

# **SUBURBAN AMATEUR FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

## **BYLAWS, CONSTITUTION AND RULES OF PLAY**

**March 2022**



**[www.saflfootball.com](http://www.saflfootball.com)**

The following Constitution and Bylaws describe the Suburban Amateur Football League organization and the rules and regulations by which it operates.

### ***Article 1 – Name***

This organization was formed at the Ludlow Boys Club in 1966 and is known as the Suburban Amateur Football League (SAFL).

### ***Article 2 – Purpose***

It is the purpose of the Suburban Amateur Football League to provide wholesome and healthy recreation for youths in the 8-14-year-old age bracket. It is the intention of this organization to lay down fair rules of play, and strictly adhere to these rules for the benefit of all the teams entered in this league.

It is the responsibility of member organizations of the League to provide a supervised activity that will stress sportsmanship, skill development, enhance physiological and psychological development, and most of all, be FUN. Each organization shall be responsible for the conduct of their teams and support staff and instruct and enforce the principles stated in the SAFL Code of Ethics, especially in attitude and intent.

### ***Article 3 - Governing Body***

The SAFL is governed by a body of member representatives, a Commissioner and an Executive Committee consisting of three Vice Commissioners, a Treasurer, a Recording Secretary and a Webmaster. Each member representative (also called League Representative) represents each participating organization.

A simple majority of members of the league in good standing and present at any meeting shall constitute a quorum to conduct the business of the league at a regular or special meeting. The Commissioner may conduct a telephone or email vote when the need arises. The organizations representative's vote should reflect the desires of their organization. League representatives have the dual responsibility of representing the Leagues rules and regulations to their respective organization.

### ***Article 4 – Membership***

Membership in the Suburban Amateur Football League shall be open to teams representing any community, sub-division or organization in the Greater Springfield.

**Section A:** Membership shall be contingent on:

1. providing an entry consisting of a Senior, Junior, and a Pee Wee football team
2. adherence to the League constitution and Bylaws, and such other Rules and Policies as established by the voting membership
3. meeting all financial obligations and assessments set by the League by the due date
4. completing and filing with the League an organizational application, no later than May 1st.

The League shall have the right to impose territorial limitations on any entrant as a means of equalizing the population base from which entrants draw their players.

Acceptance for membership for an organization shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of League membership. Each organization is a separate entity, privately organized, sponsored and directed by the various members of that organization.

**Section B:** New membership - Application shall be made in writing, at a regularly scheduled meeting, to the Recording Secretary prior to March 1 of any given year. An organization that voluntarily drops out of the League for any valid reason that is accepted by the League membership has a one (1) season grace period in which to re-enter the League. After one (1) season the organization must re-apply for entry into the League.

**Section C:** Suspension of membership: Any individual, team, or organization may be suspended from membership for:

1. violation of League Bylaws rules, the Code of Ethics, or Coaching Certification precepts
2. conduct that is detrimental to the League and its stated purposes
3. failure to meet its financial obligations
4. exhibiting or condoning behavior that could jeopardize the welfare or safety of any participant, official or spectator.

Suspension shall be by act of the Commissioner or a two-third vote of the League membership. An individual, team or organization suspended from the League that seeks reinstatement must follow the procedure for redress of suspension detailed Addendum 4.

### ***Article 5 – Officers, Members and Committees***

The officers of the League shall be a Commissioner, three Vice-Commissioners, two Conference Coordinators, Treasurer, Recording Secretary and Webmaster.

**Commissioner** - The Commissioner of the League will chair all meetings, call special meetings, and make rulings on all disputed questions regarding the rules and regulations of the League not specifically delegated pursuant to these bylaws. The Commissioner will assess penalties and perform other duties associated with this office including recruiting of new league members and arranging such meetings as may be beneficial to the overall interests of the SAFL. The Commissioner will serve as the liaison between the SAFL and the Head of Officials

The Commissioner shall appoint at minimum, the following committees:

- A. Conduct and Violations Committee** - The committee will be appointed by the Commissioner of the League, to review and recommend actions regarding: a) protests, b) violations of rules, c) violations of the Code of Ethics, or d) violations of the bylaws.
- B. Bylaws Committee** - A committee of at least three members which reviews, updates and publishes the League's Constitution, Bylaws and Rules of Play, they will meet annually. The by-laws may not be changed between April 1<sup>st</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> unless to comply with required official USA Football, NCAA and/or MIAA rules. By-Laws may be reviewed, discussed and amended between January 1<sup>st</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup>.
- C. League Alignment and Scheduling Committee** - A committee consisting of at least three members, at least one (1) from each current conference, which reviews conference alignment every two (2) years (on every even year) to assure safe and equitable competition and is responsible for scheduling league contests. This committee may meet on odd years if deemed necessary by the Commissioner or the SAFL Board.
- D. Other committees** shall be appointed as necessary to assist in the operation of the league.

**First Vice Commissioner** - In the event that the Commissioner is unable to perform the duties of the office, the First Vice Commissioner will assume the duties of the Commissioner.

**Vice Commissioner: Players** - He or She will assist the league in processing all player registration forms and team rosters.; He or She will assist the league in conducting the player's weigh-ins in accordance with the league bylaws. He or She may establish a weigh-in committee and serve as chairperson of said committee.

**Vice Commissioner: Coaches** - He or She will process all coach's applications. He or She will verify coaching certifications for all coaches and ensure that all coaching certifications are current. He or She will issue official league identification badges to all coaches and sideline personnel, who qualify.

**Treasurer** -The Treasurer is charged with the responsibility of collecting all dues and assessments, paying all appropriate bills, depositing such monies as are collected in a reputable banking institution and making reports of the conditions of the League at each regular meeting. The Treasurer serves as a resource for the assistance of the Treasurers of the member teams and is responsible for the acquisition, maintenance, and administration of all league insurance policies

**Recording Secretary** - The Recording Secretary will perform such duties as necessary to keep all written records of the operation of the League and record and make available minutes of all regular and special meetings to league members via email or SAFL website.

**Webmaster** - The Webmaster shall maintain the league website and social media pages. Further, the Webmaster shall write publicity, and report scores to the local newspapers and other media as appropriate.

**Conference Coordinators** – The Conference Coordinators will work directly with the Vice Commissioner of Coaches and of Players and deal with any issues that arise in their respective conference, such as scoring differentials being exceeded, player and coaching ejections, etc. If possible, these Conference Coordinators will be responsible for a conference that their organization is not a member of.

**Emeritus Board Member(s)** – An Emeritus Board Member shall be an individual who has previously served as a member of the SAFL Board of Directors for a minimum of five (5) years. A member emeritus shall enjoy all the rights and privileges of a regular member of the SAFL Board of Directors except that the emeritus member shall sit on the SAFL Board of Directors with a voice but no vote. Acceptance for membership as an Emeritus Board Member shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of League membership.

All officers of the League will serve a term of one (1) year, such term to be from February 1st of the current year to January 31<sup>st</sup> of the year following. Any officer may be removed for cause by a two-thirds vote of League members: Any vacancy may be filled by a majority vote at any regular or special meeting of the League.

### ***Article 6 - Rule Development and Enforcement***

The league representatives and officers of the league are responsible for the development and enforcement of league rules and regulations.

## ***Article 7 - Meetings and Voting***

Meetings of the Suburban Amateur Football League shall be called at the discretion of the Commissioner. A one week notice of such meetings shall be given. All meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. A simple majority of members of the league in good standing and present at any meeting shall be required to carry any motion, except for an amendment, or change to this Constitution and Bylaws which shall require a two thirds vote by membership and notice at the previous meeting.

Unless they are the designated representatives of their sponsoring organizations, the officers of the league will have no vote with the exception of the Commissioner, who in the event of a tie will cast a vote to break the tie.

There will be no voting on the interpretation of the rules, this being the duty of the Commissioner.

## ***Article 8 - Financial and League Liability***

Assessments are computed annually with bills being mailed prior to the start of the season. A partial payment of the annual assessment, In the amount of one half of the estimated annual assessment, must be paid prior to July 1.

The annual assessment is to be used for liability insurance coverage, cost of game officiating, and league administration and operating expenses.

The league will provide liability insurance for participating organizations and their members. The insurance premium must be paid in full prior to the due date. (The current available policy requires full payment by July 1st.) The balance of the annual assessment is to be paid by September 1st of the current season. Failure to pay, in full, the annual assessment by September 1st will result in any games scheduled for that entrant to be canceled.

The league assumes no financial obligation of the teams or organizations entered and cannot be held liable for the actions of the coaches, managers, or any other persons beyond the normal course of league operations as governed by these rules.

## ***Article 9 - Organization and Team Registration***

All organizations must register with the league no later than May 1st. At the time of registration, the organization must:

A. Submit an Organization Application containing:

1. The team - name of each team being entered into the league.
2. The name, telephone number and address of the organization's League Rep. and Officers in the organization.
3. The field name and location, at which home games will be played and the person and/or organization responsible for your home field.

B. Submit any date and time restrictions concerning the use of the home field. Late submission of scheduling information may cause home game conflicts that your organization must resolve.

## **Article 10 - Coaches Registration**

- A. Every coach in the SAFL must certify through USA Football by taking the USA Football Tackle Course.
- B. It is the responsibility of each town/organization to ensure that all o
- C. f their coaches/volunteers have completed a background check.
- D. Head Coaches must be at least 25 years of age at their registration. Waiver of this section is at the discretion of the SAFL Board of Directors.
- E. Upon completion of the required certifications, all coaches will be provided with a photo ID badge. The badge must be worn at all games to enable others (i.e., referees, medical personnel, and opposing coaches) to identify those authorized to be in the player's bench area and immediate sideline areas. Only coaches with ID badges are allowed on the sidelines or in the player's bench area.
- F. If the league determines that an uncertified coach or individual participates in league play, or is on the sidelines, all games in which the person has participated in will be declared forfeit.

## **Article 11 - Player Registration**

Player registration includes the completion of the League registration form, proof of age, weigh-in at league assigned weigh-in site and listing on the official team roster.

**NOTE:** Any player registered in the SAFL, shall only be registered on 1 team and 1 division within the SAFL and shall not play in any other youth tackle football league between the dates of August 1<sup>st</sup> and November 30<sup>th</sup>. Violations of this rule will be referred to the Conduct and Violations Committee.

**Section A: Registration Form** -The registration period for SAFL players ends prior to the first game week, and the final date for registration will be announced by the SAFL Board prior to the start of each player registration season. The sponsoring organization is to present copies of registrations in a manner as directed by the Vice Commissioner of Players. A clear copy of the player's birth certificate is required for all new players in the league or returning players who did not play in the previous season.

It is the responsibility of each organization to verify the accuracy of the data entered on the SAFL Player's registration form.

The league may use official school records to determine a player's eligibility, if a school fails to provide the league with a copy of that player's official record, the league may declare that player as ineligible.

If the league determines that an ineligible player has participated in league play, all games in which the player participated in will be declared a forfeit.

**Section B: Eligibility** – Eligibility to play in the SAFL is based on the following:

1. **Geographic** - The player must be a resident of the Town, City, or Territory of the sponsoring organization. Any School Choice student will be granted an automatic waiver to play in the town in which the player attends school.

Request for geographical waivers may not exceed 10% of the team's roster.

2. **Grade and Age**

**Pee Wee Division**

- The player **must be** registered in the 3rd or 4th grade of any school.
- The player must be 8 years of age, or turn 8 years of age, by September 1st. and cannot turn 11 years of age on or before December 31st of the current football season.

**Note:** A waiver must be submitted to the league for any 2nd grader to participate in the Pee Wee Division. The player must meet age eligibility requirements. Towns with a roster of less than 20 players will be given special consideration for 2<sup>nd</sup> graders who don't meet age eligibility requirements. Any player that plays in the SAFL as a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader will be required to play three (3) years in the Pee Wee Division.

**Junior Division**

- The player **must be** registered in the 5th or 6th grade of any school.
- The player must be 10 years of age, or turn 10 years of age, during the player registration period, and cannot turn 13 years of age on or before December 31st of the current football season.

**Senior Division**

- The player **must be** registered in the 7th or 8th grade of any school.
- The player may not turn 15 years of age on or before November 15th or two weeks after the season is scheduled to be completed of the current football season. A request for an age waiver can be presented to the Commissioner and/or his designated Waiver Committee during the registration period and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. See Section C, Subsection 6 below.

**Note: It is the responsibility of each town's/organization's registrar to ensure that all of the above requirements are met for each player.**

**Section C: Eligibility Waivers** - Eligibility waivers may be submitted using the following procedure:

1. The town/organization requesting the waiver must fill out a Request for Waiver form.
2. There are four (4) signatures required on the waiver form; the director/president of the program requesting the waiver, the director/president of the program the player would normally play for, the parents of the player and the SAFL Vice Commissioner of Players. An email approval from the director/president of the team the player would normally play for is a sufficient alternative to a signature provided the player's information and reason for the waiver is included in the email and that email is directed to the director/president of the other program involved with the SAFL Vice Commissioner of Players copied on all emails.
3. If the two (2) towns/organizations cannot reach an agreement on the waiver, the SAFL Board will intervene and make a ruling.
4. Any waiver denied by the SAFL Board may be submitted to the League membership and requires a 2/3 vote of the affected conference league representatives to override the SAFL Board's ruling.
5. Unusual requests will be submitted to the League membership, by the SAFL Board. Requests of this nature will require a 2/3 vote of the affected conference league representatives.
6. Before an age waiver request can be considered, the candidate's supporting evidence (illness, accident, school difficulties, etc.) and a fair assessment of the candidate's physical stature must be presented to the SAFL Board. Age waivers will be considered on a case-by-case basis because each case will be unique.

**Article 12 - Equality of Competition**

**Section A: Divisions** - In the interest of competitive play and safety, the players are divided into grade and age categories called divisions. There are three divisions within the League: Pee Wee for 3rd, and 4th grade youths; Junior for 5th and 6th grade youths; and Senior for 7th and 8th grade youths.

**Section B: Conferencing** - Once all league applications are received the organizations will be grouped into conferences. The conference sizes and placement of the organization will be determined by the League Alignment and Scheduling Committee. The decision will be made prior to the schedule deadline and will be final and binding. The primary consideration will be to insure equality of competition and avoid mismatched teams as far as that is possible. Only after that has been accomplished, will a consideration be given to geographical factors. The assessment of a team's potential may be influenced by town population.

**Section C: Scheduling** -The schedule will be developed by the League Alignment and Scheduling Committee. The committee will take into account the number of teams and home field dates and/or time restrictions. The schedule will be submitted at the earliest regular meeting possible. Conflicts that are identified should be communicated to the League Alignment and Scheduling Committee by the organizations involved to seek an equitable solution prior to August 1st.



## ***Article 13 - Participation***

**Section 1: Mission Statement** -The SAFL endorses the concept of maximum athlete participation at all levels of play in the league. The SAFL encourages and enables youth to benefit from participating in football in a safe and structured environment. Throughout our league we teach sportsmanship, fundamentals, teamwork, skills and knowledge that youth will use throughout their lives.

**Section 2: Playing Time** - Playing time shall be monitored by each individual town/organization.

**Section 3: JV Participation** -Teams should have a minimum of 30 players on their roster in order to participate in the JV program. It is the discretion of the SAFL Board to allow towns to participate in the JV program that have less than 30 players on their roster.

**Section 4: Minimum number of players** – In order to play an official game in the SAFL, a team must have 15 players in uniform at the time the game starts. Failure to have 15 players in uniform at the start of the game shall result in a forfeit and a score of 1 to 0 will be recorded when entering the score.

**Section 5:** Any player who uses any kind of racial slur and is heard by a game official shall be ejected immediately and per MIAA rules that player cannot participate in practice for a week and is suspended for the next game.

## Article 14 - Weight

The following terms are used interchangeably throughout this rulebook: **Overweight player, Restricted player, Over Limit player, Game Shirt #50-79, Interior Lineman, and “Underweight player designated as a lineman.”**

**Section A: Weigh-In Policy** - All players will be weighed by the league prior to the end of the registration period. A player is permitted to be weighed only once, at the official weigh-in. Players will be weighed in shorts, game shirts, sock, and athletics shoes only. Any player exceeding the initial limit in Section C, below, will be designated as "overweight" and be limited to playing positions of interior linemen on either offense or defense. Game shirts #50-79 are to be used for overweight players. Exception: At the weigh-in a team may designate a limited number of underweight players as linemen for the season, assigning them overweight numbers for the season. Any player with a game shirt number #50-79 is considered an overweight player in Article 24, Section A (the “Rules” section.)

### Section B: Weigh-In Procedure

1. The Vice Commissioner of Players will detail the league weigh in schedule and procedures by July 1<sup>st</sup> of each playing season. Official league roster for each team will be authorized by the signature of the League Commissioner or his designee. Players may be added to the official roster with the authorization of the League Commissioner or his designate. Any and all changes to the roster must be approved by the League Commissioner or his designee.
2. Organizations will be assigned a date, time, and location of their organization’s weigh-in.
3. Team Registrars will escort their team into the designated weigh-in area. No coaches are allowed in the weigh-in area.
4. Players will only be weighed once and cannot be re-weighed once they leave the scale area.

**Section C: Weight Limits** - The following weight limits determine the positions a player is allowed to play

	<b>Pee Wee</b>	<b>Junior</b>	<b>Senior</b>
<b>Initial Weight</b>	80#	115#	135#
<b>In-Season Weight</b>	82#	120#	140#

**Section D: Late Weigh-In** -There will be a late weigh-in date which will be scheduled the week after the start of the season.

**Section E: Random Weigh-In** -At any time during the season, the Commissioner or a designee may randomly weigh any player to assure compliance with the weight limit promulgated above. Any player who exceeds the maximum weight will no longer be allowed to play an underweight position for the remainder of the season. The player's jersey number must be changed and the team's roster updated by the appropriate league official.

**Note:** At any time during the season, the Commissioner or a designee may randomly inspect a team’s roster and question any player as to their name, date of birth, address, etc.

### ***Article 15 – Varsity Game Starting Time***

Pee Wee division games are played first. Junior division games are played next with Senior division games immediately following the completion of the Junior game.

**Sunday start time: 12:00pm**

**Saturday Night start time: 4:30pm**

### ***Article 16 - Procedure for Cancellation***

Failure of a team to show up for a scheduled League Game will result in a forfeiture. Any team arriving later than one half hour after the scheduled start will forfeit the game. If a team arrives within the one-half hour grace period, a one-half hour warm up period will be allowed. Exceptions to this rule include the following: severe weather conditions; an accident; an emergency that, in the judgment of the Commissioner is valid; or when the authority of the field declares the site unplayable. **If the Commissioner finds the cancellation reason invalid a One Hundred dollar fine may be imposed on the team.**

If a scheduled game is canceled:

1. The team requesting the postponement must contact the other team and the League Commissioner or designee at least four (4) hours prior to the scheduled starting time.
2. The home team must contact the League Commissioner or designee.
3. A delayed game will be any game which is held up one hour from the original starting time. No game may be delayed for more than one hour.
4. All postponed games must be rescheduled within 10 days of the original date.

### ***Article 17 – Game Rosters***

#### **Section A: Roster Exchange**

Prior to the start of each game, both Varsity and JV, head coaches must introduce themselves and exchange game day rosters that were created through the SAFL website. Game day rosters shall include the players name, weight and jersey number. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. Failure to exchange a roster by a coach, must be reported by the opposing team's league rep to the SAFL Vice Commissioner of Coaches.

## **Article 18 - Emergency Medical Personnel**

The league requires that the home team or host site provide ~~for~~ on-field emergency medical personnel (at a minimum medical proficiency of Certified EMT) at each regularly scheduled Varsity and Junior Varsity games. A Certified Athletic Trainer is also acceptable. The EMT, Paramedic or Athletic Trainer must introduce themselves to the officials and both Head Coaches, prior to the start of each game.

The visiting team may provide their own EMT/Paramedic/Trainer to attend to their own players on field medical emergencies. The visiting team must introduce their EMT/Paramedic/Trainer to the home/host site's EMT, Paramedic or Athletic Trainer, to the referee and home team Head Coach prior to the start of the game. Emergency medical personnel other than an EMT, Paramedic or Athletic Trainer must be approved by game officials prior to the start of the Pee Wee game on Varsity game days and prior to the start of Senior games on JV game days. Games WILL NOT be allowed to start without proper medical coverage. This is the responsibility of the officials and the home/host site.

- A. The league requires that the home team provide for on-field emergency medical personnel (at a minimum medical proficiency of Certified EMT) at each scrimmage.

The organization designated as the home team, or the host site, must have an AED on site (and accessible) or with their medical person during all games and scrimmages. It is highly recommended that an AED be available during practices also.

Failure to comply with any of the above will result in cancellation of the game and the home team forfeiting. A second offense will result in the organization being suspended from the league until the requirements are met.

The EMT/Paramedic/Trainer fees will be paid by the home team in Varsity games and the EMT/Paramedic/Trainer fees will be split by both teams in Junior Varsity games.

## **Article 19 - Field Preparation**

It will be the obligation of the home team to furnish all necessary equipment to run a ball game, ten yard chains, down markers and suitable playing field of regulation size and markings for high school play.

Pre-game field preparation must include:

- A. The field is to be lined so all boundaries can be clearly discerned.
- B. Each 10-yard stripe, the goal line and the back corners of the end zone must be indicated by a marker. Numbered markers are recommended for the 10-yard stripes.
- C. Pee Wee Division: The playing field will be a total of 80 yards long. The 10-yard lines will serve as the end zone and the goal lines will serve as the back of the end zone. Two (2) cones must be setup at both 10-yard lines to indicate the end zone.
- D. All goal post uprights must be padded.
- E. The game field must be outlined by either a rope or other suitable markings to prohibit the spectators from encroaching upon the playing field or the area near the team benches. Each team will be responsible for policing this barrier on its side of the field subject to forfeiture of the game.
- F. If the visiting team determines the field conditions are not in compliance with this Article, the home team will have one half hour to correct the situation, then the game official can declare the field unplayable. The League will declare that the home team has forfeited the game.

## **Article 20 - Officials**

- A. Two Certified Officials are required to preside over every Pee Wee game. A minimum of two Certified Officials are required to conduct Junior and Senior games, although three Officials are highly recommended. If only two officials are present at the Junior and Senior games, they will split the third official's fee.
- B. The league requires that two certified officials be present at every Junior Varsity (JV) game.
- C. The home team is responsible for payment of all officials for all varsity games. Junior Varsity teams will split the cost of the officials.
- D. If you are a team that is considered a travel team each official gets an additional \$10 (once, not for each game) for travel expenses. Travel teams are: Amherst, Belchertown, Easthampton, Frontier, Franklin County, Northampton, Palmer, Quabbin, Ware and Warren/West Brookfield.

## **Article 21 - Field Facilities**

The following facilities are required for games and practices, as applicable:

- A. A coach must have a signed copy of the player's League Registration Form available at all games and practices. This form includes a Medical Release and if the player's parent(s) or legal guardian does not accompany the player to the hospital, the form must accompany the player to the hospital. The head coach is subject to expulsion from the League for violation of this requirement.
- B. Each organization will be responsible for providing each head coach with an appropriately equipped first-aid box, which is to be maintained and available for inspection at all games and practices.
- C. Ten-yard chains and down marker must be handled by responsible persons.
- D. If possible, a source of drinking water and toilet facilities should be available. The home team must notify the opposing team if they are not available.

## **Article 22 - Player Equipment**

The following equipment requirements must be met for all Divisions:

- A. NOCSAE certified helmet.
- B. Shoulder pads.
- C. Football pants with hip, spine, thigh, and knee pads.
- D. Athletic supporter and cup, where applicable,
- E. Chest protector, where applicable.
- F. Colored mouthpieces must be worn by all players. Clear mouth pieces are NOT allowed. Mouthpiece must be attached to the facemask of the player's helmet. After the ball is ready for play, an official identifies a player(s) who is obviously not wearing a mouthpiece. RULING: The player(s) must leave the game for at least one down and may not return until properly equipped with a mouthpiece. The player(s) may remain in the game by spending an available timeout, but they may not play until properly equipped.
- G. Sneakers or shoes with molded non-removable or removable cleat soles are approved. The cleats may not exceed ½".
- H. Jerseys - Uniform colors must be of such contrast to allow normal play without confusion. Team colors may not be changed without the consent of the SAFL Board.

If two teams scheduled to play each other have the same color jersey. It will be the responsibility of the home team to supply a neutral color jersey for use in that game. NCAA numbering system for interior lineman is recommended and numbers must be on the front and back of ALL jerseys. All players' uniforms must be alike.

Any player who is found to be in violation of this article during a League game will be removed from the field by the referees. The player may return to the game when the equipment deficiency has been rectified.

## **Article 23 - Football Specifications**

Any brand (either synthetic or leather) approved for Pee Wee, Junior, or Senior (Youth) regulation play shall be acceptable. The lower divisions are allowed to use a larger size, higher division football.

## **Article 24 - Playing Rules**

Games of the Suburban Amateur Football League will be played under amateur rules, specifically those of the National Collegiate Athletic Association and those rules modifications made by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, in addition to any special rules included in Article 24 – Playing rules or passed by the League governing body.

### **Section A: Overweight Players**

#### **1. Offensive Linemen**

At no time can an overweight player ever advance, carry, or run with the ball. The offense is allowed a maximum of five overweight players and they must occupy interior positions on the line of scrimmage at the snap. All offensive lineman must be lined up within 2 yards of the nearest offensive lineman, and there must be at least 1 offensive lineman directly to the left and right of the snapper (this makes the “swinging gate formation illegal.) The ends of the line of scrimmage must be occupied by an unrestricted player. Offensive players in all 3 divisions (Pee Wee, Junior & Senior) may utilize 2 or 3 point stance. Offensive linemen in ALL 3 divisions may Pull or Trap.

#### **2. Defensive Linemen**

The defense is allowed a maximum of 5 overweight players (Pee Wee Division a maximum of 4 overweight players, Article 23, Section K – 2) and they must occupy interior positions on the line of scrimmage at the snap. Overweight players on defense cannot lineup any further then **the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle with the inside shoulder of DL.** Defensive linemen must make first contact with a restricted player (Offensive Linemen) **Referees can enforce a 5 yard penalty for defenses that lineup an overweight players outside the allowed outside shoulder of the offensive tackle, after an initial warning.**

Defensive linemen may not retreat at any time to take up positions as linebackers or defensive backs: All defensive linemen must be in a down position, three- or four-point stance on the line of scrimmage at the snap.

Note: If the opposing team goes to an unbalanced offensive line, the defensive line must move in such a way that defensive overweight player’s lineup with offensive overweight players.

All Linemen (offense & defense) must wear #50-79.

Should a Lineman be inserted into the line-up in an underweight position during the game, the opposing head coach can call a timeout to bring this to the referee's attention and inform him that the game is being played under protest. The game will then be continued. The incident will be reported to the Commissioner by the protesting coach, after the completion of the game, independent of the outcome of the game. The team and/or the coach may be subject to suspension.

At no time may an underweight player be inserted into the game at an overweight position unless there are no other overweight players available. The player inserted into the lineup must turn jersey inside out and remain as a Lineman for the remainder of the game. The substituted player may not return into the game. The weight limitation also applies to punters and kickers (**pat , field goal and kick offs**)

## Section B. Kicking plays

### 1. Kickoffs:

**A: Senior Division** - As followed by NCAA rules. Neither the kicking nor receiving teams are allowed overweight players. If a team has less than 11 underweight players, but has at least 9 underweight players, the opposing team must field the equal number of players on their special teams. If the number of underweight players is under 9 for either team, the kick-off will be excluded and the ball will instead be placed on the receiving team's own 35 yard line to begin an offensive series.

**B: Junior Division** - Same as Senior Division. NCAA Rules Apply. Neither the kicking nor receiving teams are allowed overweight players. If a team has less than 11 underweight players, but has at least 9 underweight players, the opposing team must field the equal number of players on their special teams. If the number of underweight players is under 9 for either team, the kick-off will be excluded and the ball will instead be placed on the receiving team's own 35 yard line to begin an offensive series.

**C: Pee Wee Division** - There shall be **NO KICKOFFS**. At the start of each half and after any score, the ball shall be placed at the 40-yard line.

### 2. Punting:

**A: Senior Division** - Follow NCAA rules

**B: Junior Division** - Follow NCAA rules

**C: Pee Wee Division** - options of:

1. To be played as a free kick. No rushing offensively or defensively. There shall be no return, fair catches are allowed and the ball would be put in play where it comes to rest.
2. The team electing to turn the ball over on fourth down would be awarded 10-yard advancement in place of the punt.

### 3. Extra Points and Field Goals:

**A: Senior, Junior and Pee Wee Division** – The following scoring system shall be used for PAT:

One (1) point for PAT with successful completion, in the manner of a touchdown, via a RUN.

Two (2) points for a PAT with a successful completion, in the manner of a touchdown, via a PASS.

Two (2) points for a PAT with a successful completion, in the manner of a field goal, via a KICK.

The defense cannot score by manner of returning an attempted conversion, via a turnover, for all PAT attempts.

**B: Pee Wee Division** - The kick will be played as a free kick. Both the offense and defense must hold their positions until the ball is kicked. The ball may not be advanced by the kicking team. Fakes are not allowed. If the snap is muffed, the play is dead. After a failed field goal try, the receiving team will be awarded the ball at the original line of scrimmage. For a declared field goal try and for a declared PAT kick, the line of scrimmage will be advanced ten yards for the try. After a failed try the receiving team will be awarded the ball at the original line of scrimmage prior to it being advanced.

## Section C: Safety

1. **Pee Wee Division** - If a safety occurs, two points will be awarded to the defensive team and that team will be awarded the ball at their opponent's forty-yard line.
2. **Junior & Senior Division** - If a safety occurs, regular NCAA rules apply.



#### **Section D: Game Length**

1. Pee Wee Division- The game shall be played in four 12-minute quarters. Pee wee games will be considered a running clock, except the game clock will stop for the following: change of possession from a score, turnover, turn over on downs and timeouts, each team will have 2 full timeouts per half.
2. Junior Division - The game shall be thirty-two minutes divided into four quarters of eight minutes stopped time each. Each team will have 3 full timeouts per half.
3. Senior Division - The game shall be forty minutes divided into four quarters of ten minutes stopped time each. Each team will have 3 full timeouts per half.
4. Overtime - Varsity games only, all divisions: A coin toss, called by the away team will determine who has possession first. Each team will have one possession with the ball being marked for play from the 15-yard line with a first down possible. Each team will be allowed one (1) full timeout during the overtime period; otherwise NCAA/MIAA/SAFL rules will be followed. If neither team has scored after both teams have possessed the ball, the game will end in a tie. Kicking plays are allowed.

**Section E:** Any injured player requiring medical attention, will not be allowed to participate at practices or games until the head coach has received a written medical clearance from a physician that sufficient healing has taken place to resume participation in playing football. The head coach will include this clearance with the player's records. The medical clearance must be available for verification.

**Section F:** Any player with a splint, cast, or brace will not be allowed to participate at practices or games without proper protective padding. All protective padding must be inspected by the attending EMT and the game officials.

**Section G: Player Substitution** - the free substitution rule is always in effect in all divisions.

**Section H: Practice Sessions** – out of season contact with players by coaches is acceptable during the calendar year prior to August 1st. There shall be NO contact between players as equipment of any kind is prohibited, i.e. shoulder pads and helmets. Football camps, flag and touch football leagues are allowed. Reminder that all off season activities are not mandatory to players.

- 1) The first three days of football practice must be non-contact conditioning sessions consistent with the limitations described below. Non-contact shall mean that there will be no contact by a player with another player, with a machine, or with stationary pads. Sleds are not allowed. Physical activity during these three days of pre-season practice shall be limited to non-contact conditioning drills. Neither football gear nor protective equipment other than head gear, shoes, and porous light-weight jerseys and pants shall be worn by players during the three-non-contact day period.
- 2) A maximum of five (5) practice sessions per week are allowed prior to the start of school. After school starts, a maximum of four (4) practice sessions per week are allowed.

**Section I:** There will be no blocking below the waist. (This goes for both offense and defense)

**Wedge blocks/offensive scheme banned:**

No more than two offensive team players may form a wedge in an attempt to block for the runner. An illegal wedge is defined as two or more players either lined up shoulder to shoulder and/or interlocking arms within two yards of each other in an attempt to block for a runner. In addition, it can also be identified when a ball carrier starts an attack and is joined on both sides by teammates who attempt to drive the runner forward.

**Penalty:**

1. A foul for forming an illegal wedge whether during a punt return, a kick return, or from the line of scrimmage, the foul is loss of 15 yards enforced from the spot of the foul.
2. This is a live-ball foul, whether or not there is contact between opponents.

**Section J:** All players, whether designated JV or Varsity players shall be encouraged to suit up for all varsity contests. This is at the discretion of each individual town/organization.

**Section K: Additional rules for the Pee Wee Division**

1. There is **NO BLITZING** in the Pee Wee Division.
  - a. **Referees can enforce a 5-yard penalty for Pee Wee defenses that line up linebackers or defensive backs within 2 yards of the line of scrimmage after an initial warning.**
2. No more than two coaches from each team will be allowed on the playing field for the first 4 games of the season, Coaches are required at the snap of the ball to be at least 10 yards behind the last player in their team's formation. No coaches will be allowed on the field for the last 4 games of the regular season and playoffs. This refers to Varsity games only.
3. The defense is allowed a maximum of 4 overweight players and they must occupy interior positions on the line of scrimmage at the snap. No defensive overweight player may line-up directly over the offensive snapper or on either shoulder of the snapper. No defensive lineman can line up in the gaps. Defensive ends, although underweight players can cross the line of scrimmage and only defensive players on the line of scrimmage are allowed to cross the line of scrimmage at the snap. When the football is moved out of the tackle box all defensive players are eligible to cross the line of scrimmage to make the tackle. The tackle box is defined as a rectangular area at the beginning of the play, centered on the snapper of the offensive formation and extending five (5) yards laterally in each direction (generally the outside shoulder of the left offensive tackle to the outside shoulder of the right offensive tackle) and four yards longitudinally into the offensive backfield.
4. Punting - option of: A) - To be played as a free kick. No rushing offensively or defensively. The ball is put in play where it comes to rest. B) - The team electing to turn the ball over on fourth down is awarded a 15-yard advancement in place of the punt.
5. Time in Huddle - Time in huddle is limited to 45 seconds from the time of the previous plays completion. First offense is a warning, second offense and after is a delay of game penalty.
6. The playing field will be a total of 80 yards long. The 10-yard lines will serve as the end zone and the goal lines will serve as the back of the end zone. Two (2) cones must be set-up at both 10-yard lines to indicate the end zone.

## ***Article 25 - Violations***

All violations of league rules and ethics will be reviewed by the Conduct and Violations Committee. Any violation of the SAFL rules, regulations, and ethics as stated herein may result in an immediate suspension of the head coach, assistant coach, or organization.

In the event that the Conduct and Violations Committee determines that a player or coach has acted in a manner detrimental to the League's stated purpose, the Commissioner may bar that player or coach from any further participation In League activities.

Repeated or flagrant violations by assistant coaches or players may result in the suspension of the head coach or organization.

The Commissioner will send a letter to the penalized individual and organization with a full explanation of the infraction and penalty.

## ***Article 26 - Score Differential Review***

In the event of a winning point spread of greater than points listed, both head coaches shall be prepared to explain to the respective Conference Coordinator the reasons for such a score differential.

### **Score Differential per Division**

Pee Wee Division	24 points
Junior Division	34 points
Senior Division	44 points

If the scoring differential is exceeded in a game, both head coaches will email the respective Conference Coordinator within 24 hours of completion of the game and give an explanation of why and if substantial efforts were made by the winning team to keep the score under the scoring differential. If it is determined that substantial effort was not attempted to hold down the winning margin, the League may take disciplinary action.

## ***Article 27 - Protest***

During a game, any head coach may lodge a protest when the coach notes an infraction of League rules has occurred. The coach should request a time-out, notify the game officials and walk over to the opposing head coach and lodge the protest at the time the infraction is noticed.

This will not be a charged time-out to the protesting team. Additionally, the head coach must submit a written protest to the Commissioner of the League, this protest may be hand delivered or sent by certified mail, postmarked within forty eight (48) hours of the completion of the game, accompanied by a ten (10) dollar protest bond. If the protest is up held, the protest bond will be refunded, if the protest is denied or dropped the bond will be forfeited to the League treasury. The Commissioner, if necessary, will then as soon as practical, call a meeting of the Conduct and Violations Committee, and shall conduct a hearing with both sides present and any other persons necessary to fairly adjudicate said protest. Decisions of the Conduct and Violations Committee are FINAL.

## **Article 28 – Game Score Reporting**

It is the responsibility of the home team to enter the scores on the S.A.F.L. website within 24 hours of the completion of the game. Failure to do so may result in the suspension of the head coach of the home team for one (1) game.

## **Article 29 – Playoffs & Super Bowls**

The Scheduling and Realignment Committee shall determine the number of teams from each conference that will advance to the playoffs.

In the event that two (2) teams tie with the same record at the end of the regular season, the tie breakers will be:

1. Head-to-head play during the regular season
2. A coin flip

In the event that three (3) or more teams tie with the same record at the end of the regular season, the tie breaker will be:

1. Head-to-head play during the regular season. If no obvious team(s) can be determined by the head-to-head method, then step 2 will be utilized. (i.e., teams 1 and 2 both beat team 3)
2. All team names will be placed in a hat and the S.A.F.L. Commissioner or designee will pull out the number of teams needed to fill the seedings in the order of highest seed to lowest seed.

If at the end of regulation time the game is tied, regular season overtime rules will apply, with the exception that if no winner is declared after both teams have had a possession, then teams will alternate possessions until a winner is declared.

Officials for playoffs:

Quarterfinals: 3 Officials

Semifinals: 3 Officials – (4 if possible)

Super Bowls: 4 Officials - (Clock Official if possible)

Each participating team is responsible for half of the official fees and half of the EMT/Trainer fees in the quarterfinals and semifinals.

The SAFL will pay for the official fees and EMT/Trainer fees in the Super Bowls.

## **Coach's Code of Ethics**

The Suburban Amateur Football League has adopted the following Code of Ethics that coaches are obligated to follow. We feel that the conduct and responsibilities of the coaches involved in the League must be clearly defined.

This Code of Ethics along with the League's bylaws gives the League the general guidelines it will use to determine any disciplinary action that it deems necessary in the event of a complaint brought before the League.

## **Philosophy Statement**

The purpose of the Suburban Amateur Football League is to provide wholesome and healthy recreation for youths in the 8-14-year-old bracket. It is the intention of this organization to lay down fair rules of play, and strictly adhere to these for the benefit of all the teams entered in this League. It is the responsibility of member organizations of the League to provide a supervised activity that will stress sportsmanship, skill development, enhance physiological development, and most of all be FUN. Each organization shall be responsible for the conduct of their teams and support staff, and instruct and enforce the principles stated here, especially in attitude and intent.

## ***Ethics for Coaching***

Along with abiding by the philosophy statement previously mentioned, adhering to the League adopted Coaching Certification program Code of Ethics, and to the League bylaws, the following are more specific codes pertaining to League Coaches:

1. Never place the value of a win above the instilling the highest desirable ideals and character traits in your players. The emotional and physical wellbeing of all players should always be uppermost in your mind. Their safety and welfare must never be sacrificed for any personal prestige or selfish glory.
2. Abide by a doctor's, parent's or medical person-on-duty's decision in all matters of the player's health, injuries, and ability to play. It is the coach's duty to see that an injured player is given prompt and competent medical attention.
3. Under no circumstances should a coach authorize the use of drugs, prescription or illegal or other stimulants.
4. Under no circumstances should a coach endorse or prescribe weight loss or gain techniques.
5. Never make demands on players that will interfere with the player's opportunities for achieving academic success. There should be no more than four (4) practice sessions per week when school is in session.
6. Stress sportsmanship, participation, fun and the basic development of skills. At the end of the game, all coaches are required to meet at the center of the field and shake hands.
7. Become familiar with the objectives, philosophy, and rules of the game, especially those outlined in the SAFL bylaws. You will strive to achieve these objectives and communicate them to your players and their parents.
8. Never use any physical means against players, spectators, parents, officials, or other coaches.
9. Do not unduly criticize players in front of spectators, parents, or peers. Criticism is only good in a constructive form.
10. Do not use profanity or harsh words of any nature while conducting any affiliated activity of the League.
11. Do not criticize the opposing team, coaches, fans, or officials by word of mouth or gesture. Also realize that the opposing coaches are cohorts in providing instruction to children and the opportunity for them to have fun, just like you. Treat them with the same respect as you would want them to treat you.
12. It is the head coach's responsibility to report all violations of the SAFL Constitution and Bylaws and Coaches Code of Ethics to the Commissioner within forty-eight hours.
13. Never appear in public under the influence of alcoholic beverages at any time while conducting the activities and duties of coaching. Coaches must refrain from use of all tobacco products during all league functions where players may be present.
14. Remember, you are a youth coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.

## **Ethics for Game Play**

1. Never attempt to beat the rules of the game or take advantage of an opponent. You should set the example for winning without boasting and losing without bitterness.
2. Uphold the authority of the officials who are assigned to the contests that you are involved with. You will assist them in every way to conduct fair and impartial competitive contests. Verbal argument or chastising will not be tolerated. Any concerns regarding officiating should be forwarded through the appropriate channels of the League.
3. Be familiar with the rules, objectives and philosophy of the game of football. You are responsible for understanding and having read the SAFL bylaws, especially understanding the League's following of NCAA and MIAA rules, weight limitations and procedures, and proper protest avenues and procedures.
4. There shall be no electronic devices on the sidelines during games, such as tablets, electronic watches, etc. and the use of two-way electronic communication (headsets) is prohibited.

## **Ethics for League Interaction**

Scouting - Although open interaction and League involvement is encouraged, the documentation of opposing teams, via written, video and/or other media, is strictly prohibited. (A team MAY video their game) Remember, the game is to develop the skills, sportsmanship and FUN amongst the players without total emphasis on winning or taking unfair advantage of the rules or opposing team. Time and energy should be concentrated on the teaching aspect of the game and not the scouting aspect. If a team is caught scouting, the S.A.F.L. Board of Directions will impose disciplinary action.

## **SAFL Drone (Unmanned Aircraft Systems or UAS's) Policy**

Prohibiting the use of Drones (Unmanned Aircraft Systems or UAS's). Unless granted special permission by the SAFL Commissioner, the use of drones (UAS), for any purpose, is not permitted at any SAFL regular season game, playoff game or super bowl. This Prohibition applies to all fields of play and covers a ban on the entire facility being used as part of the SAFL event, including the spectator stands and parking area. This ban does not include practices.

## **Administration**

1. The Head Coach and/or the League Representative of the organization will be directly responsible that all league administrative paperwork and duties that involve the players are executed accurately and promptly to the best of their ability.
2. The Head Coach is also responsible to have all League administrative paperwork pertaining to eligibility and medical waivers present at all SAFL functions involving the players.

## **Team Decorum**

The coach is the ultimate supervising and teaching role for the players and the team. The coach has the ability to shape and control the attitude and actions of the players and team.

Thus the coach is responsible for the actions of his team and/or players unless circumstances warrant the actions uncontrollable and/or unforeseeable by the coach. This determination will be made through the appropriate channels of the League.

## **National Anthem Protest Policy**

A student athlete has the right to voice their first amendment right and protest the National Anthem in a respectful way. Kneeling, sitting, etc... quietly is appropriate and their right. Even though viewpoints may vary, it is important to note that this is a form of protective speech. At no point, can a coach hand/issue out any discipline in relation to this or any matter pertaining to an individual's right.

# TERRITORIAL BOUNDARIES

It is within the scope of the Alignment and Scheduling Committee to determine the appropriate conference alignments to promote safety and equitable competition. The following chart is provided for information only as it may have some influence in determining appropriate conference alignment and scheduling

**Agawam** - The Town of Agawam.

**Amherst** – The Towns of Amherst, Leverett, Shutesbury, and Pelham

**Belchertown** - The Towns of Belchertown and Granby

**Chicopee** -The City of Chicopee

**East Longmeadow** - The Town of East Longmeadow.

**Easthampton** -The towns of Southampton and Easthampton

**Franklin County** – The towns of Bernardston, Erving, Gill, Greenfield, Leyden, Montague, Northfield and Warwick

**Frontier** – The towns of Deerfield, Sunderland, Conway and Whately

**Holyoke** - The City of Holyoke.

**Longmeadow** - The Town of Longmeadow

**Ludlow** - The Towns of Ludlow and Indian Orchard

**Northampton** - The City of Northampton

**Palmer** - The Towns of Palmer and Monson

**Quabbin** - The Towns of Barre, Hubbardston, Hardwick, Oakham, and New Braintree

**South Hadley** - The Town of South Hadley

**Ware** -The Town of Ware

**Warren/West Brookfield** - The Towns of Warren and West Warren, Brookfield, North Brookfield, West Brookfield, East Brookfield

**West Springfield** - The Town of West Springfield.

**Westfield** -The City of Westfield.

**Wilbraham** - The Towns of Wilbraham and Hampden



### ADDITIONAL RULES FOR THE PEE WEE DIVISION

1. No more than two coaches from each team will be allowed on the playing field for the first 4 games of the season. Coaches are required at the snap of the ball to be at least 10 yards behind the last player in their team's formation. No coaches will be allowed on the field for the last 4 games of the regular season and playoffs. This refers to Varsity games only.
2. The defense is allowed a maximum of 4 overweight players and they must occupy interior positions on the line of scrimmage at the snap. No defensive overweight player may line-up directly over the offensive snapper or on either shoulder of the snapper. No defensive lineman can line up in the gaps. Defensive ends, although underweight players can cross the line of scrimmage and only defensive players on the line of scrimmage are allowed to cross the line of scrimmage at the snap. When the football is moved out of the tackle box all defensive players are eligible to cross the line of scrimmage to make the tackle. The tackle box is defined as a rectangular area at the beginning of the play, centered on the snapper of the offensive formation and extending five (5) yards laterally in each direction (generally the outside shoulder of the left offensive tackle to the outside shoulder of the right offensive tackle) and four yards longitudinally into the offensive backfield.
  1. If the opposing team goes to an unbalanced offensive line, the defensive line must move in such a way that defensive overweight player's lineup with offensive overweight players, except the snapper.
  2. No blitzing; linebackers and defensive backs to line-up at least 2 yards off the line of scrimmage.
    - a. **Referees can enforce a 5-yard penalty for Pee Wee defenses that line up linebackers or defensive backs within 2 yards of the line of scrimmage after an initial warning.**
3. Punting - option of a) - To be played as a free kick. No rushing offensively or defensively. The ball is put in play where it comes to rest. B) - The team electing to turn the ball over on fourth down is awarded a 15-yard advancement in place of the punt.
4. Time In Huddle - Time in huddle is limited to 45 seconds from the time of the previous plays completion. First offense is a warning, second offense and after is a delay of game penalty.
5. The playing field will be a total of 80 yards long. The 10-yard lines will serve as the end zone and the goal lines will serve as the back of the end zone. Two (2) cones must be set-up at both 10-yard lines to indicate the end zone.



# JUNIOR VARSITY (JV) RULES OF PLAY

The purpose of the Junior Varsity (JV) program is to provide an instructional venue for beginning and less skilled players. The emphasis is on teaching the fundamentals of the sport, not on winning. The League feels that this program should not be used to exclude any child from play in a varsity game. Each child participating in the JV program should feel like a member of the overall team and if conditions are right should be included in varsity games.

All rules applying to the regulation of divisional contests are applicable to a JV game. This includes all ethical considerations, including score differential.

The following additional rules apply to both the Senior and Junior Divisions:

1. All JV games will be played under regular game conditions.
2. All JV games should be played on a regulation field
3. Pee Wee games will have four twelve-minute running time quarters. Each Junior & Senior JV game will have four fifteen-minute running time quarters. The clock will be stopped for time outs called by either team or referees, and injuries. Each team will be allowed two full timeouts per half.
4. Each team may place two coaches, who are on the official roster, on the field. Coaches are required at the snap of the ball to be at least 10 yards behind the last player in their team's formation.
5. The league will provide 2 Certified Officials. Each referee will be instructed to look for the most flagrant fouls and any special concerns of the coaching staffs.
6. The host team is required to provide ten-yard markers and the home team is required to staff a chain gang.
7. The host team is required to provide an emergency medical person.
8. Varsity team starters are not eligible for the JV team.
9. Kickoffs - follow standard SAFL rules.
10. Punts - follow standard SAFL rules.
11. Recorded standings will not be kept.

The following rules apply to Pee Wee JV Division:

1. Pee Wee JV games are played under the same rules as Pee Wee varsity games, except for game timing.
2. Each game will have four twelve-minute running time quarters. The clock will be stopped for time outs called by either team or referees, and injuries. Each team will be allowed two full timeouts per half.

# **Procedure for Suspension and Reinstatement**

**Section A: Suspension Procedure** - When the Commissioner suspends an individual, team, or organization he or she must notify the League Representative of the affected organization within 48 hours of the decision to suspend. If the League representative is not available, the Head Coaches of the individual, team, or organization suspended must be notified within 48 hours.

**Section B: Appeal of Suspension** - If the Commissioner suspends an individual, team, or organization, the suspended party must file a Petition of Appeal of Suspension within 48 hours in order to be considered for reinstatement. The content of this petition is outlined below. The Executive Committee, acting as an Appeals Committee, will, within 72 hours of receipt of a petition of redress by certified mail to the league office, convene a special appeals committee meeting to consider any redress action. If possible, the meeting will be scheduled so as to take place prior to the next game.

At the special meeting, the Appeals Committee will conduct an inquiry in which the Commissioner and the suspended party will each have up to 1/2 hour to present all pertinent evidence in support of reinstatement or continuance of the suspension. After both parties state their case, the Committee may ask questions as appropriate. When the Committee is satisfied that all facts have been presented, a vote of the Appeals Committee will be taken. A simple majority of the Appeals Committee will determine whether to overturn the suspension. The decision is final and may not be further appealed except as outlined in paragraph C.

**Section C: Application for Reinstatement** - Individuals, teams or organizations that wish to:

1. Pursue a full league vote to present a compromise of a suspension during the season
2. Wish to seek reinstatement for the next season after a permanent suspension may petition, in writing, the Commissioner. The petition will be included as an agenda item at a regularly scheduled league meeting. The league representatives will vote to accept a compromise or reinstate for the next season at that regularly scheduled league meeting. A 2/3 majority of organizations present is required.

**Section D: Violation of MIAA Rules and rule with prior notice** - Violation of MIAA cannot be appealed. Violation of rules with prior knowledge of penalty cannot be appealed.

**PETITION FOR APPEAL OF SUSPENSION**

Date:

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Organization Name:

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Suspended Party:

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League Representative:

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Appeal Submitted by:

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Telephone #:

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Explain the Reason for Appeal:

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(attach additional documentation if  
necessary)

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Signature:

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Send by Certified mail, return receipt requested to:  
SAFL  
P.O. Box 805  
South Hadley, MA 01075

# National Standards for Youth Sports

## 1. **Proper Sports Environment**

Parents must consider and carefully choose the proper sports environment for their child, including the appropriate age and development for participation, the type of sport, the rules of the sport, the age range of the participants, and the proper level of physical and emotional stress.

## 2. **Programs Based on the Well-Being of Children**

Parents must select youth sports programs that are developed and organized to enhance the emotional, physical, social and educational well-being of children.

## 3. **Drug, Tobacco & Alcohol-Free Environment**

Parents must encourage a drug, tobacco and alcohol-free environment for their children.

## 4. **Part of a Child's Life**

Parents must recognize that youth sports are only a part of a child's life.

## 5. **Training**

Parents must insist that coaches are trained and certified.

## 6. **Parent's Active Role**

Parents must make a serious effort to take an active role in the youth sports experience of their child providing positive support as a spectator, coach, league administrator and/or caring parent.

## 7. **Positive Role Models**

Parents must provide positive role models, exhibiting sportsmanlike behavior at games, practices and home, while also giving positive reinforcement to their child and support to their child's coaches.

## 8. **Parental Commitment**

Parents must demonstrate their commitment to their child's youth sports experience by annually signing the Parent's Code of Ethics Pledge.

## 9. **Safe Playing Situations**

Parents must insist on safe playing facilities, healthful playing situations, and proper first aid applications, should the need arise.

## 10. **Equal Play Opportunity**

Parents, coaches, and league administrators must provide equal sports play opportunity for all youth regardless of race, creed, sex, economic status or ability.

## 11. **Drug, Tobacco & Alcohol-Free Adults**

Parents must be drug, tobacco and alcohol-free at youth league sporting events.