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Municipal Football Tackle League (MFL)

Updated 06/01/2022

OFFICIAL TACKLE FOOTBALL RULES

Order and Operations:

The MFL shall be comprised of the following areas:

- Arlington Tigers
- Bartlett Panthers
- Briarcrest Saints
- Collierville Dragons
- Fayette County
- GFL 12U
- Lakeland Lions
- Millington Trojans
- Mt. Moriah Roadrunners
- LEC Cowboys
- Tipton Titans

Team Divisions:

The following divisions and weight classifications apply to this league:

- 1) **6U(Bantams) Flag:** A player must be **5 years old by August 1st** of the current playing season and must not have reached his/her **7th birthday prior to August 1st** of the current playing season.
- 2) **8U(Mitey Mites):** A player must be **7 years old by August 1st** of the current playing season and must not have reached his/her **9th birthday prior to August 1st** of the current playing season. **80lbs**
- 3) **10U(Pewees)** A player must be **9 years old by August 1st** of the current playing season and must not have reached his/her **11th birthday prior to August 1st** of the current playing season. **120lbs**
- 4) **12U(Juniors):** A player must be **11 years old by August 1st** of the current playing season and must not have reached his/her **13th birthday prior to August 1st** of the current playing season. **150lbs**

All directors will review all exception requests for any player that falls within one of the age bubbles. All directors must approve all requests for an age bubble player to play in the requested age bracket.

Weigh-ins:

All teams must have updated rosters to include weight submitted by the league deadline of the first two weeks in August of the current playing year. Weigh-ins will be conducted at two locations: North and South of I-40. All teams must declare which site they will attend, and if a player misses the weigh-in date, they are not allowed to play if they have been designated as a player who could advance the ball until the league hosts an additional weigh-in. If a player is questioned before, during, or after a game and they are not on the team's roster, then that team forfeits that game, and the opposing team is awarded a win.

A mid-season weigh-ins will be conducted to ensure any player has not exceeded the weight limit to advance the ball. A 5% tolerance will be allowed to account for an athlete's possible growth spurt.

All athletes who have been weighed in and are over the weight limit to carry the ball will have a large sticker placed on the back of their helmet, which will be used as an indicator that the player is not allowed to advance the ball.

The following procedures will be administered before, at, and after the weigh-ins:

1. Birth Certificates will be made available for review by the Director from all opposing teams.
2. A picture of the player must be kept on file with the official registration records at the time of sign-ups in TeamSnap
3. A complete/official weigh-in spreadsheet will be maintained, which contains the following information:
 - A. Player Name, Last/First, Jersey Number
 - B. Player Division, 6U, 8U, 10U, or 12U
 - C. Player Age at the time of Weigh-in
 - D. Player Birthdate
 - E. Player Official weight
4. All challenges – See general rules section 3.

Game Locations:

- Bartlett High School
- Ellendale Park/Freeman Park
- Herman Osteen Field
- Lakeland Middle School (LMPS)
- Arlington High School/Sports Complex
- Millington High School
- Tipton
- Bob Hailey Athletic Complex and Cameron Brown Park
- Willow Park
- Fayette-Ware High School

Practice Times:

- Conditioning can start the first week of June, and the first official practice is July 5th of the current season
- Please see Matrix for allowable practice time and pad limitations per week. Teams can practice for 5 days a week for the first two weeks of the season for a maximum of 10 hours per week.

(Mitey-Mite and Pee wee Only)

	Mitey-Mites		Pee wee	6th
Overall	4 hours/week		5 hours/week	N/A
Time in Pads	3 hours/week		4 hours/week	N/A

o **Game Fields/Markers/Balls:**

	Mitey-Mites	Pee wee	6th Grade
Field Size	80(60 at Ellendale) yard field	80- or 100-yard field	100-yard field
1st Down Length	10 yards	10 yards	10 yards
Balls	K2	TDJ	TDJ or TDY

Building Teams: (Mitey-Mites/Pee wees/Juniors)

Teams will be competitive teams and will be placed based upon a tryout. If the team eclipses 25 players, a j/v team will be added and will play a full schedule when possible. The head football coach shall assess the players and determine the roster.

Equipment:

- Every player must wear proper equipment and MFL-issued or approved uniforms. Shirt tails must be tucked entirely in or adequately hemmed.
- Football can be either composite or leather, but it must be properly inflated.
- Each team will be allowed one football on the field while on offense; that football must be sanitized after every use on the field. (Covid-19)
- Mouthpieces must always be worn during practice and games, with no exceptions.
- Clear, complete face shields are encouraged for each players Helmets (Covid-19)
- Football cleats should be worn. NO METAL cleats are allowed.
- Nothing may be worn that can cause injury to another player.
- Player's ineligible to advance the football must have an approved MFL-issued sticker on the rear of the helmet or a contrasting stripe down the middle of their helmet that indicates the player cannot advance the ball.

Coaches Rules:

- Each team shall have a head coach and an assistant coach
- Each coach shall have passed an annual background check and completed the USA Football Tackle or Flag Certification process
- Only registered coaches can be on the field in the coaches' box with their team during a game.
- One coach may stay on the field for offense and defense at the Mighty Mite Division and be more than 5 yards from the deepest player on the field of play. During gameplay, the Pee Wee and Junior teams will not have any coaches on the field.
- The on-the-field coach may not give instructions after the offense or defense has been set, or the ball has been snapped.
- Coaching from the sideline is permitted at any point in time during the game.
- The coaches' box will be from 25 to 25-yard line on a 100-yard field and 20 to 20 on an 80-yard field. Only three coaches are allowed in the box.
- Coaches will be required to wear an approved CDC mask/face covering at all times during games, and it is highly recommended during practice if social distancing cannot be maintained (Covid-19)
- All coaches must be registered in TeamSnap and USA Football
- Directors are required to go over the rule book with all coaches

Game Time:

All games will be four 8-minute quarters, with 8-minute halftime. Standard clock rules apply.

Clock stops during the following events:

- Touchdown
- PAT
- Time-outs
- Injuries (requires the player to leave the field for one play)
- Incomplete passes
- Out of Bounds
- Movement of chains
- Change of possession and clock management:
 1. If a team is more than 21 points behind in the second half, the clock will continuously run as it does in TSSAA Games. If the team behind gets the score within 14 points in the second half, the game clock will be run as usual.

2. If the score is tied at the end of regulation, only one overtime period will be played. A coin flip will determine the choice of offense, defense, or side of the field. The ball will be spotted at the 10-yard line, and each offense will have four downs to score.
3. Interceptions and fumbles may be returned for scores by the defense as long as the athlete is allowed to advance the ball. Otherwise, the ball will be spotted at the point where the turnover occurred.
4. The game will result in a tie if the score is equal at the end of the single overtime period. Playoff games will have multiple overtime periods to determine a winner.
5. A team is allowed 3 one-minute time-outs per half and do not carry into overtime. One time-out will be awarded for each team during each overtime period.

- Games shall be played on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

- All teams are encouraged to have game clocks available /visible and in use at all games. If a game clock is not available, the time will be kept on the field by the referee.

Scoring:

Points will be scored as follows:

Touchdown counts 6 points.

Points after touchdown (PATs) A. 1 point from the 2-yard line B. 2 points from the 3-yard line

The offense must declare to the official PRIOR to the huddle. Points may be made by passing or running. Kicking of 1 point, the extra point is allowed. This is a no-rush kick, and the ball cannot be advanced except by kick. If the holder must change the position to retrieve the ball, it becomes a dead ball. Safety counts 2 points.

Blocking and Defensive Alignment: TSSAA blocking rules apply, inclusive of:

A. No chop blocks outside of the neutral zone.

B. No Pick plays

C. No crackback blocks at the Mighty Mite level - 8U, 10U, and 12U, No defender can line up directly over the center and deliver a blow ("bull rush") or line up in the A gap for 8u and 10u. There will be no blitzing linebackers inside the tackles; they can blitz from outside the tackles. 10U and 12U Linebackers MUST blitz from 3 yards deep any time between the tackles. No more lining up right behind down lineman and blitzing gaps. All interior linemen in all age groups must be in three or four-point stans in the tackle box.

Special Teams:

Please see Matrix below for applicable rules:

	Mitey-Mites	Pee wee	6th Grade
Punt from Scrimmage	Walk off 30 yards and no closer than the 10-yard line	Walk off 30 yards and no closer than the 10-yard line. A punt is an option. No movement. No return.	Walk off 30 yards and no closer than the 10-yard line. A punt is an option. No movement on the line. The ball cannot be returned.
Kick-Off	None, the ball is placed on the 20-yard line	None, the ball is placed on the 20-yard line	Optional - the ball is placed on the 20 -yard line or Live-5-man front Ball is placed (kicked) from the 40-yard line
Field Goals	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Yes
Extra Point	Yes	Yes	Yes
Safety	2 points, ball put in play on the 40-yard line	2 points, ball put in play on the 40-yard line	2 points, ball put in play on the 40-yard line

Punting Option: 4th down is like any other down. Teams are given 30 seconds to run a play or elect to punt. If the coach wishes to run the 30 second play clock down to zero before electing to punt, he may do so. However, failing to get a playoff or electing to punt within 30 seconds will result in a delay of the game. If a delay of game penalty is enforced, the referees will not start the clock again until the snap of the ball on the next play. Once the coach elects to punt, the official will stop the clock and mark the ball accordingly.

Conduct: The League will not tolerate inappropriate behavior on the part of coaches, players, or fans during games or practices. The team Director and Head Coach will be responsible for the actions of his assistant coaches, players, and parents. Although head coaches can discuss specific plays/calls with the officials, the matter shall be dropped once the official has explained his call.

Foul language, abuse, or any hostile demonstration aimed at officials or anyone involved with the game will not be tolerated.

Any coach or parent caught in this situation will be immediately removed from the game and suspended for the next game. Under no circumstances will the league allow a coach, player and/or a parent to accost any official.

Penalties: All National Federation penalties apply. Listed below is a categorization of the most common penalties and their corresponding yardage.

- Five Yard Penalties
 - Illegal motion
 - Encroachment (Off-sides)
 - Delay of the game -A team has 30 seconds from the official's signal to put the ball in play.
 - Illegal Substitution
 - Unintentional facemask
 - Kick-Offs that land out-of-bounds (the team also has the option to take the ball where it landed out of bounds or 15 yards from the point it was kicked)

- Ten Yard Penalties
 - Holding
 - Block in the back

- Fifteen Yard Penalties
 - Clipping
 - Illegal participation
 - Offensive Pass interference (loss of down)
 - Defensive Pass interference
 - Intentional Facemask
 - Personal Foul
 - Unsportsmanlike conduct (the second incidence is mandatory ejection from the game and suspension from the next game)
 - Roughing the passer * * Automatic first down applies.
 - Intentionally leading with the crown of the helmet and making a helmet-to-helmet contact. (unintentional is not a penalty).

Fighting/Kicking even without contact is grounds for ejection from the game.

General Rules:

1. The HEAD COACH is responsible for the actions of players and spectators. Teams can be penalized for their actions.
2. OFFICIAL'S CALLS ARE FINAL. NO PROTEST.
3. If a player is challenged based on weight or age, an official complaint shall be filed with the league director. If a player's weight is challenged, the player's weight will be validated against the initial weigh-in. If more than one league director validated the initial weigh-in (they physically saw it with their eyes.), the child should be cleared to play. If the child was weighed in and only one party saw it, the child shall be weighed in before the next game and will be given a 2-pound variance over the initial weight limit. If the child is over, the child can no longer run or

catch the ball. In the event a team plays a child that is too old or over the weight limit on purpose, the team shall forfeit all the games played up to that point.

4. Coaches and parents should address any problems with your Director(s).
5. Fumbles are live balls and can be advanced by any eligible player (under the applicable weight limit).
6. Interceptions can be advanced by the defense if intercepted by a weight-eligible player.
7. Taunting by players, coaches or fans WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
8. Consistent belligerent behavior by any player will lead to disqualification from the game and possibly the season.
9. The visiting team for the day's first game is responsible for setting up the markers and working the first down marker and chains.
10. The home team of the last game of the day puts away all equipment.
11. The visiting team will call all coin flips.
12. The last two teams to play are responsible for picking up all the trash along their sidelines as well as on or around their bleachers. Failure to do so will result in a penalty for the Head Coach.
13. All coaches are responsible for submitting background checks by the assigned deadline. Anyone who fails to comply will be unable to attend practice or coach in a game.
14. Compliance Failure Penalties: Any coach, player, or parent who fails to comply with these rules will be subject to the following sanctions:
 - 1. the First infraction will result in a verbal warning.
 - 2. the Second infraction will result in a mandatory 1 game suspension.
 - 3. the Third infraction will result in expulsion from the league. All rules originate from TSSAA rules. Exceptions and clarifications are noted. Where not explicitly addressed, TSSAA rules apply.

Concessions:

Host cities will provide all concessions for game days, including volunteers. All profits will go back into the city program to offset the cost of football operations. Concessions will not be split.

Officials

The host team will pay all official fees.

Score Reporting

The host site shall track scores and report the score back to the league director for reporting no later than COB on Friday. Please report the scores to rtanj@msn.com.

Trophies

Trophies shall be provided to the championship teams and runners-up of the league. Trophy costs will be split among the areas.

All coaches and staff must review complete the following:

USA Football Certification: <https://footballdevelopment.com/courses-certifications>

CDC- guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>

Shelby County Health Department: <https://insight.livestories.com/s/v2/covid-19-frequently-asked-questions-directives-shelby-county-tn/a44aaf6f-f91d-4541-8ad9-0f99a7c60d7f>

TSSAA return to play: <https://tssaa.org/returntoplay>

Each team will have a daily screening process based on the safety guidelines listed below:

Covid-19 safety procedures for every practice and game:

Player Protection Questions and regulations:

No one whose temperature measures above 100.4°F will be permitted to enter.

- Player Screening: Screen players for COVID-19 symptoms before practice and competitions:
 - Temperature checks.
 - Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
 - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat?
 - Have you had a fever in the last 48 hours?
 - Have you had a new loss of taste or smell?
 - Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?
 - PPE: To the greatest extent possible, players, parents, and coaches are should be encouraged to wear appropriate PPE while they are not actively engaged in play (e.g., on the bench with other players).
 - Ventilation: Keep doors and windows open where possible to improve ventilation.
 - Signage: Post signs encouraging social distancing of at least six feet between players.
 - Cleaning: Consider providing disinfecting wipes and hand sanitizer at common touchpoint locations and request that players clean/sanitize any touchpoints or common surfaces they come in contact with, in addition to frequent and regular cleaning to be done by coaches or staff.

Maintaining Healthy Operations:

MFL Youth sports organizations should consider implementing several strategies to maintain healthy operations.

- **Protections for Staff and Players at Higher Risk for Severe Illness from COVID-19**
 - Offer options for individuals at [higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19](#) that limit exposure risk (such as virtual coaching and in-home drills).
 - Limit youth sports participation to staff and youth who live in the local geographic area (e.g., community, city, town, or county) to reduce the risk of spread from areas with higher levels of COVID-19.
- **Regulatory Awareness**
 - Be aware of state or local regulatory agency policies related to group gatherings to determine if events can be held.
- **Identifying Small Groups and Keeping them Together (Cohorting)**
 - Keep players together in small groups with dedicated coaches or staff, and make sure that each group of all players and coach avoid mixing with other groups as much as possible. Teams might consider having the same group of players stay with the same coach or having the same group of players rotate among coaches.
 - Consider staging within-team scrimmages instead of playing games with other teams to minimize exposure among players and teams.
- **Staggered Scheduling**
 - Stagger arrival and drop-off times or locations by cohort (group) or put in place other protocols to limit contact between groups and with guardians as much as possible. One example is increasing the amount of time between practices and competitions to allow for one group to depart before another group enters the facility. This also allows for more time to clean the facility between uses.
 - When possible, use flexible worksites (e.g., telework) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts) to help establish policies and practices for social distancing (maintaining a distance of approximately 6 feet) between employees and others, especially if social distancing is recommended by state and local health authorities.
- **Gatherings, Spectators, and Travel**
 - Avoid group events, such as games, competitions, or social gatherings, where spacing of at least 6 feet between people cannot be maintained.
 - Limit any nonessential visitors, spectators, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible – especially with individuals not from the local geographic area (e.g., community, town, city, or county).
 - Avoid activities and events such as off-site competitions or excursions (e.g., watching a professional team compete).
- **Designated COVID-19 Point of Contact**
 - Designate a youth sports program staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. All coaches, staff, officials, and families should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- **Communication Systems**
 - Put systems in place for:
 - Consistent with applicable law and privacy policies, having coaches, staff, umpires/officials, and families of players (as feasible) self-report to the youth sports organization if they have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days in accordance with [health information sharing regulations for COVID-19](#)^{external}

2. Identify any person or person's you may have had contact with and let them know yours or your child's current status.

Practice and Game procedures:

1. The team or coaches will immediately isolation themselves and have no physical contact within there organization or other organizations within the MFL league, coaches, teammates, and staff.
2. If there is more than one player or coach who has symptoms or has tested positive for Covid-19, the whole team must go into isolation for 10 days or as stated within the current requirements established by the CDC.
3. Games missed during the isolation period may or may not be made up depending on the current season conditions. The Director and the Official will make the decisions on a case by case basis.
4. In the event, the games are not made up; it will be counted as a forfeit on that team's current season record.
5. All other rules and guidelines will be base on TSSAA return to play procedures.

MFL Youth sports organizations should consider implementing several strategies to prepare for when someone gets sick.

- **Advise Sick Individuals of Home Isolation Criteria**
 - Sick coaches, staff members, umpires/officials, or players should not return until they have met CDC's [criteria to discontinue home isolation](#).
- **Isolate and Transport Those Who are Sick**
 - Make sure that coaches, staff, officials, players, and families know that sick individuals should not attend the youth sports activity and that they should notify youth sports officials (e.g., the COVID-19 point of contact) if they (staff) or their child (families) become sick with COVID-19 [symptoms](#), test positive for COVID-19, or have been [exposed](#) to someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case.
 - Immediately separate coaches, staff, officials, and players with COVID-19 [symptoms](#) (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath) at any youth sports activity. Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on how severe their symptoms are, and follow [CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others](#) who are sick. Individuals who have had [close contact](#) with a person who has [symptoms](#) should be separated and sent home as well, and follow [CDC guidance for community-related exposure](#) (see "Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts" below). If symptoms develop, individuals and families should follow [CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others](#) who are sick.

- Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home or to a healthcare facility. If you are calling an ambulance or bringing someone to the hospital, try to call first to alert them that the person may have COVID-19.
- **Clean and Disinfect**
 - Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after [cleaning and disinfecting](#) them (for outdoor areas, this includes surfaces or shared objects in the area, if applicable).
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible. Ensure [safe and correct use](#) and storage of [cleaning external icon](#) and disinfection products, including storing them securely away from children.
- **Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts**
 - In accordance with state and local privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations, youth sports organizations should notify [local health officials](#), youth sports program staff, umpires/officials, and families immediately of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)external icon](#) and other applicable laws and regulations.
 - Work with [local health officials](#) to develop a reporting system (e.g., letter) youth sports organizations can use to notify health officials and close contacts of cases of COVID-19.
- Advise those who have had [close contact](#) with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and [self-monitor for symptoms](#), and to follow [CDC guidance](#) if symptoms develop.