



Seacoast Junior Football League

Bylaws

Article I: Name

The name of this organization is the **Seacoast Junior Football League** (hereinafter referred to as the “League”).

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of the Seacoast Junior Football League is to assist member programs in the promotion of youth football by providing a league structure, including: game scheduling; a set of uniform rules and regulations; promoting cooperation between league members; and creating and maintaining communications between league members and necessary outside organizations.

Article III: Organization

The governing body of the League will be a Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as the “Board”) consisting of one voting representative from each member organization*. Unless otherwise designated by a member organization, the Head Coach of each organization will be recognized as its representative on the Board.

As amended by the Board of Directors on 19 April 2007, the League shall consist of two divisions to be designated as Varsity and Junior (A/B) Divisions:

1. **Varsity Division** consists of teams whose players meet all requirements set forth in **Article XV**. Varsity Division programs will consist of two teams:
 - A. Varsity competition team
 - B. Junior Varsity development team
2. **Junior Division** consists of teams whose players meet all requirements set forth in **Article XVI**. Junior Division programs will consist of two (2) teams:
 - A. “**A**” competition team
 - B. “**B**” development team

* *Organizations that do not have a team in a division shall not vote on issues specific to that division.*

The board will elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer who will collectively provide administrative and fiduciary oversight to the League’s business:

- Chairman** – represents the League and chairs meetings; votes only in case of a tie;
- Vice-Chairman** – assumes the duties of the Chairman in his/her absence and is responsible for overseeing the Junior (A/B) division;
- Secretary** – responsible for communications and administration in review with the Chairman;
- Treasurer** – responsible for League monies, coordination of payments and accounts.

The Board will also designate a Coordinator of Officials for the League. All positions are elected or designated for a one-year term, which commences at the first annual league meeting of each new year and ends at the next. All elected officers may or may not be voting members of the Board relative to their respective status as a Head Coach or the designated representative of their team organization. The Board may create additional positions and fill them with qualified individuals when it is agreed to be in the interest of the League, its purpose and activities.

LEAGUE MEMBERS

Dover

Little Green

Dover

Youth Football

Exeter

Seahawks

Oyster River

Bobcats

Portsmouth

Clippers

Rochester

Red Raiders

Sanborn

Jr. Indians

Timberlane

Tornadoes

Winnacunnet

Little Warriors

Article IV: Membership

League membership shall be limited to teams invited to join and ratified by a 3/4 majority of the full Board at any regular or special League meeting.

League Members Varsity Division

League members *as amended 26 March 2009*:

Dover LG, Exeter, Oyster River, Portsmouth, Rochester, Sanborn, Timberlane, Winnacunnet

League Members Junior Division

League members *as amended 7 February 2009*:

Dover YF, Exeter, Oyster River, Portsmouth, Sanborn, Timberlane, Winnacunnet

2011 Probationary members *as amended 24 March and 5 May 2011*:

Derry, Queen City, Tewksbury (MA)

Article V: League Funding

Each year, by majority vote, the Board will assess an annual fee from each member organization for the League's operating expenses. Any funds remaining at the end of the year will be carried over or disposed of at the Board's discretion. When appropriate, the Board will assess an entrance or initiation fee to any new team entering the League. Annual league dues are \$100.⁰⁰ per member team per division.

Article VI: Team Funding & Equipment

A: Funding

Each team in the League will be self-supporting and responsible for direct payment to all officials at every one of its home games. Each team will also be responsible for paying its yearly League fee prior to its first regularly scheduled League game. Each team's fund-raising activities are the sole responsibility of the individual team organization.

B: Equipment

The following items shall be worn by all players during practice, scrimmages and league play, or at any time where direct football contact will be performed:

1. Helmet: NOCSAE appoved
2. Shoulder pads
3. Pants: One piece or shell
4. Hip, thigh and knee pads
5. Jerseys: Numbered by position
6. Athletic supporters: Male players only
7. Mouth guards: must be attached to the helmet; dental-issued mouthpieces must be brought to the attention of the Head Official prior to the start of the game
8. Footwear: should be football cleats; no metal cleats are allowed.
9. Eyeglasses: when worn, shall be of athletically approved construction with non-shattering glass or contact lens.
10. Rib guards; use of rib guards is allowed.

Article VII: League Schedule

The Board will set the starting date for opening practice, create the League regular season game schedule, playoff format, and League alignment each year by majority vote of the Board. League members may fill any open dates on their schedule with non-league opponents, provided that such games do not interfere with the League schedule.

Article VIII: Meetings

All League head coaches and presidents shall be notified by the Chairman or Secretary of any meetings. A 2/3 majority (six) of the total number of league members (nine) shall constitute a quorum. Meetings shall be called by at the discretion of the Chairman, the Board or by a petition of no less than three members of the Board.

Article IX: Fines

There shall be a \$50.00 fine for any of the following discrepancies:

- Not having a team representative present at a regularly schedule League meeting.
- Not having paid League dues by August meeting.
- Not having team rosters submitted by the second game deadline. If the League Chairman has not received a team's roster by the second game deadline, the fine will be \$50.00 and an additional \$50.00 for each week missed thereafter. After the second game the Chairman will call any teams in violation to remind them to turn in their rosters.

Article X: Committees

Standing and special committees may be appointed by the Chairman or the Board from time to time as deemed necessary to carry on the work of the League.

Article XI: Parliamentary Authority

The parliamentary rules contained in the current edition of "Robert's Rules of Order/Newly Revised" shall govern League meetings in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any other special rules of order the League may adopt.

Article XII: Amendment of By-Laws

These Bylaws and Rules & Regulations of the League can be amended at any regular or special meeting of the League if the Board is in unanimous favor (by acclamation) of the proposed amendment or rule/regulation change. If the proposed amendment is not passed unanimously, then it must be presented in writing at least ten (10) working days prior to the next meeting, where it must receive a 2/3 majority vote in the affirmative from the quorum of Board members present in order to pass.

Article XIII: Residential Eligibility (SAU)

All League teams are restricted to drawing from players who reside in the towns that are located within their local public high school's SAU (school administrative unit). No single town within a local SAU that would otherwise play for the designated League team is allowed to create a separate League team without the League's express permission. To be eligible to play for a League team, a player must reside within the geographical area of his/her public high school's SAU as agreed upon yearly by the Board of Directors.

Players living outside a team's drawing area may be wavered on to a team roster by a 3/4 vote of approval by the Board of Directors. Any request for exception by a parent of a player for that player to play for another League team outside his/her primary residence is an exception that may be made only on a case-by-case basis at an official League meeting. The requesting team seeking waiver(s) has no standing in the voting process.

Article XIV: League Rules

1. No team is allowed to film/videotape any game in which their team is not participating.
2. Filming of home games/practices for a home team's individual use is allowed.
3. Home teams will have a current NFHS Rule Book on hand at each home game.
4. Public Address System: Use of public address systems at all League games is restricted to introductions, game/event announcements, identification of players after plays and scores. Any use of the public address system by the home team to "psych-up" their players, demean their opponent or otherwise gain an advantage is considered unsportsmanlike and therefore prohibited.
5. Home team is required to provide a licensed physician, emergency medical technician (EMT) or certified athletic trainer during both games and provide adequate emergency equipment. Head referee must certify such presence or game(s) can not start.
6. Scoring values will follow NFHS Rules.

Article XV: Varsity Division Rules & Regulations

A: Games & Rules

1. Games will be played under National Federation of High School (NFHS) Rules unless otherwise specified. When NFHS and SJFL rules and/or regulations conflict, SJFL rules/regulations shall supersede those of the NFHS.
2. There shall be two games played: a Varsity game and a JV game.
3. Home teams will confirm the starting times and dates for their games.
4. If a game time change is desired after the schedule has been set as "official," it shall be the obligation of the home team to notify the visiting team, Coordinator of Officials, and a League Official at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled game.
5. Changes in game times due to weather conditions or decisions by school officials should be communicated as soon as possible to the above mentioned parties.
6. No team can refuse to play a game or unilaterally/arbitrarily cancel or reschedule a game.

B: Penalties for Violations

1. In the event a team fails to abide by Article XV; Section A (above), that team will lose home field advantage for the make-up game and will have to play the game at a time convenient to both teams. Also, the team that is in violation will lose home field advantage to the opposing team to which the violation was committed for a period of two consecutive seasons.
2. If a team refuses to show for a scheduled league game, that team will be subject to:
 - Probation for the remainder of the season and the following season as well;
 - Loss of all playoff rights for the season;
 - Fine: if the League game was scheduled as an away game, the team in violation will have to pay a fine of not more than \$300.00 to compensate the home team for its loss of revenue (gate and concessions). Fine is to be paid by offending team to the home team by the end of the season.

C: Player/Coach Game Disqualification

1. Any player or coach who is disqualified before, during, or after a league game (including the Jamboree), shall not participate in the next league game. A league game includes both games in each division. League playoff and championship games are also included in this disqualification.
2. The supervisor of Officials shall contact the League Chairman by 8pm Sunday night about any game disqualifications. The Chairman will contact the head coach(es) of the offending team(s) and their opponent(s) by 10pm Sunday night regarding any disqualifications.

3. Any disqualified player or coach who participates in game shall cause his team to forfeit that game in the event of a win and the disqualified player or coach shall be disqualified for the remainder of the season.
4. A disqualified player may be on his team's sideline, but may not participate in any way (No cheering, water duties, pre-game talks, leading warm-ups, etc.). A disqualified coach may not be in contact with his team in any way on game day until after the game is over; a disqualified coach is also prohibited from being at any other League games that week.
5. If a player receives a second disqualification that season, he is disqualified for the remainder of that season. If a coach receives a second disqualification that season, he is ineligible for the remainder of the season. At the discretion of the Chairman a committee may be formed to evaluate further discipline, with the League Board of Directors to vote on any additional sanctions.
6. Season disqualifications for players and coaches preclude games, practices, team meetings and scouting.
7. Disqualifications will carry over into the next season when appropriate.
8. At the discretion of the Chairman a committee may be formed, to further evaluate any disqualifications and make recommendations. The League Board of Directors shall vote on any disciplinary recommendations or sanctions.

D: Game Officials

1. A minimum of three field officials will be used at each game.
2. At least two game officials will be certified by the NFHS (National Federation of State High School Association). The third official may be an apprentice (pre-NFHS certified).
3. If only one certified official is present at game time and the two opposing coaches agree to play using mutually acceptable, non-certified officials, then the game will be played without protest.
4. If the two head coaches cannot agree, then the game will be rescheduled. The home team head coach will provide the visiting team head coach with the names of the NFHS certified officials that were originally scheduled to officiate the game.
5. Game officials will be assigned to league games by the League Coordinator of Officials.
6. League Coordinator and officials' game fees will be approved by the Board of Directors prior to the start of the season.

E: Players/Eligibility – Varsity Division (7/8 grade)

1. All players must be less than Freshman [grade 9] in school and not have reached their fifteenth (15) birthday before October 1st.
2. Valid proof of birth date shall be a state issued birth certificate or federally issued passport.
3. Each Varsity Team designates (as part of its team roster and including jersey number) no fewer than 18 "Varsity" players by the final due date of roster submissions to the league. These players may not play in JV games. An exception will be made for any team with fewer than 36 total players (Varsity plus JV); such team may designate a smaller number of Varsity players to be determined by subtracting 18 from the total number of available players. (For example, if a team has 30 players for both Varsity and JV, it may designate only 12 players as Varsity: $30 - 18 = 12$). A violation of this rule shall result in forfeit of the game by the offending team.
4. All teams shall send a roster to the Chairman by the second game of the season. This team roster shall list each player's name, jersey number, age, date of birth, grade, school attended, location of school and player's designation as Varsity or Junior Varsity. The roster shall be signed by the head coach of the team submitting the roster to acknowledge his confirmation of the information on the roster. Any suspected roster violation should be brought to the attention of the Chairman.

F: Game Equipment

1. Footballs, chains, and down markers are provided by the home team.
2. Two game balls will be available at each home game.
3. Kicking tees are a team's personal equipment.
4. Game footballs, to be official, must be in accordance with NFHS Rules.

G: Varsity Games

1. Varsity games shall consist of four (4) ten-minute periods.
2. Tied Varsity games will be played in overtime according to NFHS Rules.

H: Junior Varsity Games

The following rules are intended for junior varsity (J.V.) players to compete at their appropriate level and to train players in both fundamentals and positions for future varsity competition.

1. J.V. games will be played either before or after the scheduled varsity game.
2. J.V. games shall consist of four eight (8) minute regulation quarters. **Note:** J.V. games ending in a tie will not play overtime.
3. J.V. teams will consist of players that do not play on Varsity. If a player plays on varsity, he may not play in a J.V. game (see "Article XV; E: Players/Eligibility – Varsity Division").
4. Rule Exception: If there are *not enough players* to field a J.V. team, varsity players may play only if they do not play any skill position (back, receiver, end, punter).

I: Game Protests

1. Protests will be presented to the Chairman in writing within forty-eight (48) hours of the contested game. The Chairman will review the nature and the wording of the protest. If he deems the protest valid, he will then call a special meeting of the Board of Directors.
2. Protests will be decided by the Board of Directors, consisting of members not involved in the protest.

J: Standings

A team's placement within the league standings will be decided first by its won-lost record. The more wins the higher the ranking. If there are any teams with tied records, the following tie-breaking procedure will be used to place the tied teams:

Tie Breaking Rules

- a. Head to head, best won-lost record versus each other.
- b. Total number of wins by opponents you have beaten. The larger the sum the higher the placement.
- c. If any teams are now tied with equal sums, head-to-head will once again apply.
- d. Flip a coin. When three teams are flipping, the odd man wins; the other two teams revert to head-to-head rules.
- e. If a playoff position is at stake between the two teams that are still tied after meeting the above tie-breaking criteria and have not met each other during the regular season, a play-in game will be held the following Tuesday after the regular season. Home team will be decided by coin toss.

K: Playoffs/Championship

1. Unless specified otherwise and/or voted upon by the eligible members of the League, the four teams with the best won-lost records at the end of the regular season shall advance to the playoffs.

2. Teams shall be seeded as followed:
 - a. Team with the highest total wins will be designated the 1st seed
 - b. Team with the 2nd highest total wins will be designated as the 2nd seed
 - c. Team with the 3rd highest total wins will be designated as the 3rd seed
 - d. Team with the 4th highest total wins will be designated as the 4th seed
3. Playoff Games: Opening Round

Note: only top four (4) teams participate in playoffs

 - a. 1st and 2nd seeded teams shall host 1st round games.
 - b. 4th seed to play 1st seed at 1st seeds home field
 - c. 3rd seed to play 2nd seed at 2nd seeds home field
 - d. The winners of the 1st round shall advance to the championship game
4. Championship Game
 - a. The championship game will be hosted by the highest remaining seeded team.
 - b. Each competing team will submit a list of three officials they wish to officiate the championship game to the Chairman and League Coordinator of Officials. The Officials Coordinator will then choose the four championship game officials from the combined lists.
 - c. The game officials will be paid from the gate receipts, after which the remainder shall split by the two participating teams.

Article XVI: Junior (A/B) Division Rules & Regulations

Unless otherwise specified herein, the following are the rules and regulations for the Junior Division.

A. Team Responsibilities:

1. Provide a roster to the Vice Chairman and/or his designee prior to the Jr. Division Jamboree:
2. Official team rosters are to include the following player information:
 - a. Game jersey number(s)
 - b. Player's first and last name
 - c. Player's birth date
 - d. Town of residence
 - e. Player's weight and weight classification – An official team roster for each team will be mailed and/or emailed to all teams in the Junior division after the Jamboree Official Weigh-in by the League.
3. Roster Changes
 - a. The team requesting a revision to its roster must contact the Vice Chairman by 8pm the *WEDNESDAY NIGHT* prior to the next game to have a player added and be eligible for the next game. The addition of any player to a roster must be confirmed by an **Official Weigh-in**. Weigh-ins will be conducted by the Vice Chairman and/or designated league official.
 - b. Roster changes are to be sent to the other league teams by the Vice Chairman and/or his designee, as soon as possible after any change(s) has been confirmed by the weigh-in(s).
 - c. Each "A" team shall name (as part of its roster and including jersey number) no fewer than 18 "A" players by the final date of roster submissions to the League. These players may not play in "B" team games. An exception will be made for any team with fewer than 36 total players ("A" plus "B" team); such team may designate a smaller number of "A" team players to be determined by subtracting 18 from the total number of available players. (For example, if a team has 30 players for both "A" and "B", it may designate only 12 players as "A": 30 – 18 = 12). A violation of this rule shall result in forfeit of the game by the offending team.
 - d. Teams are to exchange up-to-date roster(s) at each game, indicating any roster change that has been made.

B. Rules of Play:

Rules shall follow the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rule book, except as noted herein:

1. All games shall be played on a youth football field measuring 80 yards long x 40 yards wide, or a regulation high school field with the ten yard lines marked as goal lines, goal line as end line, and far hashmark as opposite sideline.
2. There shall be two games played: an "A" game and a "B" game.
3. Penalties shall be 4, 8 and 12 yards for regulation 5, 10 and 15-yard penalties.
4. Games will be played on Saturday mornings, unless otherwise noted. No game shall start before 8:30am nor later than 10:30am (except for playoffs, and/or rescheduled game(s)).
5. Length of periods for both "A" and "B" games shall be four (4) eight (8) minute regulation periods.
6. Time-outs will not exceed one minute.
7. Halftime breaks will be ten (10) minutes.
8. Breaks between games will be fifteen (15) minutes minimum.
9. Overtime will be played as follows:
In "A" games, NFHS overtime rules will apply, except that if after two (2) overtime periods the game is still tied, it will continue only if time allows or if it is a playoff game. Each team will have one (1) time-out in each overtime period. Note: "B" teams will not play overtime.
10. Punt Rule: in "B" games, there is no rushing the kicking team's punter; the punt may be downed, fair caught or returned by the receiving team.

C. Game Ball

1. The game ball shall be of good grade leather, rubber or synthetic leather.
2. J5Y or TDY size football or equivalent shall be used.
3. The use of "stickum" on the ball or the application and use of such on any player is prohibited.

D. Blocking Restrictions

1. No blocking below the waist, except to tackle a runner.
2. No butt blocking, chop blocking, face tackling, or spearing techniques are allowed. These techniques shall carry the maximum penalty allowed.
3. All other rules and regulations regarding blocking, tackling, etc. will follow NFHS Rules.

F. Player Regulations

1. Age and Grade Restrictions
 - a. All players must be within the age of 9, 10, 11 and 12 and within grades 4, 5, and 6.
 - b. A player must be a minimum of 9 years old prior to the first regular season game and entering a grade as indicated above.
 - c. A player must not have reached his/her thirteenth (13) birthday before September 1st.
 - d. All teams must be able to provide birth certificates for their players, upon request.
2. All players must receive a sports physical by a qualified physician prior to the preseason practice.
3. Any player who has a medical condition that could be detrimental to his or her health shall not be allowed to participate in league play.
4. No player will be allowed to compete for another team in any other football league, whether game or scrimmage play.
5. All players will demonstrate good sportsmanship qualities and will under no circumstances intentionally injure an opponent. Any player who displays bad sportsmanship or deliberately attempts to injure another player will be suspended from the league.

6. Weight Restrictions:

- a. All players will be weighed in by the Vice Chairman and/or appointed designee at the **Official Weigh-in**. The **Official Weigh-in** will take place at the annual Junior "A/B" Division Jamboree. Each team is to arrive at the **Official Weigh-in** with two (2) rosters. One roster remains with the league official conducting the weigh-in, and the second stays with the team, as their copy.
 - b. Any player not weighed in prior to, or at the **Official Weigh-in**, will be ineligible to play until such time as an official weigh-in can be performed.
 - c. All potential ball carriers must be weighed in *prior to or during* the **Official Weigh-in** or they will not be eligible to be a skill position player* in the upcoming season.
 - d. Minimum player weight must be 50 pounds.
 - e. Maximum weight shall not exceed 155 pounds at the **Official Weigh-in**, when the player is officially added to the team roster. Any player exceeding 155 pounds at the **Official Weigh-in** may practice with his team, but must be re-weighed and meet the weight restriction prior to being eligible to play. Arrangements to have a player re-weighed are to be completed as specified below.
 - f. Maximum weight of any ball carrier shall not exceed 115 pounds at the **Official Weigh-in**, at which time the player is officially added to the team roster. No player exceeding 115 pounds can be placed in a ball carrier position, including: back, receiver, end*, kick returner, punter, etc. A player over 115 pounds when he is added to a roster at the **Official Weigh-in** is considered over the weight limit and can not be re-weighed at a later date to become a ball carrier.
 - g. The team requesting the additional weigh-in(s) must make arrangements for additional weigh-in(s) to add a player(s) to a roster. Arrangements are to be made by contacting the Vice-Chairman by 8pm on the *WEDNESDAY NIGHT PRIOR TO THE NEXT GAME*.
 - h. No challenges can be made once the **Official Weigh-in** has been recorded and the player is added to the **Official Team Roster**.
- * *Definition of an End:* the player positioned at each end of the front line; TIGHT END or SPLIT END must meet the weight limits and are each considered a potential ball carrier. The **Official Team Roster** must reflect the actual weight of each player.

G. Playoff/Championship Games:

1. Unless specified otherwise and/or voted upon by the eligible members of the League, the four (4) teams with the best won-lost records at the end of the regular season shall advance to the playoffs. In the event that two teams finish the season with same amount of wins, the following shall serve as the tiebreaker:

Tie Breaking Rules

1. Sequence of determining standings:
 - a. Head to head; best won-lost record versus each other;
 - b. Total number of wins by opponents you have defeated; higher number of wins results in higher placement;
 - c. If any teams are still tied with equal sums, head-to-head will once again apply;
 - d. Coin flip: when three teams are flipping, the odd team wins; the other two teams revert to head-to-head rules;
 - e. If a playoff position is at stake between the two teams that are still tied after meeting the above tie-breaking criteria and have not met each other during the regular season, a play-in game will be held the following Tuesday after the regular season. Home team will be decided by coin toss.
2. Teams shall be seeded as follows:
 - a. Team with the highest total wins will be designated the 1st seed;
 - b. Team with the 2nd highest total wins will be designated as the 2nd seed;
 - c. Team with the 3rd highest total wins will be designated as the 3rd seed;
 - d. Team with the 4th highest total wins will be designated as the 4th seed.

3. Playoffs: First Round Semifinal Games
 - a. The 2nd seeded team will host the first round playoff games.
 - b. The 1st and 2nd seeded teams are designated as the home teams.
 - c. Games to be played as follows:
 1. 3 vs. 2 game to be played first, start by 9am;
 2. 4 vs. 1 game to start 15 minutes after conclusion of 3 vs. 2 game;
 3. The winners of the first round shall advance to the championship game. The losing semifinal teams shall play a consolation game.
 4. The host team will be responsible for payment of officials.
4. Playoffs: Championship/Consolation Games
 - a. The 1st seed team will host the championship and consolation games.
 - b. The higher seeded team will be designated as the home team.
 - c. The consolation game will be played first.
 - d. The championship game shall start 15 minutes after the conclusion of the consolation game.
 - e. In the event the championship game ends in a tie, NHFS overtime rules shall apply.
 - f. The host team will be responsible for payment of officials.

Article XVII: Provision for Dissolution

The provision for disposition of the corporate assets of the Seacoast Junior Football League in the event of the dissolution of the League is as follows: upon dissolution of the League the assets shall be distributed to the League member teams or other not-for-profit organization(s) with the same purpose as the current League, as determined by the Board of Directors.

Article XVIII: Conflict of Interest

Any possible conflict of interest on the part of any Board member, officer, or coach of the organization shall be disclosed in writing to the Board of Directors and made a matter of record through an annual procedure and also when the interest involves a specific issue before the Board. Where the transaction involving a Board member, officer, or coach exceeds five hundred dollars (\$500) but is less than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in a fiscal year, a two-thirds vote of the disinterested directors is required. Where the transaction involved exceeds five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in a fiscal year, then a two-thirds vote of the disinterested directors and publication in the newspaper is required. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect that a disclosure was made, the abstention from voting, and the actual vote itself.

Every new member of the Board will be advised of this policy upon entering the duties of his or her office, and shall sign a statement acknowledging understanding of and agreement to this policy. The Board will comply with all requirements of New Hampshire law in this area. New Hampshire requirements are incorporated into and made a part of this policy statement.

We attest that the foregoing constitutes a true copy of the Bylaws of the Seacoast Junior Football League.

Board of Directors
Seacoast Junior Football League
5 May 2011