

**NIAGARA / ORLEANS FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION  
RULES & REGULATIONS  
2018 SEASON**

**RULE 1-----PLAYER QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Each player/cheerleader must have a physical examination to cheer or play football, each year. And produce proof that the Player/Cheerleader is eligible to participate.
2. Each player/cheerleader is required to produce Proof of Birth Date as subscribed in Rule #3 Section 9 upon registration.
3. At least one parent/guardian is required to sign the player/cheerleader's registration form. – See Attached NOFA Registration Form.
4. Each player/cheerleader should have satisfactory and passing grades in school.

**RULE 2-----INSURANCE**

1. All organizations within NOFA must carry comprehensive general liability insurance protecting bodily injury and property damage with a limit of \$1,000,000 per occurrence. Each organization will be responsible to provide NOFA with a certificate of insurance on or before the 1st of July of each year. The records are to be filed and kept with the NOFA Secretary.
2. All insurance must name NOFA as the loss payee and as additional insured.
3. If a League doesn't have insurance in place and a copy of their insurance on file with the NOFA Secretary – that League will not be able to practice or play any games or participate in any cheerleading events, until such time as that League's Insurance is on file with the NOFA Secretary
4. Should an Organization practice without proper insurance being on file with the NOFA Secretary – each week without insurance on file will result in a game forfeiture at each Level by the violating Organization.

**RULE 3-----TEAM & GAME ROSTERS & PROOF OF AGE**

Note - All penalties are based on an Executive Board Decision. All Penalty phases will be reviewed by the NOFA Executive Board and Commissioners and/or Directors. This statement will not be inserted after each penalty/fine – however, this is the STANDARD and will apply to each penalty.

1. The NOFA Statistician will communicate with only one representative from each Organization. This person will be designated as the Organization Statistician. The purpose of this is to eliminate confusion and to simplify matters for NOFA as well as each individual team. Each Organization's Statistician must attend the annual mandatory meeting prior to the start of each season. If this meeting is not attended there will be a \$25.00 fine imposed on the offending Organization.
2. Each Organization's Statistician will be responsible for the following:
  - a) ALL Correspondence from an Organization's Statistician must be sent to the NOFA Statistician, NOFA Football Coordinator and the NOFA Secretary.... This is to ensure that information is not missed.
  - b) Turning in complete Team Rosters 10 days prior to the start of the season.
  - c) Turning in copies of Proof of Birth Date as subscribed in Rule #3 Section 9 grouped in alphabetical order and separated by team. (This should be done as new registrations are received).

- d) Turning in complete Game Rosters – Minimum Play Tally following each game in accordance to NOFA rules and regulations
- e) Texting game scores at the end of each game day to the NOFA Statistician and NOFA Football Coordinator. \$25.00 Fine for not complying.
- f) Emailing in game scores and the Official 6 Play Talley Sheet, at the latest, by the day following the game (Sunday), no later than 8pm to the NOFA Statistician, NOFA Football Coordinator and NOFA Secretary. \$25.00 fine for each day past the deadline without prior notification to NOFA Statistician.
- g) Emailing for ID #'s and line numbers on the Friday prior to game day. The times to call will be established by the NOFA Statistician at the annual meeting prior to the start of each season
- h) Contacting the NOFA Statistician with any questions or problems as soon as possible.

3. For League wide uniformity and ease the following will be observed by each team. Following the steps outlined, will ensure that your organization will have a minimum of roster fines.

#### TEAM ROSTERS

- a. Each Organization will be sent a template that is to be used.... It is the format that the NOFA Executive Board has approved – any other form will not be accepted.
- b. NOFA will appear on the top line of each team roster
- c. Year with the word Team Roster (ex. 2017 Team Roster)
- d. Your Organization Name
- e. Team Name (ex. Beginner, Mini, JV, Varsity) followed by Team Nickname (ex. Roosters)
- f. Age Division (ex. 6-7, 8-9, 10-11, 12-13)
- g. Head Coaches Name
- h. Head Coaches Phone Number
- i. Player/Cheerleader's name as it is written on the Birth Certificate – listed alphabetically (Last Name (legal suffix), First Name, Middle Initial)
- j. Player/Cheerleader's address (house # and street, Town)
- k. Player/Cheerleader's School they are attending.
- l. If a Player/Cheerleader is attending a private or parochial school the address on file with the school is the deciding address for the Player/Cheerleader – the School District in which the Player/Cheerleader would attend.
- m. Player/Cheerleader's phone number with area code
- n. Player/Cheerleader's date of birth (MM/DD/YY)
- o. Player/Cheerleader's NOFA ID. (This number can only be issued by the NOFA Statistician) (To receive a NOFA # A copy of the birth certificate must be turned into the NOFA Statistician in alphabetical order by Team, by Organization. Additional players may be added weekly after the original Team Roster has been turned in, in accordance with NOFA Rules and Regulations.) (If a player registers after the Team Roster has been submitted a copy of a birth certificate must be supplied to the NOFA Statistician no less that ten days prior to the player receiving a NOFA number. By NOFA Rules every new registered player must have a minimum number of practices before they can be eligible for a game.)

4. Game Rosters/Minimum Play Tally Sheet – This is a list of team players for game day. The names should be exactly as they are listed on the Team Roster. This roster should be filled out in duplicate. The original (top copy), goes to the HOME Team Statistician after the games have been completed, the second copy is given to the AWAY Team Statistician.

- a. All information must be complete otherwise a fine may be assessed per Game Roster/Minimum Play Tally sheet for each line left blank or incorrect. Maximum Fine of \$25.00 will be assessed per roster sheet. The only exception to this is the line that refers to ejected coaches or players. Those lines are to be filled in only if a coach or player has been ejected. \*Please note – missing Name or NOFA Number is \$25.00 finer per Roster Sheet.
- b. There will be NO Fine for leaving the Game Score off the Beginner Game Roster/Minimum Play Tally Sheet. However, the information should be filled in properly.

- c. A new player/cheerleader cannot be placed on a roster without receiving a line number and NOFA ID # from the NOFA Statistician. All new players/cheerleaders must be placed at the bottom of the roster. Adding players without the NOFA Statisticians approval will result in a monetary fine and/or forfeiture of that game. Minimum Fine of \$25.00 will be assessed. (If the NOFA Statistician is unavailable the NOFA Secretary may issue a NOFA Number – however, that NOFA Number must go in sequence of the Organization’s NOFA Number List).
- d. Once a player is placed on a team roster, that player must remain on that roster for the duration of the season.
- e. No Players/Cheerleaders are allowed to be moved from one Level to another Level for any reason – other than medical which can only be approved by the NOFA Executive Board, Commissioners and/or Directors.
- f. No Players/Cheerleaders are allowed to Transfer from on Organization to another Organizations in NOFA unless – the Player/Cheerleader moves to another School District. The Transfer Paperwork must be signed off on annually by both affected Commissioners and the NOFA Statistician with approval by the NOFA Executive Board, and a T is to be placed after the NOFA ID#.
- g. There is a Grandfather Clause that allows Players/Cheerleaders to remain in their originating Organization if a Franchise is granted to a new Organization. However, The Transfer Paperwork must be signed off on annually by both affected Commissioners and the NOFA Statistician with approval by the NOFA Executive Board and a G is to be placed after the NOFA ID#. Likewise, should a younger sibling choose to play within the existing Organization as their older sibling they too will be Grandfather-ed and the same paperwork will be generated.
- h. Players status (listed are the only acceptable remarks) The use of any other word, not included below may result in a fine to your organization. It is each organizations responsibility to teach your coaches the accepted terminology.
  - Ø ELIGIBLE or OK (if a player is cleared to play)
  - Ø ABSENT (player does not show up to the game)
  - Ø INJURED
  - Ø QUIT (a line must be drawn through the entire line)
  - Ø TRANSFERRED (if a player has moved to a different school district during the season – proof of school district change and proof of residency must be provided)
- i. Players reason for not having minimum plays (listed are the only acceptable remarks). The use of any other word, not included below may result in a fine to your organization. It is each organizations responsibility to teach your coaches and statisticians the accepted terminology.
  - Ø HEALTH (player gets sick during the game and isn’t listed as ABSENT in the Eligibility Column)
  - Ø INJURY (player gets injured during the game and isn’t listed as INJURED in the Eligibility Column)
  - Ø DISCIPLINARY (player fails to make the required number of practices during the previous week, player acts inappropriately during the game and is sat for that behavior)

5. Effective as of the 2015 Season Cheerleaders will also have to be checked in 30 minutes prior to the start of the game with the Football Players. They will have to produce the Game Roster to the Opposing Statistician for this.

6. Team rosters will be limited to a maximum of 35 active players/cheerleaders but must have at least 14 players and 5 cheerleaders listed alphabetically and submitted to the NOFA Statistician for approval 10 days prior to the start of the season.

7. Game rosters shall not be less than 14 eligible players, 5 cheerleaders or more than 35 eligible players/cheerleaders Commissioners must communicate with the NOFA Secretary by Wednesday prior to Saturday’s Game no later than 8pm to notify NOFA that there is a Forfeiture and at which Level. If there is not notification of Forfeiture by Wednesday, there will be a \$25.00 fine. At Game time – if there is Forfeiture by the Visiting Organization – that Organization will be responsible for paying for the Referee Fees. Anytime there is a Team/Squad that doesn’t field a team there will be a \$25.00 fine levied.

8. 10 days prior to the first game a complete roster, including the name, age, and address of the player shall be furnished as a league record. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the game regardless of the outcome. This rule applies on a weekly basis throughout the season until a roster is submitted.

9. To receive a NOFA Number - A copy of a birth certificate, baptismal certificate, adoption paper, high/elementary school report card or any other legal form of identification containing both the full name and birth date must be submitted to the league statistician no later than **10 days prior to the first practice**. Along with that Player/Cheerleaders full home address including school that Player/Cheerleader is attending. As players/cheerleaders are added – the information must be sent to the NOFA Statistician and the NOFA Secretary so a NOFA Number can be issued.

10. The playing season is defined as; the date the league roster is submitted for approval until the completion of the League schedule...Under no circumstances will a team be able to powerhouse.

11. Each organization may have only one team in any given age division.

12. Any team may not sign up additional players/cheerleaders to their roster after September 15th – unless their Roster goes below 18 Active Players/5 Active Cheerleaders. Active players will be defined as any player holding a line on the game roster not marked "QUIT". Should a Player be injured and unable to return for the season – that player will be listed as Injured Reserved (IR) (Injured Reserved will be an Official New Category) and cannot play for the remaining season – including Playoff's and Championship Games or NOFA CheerZone. However, should a Team fall below 18 at that point they can add a Player or 5 Cheerleaders they can add a Cheerleader. All established rules governing practices and player registration will apply. New players added after this date must be submitted no later than the Wednesday prior to the scheduled game in order to have a league number assigned to them. Players added during the season will be required to have 5 practices on record before that player may play in a league sanctioned game. No player may play without a league number.

13. No player can change their Jersey Number unless the Jersey is changed with the NOFA Statistician. The Player is issued a Jersey Number for the Season.

14. How to Report your League Scores to the NOFA Statistician and NOFA Secretary – use this format for texting in game scores at the completion of each of your levels and on your email coversheet with your scanned game rosters.

Report Away Vs Home

Example: Akron is playing RoyHart in RoyHart

Mini 8-9 years old  
Akron 0 Vs RoyHart 0

JV 10-11 years old  
Akron 0 Vs RoyHart 0

Varsity 12-13 years old  
Akron 0 Vs RoyHart 0

#### **RULE 4-----DIVISIONS, WEIGHTS & AGES**

#### **Football Requirements:**

**Beginner Football Players:** Age 6-7 (Must be 6 by 12/1, can't turn 8 prior to 12/1) Unlimited Weight for all positions.

**Mini Football Players:** Age 8-9 (Must be 8 by 12/1, can't turn 10 prior to 12/1) Unlimited Weight for all positions.

**JV Football Players:** Age 10-11 years (Must be 10 by 12/1, can't turn 12 prior to 12/1) Unlimited Weight for all positions.

**Varsity Football Players:** Age 12-13 (Must be 12 by 12/1, can't turn 14 prior to 12/1) Unlimited Weight for all positions.

**Cheerleader Requirements:**

**Beginner Cheerleaders:** Age 6 – 7 Must be 6 by 12/1

**Mini Cheerleaders:** Age 8 – 9 Must be 8 by 12/1

**JV Cheerleaders:** Age 10-11 Must be 10 by 12/1

**Varsity Cheerleaders:** Age 12 - 14 Must be 12 by 12/1 Can't turn 15 prior to 12/1

1. A player/cheerleader must turn 6 years old by December 1st, in order to register in NOFA.
2. The League recognizes a "beginners football team" for the purpose of instructional football 6 & 7 year old children. These games will not count towards league standings and there is no Playoff or Championship Games for this Level
3. Players and Cheerleaders will go through a check-in line 1/2 hour prior to the start of the first game (Beginner Game). A player who has not checked-in prior to the start of the game will be allowed to check-in at the games halftime period. Check-ins for succeeding games will be done one hour prior to the next game starting. No player/cheerleader may be checked-in for the first half of play once team announcements have started. All check-ins will be performed at a designated area decided by the Home Team.
4. Check-In line consists of giving the opposing Statistician and Coach the players Name, their assigned jersey number, a tap on their cup, and showing of their cleats. Each Player must address the opposing Coach and Statistician in the uniform they will be wearing for the game, full uniform is described below.
5. Check-In line for cheerleaders consists of giving the opposing Statistician and Coach the cheerleaders name. Each cheerleader must address the opposing Statistician and Coach in the uniform they will be wearing for the game.
6. A player may not participate or be enrolled in more than one (1) organized football program at any time during the season except for modified football. Players will be deemed ineligible to play for NOFA if they are enrolled to play freshman, Junior Varsity or Varsity football. Players may participate in any other sports activity, such as soccer, basketball, hockey, intramural programs and modified football. Teams found to be in violation will forfeit any game in which the violating player is on a NOFA roster, whether that player played or not. EXCEPTION: Players who join a high school program and quit that program prior to the first scheduled NOFA game will be eligible to join NOFA. The organization who signs up such a player will be responsible to obtain a letter from the high school Coach or Athletic Director stating that the player was released from the high school program and the date that player left the team. This letter will be kept on file for the entire season in order to resolve disputes. Failure to obtain a letter will be cause to rule against the offending organization. Players who move from a community outside of NOFA's sphere of influence into a NOFA district will be deemed eligible to join at that organizations discretion. Junior Varsity and Varsity players may participate as instructors for organizations for the purpose of instructing youth players on proper techniques. No J.V. or Varsity player may knowingly be listed as a Player on any roster for any reason. Any elected official from a NOFA organization or their coaches, who knowingly use ineligible players in any NOFA activity such as practices, scrimmages and regularly scheduled games will be

subject to, but not limited to the following penalties: 1) A lifetime ban from all NOFA activities. A Fine may be levied by the NOFA Executive Board and Commissioners.

#### **RULE 5----PRACTICES**

1. NOFA has established a minimum of 5 practices before a player will be deemed eligible to play in his first game. For the purposes of establishing eligibility, NOFA considers eligibility to begin the week those players birth certificates are submitted to the NOFA Statistician and NOFA Secretary. During the pre-season a team may consider organized sport practices and games as counting towards eligibility as long as they overlap. When a question of eligibility arises, the NOFA Statistician will have the right to see documentation. Lack of documentation (weekly practice rosters) will result in that player being deemed ineligible and the game will be forfeit.

2. No Organization can start practice prior to the designated start date of the Last Monday in July, or the designated date set by the NOFA Executive Board.

3. All practices must be held at an approved and insured practice site.

4. All practices will must be supervised by NOFA Approved Coaches.

5. All practices will adhere to High School Practice Guidelines. The first two (2) days of practice must be non-contact, without the use of protective equipment and mechanical blocking devises. The use of cones, ropes, ladders, step-over dummies, soft hand shields and similar devices as teaching aids is permissible. Helmets may be worn. The next three (3) days provide a transition from the conditioning phase to full contact. During this phase, players are permitted to wear a helmet and shoulder pads. Blocking dummies, sleds and similar devices are permitted. During this phase, player to player tackling drills, team scrimmaging, running full contact plays, etc, are not permitted. The following six (6) days consist of contact practice with full protective equipment and the use of all training devises. Full player to player contact and team scrimmaging is permitted. Interscholastic scrimmages may commence after eleven (5) practices have been completed by the individual player and team. The fine for non-compliance is \$25.00/team or squad.

6. All practices will adhere to the Hydration Guidelines. – See attached

7. All practices will adhere to the NYS Heat Index Guidelines. – See attached

8. Football and Cheerleading camps can be held prior to the start of the Official practice date if they are open to all players/cheerleaders within the NOFA boundaries and are approved by the NOFA Executive Board at least one month prior to the scheduled date of the camp.

9. This is to be followed by Football and Cheerleading. There are to be no practices on Saturday or Sunday. The only exception to a Saturday practice is if practice was cancelled due to lightening or heat index. NOFA Secretary must be notified prior to a Saturday practice. All practices occurring after the set start date of practice and prior to school starting practices can be held a maximum of 4 days per week with a maximum of 2 hours per practice. Once school is in session practices can be held a maximum of three days per week with a maximum of 2 hours per practice.

10. Any Organization that does not follow the above practice rules is subject to not be allowed to participate in Playoffs and/or Championship Games and/or CheerZone.

11. If a NOFA organization wishes to implement an INNER-NOFA (controlled) scrimmage at any level prior to the first games of the season, same can ONLY be done by engaging an existing NOFA organization team and same can ONLY be done the Saturday preceding opening day of that year's season. (This controlled scrimmage could count as a practice for preseason tally purposes.)

## **RULE 6----NOFA BEGINNER DIVISION**

1. Present NOFA rules and regulations will apply to Beginner Division. Focus will be on fun, education and discipline.
2. Beginner games will start 2 hours prior to scheduled Mini game.
3. Check-In's are ½ hour prior to scheduled starting time.
4. Games will have 15 - minute quarters with running clock. Time will stop for injury or instructional time outs. Time will stop when a timeout is called by either team. Teams are allowed two timeouts per half for water or substitution purposes. Instructional timeouts will not count towards a team's timeout allotment.
5. The Beginner Half Time – it is 10 minutes. This will accommodate the Cheerleaders halftime routine.
6. The clock will be stopped by an injury.
7. No score keeping will be allowed. Official standings will not be kept.
8. Penalties called will stop play, (but not the clock) and will be used as an instructional opportunity only with NO deduction in yards. The down should be replayed from the previous spot.
9. Two coaches are allowed on field from each team. Coaches should be a minimum 10 yards from line of scrimmage once the players break the huddle.
10. Instructions end once lines are set and QB cadence begins. Coaches cannot instruct while the play is being run. Coaches are allowed to approach lines to instruct and set lineman prior to the play.
11. Defense- Blitzing will not be allowed. This means Linebackers, Safeties and Cornerbacks in particular. These positions should be a minimum of 5 yards off the line of scrimmage. Defensive lineman cannot line up head on with the center. Defensive lineman must position themselves so that their inside shoulder is outside the "A" gap. (The A gap is defined as the area between the center and the player lined up on either the right or left hand side.) Alignments must be adjusted and corrected prior to the snap.
12. There be no more than a 6 down lineman on defense or it is a penalty
13. Offense- Straight ahead QB sneaks will not be allowed in lieu of the defensive alignment stated in point 10. The QB can carry the ball, although it must be outside the A gap area and not straight ahead. Muffed exchanges between the QB and centers will be blown dead and replayed without consequence. However, continual muffed exchanges will result in loss of down example – after the third muff in a row will result in loss of down.
14. A coin toss will determine initial possession, visiting team will call heads/tails.
15. Two paid Referee's will be assigned to this game. Their role is to keep order and assist in the instruction process while refereeing.

## **RULE 7-----CHECK-INS AND GAME ROSTERS**

1. The official check-in for players/cheerleaders is as described in RULE # 4 subsection 3.
2. Each Team Statistician must submit to the opposing Team Statistician a NOFA approved original game roster indicating the players name and jersey number and their NOFA ID number. No player may checked-in or play without a NOFA ID number. The Team Statistician or team representative from both teams must be present any time a player is checked in.

3. The original game roster shall be emailed to the NOFA Statistician, NOFA Football Coordinator and the NOFA Secretary at his/her email address not later than the Sunday at 8pm of the week after the game is played. One copy is to be given to the opposing coach and the second copy should be retained by the home team. If the Game Roster is received late a maximum \$25.00 fine will be levied per league. When an Organization doesn't have access to a scanner – the Game Roster can be sent via picture however, a scanned copy must be received no later than 12pm the next day (Monday) unless it is a Federal Holiday then by 12pm the following day (Tuesday).

4. All rosters must be filled in completely and any alterations to the game day roster must be approved by the NOFA statistician. Failure to fill in all appropriate spaces will result in that roster being considered an invalid roster. Teams that are consistently in violation run the risk of possible points being deducted from their season ending standing.

5. It shall be the duty of the NOFA Statistician to report at the monthly meeting which team is in violation of the above mentioned rule. Once a team has been warned the Chairman at his discretion may deduct one point for each subsequent violation.

6. If a player is dropped or quits for any reason, a single line will be drawn through that player's name on the game roster and the word quit **must** be placed in the appropriate spot on the roster. There is a \$25.00 fine per player/cheerleader that doesn't follow this. This is per week fine.

7. Coaches have the option of stamping the right back hand of the opposing team during check-in to avoid confusion during the check-in procedure.

8. All players must check-in wearing their complete uniform including protective cup, helmet, mouth guard (Must be attached at all levels, colored - not clear.), shoulder pads, and player's jersey. The jersey # must coincide with the number appearing on the game day roster. NOTICE - The players must have their game footwear on at the time of check-in.

10. ROSTERS- Inclusion of the Injured reserve clause. Can be on roster but does not count towards minimum or maximum requirements.

\*\*\* All roster for each level of football (beginner, mini, jv, varsity) will be shared with the commissioners prior to the first game and will be re-sent to commissioners when any changes have been made. Rosters must include but not limited to name, date of birth, age and number.

#### **RULE 8-----ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

1. The league shall adopt a policy of academic eligibility by which all league participants (football & cheerleading) should be in compliance with their school systems standards. It shall be the responsibility of each individual organization to monitor the eligibility of their own children in conjunction with that child's parents or guardian. A standard form will be issued by the league; however, each organization may adapt that form or use their own in order to meet their own unique situations.

#### **RULE 9-----GAMES**

1. The first game of the schedule and the length of the season shall be established by the scheduling committee subject to approval by the NOFA Executive Board of Directors and Commissioners. Scheduling committee will alternate all NOFA team location home vs. away every other year as best as can be achieved with all determining factors.

## Forfeit Rule

If an organization must postpone or cancel a game for any reason you must contact the NOFA Secretary

- A) Any team failing to meet a scheduled game will lose that game by forfeit. Commissioners must communicate with the NOFA Secretary by Wednesday prior to Saturday's Game no later than 8pm to notify NOFA that there is a Forfeiture and at which Level. If there is not notification of Forfeiture by Wednesday there will be a \$25.00 fine. At Game time – if there is Forfeiture by the Visiting Organization – that Organization will be responsible for paying for the Referee Fees
- B) Forfeit all 4 games
- C) Reschedule within 1 week with both Commissioners and the NOFA Executive Board in agreement
- D) Play on the opposing team's field or another field. If the home team cannot provide a field within the week they automatically forfeit all 4 games or the Level that had the forfeit.
- E) Concessions must pay for the Referee's for those games, ex. If you are the home team and you have to go to your opponent's field and they do concessions they must pay for the Referee's. If the home team forfeits or cancels games they must pay the Referee's. The final word of any decision made comes from the NOFA Executive Board.
- F) Game rosters shall not be less than 14 eligible players, 5 cheerleaders or more than 35 eligible players/cheerleaders. Commissioners must communicate with the NOFA Football Coordinator & NOFA 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman by Wednesday prior to Saturday's Game no later than 8pm to notify NOFA that there is a Forfeiture and at which Level. If there is not notification of Forfeiture by Wednesday there will be a \$25.00 fine. At Game time – if there is Forfeiture by the Visiting Organization – that Organization will be responsible for paying for the Referee Fees

2. It shall be the visiting team's responsibility to call the home team Commissioner and the NOFA Football Coordinator and NOFA 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman no later than three (3) days prior to a game to eliminate any confusion or conflicts that might arise. Any deviation of the NOFA Schedule must be cleared through the NOFA Football Coordinator.

3. If a visiting team does not show for a home game and has not given a three day notice to the opposing Commissioner, the visiting team shall be responsible to reimburse the home team for the cost of the officials. If the offending team does not reimburse the home team within 30 days, that team shall not receive a ranking at the conclusion of the season and all of the games from the time of the infraction to the end of the season shall be considered forfeit. If the offending team wishes to compete the following season they must have satisfied all of their debt from the previous year.

4. Whenever possible every effort will be made for games to be scheduled for play on Saturday and will begin at 10:00 am and run through until the conclusion of the last game. Each individual franchise will retain the right to schedule their games in accordance with their own field availability. (Ex. If playing Sat. afternoon interferes with high school games that franchise may elect to play their games Fri. night Some teams may elect to play under the lights.) The date of play will be decided at the scheduling meeting and scheduled accordingly. A side note – the Beginner Level will begin two (2) hours prior to the Mini Level Game.

5. Games will be played with the Beginner Division playing first, followed by the Mini Division, Junior Varsity Division and ending with the Varsity Division (youngest to oldest) unless agreed upon by both commissioners. Each game is allotted two hours to play each game – they may end quicker or longer pending on the game. But no time should be shaved off of the allotted game time.

6. All teams will be responsible for providing a numerical roster (Jersey Order) to the announcing booth 1/2 hour prior to the start of the game. This includes the Cheerleaders list in Alphabetical order. The visiting Cheerleaders will be announced followed by the Players, then the home Cheerleaders will be announced followed by the Players. Once Cheerleader/Player Announcements have been made the National Anthem will be played followed by the coin toss. Announcers will refrain from calling the action as it happens so as not to be misconstrued as coaching from the booth. Any team may request through the

referee that the announcer discontinue the practice if he feels it unjustly interferes with the game. The referee's decision will be final.

7. Whenever possible the official rules that govern high school (section 6) play shall be used – however, any rules that are placed in the NOFA Rulebook take precedence.

8. Neck tackling is prohibited. Neck tackling shall be defined as any contact above the shoulders, except in close line play. Rules that apply to equipment, field size or length of quarters shall be governed by our own rules and regulations. In the Beginner & Mini Divisions only, the coach is permitted to call time out to confer with his team between the hash marks.

9. No kick-offs or punts will be allowed in the Beginner or Mini weight division. The ball shall be put into play at the punting team's 40 (30) yard line whenever a kick-off would normally be made. Teams in possession on fourth down situations may elect to run a play. If they do and fail to make first down yardage the ball will be turned over to the opposing team at the spot of the ball. If the team elects to call for a punt on fourth down the receiving team shall have the ball placed 25 yards from the line of scrimmage, as long as the kicking team is on their side of midfield 50 yard line (40 yard line). Once a team penetrates the defending team's side of the field and elects to punt, the ball will be placed at the receiving team's 25 yard line. All divisions will kick off from their 40 (30) yard line. No punts will be allowed in the Junior Varsity Division, however, if a team elects to call for a punt the same rule that applies to the Mini division will be in effect. NOTE: An 80 Yard Clarification – the 80 Yard placements are in parenthesis.

10. During the Mini and JV games when you are opting to punt the ball, you have the same time as a normal down (25 seconds) once the option to punt has been called the clock will stop, the ball will be marked off, and the clock doesn't start again until the snap of the ball on the next possession. Varsity will remain the same.

11. The use of headsets is prohibited anywhere on the field, on the side lines or in the stands for the purpose of communicating to players or coaches.

12. The use of cellular devices are prohibited from use by all members of the chain crew and anyone on the sidelines. Any coach, person on the sideline, or chain crew caught using a cell phone will be warned and then removed and then will follow the ejection penalty and fines.

13. In the Beginner and Mini Division only, if a safety is scored the ball shall be move to the 50 yd line and awarded to the team that scored the safety.

14. The Beginner game will have 2 Referee's. All other games must have a minimum of 3 league approved referees scheduled by the referee organization under contract to NOFA. In the event that only 2 referees show up, those games may be played as long as there is mutual consent by each franchise coach. Games suspended due to insufficient number of referees will be rescheduled by the NOFA Executive Board.

15. Any referee may remove a player whom he deems to have an aggravated injury. The extent of an injury, for the most part, will be decided by a team representative on the sideline. If for any reason a player is removed by medical personnel and treated at the field, the attending medical specialist shall have the final say as to whether that player can re-enter the game. Any player leaving the field by ambulance will not be allowed to re-enter that day's game. Any player who is told to follow up an injury with a visit to his/her doctor must bring a note to their coach indicating when they may resume full contact. All injuries must be reported to the NOFA Secretary on the NOFA Injury Report within 24 hours of injury. All players/cheerleaders must follow the return to play policy.

16. Return to Play after a Concussion: Before a Player/Cheerleader can return to practice following a concussion they must have a Doctor's note that states they are able to return to play/cheer. And follow the Progressive Return to activity:

A.

Step 1: Begin with light aerobic exercise only to increase an athlete's heart rate. This means about 5 to 10 minutes on an exercise bike, walking, or light jogging. No weight lifting at this point.

B.

Step 2: Continue with activities to increase an athlete's heart rate with body or head movement. This includes moderate jogging, brief running, moderate-intensity stationary biking, moderate-intensity weight lifting (reduced time and/or reduced weight from the athlete's typical routine).

C.

Step 3: Add heavy non-contact physical activity, such as sprinting/running high-intensity stationary biking, regular weight lifting routine, non-contact sport-specific drills (in three planes of movement)

D.

Step 4: Athlete may return to practice and full contact in controlled practice.

E.

Step 5: Athlete may return to football/cheer competition.

F.

Remember: The Participants primary role during their youth experience is their education! Their football/cheerleading experience at this level is an entry level experience...we want to keep them involved, their safety comes first!

\*\*\* If a player/cheerleader obtains an injury other than a concussion he/she must have a minimum of 3 practices before participating in a game.

\*\*\* All players must participate in a minimum of 4 games to play in the playoffs and championship games.

17. One point shall be awarded for the P.A.T. after a touchdown if the ball is run or kicked successfully. Two points will be awarded for the P.A.T. after a touchdown if the ball is successfully passed and caught in the end zone (ie. It cannot be thrown, then caught and then run into the end zone). The try for the point after will be spotted on the two yard line. Any forward pass past the line of scrimmage is worth 2 points. Any running pass past the line of scrimmage is worth 1 point.

18. All quarters in all divisions (except Beginners – refer to their rules) will operate under a 10 minute stop clock with the official time kept by the officials on the field.

19. If for any reason, a team has to play all of its games away that team will be responsible to pay ½ of the referee's fees.

20. If a Player, Cheerleader, Coach, or member of the Chain Crew is ejected from one game that Player, Cheerleader, Coach or member of the Chain Crew the Organization will receive a \$100.00 fine plus a minimum game suspension of 2 up to season removal based on the ruling of the NOFA Board. If a Player, Cheerleader, Coach or member of the Chain Crew is ejected from a second game that Player, Cheerleader, Coach, or member of the Chain Crew will receive a \$300.00 fine plus a minimum game suspension of 3 up to season removal based on the ruling of the NOFA Board. If a Player, Cheerleader, Coach or member of the Chain Crew is ejected from a third game that Player, Cheerleader, Coach, or member of the Chain Crew will receive a \$500.00 fine plus a minimum game suspension of the remaining season based on the ruling of the NOFA Board. Should an ejection come at the last game of the season – the Organization must pay the fine by the last meeting of the year and will serve the penalty phase the following season. Note: A Referee will sign the team roster providing an explanation to the Head Coach & Commissioner of any warnings given in regards to their Players, Cheerleaders, Coaches, and members of

the Chain Crew. If a Player, Cheerleader, Coach, or member of the Chain Crew is ejected that person must remove themselves from the playing field including the bleachers. Any ejected Player must remove their shoulder pads.

21. There will be an uncharged official time out at the 4 minute mark of the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> quarters. At that time one coach may speak with his players in accordance with the rules governing a charged time out. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter time outs are to be used for substitution purposes only.

22. Alcoholic beverages will not be served or consumed by any NOFA organization, member or spectator of any event that is sponsored by NOFA for its youth. This rule shall be in effect one-half hour prior to the event to one-half hour following the events conclusion. Tobacco products of any kind are also prohibited at youth events. This rule does not apply to adult only functions.

23. The initial block on the line of scrimmage must be above the waist. Blocking below the waist will not be permitted anywhere on the field, including the line of scrimmage.

24. A Red Flag for the Head Coach to be able to have a conference with the Referee to discuss a call. One per half – if you don't use your flag in the first half you lose that flag – it doesn't carry over to the second half of the game. The Conference is to be no longer than 2 minutes. There is to be no shouting – if shouting occurs it is called off immediately. If the Referee feels this is confrontational - the conference can be terminated immediately. Only the Head Coach can enter the field – and only the Head Coach for the side that has thrown the flag. Each Organization must provide their own Red Flag.

25. All Play Rule stating that all players who have attended practice regularly and are not restricted due to health or disciplinary issues shall play a minimum of 6 plays per game. This includes all games – regular season, playoffs and championships. Team statistician's report will document that each player on the team roster has played a minimum of 6 plays, and will be reviewed and signed by the head coach after the completion of a game. Each team during each game will assign an individual (statistician) whose primary responsibility is to work with the opposing team (statistician) to assure that all eligible players have met the minimum play standard. These statisticians primary responsibility is to communicate with each other and to communicate with the coaching staff to assure that the standard minimum 6 play rule is met. A written explanation on the Six Play Minimum Statistician Sheet shall be submitted after each game to NOFA and the opposing coach as to why a player did not participate in the minimum number of plays. Example (health, injury or disciplinary issue). NOFA will set a standard fine for each non-compliant occurrence. Parents/Guardians of all players will be notified of this rule prior to each team's first practice. Any league not in compliance would be fined as follows: 1st offense \$25.00 fine per player that didn't play the minimum number of plays, 2nd offense \$50.00 fine per player that didn't play the minimum number of plays, and 3rd offense \$100.00 fine per player that didn't play the minimum number of plays. The format would be the roster with 6 boxes and a line with a reason for not playing. A discussion should be held by the team statisticians prior to the game starting. It must be stipulated that you must go through your League first for any playing time complaints– if a parent doesn't get a resolve the parent can put in a signed written complaint and file it through the NOFA Secretary as always. As always, all NOFA Meetings are closed meetings.

26. Deflation of standard NOFA issue balls will result in as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> time REFEREE inflicts a 15 yard penalty on the violating team.

2<sup>nd</sup> time COACH is removed from game and premises.

\*After offense inflicted and remedied herein, that organization is on probation with next offense losing post season eligibility in completion.

\*\*If a coach is removed a second time, that coach is done for the season's calendar year from coaching in completion (practices and games).

27. Football: All players at all levels MUST check-in a minimum of 3 games in order to participate in that season years playoff and championship competitions.

28. MINI LEVEL FOOTBALL: Defensive linemen must position themselves so that their inside shoulder is outside the "A" GAP. Alignments must be adjusted and converted prior to the snap of the ball. Blitzing will be allowed for linebackers, safeties and cornerbacks through the "A" GAP at the snap of the ball as long as they are lined up a minimum of 5 yards from the line of scrimmage. Goal line defense allowed inside 5 yard line. No quarterback sneaks through the "A" GAP.

PENALTY: A penalty for an infraction of Rule #28 is a 5 yard penalty from original line of scrimmage

### **RULE 10-----PLAYING FIELDS**

1. Teams applying for admission to NOFA shall have their field inspected by a committee designated by the NOFA Chairman. That committee shall have the authority to approve a playing field. If there is not unanimous agreement, the NOFA Executive Board will make the final determination.

2. Unless otherwise approved, the playing field will be 53 1/2 yards wide and 100 yards long. A 10 yard cushion on all sides of the playing field is recommended for player safety. The entire length of the playing field will be roped off so that only players, coaches and team statisticians have access to that area. The referee has the right to enforce the cushion and remove Non-essential personnel from that area.

3. All designated playing fields, require an American Flag and the National Anthem or Reciting the Pledge to Flag before every game.

\*\*\* All fields require a functional and visible time clock.

\*\*\* All game balls must be filled to the specs of the manufacturer. The home team will provide the referees a pump/gauge prior to the start of the game and any time requested during a game.

4. Only Players and Certified Coaches and NOFA Approved personnel will be allowed along the sidelines. All other spectators must observe the game in the area designated behind the cushion. Only those people with NOFA Credentials are allowed to be within the game fields.

5. It shall be the responsibility of the home team to ensure that ambulance service is either at the field or on call for regularly scheduled home games. This arrangement must be filed with the NOFA Secretary prior to the start of the Practice season.

6. The Referees are in charge of all instances on the field and sidelines (from bench to bench) – the Commissioners are in charge of the fans in their stands. However, a Referee can eject a participant after a warning has been issued. Head Coach is to be warned and Commissioner informed.

7. Coaches are only allowed to stand between the two 30 yard marks and they are not allowed on the field.

8. Cheerleaders are to cheer between the 5 yard mark and the 25 yard mark when there is no track for them to cheer on. When there are bleachers only on one side, the cheerleaders are to cheer between the 5 yard mark and the 25 yard mark – should they want the cheerleaders will switch sides to give each a time to shine. This is at the discretion of the Directors.

### **RULE 11-----PENALTIES & FINES**

Note - All penalties other than what has been written are based on a Board Decision. All Penalty phases will be reviewed by the NOFA Executive Board and Commissioners and/or Directors. This statement will not be inserted after each penalty/fine – however, this is the STANDARD and will apply to each penalty.

1. Any coach who falsifies records, birth certificates or otherwise misrepresents a player's name or age will be punished as follows:

- a) The team for which that player is registered shall forfeit all games played that season.
- b) The guilty coach shall be disqualified from any further participation in the NOFA activities.
- c) The team forfeits the right to any and all monies, equipment, or other embellishments distributed by NOFA.

2. If a player/coach is found to be playing/participating in any illegal manor for an organization; as determined by the Board of Commissioners, the organization will forfeit all games that the illegal player/illegal coach participated in. Illegal manor includes, but is not limited to, falsifying records, birth certificates or otherwise misrepresenting a player's name, address or age. Once the player/coach is found guilty he/she is to be immediately removed from the roster. A guilty coach will be removed from the roster and immediately relinquish his/her duties.

3. It shall be the position of NOFA that no team shall intentionally "run up the score" on any other team. As a benchmark, any team that has built up a 24 point lead must substitute liberally in an honest effort to control what could be a lopsided victory. NOFA recognizes that there will be times when no matter how much a team substitutes, a large margin of points may still be scored by second or third string players. Those players should have the right to perform at their level without fear of penalty. NOFA also recognizes that making substitutions should not endanger the eventual outcome of the game and that teams may feel the need to re-insert its starting players. See addendum for point breakdown!

#### ADDENDUM TO RULE 10 SUBSECTION 2

The penalty phase of this rule will be initiated as follows:

#### FORMULA FOR ASSESSING POINTS:

5 POINTS FOR A WIN OF 42 POINT DIFFERENTIAL OR BELOW  
3 POINTS FOR A WIN OF 43 POINT DIFFERENTIAL OR ABOVE  
0 POINTS FOR A LOSS OF 44 POINTS OR LESS

#### TIE BREAKER RULE FOR PLAYOFFS AND CHAMPIONSHIP GAME COMPETITIONS:

##### Rule 10 Points

Overall Record

Head To Head

Record Against Common Opponents

Points Common Opponents Scored Against You

Old rule was points scored against common opponents.

Reason For Change Of #5: It will help teams deter running up the score.

Example: Team A is winning 24-0 against Team B. Team A has the ball with two minutes left in the game. Team A would be able to run the clock out, instead of trying to score one more touchdown.

Fines issued by the NOFA Statistician must be paid to the NOFA Treasurer at the following NOFA meeting. All fines and monies due to NOFA must be paid before the January meeting or that organization will be ineligible to vote until such monies are paid.

4. Any organization (Commissioner and Director) not in attendance at a NOFA sanctioned meeting (Board Meeting, Mandatory Annual Meeting, CheerZone Competition, Playoff Games, Championship, Etc.) will be assessed a \$25.00 fine per violation. Organizations not in attendance must notify the NOFA Secretary prior to the meeting in order to be excused and avoid a fine.

#### **RULE 12-----COACHES**

1. No Coach shall be permitted to Coach in more than one Youth Football League at a time without express permission from the NOFA Executive Board. A Coach can coach Little League and JV or Varsity High School Sports at the same time as long as they are prepared to make the time commitment.

2. Each Team within each League must have at least one coach from each team/squad shall be trained in an accredited advance First Aid and CPR/AED course by a certified First Aid Trainer. Those certified Coaches must be at every practice and game; therefore, you should really have more than one trained person per team and squad.

3. A coaches meeting will be called, League-wide prior to the start of the season. All teams must be represented by one coach for each level. The agenda for this meeting will be to discuss rule changes and to establish contacts with the NOFA designated Referees. Other business pertinent to coaching will be discussed at that time. All organizations will be responsible to equally share the expenses this meeting incurs whether or not they are in attendance. This meeting can be cancelled by the NOFA Executive Board if they deem unnecessary.

4. The information required is the Persons First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name, Street Address, City, State, Zip Code, Any Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Statistician and Team Parent(s) not meeting NOFA requirements will be asked to step down from their duties. Leagues that fail to comply with NOFA requests shall forfeit all games.

5. Each Organization's Board Members (Commissioner, Vice-Commissioner, Director, Statistician, Treasurer, Secretary, and (anyone else, on their Board, that comes into contact with the Players/Cheerleaders)), Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Parent, Team Statistician will participate in a National Background Check. This must be done prior to any consequential training that is provided (NYSCA or USA Heads Up Football). Currently (2018 Season), the WNYAFA will be paying for this service and each background check through Protect Youth Sports will be good for two seasons. If the WNYAFA decides not to pay for this service other options will be discussed. The background check process can take up to three weeks for results so plan properly.

6. All NOFA Head and Assistant Coaches Football and Cheerleading must have a minimum certification of a NYSCA Coaches Clinic which is provided by the National Youth Sports Coaches Association. This is to affirm that all Coaches within the NOFA Association have the basic skills and knowledge of being able to deal with the youth in our program in a professional and proper way. Completion of this clinic also protects each and every coach in good standings with a minimum of \$1,000,000.00 of liability insurance.

7. All Football Coaches must be certified through USA Football – Heads Up Football Certification. Each Head Coach and Assistant Coach must be re-certified annually prior to be able to coach.

8. All teams within NOFA will be required to supply the NOFA Coordinator of Coaches (Football Coaches), NOFA Coordinator of Cheer Coaches (Cheerleading Coaches) and the NOFA Secretary the following items for all Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Statisticians, Team Parent(s) prior to the June meeting (remember – you can't get your training started until the approved background check is done and you are a green light status), to be kept in the NOFA records in case there ever is any problem with a coach that should involve NOFA:

A. An Original Copy of the Coaches Application (this form can be kept annually, however if your information changes you must re-file a new form). Application must include all of the same information on the NOFA Coaches/Volunteer Application. An Organization can add more but not have less than the NOFA Application

- B. An Original Copy of the Current Year's Code of Conduct – this must be filed annually.
- C. A copy of all Coaches current NYSCA Certification Cards.
- D. A copy of the Football coaches USA Heads Up Football Certification.
- E. See Rule 12 section 5 for the Background Check Requirements.
- F. See Rule 12 section 2 for CPR/AED Requirements.

9. Under no circumstance is a Football Coach permitted to become verbally abusive to a Director of Cheerleading and vice versa. If a Football Coach has a problem with a Cheerleader he is to go to the Head Cheerleading Coach to discuss the situation.

10. Each approved NOFA Executive Board Member, Organization Board Member, Coach, Team Parent will receive a NOFA Issued Badge. This badge must be worn at all times on game day. No Badge you will not be allowed to interact with the players/cheerleaders. If you don't have your badge you will be asked to remove yourself from the field (practice or game). Note for safety purposes while at practice your badge must be with you but may be in a pocket so as not to be a hazard for the players/cheerleaders.

11. Ejected coaches will be required to leave the facility immediately for the remainder of the day. This ejection includes the following /next weeks' game(s) (not including a bye or forfeit).

NOTE: Each Organization will get one copy of the NFHS Rule Book for Football and one for Cheerleading – they will be paid for by NOFA.

### **RULE 13-----REFEREE'S**

1. NOFA will adopt a policy to prosecute any person known to **VERBALLY ABUSE, THREATEN**, or **PHYSICALLY** harm any referee. The offending organization, as identified by the referee, will be required to submit in writing to NOFA no later than 3 calendar days a full report including the names of the offenders or that organization will forfeit that day's games and all subsequent games until an adequate report is submitted.

2. League penalties for the offender are as follows:

- a) Spectators will be barred from the following week's games.
- b) Ejected coaches will receive a one game suspension as well as being barred from the facility while those games are being played.
- c) Second time offenders will be suspended from any league activity for 1 full year.
- d) A third offence will result in permanent suspension from any league activity.

### **RULE 14 – LIGHTENING RULE**

The "UOA" lightning policy has been written to be fair to all games during the course of a Saturday. If we followed the High School Rule assume there are three games on a Saturday - 12:00, 2:00 and 4:00. At 12:30 lightning is spotted and that game is suspended. The skies clear at 1:00 and the "all clear" is given. We may not get the 4:00 game started until 4:30 or 4:45 (Assuming that there is no further lightning or other stoppages). Again, the High School rule is for one game on that site each day - not the 3-4 games scheduled on a youth field.

The lightning policy in effect for all games in 2017 (regardless of the league) is as follows: If any official sees lightning then the game that is currently underway is suspended. This is not negotiable. The officials are to remain at the site (preferably in under shelter) until the scheduled tending time of that game. If there is no lightning for thirty (30) minutes prior to the originally scheduled start time for the next game, that game and all subsequent games will be started and played as if there was no occurrence. For example, if there is lightning during the 10:00 game (first game of the day at that site), that game is done. The officials will be paid for that game and, as such, will remain at the field until 11:30 pending the crew chief's decision as to the ability to play the second game at 11:30. If there is no lightning seen after 11:00, the second game, and all subsequent games will be played. If not, we may give a few minutes leeway to start the next

game. If any game is cancelled, notify Head Referee as soon as possible. The decision to terminate a game due to lightening will be a consensus of both Commissioners and the Head Referee. The Head Referee will reschedule officials for the make-up game, if necessary. If the lightning stops the final game of the day, that game is suspended and the teams will wait for 30 minutes, putting forth best effort to play the game until completion. The home team will be responsible for paying for all game started on any day. Officials will be paid for each game completed, as well as the game that was stopped. Additionally, the officials who will work the make-up game will be paid a regular game fee for the game (or portion of a game) played.

### **RULE 15 - GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES**

It shall be the policy of NOFA that each organization must respect the geographical boundaries of each organization as a general rule; the boundaries will be determined by school districts. Organizations are prohibited from actively recruiting players in another organizations area. If area high schools blend their high school football teams that is where the Players/Cheerleaders will play.

#### **Guidelines for this rule are:**

1. Players already enrolled in another organization prior to Jan 1, 2002 may, at their discretion, elect to remain with that organization.
2. Coaches are strictly forbidden to tamper with another organization established players. (Established players are players already with a league ID number).
3. Disputed players will not be issued a League ID number until the dispute is settled.
4. Disputed players may not practice with either organization.
5. If for any reason an agreement cannot be reached concerning a player's status, the NOFA Executive Board will meet with both Commissioners to hear verbal arguments. The NOFA Chairman and NOFA Statistician will then confer and render a decision as to that player's eligibility. All decisions rendered will be final and binding.

### **PENALTIES**

Coaches/Organizations found to be in violation of other organizations boundaries may be subject to, but not limited to the following penalties:

1. Coaches may be subject to anywhere from a 1 year suspension to a lifetime suspension, depending on the severity of the alleged tampering.
2. Organizations may be fined up to \$250.00 per recruiting violation.
3. No penalty will be imposed until the FULL Executive Board and Board of Commissioners have heard the charges and the offending organization have had the opportunity to defend themselves.
4. A majority vote of the Commissioners will determine innocence or guilt.
5. The Commissioners will determine the penalties to be imposed.
6. Commissioners may elect to penalize the coach and not the Organization.

NOTE: Organizations wishing to join NOFA must have boundaries established by a school district other than the ones already established by an already existing organization.

## **RULE 16 – EQUIPMENT**

1. Football Cleats will be as follows: Detachable Cleats will be allowed up to  $\frac{3}{4}$ " all plastic, no exposed metal on the cleat.
2. There is to be one Standard Football for all Leagues to be used as Game Balls – the choice of Football is to be selected by majority vote of Commissioners prior to the start of each season. The Beginner and Mini Teams will use the K Football, JV = Junior Football, Varsity – Youth Football The Football of Choice for the 2013 season is the NIKE Spiral Tech Football Sizes are Beginner = K Football , JV = Junior Football, Varsity = Youth Football. Any League not using the correct Football will be fined. The NOFA Executive Board will select the Footballs to be used each year – based on availability and likeness to the High School Footballs used most. The Football will be decided upon annually.
3. No sticky or slippery substances of any kind is to be used on any part of the uniform.
4. Gloves may be worn however they must comply with the National Federation High School Rule #1, article 2, section c.
5. It shall be the coach's responsibility to ensure that all his players are properly equipped for a game. Proper equipment shall include, but is not limited to: A helmet which meets nocsae standards and has at least a double bar face mask, a mouthpiece (must be colored, not clear) and it must be attached to the facemask unless a doctor prescribed mouthpiece (orthodontist, etc) which must be disclosed at check-in, shoulder pads with cantilever suspension, jersey, football pants, hip-thigh, tailbone and knee pads, cup or pelvic protector, sneakers or cleats. Additional equipment such as rib vests, neck rolls, forearm pads or sweatshirts or clear face shields will not count against a player. (Water shoes, slippers or any other non-approved football gear is not acceptable for check-in purposes.) Soccer and lacrosse equipment are not approved football gear and will not be allowed on the field.
6. The USA Football Guidelines for Equipment fitting shall be followed.

## **RULE 17 – GENERAL RULES**

1. NOFA has drawn a hard line on swearing at a player, pushing a player, or grabbing a player will not be tolerated. There is no wiggle room in this.
2. THE NOFA BOARD OF GOVERNORS RECOGNIZES THAT AS OF JAN 1, 1999 THIS LEAGUE SHALL BE OFFICIALLY FORMED AND OPERATING FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLAYING YOUTH FOOTBALL AND CHEERLEADING. THE ABOVE MENTIONED RULES WILL BE SUBJECT TO AMMENDMENT OVER THE COURSE OF TIME.

## **RULE 18 - TIE BREAKING PROCEDURE**

1. A coin toss will decide the 1st possession of overtime
2. Per the High School Rule book, in the event of a tie each team will get 4 plays from the 20 yard line to score. There will be no first downs, except for a defensive penalty on fourth down. If the first team scores the other team will be given the same opportunity to score also. If after the initial set of downs the score remains tied, the ball will be moved to the 10 yard line the same format will be followed as from the 20 yard line.
3. If the game is still tied, Line 2 will repeat until there is a winner.

## **RULE 19 – CHEERLEADING STUNTING GUIDELINES**

**BEGINNER:** will be allowed to do basic waist level stunts (thigh mounts, piggy backs, shoulder sit with back spot) etc. The only dismounts allowed are step down/pencil down. Tumbling should be limited to

somersaults, cartwheels and round offs. Other tumbling will be allowed if the cheerleader has gymnastic training outside of your league.

**MINI:** same rules as Beginner Level with the following additions for stunts and tumbling:

Prep level 2 legged stunts with 2 bases, a front and a back spot

Prep level 1 legged stunts with 2 bases, a front and a back spot

Extensions are NOT allowed

Sweeping form both 2 and 1 legged stunts ARE allowed

Popping is only allowed from 2 legged stunts

Connected stunts are allowed

Only non-connected 2 legged mounts can move

Tumbling rules are the same as beginner level

**JUNIOR VARSITY:** same rules as Mini Level with the following additions for stunts;

Stunts can go from prep level to a full (2 legged)

All stunts can use a pop or sweep dismount

Basket tosses and twists downs ARE allowed and require 2 bases, a front and a back spot

Scorpions ARE allowed and require 2 bases, a front and a back spot – leg must return straight prior to dismount

Tumbling rules are the same as beginner level

**VARSITY:** same rules as JV Level with the following additions for stunts:

Straight up extensions are allowed (both 2 and 1 legged)

Moving mounts may be connected.

Tick tocks are allowed.

Basket tosses are allowed. NOTE: Basket tosses can only be performed on a matted surface, of proper thickness and size. Therefore, NO basket tosses at games. They are intended for Competition and practice for said competition, as long as the league has the proper mats to do so.

Tumbling rules are the same as beginner level

NOFA will follow the National Federation Spirit Book. Each League will be given one copy of the annual spirit book paid for by NOFA.

## **RULE 20 – CHEERLEADING ELIGIBILITY**

1. A cheerleader may participate in only one football league in any given season. Cheerleaders will be deemed ineligible to cheer for NOFA if they are enrolled to cheer freshman, junior varsity or varsity high school cheerleading. Cheerleaders may participate in any other sports programs including Flips, Greater Buffalo or any other gymnastic gyms. Squads found to be in violation will forfeit NOFA CheerZone. Any cheerleading coordinator, coach or cheer official who is knowingly allowing any Freshmen and/or High School Cheerleaders to cheer in any NOFA sanctioned activities including practice, scrimmages and/or regular games will be subject to the following penalties:

- A.) Lifetime ban from all NOFA activities;
- B.) A fine to be levied by the NOFA Board.

2. High School level cheerleaders may help each organization or may use this time for their community service hours.

## **RULE 21 – CHEERLEADING COACHES**

1. An annual Coaches meeting will be called by NOFA prior to the start of the season. All teams shall be represented by their respective Cheerleading Directors and at least one Coach from each team. The agenda for this meeting will be to discuss the rule changes and other business pertaining to cheerleading at that time. All organizations will be responsible for information given and share in any expenses these meetings incur whether or not they are in attendance.

2. Each league will have their Cheerleading Director attend the NOFA Monthly Meeting. If the Coordinator cannot attend they must send another representative or a fine of \$25.00 will be levied.

3. Any cheerleader coach who is removed from any NOFA activity because of unsportsmanlike conduct shall have a fine levied against the team of no less than \$25.00. If removed two times during the season, they shall be deemed ineligible for the remainder of the season.

4. Any coach who falsifies records, birth certificates or otherwise misrepresents a Cheerleader name or age will be punished in as follows:

\*The team for which the cheerleader is registered shall forfeit CheerZone.

\*The coach will be disqualified from any participation in NOFA.

\*The squad forfeits the right to any and all monies distributed by NOFA

5. No coach will be permitted to coach in more than one youth football or Cheerleading league at a time without expressed permission from NOFA Board and Cheer Coordinator.

### **RULE 22 – CHEERLEADING GENERAL RULES**

1. There is no moving of cheerleaders – all cheerleaders are to cheer with their appropriate age group.

2. NOTE – all cheerleaders must comply with the NOFA Rules.

3. In the case where a particular League can't field a football team at a certain level, the Cheerleaders for that particular team can sideline cheer at a different level. However, regarding Cheer Zone, they must compete at their original level. If the next season the League fields all teams, the Cheerleaders must cheer at the correct age level, unless an exception as outlined above is in place.

4. Any cheerleader that is removed from any NOFA activity due to unsportsmanlike conduct may be fined, any cheerleader being removed twice during a season will be deemed ineligible for the remainder of the season.

5. Absolutely NO jewelry is to present at practices, games, competition, or while in uniform! No nose, brow, ear or belly rings allowed.

6. No loose glitter is allowed however any hairspray glitter or approved cheerleading glitter facial decals or stickers (like the type you can get from Razzle Dazzle) can be used.

7. Fingernails should not extend past end of finger. If done so at Cheer Zone a 0.5 deduction will be applied to the final score on both the Dance Routine and Team Cheer.

8. If eyeglasses should be worn, they must have the back tie wrap. If the back tie strap is not worn, a 0.5 deduction will be applied to the final score on both the Dance Routine and Team Cheer.

9. Anyone interested and wanting to participate in cheerleading that doesn't turn 15 prior to 12/1 be allowed to cheer as long as he/she is not participating in a JV or Varsity Football Cheerleading Program.

10. Mascots will be allowed, as long as they are the Coaches Daughter and that they can only be on the sidelines – they can't perform in the halftime performance, they can't stunt, and they can't compete in the NOFA CheerZone or any other competition.

10. Any squad may not sign up additional cheerleaders to their roster after September 15th – unless their Roster goes below 5 Active Players. Active players will be defined as any player holding a line on the game roster not marked "QUIT".

11. Cheer sneakers are required for game days as well as competition. If a cheerleader does not have on cheer sneakers at CheerZone a .5 point deduction will be applied to the final score on both dance and cheer routine.

12. No nail polish is to be worn to practices, games and competition. At CheerZone a .5 point deduction will be applied to the final score on both dance and cheer routines.

13. All hair needs to be pulled back and off shoulders for competition. At CheerZone a .5 point deduction will be applied to the final score on both dance and cheer routines.

### **RULE 23 – CHEERLEADING COMPETING**

1. All squads must participate in the NOFA competition CheerZone, and attendance will be taken prior to the competition. This is mandatory with no exceptions. This is inclusive of the Mandatory Fundraiser for CheerZone.

2. All squads have the ability and shall be able to compete at other cheerleading functions outside of NOFA's competition as long as it does not conflict with any NOFA games, practices, competitions, or functions!!!! NOFA COMES FIRST!

3. NOFA CheerZone competition will not be the responsibility of any one league, all leagues will split responsibility and participation equally or they will be subject to a fine levied by the NOFA Board and Cheer Coordinator. CheerZone will be run by NOFA Executive Board.

4. As far as CheerZone goes – the Beginner Level Teams will go out to compete only one time – they will do a 2 minutes 30 second Dance Routine – So trophies will need to be purchased for this event for CheerZone. The Beginner & Mini Cheerleaders will compete and then there will be awards. JV will compete and have their awards and then Varsity will compete and have their awards.

5. Divisions for CheerZone:

The divisions would be set as follows, this covers all age groups.

Div 1: 3 largest per submitted rosters – Top Four Squads

Div 2: Next 3 largest groups per submitted roster – Next Three Squads

Div 3: Final 3 remaining groups – Next Three Squads

Ø In the case that the squads have equal numbers, the previous years CheerZone finish will determine who moves to the upper division. For example there are two squads of 35 in division 1, the next 2 largest squads each have 25. The squad that finished higher in the previous years CheerZone would move up to Div 1.

6. Cheer sneakers are required for game days as well as competition. If a cheerleader does not have on cheer sneakers at CheerZone a .5 point deduction will be applied to the final score on both dance and cheer routine.

7. No nail polish is to be worn to practices, games and competition. At CheerZone a .5 point deduction will be applied to the final score on both dance and cheer routines.

8. All hair needs to be pulled back and off shoulders for competition. At CheerZone a .5 point deduction will be applied to the final score on both dance and cheer routines.

9. There will be a meeting with Cheer Directors and Judges prior to CheerZone.

10. All score sheets will be reviewed by a judge or NOFA board member before the runner takes them to be tallied. This is to ensure they are filled out completely.

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