

Livingston County Area Junior Football League

Football Game Rules - 2017



Note - The intent and spirit of all rules governed by the LCAJFL are to promote fair and even play along with sportsmanship among its member communities. The intent of all rules herein is to support this fair and even play initiative. Any coach, player, parent or administrator found to be violating the very intent or spirit of this initiative will be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the LCAJFL Board of Directors.

Rules and bylaws passed at monthly LCAJFL Board Meetings may not be in this document but are enforceable. Please contact your Community Commissioner if a rule is not covered in this document.

All game rules not noted in this document are to refer to the MHSAA interpretation. Some game rules not covered by the MHSAA are covered in the NFHS rule book.

Game Rules Revision Log

Revision Date	Revision By	Revision Notes
3/16/2017	Jason LaPerna	Updated rules to new format
3/16/2017	Jason LaPerna	Section 5 - Game Ball changed to define acceptable game balls, color, psi level and unaltered surface.
8/1/2017	Jason LaPerna	Transferred the practice rules over from the old bylaws.
9/20/2017	Jason LaPerna	Modified Article II, Section 9.c Change was from missing a full game following an ejection to 4 quarters from the time of ejection.
12/12/2017	Jason LaPerna	Modified language in Article 1, Section 1 that was approved in 2016 for age cap at each level. This was approved 7-1 in May of 2016 but never officially added to the bylaws during the rewrite.
12/12/2017	Jason LaPerna	Updated the scoring balance section to the current rules approved in 2016 and modified in 2017.

The Livingston County Area Junior Football League further referenced as "LCAJFL" or the "League", is a nonprofit corporation, organized under the laws of the State of Michigan, and shall remain nonprofit forever.

The LCAJFL exists to provide a safe, fun learning environment for the youth of our community. We strive to create an opportunity for kids to work together as a team toward common goals. We emphasize sportsmanship, teamwork and respect for authority figures (League Officials, Coaches and Game Officials), players and other spectators.

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Article I

Section 1 – Weigh-in

	Grade	Age	Weight Restrictions
Instructional	1st/2nd Grade	No age cap	110 lbs.
Freshman	3rd/4th Grade	Cannot turn 10 by May 1st of that year	125 lbs.
	4th Grade	Cannot turn 11 by final day of the season	75 lbs.
JV	5th/6th Grade	Cannot turn 12 by May 1st of that year	Ball Carrier Weight - 140 lbs. or less Tackle to Tackle Weight - 150 lbs. or less
	6th Grade	Cannot turn 13 by final day of the season	90 lbs.
Varsity	7th/8th Grade	Cannot turn 14 by May 1st of that year	Ball Carrier Weight - 160 lbs. or less Tackle to Tackle Weight - 220 lbs. or less
	8th Grade	Cannot turn 15 by final day of the season	115 lbs.

- A.** All teams to use the same type of scale at the pre-game weigh-in. (a mechanical beam balance scale)
- B.** Official weigh-in will be held immediately prior to each regularly scheduled game. All players must weigh-in before the game to be eligible to play. Players who do not qualify (by weight) may be re-weighed at halftime (if they were not eligible to play in the game) and may participate, once they make weight.
- C.** The above weights are with all equipment (minus helmet). This includes any additional protection worn underneath the jersey such as, but not limited to, a rib vest or quarterback flak jacket.
- D.** All players at all levels must provide a copy of their birth certificate and proof of grade. These must be available at weigh-in. Any challenges to age or grade requirements must be handled at this time.
- E.** Weigh-in will be handled by the home team's Commissioner.
- F.** There will be no exceptions or trade-offs to a player that does not make weight.

Section 2 – Player Inspection

- A. Prior to the start of the game, the Head Coach will inspect his/her own players to ensure each player is wearing the following safety equipment:
 - 1) Correct shoes
 - 2) Mouth guard
 - 3) Cup and supporter (males only)
- B. Any player not having or using the above equipment will be excused from play in the game.

Article II

Section 1 – Miscellaneous Game Rules

- A. The Free Substitution Rule is always in effect.
- B. Every player must play at least six (6) plays per half, unless there is a disciplinary or medical reason. The player and reason must be identified at weigh-in.
- C. All rules not covered relate to the Michigan High School (MHSAA) rules.
- D. To ensure an organized sideline, each team coaching staff (including all helpers) shall not exceed seven (7) persons. This includes Unit Director/Team Mom, and statistician. There may be up to 2 photographers per team on the sideline as well. All persons designated are confined to operate within the parameters of the 25-yard marker, except the statistician and photographer. Designated medical staff is exempt from this rule.
- E. All facilities, including the press box, shall be shared equally. This also goes for locker rooms, if the away team is not provided a locker room then the home team cannot use theirs either.
- F. Allow games from Saturday's that have been cancelled to be played on Sunday's starting no earlier than 1:00pm, but no practices on Sunday's.
- G. The use of communication devices is legal for coaches, regardless if both have access.
- H. Rosters must be turned into the Commissioners 30 minutes before the scheduled game time and must be on the league forms in numerical order.

Section 2 – Required Equipment

- A. The following items shall be worn by players in all divisions beginning with the physical contact in practice sessions and shall meet the Required Standards as noted. (Recommended Standards are noted in parentheses.)
 - 1) Helmet: May be of one (1) or two (2) piece construction, of ultra-high impact plastic type material. Helmet shall provide adequate neck protection, shall have horizontal (double bar) face guard attached, and shall have a chinstrap. Only clear visors may be worn by players.

- 2) Shoulder Pads: May be of corrugated, molded fiber or plastic type (high density polyethylene) material, with coated (polyvinyl) washable padding, heavy web hinges, and adjustable (cantilevered) underarm straps.
- 3) Pants: May be of one-piece "shell" construction with tunnel belt loops or attached web belt. Knit (cotton/nylon) material is recommended. "Shell" pants Edit Date 9/4/14 3 may feature Sanforized knee guard pockets and (waist suspended) thigh pad pockets.
- 4) Tail, Hip and/or Kidney Pads: May be of corrugated, molded fiber or plastic type (polyethylene) material, covered on the inside with a shock absorbing (polyfoam) material and shell.
- 5) Thigh Guards: May be of corrugated, molded fiber or plastic type (polyethylene) material with adequate (polyfoam) padding, not less than ½ inch thick.
- 6) Knee Guards: May be of corrugated, molded fiber or plastic type (polyethylene) material with adequate (polyfoam) padding, not less than ½ inch thick.
- 7) Jersey: For game purposes, may be of rayon/nylon, cotton/nylon, or nylon/durene materials, with single shoulders and elbows. Numbers (six (6) to eight (8) inches on front, eight (8) to ten (10) inches on back) are required and may be processed, air dyed cotton (cotton/nylon) material.
- 8) Teeth or Mouth Protection: Shall be of intra-oral, custom or self-fitted impression type. A mouth guard must be worn at all practice sessions and games in which players engage in physical contact. All mouth guards MUST have a strap. Clear mouth guards are prohibited.
- 9) Shoes: Sneakers or non-detachable rubber cleated or plastic molded shoes are required. No metal or screw-on type cleats will be allowed (male threaded nylon, screw-in cleats are permitted). Length of cleat is no greater than 1/2 inch. If player has a screw-in cleat, it must be plastic with no metal showing.
- 10) Cup and Supporter: Shall be worn by all male players at all practices and games.

Section 3 – Medical Attention

- A. Once removed from the game because of injury, a player should not be allowed to reenter the game without the approval of a Game Medical Attendant or Red Cross cardholder. This rule does not apply to minor injuries; i.e., abrasions, bruises, etc.
- B. The home team shall be responsible for the presence of a Doctor (MD, DO), Nurse (RN, LPN) Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), or First Response on the field. The press box will be supplied with his/her name. **This person must be located on the game field during play and should be the first responder in case of an injury.**

Section 4 – Officials

- A. The League shall arrange for the appearance of at least four (4) qualified officials at each scheduled game.

- B. All qualified officials will be registered Collegiate or High School.
- C. The officials must have a copy of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (M.H.S.A.A.) rules and the Livingston County Area Junior Football League rules. If an official is shown a rule in the LCAJFL rulebook, they are supposed to try and follow these rules.
- D. The officials shall be fully uniformed. Pants will be white or black. The officials must wear an official's shirt.
- E. All officials will sign in and show M.H.S.A.A. credentials at the beginning of each event day.
- F. All Commissioners will fill out official evaluation forms at the end of each event day.
- G. Each Commissioner will then forward the evaluation to the chosen LCAJFL representative to discuss with head of officiating.
- H. Any issues with officials must be directed to the League designate.

Section 5 – Game Balls

- A. The primary color for all game balls must be brown.
- B. The ball shall be of a good grade of leather, rubber or composite material. No stickum or any other sticky based product can be used on game balls. The game ball surface must remain unaltered.
- C. All game balls must be inflated to the psi level listed on the ball. Balls cannot be altered during the game and must remain at the suggested psi level. All balls are subject to inspection by Commissioners if they feel that balls have been tampered with during the course of play. If no psi level is listed on the ball, both Commissioners must agree to a proper psi level prior to game play. The normal psi level in youth footballs is 11 psi.
- D. Balls cannot be switched for kicking or any other purpose during the course of play. In the event a team's ball becomes damaged during the course of play, a new ball that is approved by both commissioners may be used. In the event of wet conditions such as dew or rain, multiple balls may be used. All balls must be inspected prior to game play.
- E. The following chart lists acceptable balls per the LCAJFL:

Division of Play	Under Armour	Wilson	Spalding	Rawlings	Nike
Instructional	Pee Wee	K2	Pee Wee	Pro5 PeeWee	Junior (Size 7)
Freshman					
Junior Varsity	Junior or Youth	TDJ, TDY	Junior or Youth	Pro5 Youth	Youth (Size 8)
Varsity					

Section 6 – Playing Field

- A. The home team is responsible for the preparation of the playing field.
- B. All playing fields will be 100 yards long and 53½ yards wide (not counting the 10 yard end zones).
- C. Coaches and players are not permitted beyond the 25-yard line.
- D. The bench area is reserved for players, adult team personnel, and a game medical attendant. Sidelines are for the crew operating the yardage chains and down markers. The general vicinity of the field shall be clear except for the presence of an ambulance and law enforcement officials.
- E. Playing personnel not in the game should remain in the bench area.
- F. Due to inclement weather, games may be officially delayed, suspended or cancelled by mutual agreement of both communities' commissioners. Games maybe rescheduled.

Section 7 – Quarters (Stop and Go Clock)

- A. All games will be played with four (4) quarters, with each quarter being twelve (12) minutes long (stop time).
- B. Between the first and the second quarters and between the third and the fourth quarters, there will be a two (2) minute intermission.
- C. Between the second and third quarters, there will be a fifteen (15) minute intermission (half time).
- D. Three (3) time-outs, per team, per half. The clock stops for one (1) minute during timeouts.
- E. Mandatory three (3) minute warm-up at half time.
- F. There will be no two (2) minute warning.
- G. Current team rosters and team spotters are required in the press box fifteen (15) minutes prior to game starting time.
- H. Game clock will stop at change of possession for no less than 30 seconds.
- I. There will be no continuously running clock.

Section 8 – Scoring Values

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| A. Touchdown | 6 points |
| Field Goal | 3 points |
| Point After Touchdown (run or pass) | 1 point |
| Point After Touchdown (kick) | 2 points |

Safety (awarded to opponent)	2 points
Forfeit (offended team wins)	2 points

1. If the offended team is ahead at the time of a forfeit, during a game, the offended team wins by the score at the time of the forfeit being made.
2. Freshman teams must have at least eighteen (18) players. Jr. Varsity teams must have at least eighteen (18) players. Varsity teams must have at least thirteen (13) players.
3. Under no circumstances will Varsity games be played with less than thirteen (13) players.

B. Games may end in a tie, there is no overtime.

Section 9 – Conduct

- A.** The conduct of all participants of the LCAJFL during the game should be exemplary. However, to ensure this point, the officials are authorized to request a coach or member of his staff to leave the playing field for improper display of temper or poor choice of language.
- B.** Profane language by player(s) and/or coach(s) constitutes an automatic fifteen (15) yard penalty. Repetition of the same by the same player will result in that player(s) and/or coach(s) being ejected from the game.
- C.** Any participant of the LCAJFL who is ejected from a contest by a game official is **INELIGIBLE** to participate for 4 quarters including the quarter in which the participant was ejected. For example, if a player were ejected in the 2nd quarter of a contest, he would be eligible to return on the team's next contest at the beginning of the 2nd quarter. It will be the responsibility of the opposing commissioner to contact the next weeks opposing commissioner about the infraction. The LCAJFL board has the right to extend or reduce this penalty if necessary.

Section 10 – Commissioners

- A.** Commissioners shall require each Head Coach to submit a complete roster in numerical order with player's names, numbers, ages, birth dates, and any discipline or injury problems listed. These rosters shall be exchanged at weigh-in.
- B.** The home Commissioners shall be the final authority in any dispute. **All Coaches must obey all requests of the Commissioners!**
- C.** Infractions of LCAJFL by-laws must be registered with the Commissioner and one (1) warning will be issued. A second, similar infraction can lead to forfeiture of a game. (It is up to the discretion of the home field (official) Commissioner or his mandated proxy.)
- D.** Each Commissioner is responsible to ensure each Coach receives, understands, and follows the League rules in their respective communities. Ignorance of the rules is inexcusable.
- E.** Commissioners will be around the field and accessible at all times.

Article III

Section 1 – Junior Varsity Particulars

- A. Players over 140 lbs. will be restricted to playing the interior line on offense and defense (tackle to tackle – see Article III Sec. 3). Coaches must bring any violation of this rule to the attention of the officials. Game officials are to have a copy of the league rules. Violation of this rule will result in the play being a dead ball foul at the point of possession and the loss of down.

Section 2 – Varsity Particulars

- A. Players over 160 lbs. will be restricted to playing the interior line on offense and defense (tackle to tackle – see Article III Sec. 3). Coaches must bring any violation of this rule to the attention of the officials. Game officials are to have a copy of the league rules. Violation of this rule will result in the play being a dead ball foul at the point of possession and the loss of down.

Section 3 – Tackle to Tackle Rule

- A. Any players with the tackle-to-tackle restriction must wear a clearly visible sticker on the back of their helmet in accordance with Article III Sec 3.B below to identify them as a lineman. These players may only advance the ball on defense. On offense these players may not advance the ball by running or passing the ball. As a kicker He or She may kickoff, punt, kick extra points and kick field goals. (On kickoff returns they must remain on the front line but may advance the kick.) See diagram 1A for more clarification.
- B. Player's on Varsity or Junior Varsity that are restricted by the "tackle to tackle" rule must wear a 3" by 1½" piece of tape on the crown of their helmet. The tape must be clean and of a contrasting color to the helmet.
- C. On Offense, they may play from tackle to tackle. In the event of a tackle eligible play, he will not be eligible because he exceeds the maximum weight allowed to advance the ball.
- D. On defense, a player will be allowed to line up on the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle. This means that the defensive tackle's head can be lined up on the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle's shoulder. He cannot line up outside that shoulder (The player must be in a 3 or 4 point stance). In the event of a trick play, where the offensive tackle does not line up where he should, it becomes the option of the defensive tackle to adjust to him, or line up where the offensive tackle would be.
- E. Diagram 1A

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- F. If a defensive player that is under the tackle-to-tackle restriction lines up outside of his zone and the play is executed. The Defensive will be charged with a 5 yard penalty.

Section 4 – Scoring Balance

- A.** Each head coach must disclose the teams four (4) best backfield players (QB, RBs, WRs) and the back-up quarterback and back-up center on the roster form and exchange with the opposing head coach at weigh-in prior to each game. The back-up quarterback and center cannot be one of the four best backfield players.
- B.** Once a team reaches an 18 point lead at any level (freshman, JV, or varsity) the opposing head coach will select four players to be removed from offense for the remainder of the game or until the lead is less than 18 points. If the starting QB and/or center are removed the back-ups cannot be removed.
- C.** The four removed players can continue to play defense and are eligible to intercept and return passes and fumbles.
- D.** The four removed players cannot play on the kick-off team, kick return team, kick extra points, kick field goals, hold for extra points or field goals, or return punts.
- E.** In the case where a team starts the game with less than 17 players and reaches a lead of 18 points, the four players selected by the opposing head coach must be removed from offense or switched to an offensive interior lineman position (tackle to tackle).
- F.** Once the lead is below 18 points all selected or removed players are eligible to return to any position.
- G.** If the lead goes back to 18 points or more a second or subsequent times, the same four players must be removed. The opposing coach cannot change the players selected within that game.

Section 5 – Practice

- A.** Formal practice not permitted before the date established by the Livingston County Area Youth Football League Board of Commissioners.

B. Practice Guidelines

- i. Preseason Week 1 (Absolutely No Contact)**

- Heat Acclimatization Period**

- Practice must not exceed 180 minutes (3 hours) per day

- Practice must not exceed 720 minutes (12 hours) per week

- The first 6 hours of practice this week must be completed with helmets only.

- The next 4 hours of practice must be completed with up to full equipment.
 - Any additional hours within that first week must be completed with participants in up to full equipment but still no contact.

ii. **Preseason Weeks 2 - 4 (Full Contact Allowed)**

Practice must not exceed 180 minutes (3 hours) per day

Practice must not exceed 720 minutes (12 hours) per week

iii. **Regular Season (Including Labor Day Week)**

Practice must not exceed 120 minutes (2 hours) per day

Practice must not exceed 360 minutes (6 hours) per week

C. After the first week of league scheduled games, no team is allowed to practice more than six (6) hours per week (total practice time).

D. Viewing tapes is considered practice.

E. There will be NO practices held on Sundays.