

Welcome

Welcome to the Northampton Youth Football League (NYFL). This handbook was developed to help our adult and youth members understand how our organization operates and what is expected of all parents/participants and volunteers. While we cannot cover every contingency in this handbook, you are asked to follow the spirit of what is outlined here, and allow common sense to prevail. NYFL is organized and operated by volunteer members- your input is always welcome.

Mission:

Our mission is to teach football to youths between the ages of 8 and 15, which will help them meet their individual goals. The training will take place in an environment based on the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, courage, loyalty and respect for oneself and others.

Organization:

NYFL is a non-profit Massachusetts Corporation, governed by By-Laws. We are affiliated with the Suburban Amateur Football League (SAFL). We have 3 divisions of teams based on age and weight policies established by the SAFL.

Rules and Policies:

Every parent/participant is required to read this handbook and abide by the policies outlined here. All parent/participants are required to return a signed parent/participant contract signed by both parents and participant certifying that they have read and understand this document.

Roles and Responsibilities:

NYFL is operated entirely by volunteers- every activity that is a part of our program occurs through the efforts of volunteers. Board members and coaches donate approximately 200 hours or more per person, each season, to ensure we can offer the highest quality program to children. It is critical that every volunteer be treated with courtesy and respect at all times.

There are a variety of levels of involvement within our program here are some examples:

***Board of Directors:** These volunteers are elected to a one-year term by the general membership. They are responsible for the management of all operations in the program, including oversight of all volunteer networks. Other board members are appointed, as needed for one-year terms as per the By-Laws.*

***Coaches:** These volunteers manage all practices and games for NYFL. Coaches are the primary instructors for the players. They are responsible for the supervision, teaching of plays, running drills, discipline on the field as well as management of parent relations and communications. All issues should be directed at the head coach or one of their assistants for resolution.*

***Parent Volunteers:** We need at least 20 volunteers for each home game to set up, staff, and closing up the concession stand, chain gang, and field crew. Every parent is required to volunteer in some way shape or form unless they pay the “Opt out” fee at registration. Documentation of volunteer hours will be kept to assure compliance.*

***Football Players:** Every child is expected to put forth their best effort, both on and off the field, and to abide by the rules and regulations in this handbook and the players code of ethics.*

Citizenship:

NYFL is known for pride and respect- to each other, any other SAFL program, their leadership to coaches, parents, teachers and fellow classmates. Any derogatory comments, mocking of others, gossip, or criticism that is not constructive in nature will not be tolerated.

Required Adult Conduct:

The support of parents is essential to the success of any youth program. This support should, however, be of the off the field variety in such activities as fundraising, promotion, equipment maintenance, team sponsorship, and other volunteer activities. On occasion, well-meaning parents can become overzealous and cause unwarranted problems. For the safety and well being of everyone involved NYFL provides these rules concerning parent conduct.

- A) Parents should clearly understand that the purpose of this program is to teach children teamwork, good sportsmanship, fair play and the love of the game.*
- B) Alcohol, smoking, and drugs will not be permitted at the practices or games or at any other NYFL activity.*
- C) Parents must stay in the areas designated by the local programs during all practices and games, nor are they to approach the coaches or officials during a game.*
- D) Parents are expected to cheer loudly for your team, but always in good taste and never in a way that is disparaging to the opposing team. Un-sportsmanlike conduct is prohibited at all times, and can result in penalties to the team on the field.*
- E) Derogatory statements toward game officials or the opposing team is prohibited and can result in the forfeiture of the game.*
- F) A positive mental attitude, free from parent pressures, is an important ingredient for the success of any youth program. Adults will refrain from open criticisms, especially in the presence of children of the program, coaches, or any personnel connected with the program.*
- G) Parents should encourage attendance at all practice sessions. Absences impede progress for the rest of the team as well as for the child who is absent. Missing practices can lead to limited playing time during the game. Missing practice should be limited to illness or serious injury. Children with minor injuries or mild illness can still benefit from observing at a practice session. You must notify your coach if an absence occurs.*
- H) Parents are responsible for getting all players to and from all games and practices, on time. Please have players there 15 minutes prior to the start of practice and 60 minutes prior to the start of a game. Parents are required to arrive 15 minutes prior to the end of practice. It is not the responsibility of the coaching staff to wait for parents to show up to pick their children up.*
- I) NYFL cannot be held responsible for the health and welfare of unattended children. (Siblings of players) should not be left unattended.*

Required Youth Conduct

Hard work and dedication will be required before you can wear the uniform of the team. Being a member of the team requires much more than just learning about playing the game of Football.

- A) Vulgarity, temper tantrums, taunting and fighting are absolutely prohibited. Any player observed displaying improper conduct below the acceptable standards of NYFL will result in disciplinary action or dismissal.***
- B) If you are going to miss a practice or a game, you must notify one of your coaches. You are expected to arrive at games and practices on time, or to alert your coach if you are going to be late or have to leave early.***
- C) Report all problems to your coaches immediately. It is your responsibility, not your parents, to keep your uniform and equipment clean and in good repair. Football uniforms must be clean before every game.***

Should violations of the required conduct or other policies outlined in this handbook occur, they will be handled in the following manner.

- 1. First incident: The head coach will take the player aside and speak with them privately about the behavior and consequences. The incident will be documented.***
- 2. Second incident: The head coach will meet with the player's parents and the player privately, again documenting the incident.***
- 3. Third incident: The incident will be reported to the President or Vice President of NYFL. The player will be suspended one game. The incident will be documented.***
- 4. Fourth incident: The incident will be documented and the player will be dropped from the team roster.***

Adults:

The NYFL board of directors has established a NO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR IMPROPER ADULT BEHAVIOR. Each adult will be required to sign an Adult Code of Ethics. Violation of the Adult Code of Ethics will result in the removal from any practice, game or function of NYFL for the entire season.

Communications:

We welcome your ideas, concerns and input at all times. If you have a question or an insight to share, you should begin with the players head coach. If you do not feel that the situation is resolved, you can speak with the Parent Liaison, President or Vice President of NYFL. Please remember, if you have a complaint, you must be part of the solution.

Attendance:

Attendance at all practices and games is mandatory. Each participant is allowed only 2 unexcused absences from practices. Participants are only allowed 4 unexcused absences total. The only excused absences are:

- 1) Medical/Injury (with doctors note excused absences can be extended)*
- 2) Academic (with proof of field trip or other school activity)*
- 3) Religious (worship or education)*
- 4) Family emergency (with note excused absences can be extended)*
- 5) Family obligations (vacations)*
- 6) Another activity in which the player has been involved for several weeks and in playoff/championship (such as baseball)*

Playing Time:

Each player should anticipate receiving fair play time according to the SAFL By-Laws.

Handouts:

As a player, you are sometimes given handouts at practice. It is your responsibility to bring them home to your parents, make sure that they read them, if there is an announcement at practice please be sure to pass it along to your parents.

Safety:

Your Child's Safety is our highest priority. The following measures will be followed at all times:

Food and water: It is your responsibility to bring adequate sized water jugs to each practice. Coaches will supply water on game days. Water breaks will be taken as needed, and all players are responsible for picking up their own empty containers.

Conditioning: Conditioning exercises will be a part of each practice and game to ensure that the player is able to keep up with the rigors of the sport.

Equipment: Helmets are evaluated by an outside vendor to ensure quality and safety. The head coaches inspect all equipment prior to the start of the season, if necessary equipment is replaced.

Players are to wear a complete league approved uniform for games. Current year game jerseys or pants are not to be worn during practices. 1 mouth guard and 1 pair of Gold Sox will be provided by the NYFL. Each player is responsible for their equipment, keep track of it. The cost of maintaining and replacing football equipment is the largest expense for the league. Each player is responsible for the equipment issued to them. All equipment must be returned to the league at the end of the season. Treat your equipment in a responsible manner. Equipment maintained properly and in good condition is critical for your safety.

If a player separates from their team before the end of the season, it is the player and parents responsibility to return all equipment issued after it has been cleaned.

Certification: All coaches are National Youth Sports Certified (NYSCA).

Registration:

A player will not be permitted to play or attend practice without the proper registration forms filled out and returned to the league. A copy of the player's birth certificate is mandatory to complete the registration process.

Parent Meeting:

A mandatory parent meeting will be held at the beginning of the season. All players' parents new and returning are required to attend. It will be held at R K Finn Ryan Road practice field and it is imperative that all parents attend. The meeting will give you a chance to hear from the coaches, board members and to get vital information regarding the program and schedule.

Board Meeting:

Board meetings are held monthly. Notification will be sent out 7 days prior to meetings and all are encouraged to attend.

Thank you,

2006 NYFL Board of Directors

Northampton Youth Football Adult Code of Ethics

Northampton Youth Football is a non-profit organization, with the sole purpose of promoting youth tackle football, instructional, competitive and academic excellence. These goals cannot be attained without the active participation and cooperation of parents/guardians and other adult volunteers.

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my child and other children participation with this program by following this Code of Ethics:

- *I will encourage and demonstrate by example the importance of good sportsmanship and positive support for all players, coaches and officials at all practices and games.*
- *I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child above my personal desire to win.*
- *I will assist in an Alcohol and Drug free environment.*
- *I will assist in teaching my child that rules are important and must be followed.*
- *I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.*
- *I understand that verbal and physical abuse is not to be tolerated against anyone in this organization including profanity and foul language.*
- *I understand that racial epithets or negative innuendo related to a person/players race, religion or ethnicity will not be tolerated.*
- *I will show respect for all officials, coaches and volunteers.*
- *I will not create conflict by slander, malicious rumors or threats, nor will I entice others to do so.*

By signing below, I understand that the NYFL had adopted a NO TOLERANCE POLICY. If I violate any of the Code of Ethics it will result in my child's and my/our participation from any NYFL activity for not less than the balance of the current season, or as determined by the NTFL Executive Board.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

Player(s) Name: _____

Northampton Youth Football

Parent/Player Contract

Code of Conduct Parent/Player Contract

- *I/we have read the Participation Handbook, understand and agree, as parents/guardians of the below named child to abide by the role of parent and player's code of conduct and assume absolute obligation for my/our child to participate in this your program.*
- *The child named below has read, understands and agrees to abide by the player code of conduct.*
- *As the parent/guardian of the below named child, do hereby give my/our permission for my/our child to participate in the NYFL activities for the current season. I/We assume all risks and hazards to this participation for any claims arising out of injury to the below named child, including, but not limited to, transportation to and from such activities. I/We hereby waive, absolve, indemnify and agree to hold harmless the NYFL, SAFL, organizers, coaches, board members, participants, person providing transportation and any organization this youth football program may be affiliated with.*
- *I/we as parents/guardians agree to fulfill our volunteer obligation during the course of the season, or agree to pay the "Opt out" fee.*

I/We have read and fully understand the provisions of the consent/release authorization, and I/ we voluntarily sign it.

Player's name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____