



Little League Rules & Regulations 2026

The National Federation High School Rule Book and North Carolina High School Athletic Association Handbook will be used with the exceptions listed below.

Organization:

The Davidson County Youth Football League (DCYFL) will offer a Little League Football program. The DCYFL Board will conduct all meetings, set schedules, officials, field supervisors, receive and check all rosters prior to league play, and supervise weigh-ins.

1. Age Requirements:

- 1.1. A child is eligible if he/she is in at least the fifth grade and is 10 years of age on or before August 31 of the playing year and has not advanced beyond the sixth grade and is not over 12 years of age on or before August 31 of the playing year.
- 1.2. If a child has advanced into the fifth grade due to starting school early then he or she will play Little League
- 1.3. Little League Football has a 2 year eligibility limit.
- 1.4. Any student suspended from school will not be permitted to participate in any games, until the suspension has been lifted and the student has returned to class.
- 1.5. See age chart.

2. Registration Policy: The following criteria will be used to determine which club a child participates with:

- 2.1. Booster club that represents the public elementary school in which he or she attends.
- 2.2. If the child attends a different public elementary school, he/she may participate with that booster club.
- 2.3. If a child attends a private school, charter school or is homeschooled then he or she will participate with the booster club of the public school for the address in which he or she resides.
- 2.4. Elementary school District is the standard graduation from elementary to middle to high school within the same district.
- 2.5. It is the responsibility of the football director to verify the residence of each player.
 - 2.5.1. This can be verified through a driver's license, lease, utility bill, or tax bill.
 - 2.5.2. A Lease must be accompanied by a utility bill and/or an electric bill.
 - 2.5.3. The legal guardians' name is required on all requested documents.
- 2.6. DCYFL reserves the right to review requested residence verification documents.
- 2.7. DCYFL reserves the right to declare a participant ineligible that has given false information.

3. Eligibility Change Policy: Once a child's booster club is determined, his/her eligibility would change only if there were change in the following:

- 3.1. Public School
- 3.2. Residence/Address
 - 3.2.1. The Davidson County address of the legal guardian will determine the resident status.
- 3.3. Transfer Request has been granted.
 - 3.3.1. Transfer forms and guidelines must be followed.

4. Transfer Request Guidelines

- 4.1. Transfer requests must be submitted by the Club's director.
- 4.2. A team is not permitted to transfer a player until the team has at least 30 players on the roster.
- 4.3. A team is not permitted to request a transfer for a player until **Aug.15th** unless the team has reached 30 players and the team's roster has been submitted.
- 4.4. Once the final roster is submitted and a transfer request has been granted the team can no longer add players.
- 4.5. Any rules or eligibility concerns after the date of the approved request both teams are subject to disciplinary actions such as but not limited to suspensions, forfeits and/or other.
- 4.6. All eligibility concerns must be submitted in writing to the DCYFL board.

5. Lexington & Thomasville Boundaries:

- 5.1. Do not sign up a player not within the boundaries listed.
- 5.2. If Thomasville or Lexington join the DCYFL, then all players will return to the appropriate club.
- 5.3. If a program accepts a player from Thomasville or Lexington, then the program must accept all players from that boundary (not including Charles England).
- 5.4. Directors for each program are responsible for verifying players from Lexington and Thomasville.
- 5.5. Thomasville Boundaries:
 - 5.5.1. South of the track-East Davidson
 - 5.5.2. North of the track-Ledford
- 5.6. Lexington Boundaries:
 - 5.6.1. Pickett Elementary-West Davidson
 - 5.6.2. Southwest Elementary-West Davidson
 - 5.6.3. South Lexington Elementary-Central Davidson
 - 5.6.4. Charles England Elementary-Central Davidson or West Davidson

6. Friedberg Elementary School Players

- 6.1. If a player will attend Oakgrove Middle School then he or she will need to play for Midway.
- 6.2. If a player will attend North Davidson Middle School then he or she will need to play for Arcadia/Welcome.

7. Out of County Residents: Out of County youth are allowed to participate following guidelines:

- 7.1. A fee of **\$150.00** will be paid to DCYFL in addition to your registration fee.
- 7.2. A maximum of 3 OUT of COUNTY players are allowed per team for each division.
 - 7.2.1. (Ex. West Davidson: 3 on LL, 3 on PW & 3 on JRPW)

8. Forms & Requirements:

- 8.1. Each booster club must have all registration forms, birth certificates, and physicals turned in by **Aug. 24th**.
- 8.2. All players are required to have a physical examination.
- 8.3. A birth certificate must be turned in with all participants' registration forms

9. Roster Requirements:

- 9.1. Rosters are due to the DCYFL Board of Directors by **Aug. 24th**.
- 9.2. A minimum of 15 players on a roster is required for a team to participate un approved by DCYFL.
- 9.3. A team may keep as many players as it wants, but a team cannot cut below 30 players if they have more than 30 players sign up.
- 9.4. If less than 30 players sign up all players must be kept.
- 9.5. A booster club can only cut off Sign ups as of **Aug. 24th** unless they have 30 players.
- 9.6. Any booster club wishing to have more than one team will be dealt with on an individual basis.
- 9.7. The Penalties for any ineligible player:
 - 9.7.1. All games will be forfeited
 - 9.7.2. Coach will be suspended
- 9.8. It is the Football Director's responsibility to verify all players' information.
 - 9.8.1. There will be 1 head coach.
 - 9.8.2. Maximum of 5 total coaches.

10. Athletic Appeal Process:

- 10.1. Must be made in writing to DCYFL within three days of assignment of consequence.
- 10.2. Only Parents/guardians, booster club presidents and/or head coaches have the right to be present at appeal.
- 10.3. Based on review of the appeal, DCYFL Board of Directors will adjust, revoke, or sustain the action.
- 10.4. The athlete is not eligible to participate in competition or activity during the appeal process.
- 10.5. In cases where action was taken directly by the DCYFL Board of Directors where dissatisfaction exists with the results of the appeal hearing, a secondary appeal may be made, within 3 days of the conclusion of the first appeal, in writing to the DCYFL Board of Directors.
- 10.6. The second appeal will be held by the DCYFL Board of Directors and must be held within 3 days of receipt of the appeal.
- 10.7. The athlete's parent/guardian will be notified of the results of the second appeal within 24 hours.
- 10.8. This decision is final.

11. Weight Requirements:

- 11.1. The maximum weight limit for DCYFL Little League Football Program is unlimited
- 11.2. Players playing skilled positions must weigh under 135 pounds.
- 11.3. **All players are Required to weigh in.**
- 11.4. Non-skilled position players will have a sticker on the back of their helmets.
- 11.5. Coaches and Directors are responsible for designating players restricted by weight.
- 11.6. Skilled Positions are considered the following: Quarterbacks, Running Backs, Tight Ends, Receivers, Kick Returners, Linebackers. Defensive Backs (any player with a designed run or catch)
- 11.7. In continuous play (fumbles, interceptions) anyone can make forward progress with the ball.
- 11.8. If a coach thinks the opposing team is using a restricted player out of position:
 - 11.8.1. They must call it to the attention of the officials, who will notify the opposing coach.
 - 11.8.2. The officials will watch to see if they catch a restricted player out of position.
 - 11.8.3. The coach will be given a warning.
 - 11.8.4. If the officials catch a restricted player out of position again, it will be an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty of 15 yards (for each time a restricted player is caught out of position during the game).
- 11.9. Weigh-In is scheduled: **Sept. 12th at the Jamboree**
 - 11.9.1. A schedule will be sent to the football directors.
 - 11.9.2. Makeup weigh-in date to be determined.

12. Summer Camps:

- 12.1. Teams are allowed unlimited conditioning (only) workouts throughout the summer.
- 12.2. No protective equipment of any type (No helmets, shoulder pads, or pants).
- 12.3. Any team who violates these conditioning guidelines will be ineligible for postseason play.

13. Conditioning: Aug. 1st-Aug. 5th

- 13.1. All players, even those players coming out after practice starts, must have 5 hours of conditioning sessions prior to their regular practice sessions.
- 13.2. The first two hours of conditioning will be with helmets, no shoulder pads, or padded pants.
- 13.3. The last three hours may be with pads (helmet and shoulder pads only)
- 13.4. No contact is permitted until all five hours are completed.

14. Practice: August 5th

- 14.1. A team may practice 5 times in one week (Mon.-Sun.) before the first scheduled game.
- 14.2. Once games have started a team may practice a maximum of 4 hours in no more than 3 days.
- 14.3. If a team has a scheduled bye, then the team may practice on the Saturday of their bye. Rainouts of games do not count as a bye.
- 14.4. Practices before games start are limited to 2 hours.
- 14.5. If Davidson county Schools are under a heat advisory then practices cannot start until after 6:00pm.
- 14.6. No restrictions when school is not in session.

15. League Play:

- 15.1. Jamboree is **Sept. 12Th**.
- 15.2. League play will start on **September 19th**.
- 15.3. Teams are not permitted to scrimmage out of DCYFL teams in Davidson County

16. Admission:

- 16.1. Regular Season Gate fee is \$5.00 per person that attends DCYFL games.
- 16.2. Gate fees may change at the discretion of DCYFL.

17. Coaches:

- 17.1. All coaches must be eighteen years old, no exceptions.
- 17.2. All head coaches and all assistant coaches must fill out a volunteer coach's form, coach's code of conduct form, and must pass the background check (booster club's responsibility).
- 17.3. Coaches are also required to complete:
 - 17.3.1. Concussion Protocol Policy Course (nfhslearn.com)
 - 17.3.2. Bullying, Hazing and Inappropriate Behaviors Course (nfhslearn.com)
- 17.4. All volunteer coaches' forms, background check forms and Concussion Protocol Policy certificate must be turned in no later than **August 24th**.
- 17.5. Coaches will not use profanity or use tobacco products or be under the influence of any drugs or alcohol on the field during practice or games.
 - 17.5.1. Violations can lead to suspensions.
- 17.6. The Head Coach is responsible for his assistant coaches and players and fans.
- 17.7. Coaches are not permitted to taunt, trash talk, make negative comments to or about opposing players. (EX. No asking the player how much he or she weighs).
 - 17.7.1. Violation of taunting, trash talk, and negative comments can lead to suspension.

18. Sportsmanship/ Ejection Policy:

- 18.1. Any coach ejected from a game will be suspended for the next game.
- 18.2. If the ejection occurs in that team's last game, the suspension will be for the first game of the next sport they coach or participate in.
- 18.3. Any coach ejected from a game must leave the playing area (Out of sight and sound).
- 18.4. Players may stay on the bench.
- 18.5. Any coach refusing to leave may be suspended for more games and the game can be forfeited.
- 18.6. Coaches, players, and spectators may be asked to leave the facilities for showing any type of unsportsmanlike actions, under the influence of alcohol, using tobacco products or harassment of umpires, fans, coaches and players, and recreation staff.
- 18.7. Participants meeting one of the following criteria will be suspended for 1 game.
 - 18.7.1. Biting observed by an official.
 - 18.7.2. Taunting, baiting, or spitting toward an opponent.
 - 18.7.3. Profanity- directed toward an opponent or official.
 - 18.7.4. Obscene Gestures- including gestures in such a manner to intimidate.
 - 18.7.5. Disrespectfully addressing or contacting an official.
 - 18.7.6. Fighting
- 18.8. Any teams having two incidents with coaches/parents/spectators being ejected or removed from the venue will be disqualified from participation in the postseason tournament.

19. Postponed Games/ Inclement Weather:

- 19.1. In case of inclement weather, coaches will be notified via: text, email, or website.
- 19.2. Prior to the start of a game, the field supervisor or DCYFL will have sole authority to postpone games.
- 19.3. After the games begin, officials will have sole authority to postpone or play games.
- 19.4. Make-up games will be scheduled if possible by the DCFYL.

20. Tournament:

- 20.1. Will be determined on how many teams are in each division.
- 20.2. Possible Gold & Silver brackets.
- 20.3. The 5th seed team can choose to play the first round game if there are only 3 teams in the silver bracket.

❖ **Playing Rules: North Carolina High School Athletic Association Handbook**

- 21. Games can start up to 15 minutes early.**
- 22. Protest:** There are no protests by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association Handbook
- 23. Unauthorized radios:**
 - 23.1. Radios are not permitted on the opposing sideline, stands, or pressbox.
 - 23.1.1. First Offense: The Head Coach is suspended for one game.
 - 23.1.2. Second Offense: The Head Coach is suspended for the remainder of the season and the team is not eligible for the postseason.
- 24. Unauthorized Filming:** Teams are not permitted to film any games their team is not participating in.
 - 24.1. First Offense: The Head Coach is suspended for one game.
 - 24.2. Second Offense: The Head Coach is suspended for the remainder of the season and the team is not eligible for the postseason.
- 25. Mercy Rule:**
 - 25.1. 24-point differential, or more, at any time during the game, results in a running clock.
 - 25.2. After a touchdown the losing team will receive the ball at their own 40-yard line with no option to receive.
- 26. Timeouts and Play Clock**
 - 26.1. The game shall consist of 4 eight-minute quarters.
 - 26.2. Teams are allowed a total of 4 timeouts during the game.
 - 26.3. A team cannot take more than 3 timeouts in a half.
 - 26.4. During the last 2 minutes of the game, a team that is ahead by 14 or more points will not be granted a timeout except for substitutions.
 - 26.4.1. The Clock will restart once substitutes are in the game.
 - 26.5. The game clock will stop on incompletions and out of bounds during the last minute of the 4th quarter.
 - 26.6. There will be a 25 second play clock. The 25 second clock will start as soon as the official places the ball.
 - 26.7. Playing time of 2 minutes per game is suggested for each player who is dressed and physically able.
- 27. Halftime**
 - 27.1. It will be 10 minutes.
 - 27.2. The homecoming game may take up to 15 minutes.
 - 27.3. The visiting team should use discretion during the homecoming game.
 - 27.4. All homecoming festivities should be done at half-time.
- 28. Punting:**
 - 28.1. On 4th down a team will have the option of trying for a first down or declaring they will punt.
 - 28.2. If a team chooses to punt, they will be awarded a free kick and can no longer advance the ball.
 - 28.3. The punter must remain in the restricted area (between tackle to tackle) and be 7 yards behind the LOS.
 - 28.4. Neither the offensive or defensive team can resume regulation play until after the punt.
 - 28.5. The offensive and defensive team will be given one warning per punt for any violation that occurs.
 - 28.6. After that warning, a penalty will be incurred by the violating team.
 - 28.7. Both the offense and the defense MUST have 5 players in the tackle box, it is prohibited to line up in the same formation for kick off or kickoff return.
- 29. Players Stance and Formation:**
 - 29.1. All players can choose to be in a 2-point, 3-point or 4-point stance regardless of position.
 - 29.2. Offensive Tackle UNCOVERED/ Illegal Formation - If a tackle is left uncovered (last man on end of line) and is a restricted player then the formation will now be deemed illegal and incur a penalty.
 - 29.3. All violations after will be a 10 yard penalty.
- 30. Tie Game:**
 - 30.1. If the score is tied, the tie will be resolved by the method approved by NCHSAA.
 - 30.2. The 10-yard line overtime procedure.
 - 30.3. The officials can determine a tie at their discretion.

31. Extra Point Tries:

- 31.1. The scoring team will have the opportunity to either go for a two-point conversion or one-point FREE kick.
 - 31.1.1. A team must declare which they are going to do.
 - 31.1.2. If the team chooses to kick, the extra point kick is dead.
 - 31.1.3. The defense is not allowed to rush or jump.
 - 31.1.4. After the team declares they will kick, the only way a team can score will be by completing a successful kick.
 - 31.1.5. No Fake attempts
 - 31.1.6. The play becomes dead if the kick is not off after 3 seconds after snapping the ball.

32. Football Size

- 32.1. The TDJ size football is the official ball.
- 32.2. Violation for using a non TDJ ball:
 - 32.2.1. Warning
 - 32.2.2. Unsportsmanlike Penalty

33. Team Responsibility:

- 33.1. Teams are responsible for cleaning up the bench areas after each game.
- 33.2. The visiting team is required to provide a chain crew.

34. Jerseys and Rosters and Equipment:

- 34.1. Jersey (and Numbers) should be assigned to players before the season begins.
- 34.2. Jerseys (and Numbers) are not to be changed unless damaged or lost; and the DCYFL and the opposing team should be notified before the next game.
- 34.3. Pacifier Mouth Guards: Are NOT permitted.
- 34.4. Face shields: Must be clear.
- 34.5. Teams will need to supply a team roster with coaches', player's names, numbers, and restricted players.

35. Tie in the standings:

- 35.1. Tie breaker is determined by:
 - 35.1.1. Head-to-Head
 - 35.1.2. Draw from a hat per NCHSAA.

- ❖ DCYFL has Zero Tolerance to: Drugs, Alcohol & Tobacco (vapes included). Violators will be asked to leave.
- ❖ DCYFL reserves the right to take any action necessary to benefit the objective of the program.

2026 New/Revised Rules

- 36. Play cards are now allowed to be worn on the belt.
- 37. Head slap is not allowed for both offense and defense, not just defense.
- 38. No decorations allowed on a mouth piece that is not manufactured on it.

⚡ Rules may be updated/edited at the League's Discretion.

⚡ The League's Board of Directors may assist the on field officials if required as long as there no conflict of interest.

⚡ The League's Board of Directors or Game Day Staff may enforce Rules pertaining to hosting or any on or off field conflicts.

Updated 8/29/26