cold to 80 minutes or less.
    - iv. Players that are at risk for medical related issues due to the cold weather are asked not to play.

## IV. RULES OF CONDUCT

Field supervisors, game officials, security, or other staff that work for Greenville County Rec will make reports to the Greenville County Rec Athletic Staff on any of the infractions listed below by anyone in attendance at a Greenville County Rec event. This includes players, parents, spectators, and coaches:

Infraction	Penalty
Ejection from Game	Minimum of 1 game suspension
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	10 day suspension
Profanity	10 day suspension
Threatening an Official	Season suspension
Hitting an Official	Indefinite suspension (no less than 1 year)
Drinking/ Public Intoxication	Season suspension
Fighting (on or off the field)	Season suspension (minimum)
Second Offense	Season suspension
Playing an Ineligible Player	Loss of game or games in which player participated. Possible action against the coach, team and association.

- A. The Greenville County Rec Athletic Department, after review of reports, will carry out the above penalties and suspensions.
- B. The Athletic Department may present situations to the YSAC for further review.
- C. Associations may request an appeal of Greenville County Rec's decision through the YSAC. During the appeal process, Greenville County Rec's initial decision will remain in place.
- D. In the event a team fails to respect the official's authority or decisions, officials have been instructed to call a forfeit in favor of the opposing team after one (1) warning has been given.
- E. If an official ejects a coach or spectator from a game, that person will be escorted to the parking lot and must leave the park immediately. If the person refuses to leave park, the game will be forfeited.
- F. Any player, coach, or person associated with a team who is caught and proven guilty of cheating or misrepresenting any record will be suspended indefinitely.
- G. **Coaches Code of Conduct:** Being on the front lines working with our youth, we hold the conduct of our coaches to the highest level at **all times**. These expectations are clearly outlined in the Coaches of Conduct. The Coaches Code of Conduct can be found at [www.greenvillerec.com](http://www.greenvillerec.com)
  - 1. The Coaches Code Conduct is expected to be upheld at practices, pregame/during games/post games, and anytime while serving as a coach.
  - 2. Greenville County Rec supports the youth association in the implementation of the Coaches Code of Conduct within their association.
  - 3. **Consequences:** These consequences will be determined by the youth association and/or Greenville County Rec on a case by case basis:
    - a. Verbal warning issued by an Official, youth association or Greenville County Rec.
    - b. Immediate ejection from the game, practice, or youth sports event.
    - c. Suspension as stated in the Youth Football Operations Manual or determined by the association and Greenville County Rec.
    - d. Permanent suspension from all Greenville County Rec Facilities.
- H. **Player, Parent, and Spectator Code of Conduct:** The Parent and Player Code of Conduct is expected to be upheld to the highest levels at **all times**. The Player, Parent, and Spectator Code of Conduct can be found at [www.greenvillerec.com](http://www.greenvillerec.com).

4. The Player and Parent code is expected to be upheld at practices, pregame/during games/post games, and anytime while at a youth football event.
5. Parents and guardians are responsible for the behavior of those spectators that attend practices, games, and football functions with them
6. Greenville County Rec supports the youth association in the implementation of the Player and Parent Code of Conduct within their association and those spectators who attended as part of their association.
7. **Consequences:** These consequences will be determined by the youth association and/or Greenville County Rec on a case by case basis:
  - a. Verbal warning issued by an Official, youth association or Greenville County Rec.
  - b. Immediate ejection from the game, practice, or youth sport event.
  - c. Suspension as stated in the Youth Football Operations Manual or determined by the association and Greenville County Rec.
  - d. Permanent suspension from all Greenville County Rec Facilities.
  - e.

## V. PROTEST PROCEDURES

- A. Protests are to be submitted when there is an actual game where a potential infraction is involved.
- B. A legal protest shall be one which involves a violation of playing rules or the use of an ineligible player. (Note: Any team leaving the field of play with any time left in regulation or overtime waives their right to file a protest.)
- C. Judgment calls cannot be protested.
- D. The protest must be in writing and submitted to the Greenville County Rec Athletic Department in person: 4806 Old Spartanburg Road, Taylors, SC 29687. **(No faxed or e-mailed protests will be accepted.)**
- E. A \$100.00 protest fee, made out to Greenville County Rec, from the Association to which the team filing the protest belongs, must accompany the written protest.
- F. Greenville County Rec will rule on all protests. If Greenville County Rec feels that the protest needs to be brought before the YSAC, they will do so.
- G. If the protest is ruled valid, the protest fee will be returned. If the protest is ruled invalid, the fee will not be returned.
- H. When a protest is filed, both coaches, the field supervisor, and the game officials will be interviewed.
- I. Decisions on protests are final. Decisions may be appealed through the process outlined in the YSAC portion of the Football Operations Manual Section Please see YSAC appeals process.
- J. The penalties for protests found valid can range from verbal warnings, losing a game, losing all games, to ejection from the league.
- K. The following is the protest submission schedule.
  1. Games played on Monday - The coach will have until 4:30pm on the following Wednesday to file a protest.
  2. Games played on Tuesday - The coach will have until 4:30pm on the following Thursday to file a protest.
  3. Games played on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday - The coach will have until 4:30pm on the following Monday to file a protest.
  4. Protests on playoffs or tie-break games must be submitted by 10:00am the first business day after the game played.

## VI. Reporting Procedures of Potential Infractions

- A. Greenville County Rec strives to run a fair and safe youth football league for the youth associations in the Greenville County Rec Youth Football Program. If you suspect that an infraction is being committed within the Greenville County Rec youth football league, please take following steps:
1. Ensure that the infraction is factual and there is strong evidence that an infraction is taking place.
  2. Compile as much information as possible. Please include full details.
  3. Submit the information via email to [rdixon@greenvillecounty.org](mailto:rdixon@greenvillecounty.org) or drop it off at the Greenville County Rec administrative offices at 4806 Old Spartanburg Rd Taylors, SC 29687.
  4. The infraction will be reviewed by the Greenville County Rec Athletic Department. It will be reviewed with fairness and objectivity. If an infraction is found, the Athletic Department will follow the Rules of Conduct procedures in Section Iv. Rules of Conduct. If needed, the infraction may be brought to the YSAC for further review.
  5. Please note that the privacy of minors and adults is taken very seriously. It is important that all sensitive information regarding minors and adults in the Greenville County Rec league be kept safe and not distributed or publicized in any way.

## VII. Criminal Background Check Procedures & Guidelines

1. The safety and well-being of children is a primary concern for the Greenville County Rec. In order to protect the welfare of all youth participants in our programs, all individuals who volunteer to coach are required to submit information for a criminal background check before they begin coaching and at such intervals as Greenville County Rec determines is prudent for the protection of its youth participants. **The criminal background check will be run at a minimum of once per a calendar for each coach and volunteer.**
2. Link to submit Background Check Online: <https://bib.com/SECUREVOLUNTEER/Greenville-County-Parks-Recreation-and-Tourism/>
3. **Coaches and volunteers are not to have any contact with youth participants until Greenville County Rec has confirmed a clear background check. Teams will not be allowed to start practice or be given a permit to practice until there are at least 2 coaches per registered team that have cleared background checks.**
4. Should anything questionable arise from the background check, the following procedure will go into effect:
  - A. The Athletic Department at Greenville County Rec will notify the related Youth Association after which time the individual will have **NO CONTACT** with any team or any team member.
  - B. At the request of the individual, the Athletic Department at Greenville County Rec will schedule a meeting to discuss the issue within 4 business days. If the individual wishes to dispute the findings, he or she will need to provide facts **IN WRITING** from the Clerk of Court, or other official, explaining the status of the found charge(s).
  - C. Each offense on the background check will be reviewed and the following will result in disqualification of that individual from participating as a coach or volunteer with Greenville County Rec.

Conviction, open or pending charge, arrest, plea of guilty, or plea of nolo contendere to:

1. Any Felony
2. Any Sexual Related Crime
3. Any Crime involving Violence
4. Any Criminal Domestic Violence
5. Any Drug offense within the last 10 years
6. Any DUI within the last 5 years
7. Any misdemeanor related to children such as contributing to the delinquency of a minor or abuse or neglect of a minor;
8. Criminal attempts to commit any of the above offenses;
9. Any other offense or circumstance which calls into question the responsibility for the safety and well-being of children or other adults

**League Administrator**

Rich Dixon

Athletics Program Manager

Office: 864-467-3460 Email: [rdixon@greenvillecounty.org](mailto:rdixon@greenvillecounty.org)

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