



## Youth Athletics Manual

### Youth Football

2015

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## **Youth Sports Mission**

The City of Clinton Parks and Recreation youth sports program mission is to provide sports activities to all who want to participate. These sports are provided to encourage learning, social interaction, physical exercise, skill development and, most important, fun.

## **Tackle Football Mission**

This program is to teach and promote good sportsmanship through the sport of football for kid's nine to twelve. This is regardless of race, creed or nationality. The program will be designed to teach the fundamentals and skills of football, in an atmosphere conducive to developing sound mind, body, and character. This program will strive to make the game "FUN" for all participants.

## **Participation/Eligibility - General**

1. All Clinton youth are eligible to sign-up for recreational team sports despite ability level.
2. The Department will permit eligible family members and non-residents to play on Clinton recreational teams under the following conditions:
  - The rules of the specific sport league permit it, and all forms have been completed.
  - The resulting team size is within the minimum and maximum team size.
  - The players and their guardians agree to abide by general operating and youth sport policies set forth.
  - The coaches involved are consulted

### **Participant /Eligibility – Specific**

1. To be eligible for the Junior Division, a player must be at least nine (9) and not older than ten (10) before August 1st of the season.
2. Weight requirements are as follows for the Junior Division:
  - a. Max Run Weight: 105 lbs
3. To be eligible for the Senior Division, a player must be eleven (11) and not older than twelve (12) before August 1st of the season.
4. Weight requirements are as follows for the Senior Division:
  - a. Max Run Weight: 135 lbs.
5. Official weights will be taken during observation. Only one weigh in is allowed.
6. There will be a 9lbs. Growth weight allowed during the season.
7. Eligible players are those that may play in the position of offensive backfield, receivers, or advance an interception or fumble recovery.
8. All eligible players must wear a jersey number between 1-49 or 80-89.
9. All ineligible players must wear a jersey number between 50-79 or 90-99.

### **Draft / Evaluation**

1. A draft will be held to assign participants to teams.
2. There will be a player evaluation day (observations) prior to the draft (which may occur on the same day).
3. A player who does not show up to the evaluation will be blindly drafted to a team.
4. Head and one assistant coach's child may be protected during the draft. This however, will require that the team loses the first round or first and second round of the draft.

### **Equipment**

1. Players are responsible for furnishing their own equipment to include helmets w/ face bars, shoulder pads and pants with pads. The league will furnish a game jersey. **Helmets must be N.O.C.A.S.E. approved.**
2. All equipment must be approved by the league and worn in all practices and games. A player without necessary equipment will be allowed to attend but not participate in practices and games.
3. A coach may allow practice without equipment pads so long as that practice is non-contact. Helmets are still required even for those types of practices.
4. Athletic shoes or molded rubber cleats must be worn. NO screw – in or metal cleats allowed.
5. Any player found to be using unapproved equipment will not be allowed to participate in practices and games until approved equipment is shown.

## **Practices**

1. Only two official practices are allowed per week. Unofficial practices are not allowed.
2. Official practices will be scheduled between the coach and the Sports Coordinator.
3. Practices will last no longer than two hours and no practice will be allowed on Sundays or Wednesdays.
4. Any coach to be found in violation of these rules will be suspended from the following game.

## **RAIN-OUT POLICY**

It is the intention of administration to play all games when it is safe to do so. Staff is instructed to make all decisions based upon the safety of the players, not on the willingness or unwillingness to play of the participants. If you have questions as to whether games will be played or not, you may call **601-924-0888**, visit the Parks & Recreation Web page at [www.clintonparksandrec.com](http://www.clintonparksandrec.com), or subscribe to the Field Status Remind® System by texting the phrase “@CPRDfields” to the number 81010 (preferred method, as the telephone hotline DOES NOT get updated on weekends). When games are canceled, coaches will be informed first, it is the responsibility of the coach to inform players/parents. The Remind® system is the first line of defense for gaining such information about field closures (resulting in game cancellations).

It is the responsibility of the Team Representative to call and find out when games are rescheduled, however, the SportsSignup system will send out an automatic email to participants when the schedule is updated online by a league administrator.

## THE GAME TACKLE FOOTBALL

1. Other than those changes outlined in these rules, the regular tackle football rules adopted by the National High School Federation will govern play and all disputes will be settled according to these rules.
2. Games will be played eleven (11) vs. eleven (11).
3. Teams must have at least nine (9) players ready to play 10 minutes before the start of every game.
4. If nine (9) players are not present the game ends in a forfeit.
5. If both teams do not field at least nine (9) players the game ends in a 0 – 0 tie.
6. The team with more than nine (9) players can only play as many players as the other team can field.
7. Games shall consist of two (2) 24 minute halves with a running clock.
8. A one (1) minute break at half of each half and a five (5) minute break for halftime.
9. Each team is allowed two (2) 60 – second time outs per half.
10. All participants must play at least ½ of the game. Also, each participant must start in at least one (1) position during the season.
11. Scoring will be as follows:
  - Touchdown = 6pts
  - 3 yard Extra Point = 1pt
  - 5 yard Extra Point = 2pts
  - Safety = 2 pts
  - \*No field goals
12. Linebacker Blitz only from the outside of the tackle. No linebacker blitz from the inside.
13. No nose guard lined up on the center.
14. Dead ball when recovered by an ineligible player.
15. Linemen must be in 3 point stance.
16. Players must have colored mouthpieces unless attached to the helmet.
17. Visors must be clear.
18. Home team responsible for down marker chains. These are to remain on the home side of the field (scoreboard side). \*\*Adults only. **Referee score is official.**
19. Forward pass must be beyond line of scrimmage.
20. NFHS rules will govern overtime during regular season games.
21. (1) Coach is allowed on the field for the Junior Division ONLY.
22. (1) Coach is allowed on the field for the 1<sup>st</sup> Half ONLY, for the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 games of the season for Senior Division. Coaches **ARE NOT** allowed after the second game for the Senior Division.
23. Junior & Senior Tackle Divisions will use “Junior.” sized football.
24. “Mercy Rule”
  - A. After one team is ahead by 28 points or more, the losing team gets one offensive series to continue regulation play. If they do not score, the game will enter “scrimmage mode.” In scrimmage mode, the losing team will get two consecutive offensive possessions, each of which will end when they score or fail to achieve a first down per normal game rules.. After the two consecutive possessions, the winning team will get one offensive possession that will end when they score or fail to achieve a first down per normal game rules. This will continue and follow the normal clock until there is five minutes left in the game. Once the mercy rule is reached and there is five minutes or less left in the game, the game is over. The reasoning behind this is to allow more play and the ability to learn while playing against another team.

Example: Team A just scored and is ahead 28-0 over Team B. Team B will get one possession to score to continue normal game play. If they do not score on that possession, the game goes into scrimmage mode. Team B would then get two possessions, and then Team A would get one possession and the pattern would continue until 5 minutes are left in the game.

## **THE KICKING GAME**

As of the 2014 season, we are eliminating the automatic 30 yard punt. The purpose of doing so will allow the teams to develop a snapper, punter, and punt receiver. In addition, it will add another element of football that they are not currently exposed to.

On 4th down, the offensive team can select to either (1) attempt the try or (2) punt the football to the other team. Please note that once you make the decision, your team has to complete that option. You do not have the authority to change your mind. However, if you are penalized on a 4th down play, you now have the option to re-select between option 1 and option 2.

If they elect to attempt the try, the offense and defense will line up and attempt the try, just like it is a regular down.

If they elect to punt, the offensive team will line up in a punt formation. At the time of the snap, everyone on the offensive team will remain still (no firing off from the line), except for the snapper and punter. The snapper will put the ball in play when he snaps it to the punter. The punter will receive the ball and kick it away to the defensive team's designated punt returner. All 11 members of the offensive team will remain in position and will not pursue the punt or punt returner. If a pursuit occurs, the whistle will be blown immediately, the offensive team will be penalized 5 yards from the original line of scrimmage, and we will replay the down.

If an offensive team elects to punt the football, the defensive players will lineup in a punt return formation (no one lined up over the center). At the time of the snap, all players of the defensive team will remain still (no firing off from the line). The punter will kick the ball to the punt return. If the punt returner catches the ball, then he is automatically down and the change of possession will occur at that location. If the punt returner elects not catch the ball, then the change of possession will occur where the punt ball comes to a rest. If the punt return muffs the catch (touches the ball while in flight, but does not catch the ball cleanly), the change of possession will occur when the punt returner obtains complete possession of the ball.

If the center snaps the ball over the head of the punter, the punter has the opportunity to retrieve the ball, return back to his original position at the time of the snap, and punt the ball. This should not be difficult since the punter will not be receiving any pressure from the defensive team.

No fake punts - If you choose to punt the ball, then you will punt the ball. If you elect to run a "fake punt" play, the whistle will be blown immediately, you will be penalized 5 yards from the original line of scrimmage, and we will replay the down.

## **PROTESTS**

1. The only protests allowed are for player eligibility (player weight, birth date, etc.).
2. All player eligibility protests are to be settled before the game begins. After the start of the game, player eligibility protests will not be deemed valid.
3. Questions regarding rule interpretations will be settled by the League Coordinator and/or his designee.

### **Proper Procedure for Protest:**

1. Protests must be made before the game begins. All game referees and the opposing coach are to be made aware of the protest immediately. The protest must be noted on the back of the score card (kept by the referee).
2. All protests must be accompanied by a written description of the nature of the protest before the game is allowed to begin.
3. There is a \$100.00 protest fee. This fee must be presented at the time of the protest, or the protest will not be deemed valid. If protests are deemed correct the \$100 will be returned. If a protest is lost, the fee will go to a Parks & Recreation General Fund.
4. Protest information must include the following:
  - a. Date, Time and Place
  - b. Name of Referee
  - c. Player Name and Number being protested.
  - d. Any other essential facts.
5. After the protest description and fee are submitted, and the protest is deemed correct or incorrect, the game will begin.\*Exception – for protests where players have to be weighed, the player in question may play the game at their current eligible position. The player must be weighed by a Clinton Parks and Recreation staff member by 5:00 p.m. the following day. If the player is found to be over the allowed weight, or allowed 9 lb growth weight, the game must be replayed and the \$100 will be returned. If the player is found to be within the allowed weight, or under the allowed 9 lb growth weight, the \$100 will be kept and the result of the game stands.
6. If the protest is deemed correct and valid, the player that was found to be ineligible will not be allowed to play in that game. The player's team may face additional penalties if league rules were broken.
7. If a player was found to be playing at eligible positions but was over the allowed weight/exceeded the allowed growth rate for the season, the player will be allowed to play future games as an ineligible player (ex: Player originally playing as running back but was found to have exceeded allowed growth weight later in season. That player could play future games as a lineman). This will only be allowed with written approval from the League Coordinator.

### **Rules for Parents and all other Spectators**

1. All spectators are to remain behind the spectator line which is 10 feet from the sideline.
2. Each team's parents and spectators are to remain on their respective side of the field before, during and after each game. Home Team = Scoreboard side of the field, Visitor Team = Opposite side of the field.
3. Additional guidelines for parents and spectators are outlined in the Code of Conduct. All parents must sign a code of conduct after the teams have been formed.