

Official Rules

Football · 2024-2025

August 1, 2024 – July 31, 2025

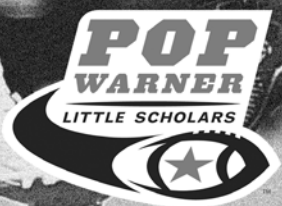
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General Code of Conduct

Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. is committed to cultivating a safe and welcoming environment for its regional and national events and programs that encourages and promotes good sportsmanship by student-athletes, parents, coaches, administrators and other spectators. We ask that event participants and attendees cooperate in being respectful at all practice and competition venues, partner hotels and/or ancillary venues throughout the course of the event. All those involved with the event are expected to refrain from the following behaviors:

1. Acting in a way that is unruly, disruptive or illegal in nature.
2. Intoxication or other signs of impairment that may potentially result in bad behavior.
3. Excessive use of profanities and other vulgar language that interfere with other attendees' ability to enjoy the event.
4. Using bigoted, demeaning or abusive or other disruptive and intimidating language and/or gestures.
5. Verbal or physical harassment of officials, athletes and coaches before, during and following the competition.
6. Disrupting the progress of competition (including physically entering or throwing objects onto the playing field or competition mat).
7. Interfering with or failing to abide by security or emergency procedures or response.
8. Displaying signs that contain offensive language, or any graphic art that may be deemed disrespectful.
9. Defacing, destruction or theft of property associated with the event, including property of the opposing team or other athletes, including officials, as well as official venues.
10. Violence or threats of violence against other individuals at any official venue.
11. Publicly criticizing or making derogatory statements of an official, opposing teams, event personnel or its policies, or other individuals associated with the event. This includes comments with respect to their conduct, character, competence, integrity or appearance. Note: social media is deemed a public forum.
12. Failing to follow instructions of event personnel.
13. Any behavior which otherwise violates conduct codes set by partner venues, hotels or ancillary venues including but not limited to theme parks, as enforced by those properties.

Failure to abide by these expectations are grounds for removal from competition. Pop Warner reserves the right to remove individuals or the entire team. Depending on the infraction, a one-year ban from Pop Warner events and programs will be considered. A repeat offense of the same infraction may result in a permanent ban. All removals will be without refund.

Members Code of Conduct

In addition to the aforementioned General Code of Conduct, all Pop Warner coaches, administrators and other program volunteers shall:

1. Create a positive, safe and healthy environment, free of abuse and harassment, for all athletes and their families.
2. Not criticize athletes in front of spectators, but reserve constructive criticism for later, in private, or in the presence of team members if others might benefit.
3. Accept decisions of the game officials and judges on the field and in competitions as being fair and called to the best ability of said officials.
4. Not criticize an opposing team, its athletes, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or by gesture.
5. Emphasize that good athletes strive to be good students and that both are physically and mentally alert.
6. Strive to make every athletic activity serve as a training ground for life, and a basis for good mental and physical health.
7. Remove from a game, competition or practice any athlete when even slightly in doubt about his/her health, whether or not as a result of injury, until competent medical advice is available.
8. Emphasize that winning is the result of good teamwork.
9. Not engage in excessive sideline coaching and shall not leave the bench area/coaches' designated seating area to shout instructions from the sidelines or competition mat.
10. Together with team officials, be jointly responsible for the conduct and control of team fans and spectators at all times. Any fan who becomes a nuisance and out of control will be asked to leave.
11. Not use abusive or profane language at any time.
12. Not receive any payment, in cash or kind, for services as a volunteer or athlete involved in Pop Warner. This includes any coach, expert, consultant or choreographer, regardless of his/her roster status.
13. Not recommend or distribute any medication, controlled or over the counter, except as specifically prescribed by the athlete's physician.
14. Not permit an ineligible athlete to participate in a game/competition.
15. Not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.

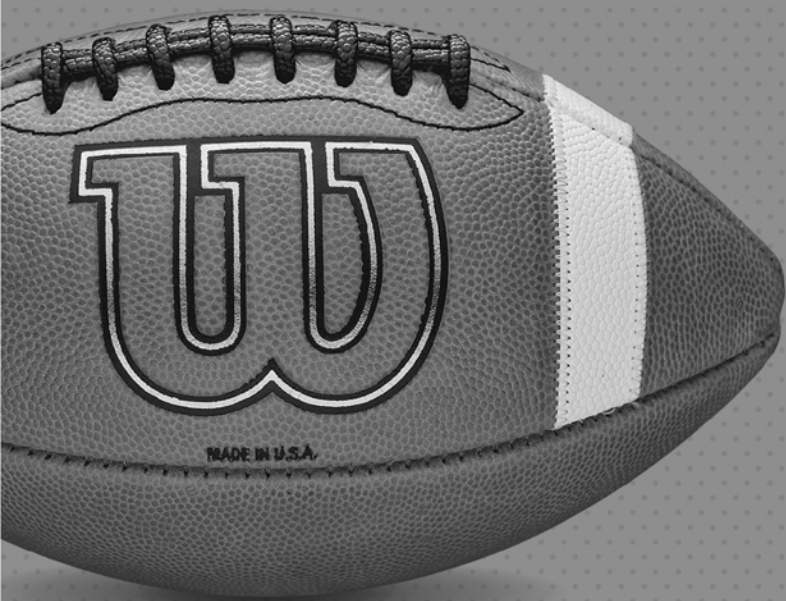
Members Code of Conduct

16. Not possess or drink alcoholic beverages and/or use illegal substance(s) on either the game, practice field/practice area or competition venue.
17. Not smoke, vape and/or use smokeless tobacco on the field.
18. Uphold all rules and regulations regarding Pop Warner programs.
19. Refrain from engaging in any action within or outside Pop Warner which in PWLS sole & absolute discretion reflects negatively upon, or causes embarrassment to, the Pop Warner program.

If any of these rules are broken, Pop Warner or its member league shall have the authority to impose a penalty including permanent removal from the program.

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Table of Contents

PART I: THE POP WARNER PROGRAM	12
NATIONAL OFFICE & REGIONAL MANAGEMENT TEAMS	12
NATIONAL REMARKS	12
ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL	12
MISSION STATEMENT.....	12
GOALS & PHILOSOPHY OF THE POP WARNER PROGRAM	13
PART II: POP WARNER STRUCTURE	14
DEFINITIONS	14
S1: LEAGUE	14
S2: ASSOCIATION	14
S3: ADMINISTRATORS	14
S4: TEAM	14
S5: LEVEL OF PLAY	15
INTRODUCTION TO THE RULES	15
PART III: POP WARNER REGULATIONS — ALL PROGRAMS	16
ARTICLE 1: POWERS/AUTHORITY OF LEAGUE	16
ARTICLE 2: BOUNDARIES	16
ARTICLE 3: RESTRICTION AGAINST DUAL MEMBERSHIP	17
ARTICLE 4: ANNUAL LEAGUE CHARTER APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & VARIANCE OF RULES	17
ARTICLE 5: COACHES REQUIREMENTS	18
ARTICLE 6: REGISTRATION	18
S1: PARENTAL CONSENT	18
S2: <u>MEDICAL FORM</u>	18
S3: PROOF OF AGE	19
S4: SCHOLASTIC FITNESS.....	19
ARTICLE 7: FORMATION OF TEAMS	19
ARTICLE 8: MANDATORY CUTS	19
ARTICLE 9: VOLUNTARY CUTS	20
ARTICLE 10: CERTIFICATION	20

Table of Contents

ARTICLE 11: RETENTION OF ELIGIBILITY	21
ARTICLE 12: DROPS AND ADDS	22
ARTICLE 13: NO ALL-STARS	22
ARTICLE 14: AWARDS	22
ARTICLE 15: PRACTICE	22
ARTICLE 16: CAMPS	22
ARTICLE 17: IMPORTANT POINT — MEDICAL & CONCUSSIONS	23
ARTICLE 18: CHARGING ADMISSION	24
ARTICLE 19: PROTESTS	25
ARTICLE 20: PATCH REQUIREMENT	25
ARTICLE 21: MANDATORY BACKGROUND CHECKS.....	25
PART IV: ENFORCEMENT POLICY	28
POLICE POWERS/HEARINGS & APPEALS	28
MINIMUM MANDATED PENALTIES	28
S1: ADULT OFFENSES	28
S2: JUVENILE OFFENSES	29
S3: TEAM AND ASSOCIATION OFFENSES	29
S4: REGIONAL AND NATIONAL PLAYOFFS	29
S5: ADDITIONAL OFFENSES	29
PART V: 11-MAN TACKLE RULES	30
RULE 1: AGES AND WEIGHTS	30
RULE 2: INITIAL WEIGH-IN; FIRST PRACTICE	32
RULE 3: IN-SEASON DETERMINATION OF WEIGHT	32
RULE 4: IN-SEASON WEIGHT INCREASE	34
RULE 5: FAILURE TO PASS IN-SEASON WEIGH-IN	34
RULE 6: CUTTING OF PLAYERS	34
RULE 7: CERTIFICATION OF PLAYERS	35
RULE 8: ROSTER SIZE	35
RULE 9: TEAM PLACEMENT IN DI/DII/DIII	35
RULE 10: MANDATORY PLAY RULE	36
RULE 11: THE FIELD AND MARKINGS	36
RULE 12: GAME BALL	37

Table of Contents

RULE 13: PLAYER DESIGNATIONS	37
RULE 14: REQUIRED EQUIPMENT	38
RULE 15: BLOCKING & TACKLING RESTRICTIONS	40
RULE 16: LENGTH OF PERIODS	40
RULE 17: INTERMISSION LENGTH	40
RULE 18: TIME CLOCK	41
RULE 19: TIME-OUTS	41
RULE 20: KICKOFFS	41
RULE 21: DUAL PARTICIPATION	41
RULE 22: PLAYERS.....	41
RULE 23: REGARDING INELIGIBLE PLAYERS	41
RULE 24: COACHES REQUIREMENTS	42
RULE 25: SCORING VALUES	43
RULE 26: SCORES	43
RULE 27: SIDELINE PERSONNEL	45
RULE 28: RADIOS & COMMUNICATION DEVICES	45
RULE 29: SCOUTING	45
RULE 30: CAMPS	45
RULE 31: NO TAXI SQUADS	46
RULE 32: PRACTICE	46
RULE 33: SCHEDULES	49
RULE 34: POST-SEASON & BOWL GAMES	51
RULE 35: TIE BALL GAMES	52
RULE 36: CONTACT WITH OFFICIALS	53
RULE 37: REG./NAT. CHAMPIONSHIP ELIGIBILITY	53
RULE 38: TINY MITES, 6U, 7U	54
PART VI: 6, 8 & 9-MAN RULES	57
ARTICLE 1: AGES & WEIGHTS	57
ARTICLE 2: ROSTER SIZE	57
ARTICLE 3: POST-SEASON PLAY.....	57
ARTICLE 4: MERCY RULE	57
ARTICLE 5: 6-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES	57
ARTICLE 6: 8-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES	58
ARTICLE 7: 9-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES	59

Table of Contents

PART VII: FLAG FOOTBALL RULES	60
ARTICLE 1: ORGANIZATION	60
ARTICLE 2: REGISTRATION	60
ARTICLE 3: DIVISIONS OF PLAY	60
ARTICLE 4: FLAG FOOTBALL RULES	61
RULE 1: PLAYERS	61
RULE 2: PLAYING FIELDS	61
RULE 3: EQUIPMENT	62
RULE 4: PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT	63
RULE 5: REFEREES.....	63
RULE 6: THE RULES OF THE GAME	64
RULE 7: SCORING VALUES	67
RULE 8: TIE GAME	67
RULE 9: INJURED PLAYERS	68
RULE 10: PRACTICES	68
RULE 11: SCHEDULES	68
RULE 12: TOURNAMENT PLAY	68
RULE 13: PENALTIES	70
RULE 14: PROTESTS	71
RULE 15: THE RULES OF THE GAME BY DIVISION	71
PART VIII: 7v7 NON-CONTACT FOOTBALL RULES.....	73
ARTICLE 1: OVERVIEW	73
RULE 1: PLAYING RULES	73
RULE 2: SCORING	75
RULE 3: PENALTIES	76
PART IX: CHALLENGER DIVISION	77

Please note: All rule changes that take effect in 2024 are underlined in this rule book.

Part I: The Pop Warner Program

NATIONAL OFFICE & REGIONAL MANAGEMENT TEAMS:

Pop Warner is led by a national staff and supported by an extended volunteer staff across eight (8) regions. The number and composition of regions is determined and may be changed from time to time by the Joint Advisory Committee of Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. (PWLS). The National Office may be reached at: P.O. Box 307 Langhorne, PA 19047 or via www.popwarner.com. When contacting the national office, please note your team and clearly identify your association and league.

NATIONAL REMARKS

PWLS is dedicated to the athletes who participate in Pop Warner and to their safety and enjoyment. The rules for Pop Warner activity of any type as published in this book are to be followed scrupulously. Failure to enforce these rules can result in legal action, dismissal and/or loss of charter. Each family and each adult volunteer in the program must be covered by excess medical and liability insurance of some type. Although participation in Pop Warner is statistically safe, such insurance should include coverage for “participant risk.” All programs must have minimum insurance limits of \$100,000 Medical, \$1,000,000 General Liability, and \$1,000,000 Sexual Abuse/Molestation in order to participate.

All Pop Warner programs and activities are open to youth – males and females – including “mixed/co-ed” teams.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL

The Pop Warner Administrative Manual is designed to keep each League and Association current on all administrative matters, as well as to facilitate the daily operational management of those local organizations. This Rule Book and the Administrative Manual are not the personal property of the volunteer, but belong to PWLS.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Pop Warner Little Scholars is to enable youth athletes to benefit from participation in team sports and activities in a structured environment. Through this active participation, Pop Warner programs teach fundamental values, skills and knowledge that young people will use throughout their lives.

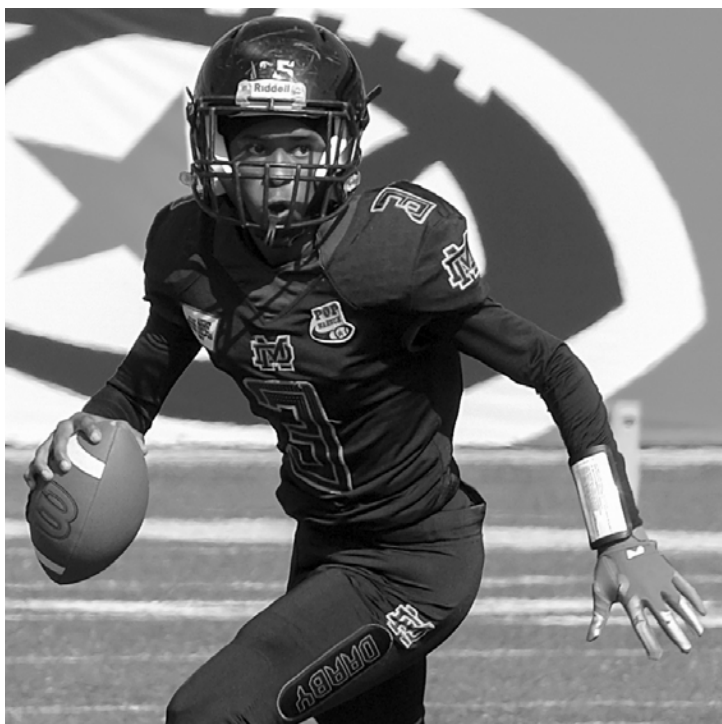
Part I: The Pop Warner Program

GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE POP WARNER PROGRAM

Pop Warner is an international program operated for the benefit of its youth athletes. Since 1929, the program's philosophy has been that academics and athletics go hand-in-hand. At every level, Pop Warner seeks to develop well-rounded young athletes who learn not only the fundamentals of football, cheer & dance, but also the importance of education, in an atmosphere conducive to developing sound mind, body and character – and having an enjoyable time along the way!

The objectives of Pop Warner are to inspire youth, regardless of race, creed, religion or national origin, to practice the ideals of sportsmanship, scholarship, and physical fitness, as reflected in the life of the late Glenn Scobie "Pop" Warner.

Pop Warner strives to make the game fun for all athletes. The program stresses learning lessons of value that will transcend their participation in Pop Warner, such as: self-discipline, teamwork, determination, friendship, leadership, and good sportsmanship. With such goals in mind, and by providing an opportunity to participate in an organized, supervised environment with emphasis on maximum safety and participation, Pop Warner offers young athletes a unique and memorable opportunity to excel.



Part II: Pop Warner Structure

DEFINITIONS

S1: LEAGUE

The term “League” has two definitions, each separate and distinct as applicable:

- A. It is a legal term to define a type of Federation/Conference, **or**
- B. It is a grouping of teams of the same ages and weights (playing levels) into a “league” for scheduling purposes.

League shall be utilized and referenced herein place of Federation and Conference. A League consists of a minimum of four (4) teams playing in the same Age/Weight level. Leagues are Chartered and managed by PWLS with the assistance of the appropriate Region Administrator(s). All Leagues must declare a commitment to their charter agreement annually and remain in good standing. Pop Warner national staff shall have the right to attend any League/ Association function with or without notice.

S2: ASSOCIATION

Associations are organizations that sponsor and administer one or more teams. They raise money, buy equipment, recruit coaches, secure fields, secure indoor practice facilities, etc. Each Association shall have Association Board members to be called the Director of Football or Football Commissioner, as well as a Director of Cheer & Dance, Cheer & Dance Commissioner (or whatever other term is locally applicable), who are equal voting members of the Association Board and responsible only to that board.

Associations are characterized by specific geographical coverage. In cities, they often adopt commonly understood neighborhood names. In the suburbs, they usually take the town name. In rural areas, an association name may embrace an entire county (or a substantial part of it). An association’s recruiting area is approved by its League and is normally consistent with its geographical name. When there are no associations, a League is intramural.

S3: ADMINISTRATORS

All League & Association Administrators must be at least 21 years of age.

S4: TEAM

A team is the universal, basic unit of organization. At minimum, a team consists of a group of athletes organized under the direction of a coaching staff in a given playing level. Each football team may have a maximum of three rostered Pop Warner Cheer & Dance teams.

Part II: Pop Warner Structure

S5: LEVEL OF PLAY – AGE AND SKILL DIVISIONS

Football Levels of Play: Tiny-Mite (TM), Mitey-Mite (MM), Junior Peewee (JP), Peewee (P), Junior Varsity (JV), Varsity (V), Junior Bantam (JB), Bantam (B), 6u, 7u, 8u, 9u, 10u, 11u, 12u, 13u, 14u, as well as Flag, 7v7 and Challenger programs. More details are listed in Football, Rule 1, S4.

Division is used to designate DI, DII, DIII or a sub-grouping of a League, such as “National-American divisions” or “East-West divisions.”

Cheer & Dance Age Divisions: Junior Tiny Mite (JTM), Tiny-Mite (TM), Mitey-Mite (MM), Junior Peewee (JP), Peewee (P), Junior Varsity (JV), Varsity (V), Bantam (B), Challenger (CH).

- Cheer and Dance Flag Divisions: Cat, Cub, Bobcat, Wildcat, Panther.

Pop Warner offers YCADA Skill Divisions: Show Cheer 1 Ltd. (S,M,L), Show Cheer 1-3 (S,M,L), Show Cheer 4 (S, M, L, NB), Core Cheer 1 Ltd., Core Cheer 1, Sideline Performance Cheer 1 (S, M, L), Pom Performance (NB), Theme Dance (NB) and Hip Hop (NB). (NB = Natural Break applied if division has four (4) or more.)

INTRODUCTION TO THE RULES

S1: The rules contained herein are required to be enforced by each PWLS association and league. Failure to do so shall be subject to the penalties defined herein, in the PWLS Administrative Manual and in any other PWLS Policies.

S2: For all purposes, the Pop Warner Cheer & Dance season shall be defined as August 1 through July 31. Meanwhile, the Pop Warner Tackle Football season is August 1 through December 31, and the 7v7/Flag Football season typically runs in the spring, with the season concluding no later than July 15.

All Leagues, administrative personnel, coaches, athletes are subject to disciplinary action for violations of Pop Warner rules and regulations occurring at any time during a stated season.

S3: No Rules will be added after August 1 unless required for safety reason(s).

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

All Programs

ARTICLE 1: POWERS/AUTHORITY OF LEAGUE

S1: The League has, among its powers, the obligation and authority to enforce National rules. Leagues will follow all Pop Warner Rules as printed in this book or their Charter shall be in jeopardy.

S2: Leagues are responsible to verify accuracy of all scores/results from League Playoffs and/or Championships. If an error is found in reporting, leagues are responsible to correct and advance the proper team.

ARTICLE 2: BOUNDARIES

S1: A League is responsible for the enforcement of its own boundaries. However, it shall not infringe upon the territorial rights or boundaries of another chartered League.

S2: Transfer between Leagues: Any team or association seeking to withdraw from one League to join another League may do so only with the prior written agreement of the Leagues involved and with the written concurrence of the appropriate Regional Director, after consultation with the Regional Cheer & Dance Coordinator, and under the direction of the national office. In the event the two Leagues cannot agree upon the terms of the move, the Regional Director, under the direction of the national office, shall rule on the matter, with either party retaining the right to appeal the decision to the National Football Commissioner or National Cheer & Dance Commissioner.

S3: Leagues must establish boundaries for their participating associations. Boundaries will be set by a defined, readily recognizable format, (i.e., town limits, school districts, streets, etc.) Failure to establish and operate boundaries in this manner can result in revocation of charter. Athletes found to be participating outside boundaries they reside, without proper release from both Leagues & Associations involved, subject their team to forfeiture of all games played/competitions.

S4: ATHLETE WAIVERS

Leagues must establish written policies for their Associations pertaining to athlete waivers. Waiver requests must be submitted with cause by a parent or legal guardian to both Presidents/Coordinators of the affected Leagues & Associations. Leagues must approve all waivers between their Associations and the Regional Director or his/her designee must approve all cross-league/region waivers. It is strongly recommended that all Waiver requests be resolved by the first practice.

Waivers shall only be granted upon written application executed and verified by both League & Association Presidents involved in

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

All Programs

the Waiver request, attesting that the Waiver meets at least one of the following criteria but not limited to, for waiver allowance:

- A. Valid family circumstances (divorce, custody determinations, court decisions, etc.) in which the athlete effectively resides in multiple locations.
- B. In cases where the team is full.
- C. In cases where an age appropriate team does not exist.
- D. In demonstrated (proven) hardship cases.

All Football Waivers related to the fall tackle season expire annually on December 31. Cheer & Dance Waivers expire annually on July 31. Only waivers which serve in the best interest of Pop Warner both locally and nationally will be given consideration.

S5: Under the direction of the Executive Director, the National Football Commissioner or National Cheer & Dance Commissioner shall have final non-appealable authority over any/all League boundary and waiver disputes.

ARTICLE 3: RESTRICTION AGAINST DUAL MEMBERSHIP

No League or member association holding a Pop Warner charter may enter any one of its teams into membership in any other youth football, cheer or dance organization and no adult volunteer may serve on the board of a Pop Warner Region, League or member Association while concurrently serving on the board of another youth football, cheer or dance organization. Any individual, League or member Association in violation of this rule shall be immediately dismissed from Pop Warner.

ARTICLE 4: ANNUAL LEAGUE CHARTER APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & VARIANCE OF RULES

The Charter Committee for Pop Warner consists of select National Staff members, as well as Region Directors. They are responsible for reviewing, granting, suspending or revoking the privileges and conditions of the local league's charter. When a local league wishes to request a waiver of a specific rule or regulation, it must submit in writing to the Region Director, who will forward it with their recommendation to the Charter Committee. The appropriate Region Director will present the variance to the Charter Committee for a decision.

S1: Variances shall only be granted upon a written application executed and verified by the President of the League, attesting that the variance sought is based upon good cause and can be shown to be in the best interest of Pop Warner athletes assuring their safety. Variances are defined by one (1) of three (3) categories: Football only, Cheer & Dance only, Football and Cheer & Dance.

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

All Programs

S2: Programs granted a variance forfeit their rights to compete in Region and National Championships for the current season.

S3: No program granted a variance may compete in post season bowl games/competitions that year, unless the opposing team has an identical variance.

S4: All variances expire annually on December 31st or for Cheer & Dance July 31st every year. Only variances which serve in the best interest of Pop Warner both locally and nationally will be given consideration.

ARTICLE 5: COACHES REQUIREMENTS

Details related to this article are now included in the football and cheer & dance portions of the rule book.

ARTICLE 6: REGISTRATION

A candidate cannot begin practice with a team until he/she has officially registered. Registration consists of completing and submitting items S1-S4 in this Article in addition to any/all local required forms.

The sign-up fee, if any, may be collected at this time. All coach trainees and student demonstrators under the age of 18 must be registered/certified in the same manner as all other minors participating in Pop Warner programs. All candidates must furnish the following in order to be registered and before starting practice:

S1: PARENTAL CONSENT

A candidate cannot begin practice with a team until he/she has officially registered. Registration consists of completing and submitting items S1-S4 in this Article in addition to any/all local required forms.

S2: MEDICAL FORM

A signed medical form provided by PWLS is required to be submitted each year by a parent or legal guardian of each youth participant attests that the youth athlete has been given a medical examination within the past two years, is physically fit, and has no observable conditions which would contra-indicate playing football or participating in cheer & dance.

SPECIAL NOTE: A person with a loss of limb may participate provided that the individual has a signed statement of approval from an examining physician and that the use of the artificial limb is no more dangerous to athletes than the corresponding human limb, and does not place an opponent at a disadvantage.

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

All Programs

S3: PROOF OF AGE

A certified copy of the birth certificate on file bearing the seal of the issuing office of the state of birth is the best guarantee of reliability of claimed date of birth and is the form of proof most recommended.

Passports are also reliable. Military ID cards are acceptable. Certified wallet-size certificates issued by a state or commonwealth are acceptable. Any other alleged “proof of birth date,” including photocopies of “originals,” are to be accepted only upon the willingness of the team administration to have its schedule forfeited should fraudulent application later be determined. Pop Warner does not mandate retaining the originals but verifying them.

S4: SCHOLASTIC FITNESS

Proof of satisfactory progress in school is required. A 2.0/70% or the equivalent shall be the minimum grade point average acceptable to participate. In cases of doubt, conflict of opinion, or if a valid report card is not submitted, the nationally published scholastic eligibility form shall be used and deemed final. NOTE: Like all rules herein this rule as it relates to scholastic grades may not be made more stringent by any team, association, or league. No local team may be allowed to participate in Region/National sponsored championships or bowl games if it has not met the nationally published scholastic requirements and may be subject to other penalties.

Beginning with the 2023 fall season, academic verification will take place at the local level. Leagues do not need to keep a record of each individual athlete’s GPA, but must to affirm eligibility. Each League Scholastics Coordinator is required to file an official Pop Warner “League Confirmation of Compliance with Scholastic Fitness” affidavit annually with the National Office. This affidavit will state that each athlete on the certified roster meets the minimum academic standard and is eligible to participate.

ARTICLE 7: FORMATION OF TEAMS

Tryouts of any kind within Pop Warner are prohibited. Tryouts are defined as any means used to ascertain the level whereby a participant is placed on a team, including assessments, evaluations, or any other method used to place a participant in Pop Warner. For more information regarding formation of teams, please see the specific rules in the football and cheer & dance portions of the rule book.

ARTICLE 8: MANDATORY CUTS

Any participant must be cut who:

S1: Is found to have signed up as a result of parental pressure or tells team management he/she does not really want to play tackle football.

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

All Programs

S2: Refuses or cannot furnish the 4 required items: Parental Consent, Medical Examination, Proof of Age, and Scholastic Fitness.

S3: Is a member of any other organized Pop Warner program that retains his/her rights is the one whose boundary includes the athlete's primary residence.

S4: Is to be simultaneously rostered and participating in other youth tackle football leagues, teams or events that are not under Pop Warner governance. (Exceptions: See Football, Rule 21; See Cheer & Dance, Section V, S6.)

S5: Attempts to intimidate fellow athletes in practice by word and/or physical deed. No refunding of fees shall be required.

S6: Is a recurring discipline problem (and then, only with the concurrence of the League).

ARTICLE 9: VOLUNTARY CUTS

An athlete shall be considered a voluntary or "self-cut" athlete when he/she simply no longer shows up at practices, games or competitions of his/her own free will. While voluntary cuts are not charged to any team for the purpose of these regulations, a coaching staff may attempt to disguise its cutting pattern by arranging practices in such a way as to discourage athletes of lesser ability into quitting on their own. While these practices are not common, they have been known to occur and are considered intentional avoidance of the rules and regulations and are, therefore, punishable as a result of a hearing.

If a team loses 20% or more of its assigned athletes prior to certification, it is mandatory that the Association investigate the causes for the athletes voluntarily leaving the team, and take whatever appropriate action may be needed. The results of this investigation shall be reported to the League and the League shall have final authority as to whether appropriate actions were taken.

ARTICLE 10: CERTIFICATION

S1: Certification is that process whereby the team or association will file with the league and Region of which it is a member, a complete roster of athletes for the regular season schedule.

S2: A roster is certified once the Association and League have approved the roster through Pop Warner's online Roster Software. A certified roster is one that the League has accepted at a preseason session with its teams, based upon information submitted, and the teams are restricted to these athletes for the balance of the season (except for allowed "Drops" and "Adds," see Article 12).

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

All Programs

S3: Certification will be accomplished within the official Roster Software. All rosters must be completed online prior to the first regular season game to be certified.

S4: To be certified onto a team roster, an athlete shall qualify under the following:

- A. Eligibility according to residence shall be decided by the League when the candidate resides in an area other than that authorized for the Association by the League and on file at PWLS.
- B. Each Association shall attempt to assign a first-time athlete to the lowest age and skill division for which he/she is qualified.
- C. Once certified for a particular age level, an athlete shall not be permitted to recertify to a lower age level during the current season under any circumstances, but based on the information available shall be permitted to approve recertification to a higher age/skill level.
- D. Ages shall be verified by birth certificate as specified in Article 6, S3.
- E. Associations will require each athlete to upload a current photo to the roster software that is no more than two years old.

ARTICLE 11: RETENTION OF ELIGIBILITY

Once certified, an athlete or Coach Trainee/Student Demonstrator must meet the following requirements to retain eligibility:

S1: Transfer policy in case of change of residence will be decided by the League.

S2: Retain parental consent.

S3: Maintain sound physical condition.

S4: Continue to maintain sound scholastic standards. In cases of doubt, a League shall have the right to require a written statement by the school administration, which shall be deemed final.

S5: An athlete or Coach Trainee/Student Demonstrator serving a school suspension is not eligible to compete in Pop Warner until the day after their school suspension is completed.

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

All Programs

ARTICLE 12: DROPS AND ADDS

S1: A team may add athletes to its certified roster as long as said roster was certified below the maximum number permitted, or to replace those originally certified and no longer on the team for any valid reason as outlined herein.

S2: Each League shall establish its own Drops & Adds cutoff date, but no athlete may be added to any roster after the first Monday of October of the current season.

S3: All Team Rosters must have active status in Pop Warner's Roster Software by the first Monday in October.

ARTICLE 13: NO ALL-STARS

All-Star teams are prohibited in Pop Warner. Pop Warner Football fall season rosters are valid from August 1-December 31, while Pop Warner Cheer & Dance rosters are valid from August 1-July 31 of the current year. Any coach or athlete found to be competing with All-Star athletes from different rosters of regular season teams will forfeit future eligibility for all Pop Warner programs.

ARTICLE 14: AWARDS

S1: In compliance with the team concept and in view of the ages of Pop Warner athletes, no athlete will be singled out for presentation of any special award. This includes, but it not limited to "best lineman" and "best offensive back" in football, "best flyer" and "best jumper" in cheer & dance, and generally "most valuable athlete" on any team. Such adulation should be given to an athlete after his Pop Warner days, if he/she justly deserves it by performance or achievement. Individual awards may be presented, but must be given to all team members.

S2: SPECIAL NOTE FOR ATHLETES: Awards for individual performances displayed on the uniform, helmet or any piece of equipment are prohibited.

ARTICLE 15: PRACTICE

Details related to this article are now included in the football and cheer & dance portions of the rule book.

ARTICLE 16: CAMPS

Details related to this article are now included in the football and cheer & dance portions of the rule book.

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

All Programs

ARTICLE 17: IMPORTANT POINT—MEDICAL & CONCUSSIONS

The home team or hosting organization has the responsibility to provide medical coverage at each game or competition. In the absence of a physician and or ambulance on the site, the minimum safety requirement will be the presence of one individual associated with the home team/host organization who is currently EMT qualified or is currently certified in Red Cross Community First Aid and Safety, the P.R.E.P.A.R.E. Course by the National Center for Sport Safety (www.sportssafety.org), or their equivalent.

Work together with your local EMTs to establish an emergency plan that fits your specific area and needs. Your emergency plan should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. introduce or identify trainer/health care provider to visiting coach;
- B. home team/host organization review emergency plan with visiting team;
- C. designated duties for coaching staff and or athletes;
- D. specific directions to your facility for emergency medical service (EMS);
- E. emergency numbers,
- F. injury report forms;
- G. treatment authorization card;
- H. list of administrators that the coach is required to contact.

Practice your emergency plan early in the season, and repeat often throughout the season. A similar plan should be in place for teams traveling to away games and competitions.

All teams are recommended to have a staff member carry the entire team's medical release forms and emergency numbers for all athletes in case in an emergency their parent(s) or guardian must be reached. Having the family physician's number opposite the athlete's name is also recommended.

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

All Programs

S1: CONCUSSION RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES:

An athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or a head injury in a practice, game or competition shall be removed from practice, play or competition at that time based on evaluation and determination by the Head Coach. However, if an official licensed athletic trainer or other official qualified medical professional is on site and available to render such evaluation, that person shall always have final authority as to removal or return to play/competition of the athlete. When an official licensed athletic trainer or other official qualified medical professional is not present, and a parent or guardian of the injured athlete is serving as head coach, the final authority on removal of a athlete shall rest with the league president, association president or the top ranking assistant head coach; whomever is present and highest in the Pop Warner chain of command.

Any Pop Warner athlete who has been removed from practice, play or competition due to a head injury or suspected concussion may not return to Pop Warner activities until the athlete has been evaluated by a currently licensed medical professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and receives written clearance to return to play from that licensed practitioner.

In the absence of an official licensed athletic trainer or other official qualified medical professional, at Pop Warner regional events, the Regional Director and/or Regional Cheer & Dance Coordinator shall be the final authority on removal of an athlete for a suspected head injury or concussion. At National events, the National Football Commissioner or National Cheer & Dance Commissioner, or in their absence the Executive Director, shall be the final authority on removal of an athlete for a suspected head injury or concussion.

Pop Warner recommends that all decisions be made in the best interest of the athlete and that when any doubt exists as to the health of the athletes, they sit out. Please check www.popwarner.com or www.cdc.gov/concussion for Center for Disease Control (CDC) signs and symptoms chart for concussions.

ARTICLE 18: CHARGING ADMISSION

Reasonable admission fees may be charged to attendees for entry into pre-season, regular season and postseason Pop Warner league, association and team events, however such admission fees shall not be borne by any active rostered individual who is partaking in the event, including both athletes and coaches, as well as all pertinent Pop Warner administrators; all of whom shall be admitted free of charge.

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

All Programs

ARTICLE 19: PROTESTS

S1: Only protests involving the eligibility of an athlete shall be considered.

S2: Protests are decided in accordance with the administrative procedures of the League.

S3: Teams, Associations and Leagues have the responsibility to communicate protests as soon as they are known to exist. Lack of prompt notification may result in denial of the protest.

ARTICLE 20: PATCH REQUIREMENT

All Pop Warner athletes must have the official Pop Warner patch displayed on every uniform for games and competitions in order to participate. More specific information on placement is included in the football and cheer & dance portions of the rule book.

Patches may be purchased through www.popwarnershop.com. All uniforms purchased through Pop Warner Authentic, Inc., are permitted to have the patch sublimated or silk screened directly to the uniform. Pop Warner Authentic has the exclusive right to include the patch onto its uniforms.

ARTICLE 21: MANDATORY BACKGROUND CHECKS

S1: As a condition of service to a Pop Warner League, all member League and Association board members, coaches, administrators, team parents and other individuals on official, certified team rosters, are required to complete and submit an official "Pop Warner Volunteer Application" to their local Pop Warner Association or League. **Annual** background checks must be completed prior to the applicant assuming his/her duties for the current season, and should be submitted to the League President prior to the start of the current season. Refusal to submit a fully completed "Pop Warner Volunteer Application" annually must result in the immediate dismissal of the individual or denial of participation for the applicant.

S2: Each League shall require and be responsible for enforcing all league and association personnel to annually submit to the League President a fully completed official "Pop Warner Volunteer Application," prior to the applicant assuming his/her duties for the current season. The Volunteer Application must include signed permission from the applicant allowing the League or Association to perform the necessary background check. The official "Pop Warner Volunteer Application" shall only be modified in order to comply with local, state, provincial or national laws. Each League shall also

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

All Programs

require and be responsible for enforcing that an Officer of each member Association complete and submit an official Pop Warner “Association Confirmation of Compliance with Background Checks” affidavit.

Each League is required to file an official Pop Warner “League Confirmation of Compliance with Background Checks” affidavit annually with the National Office. All volunteer applications and Association affidavits must be maintained by the League for a minimum of one year, but Pop Warner’s recommendation is for two years after the volunteer leaves the organization. Volunteers shall be defined as those persons who have been approved by the League to serve in that capacity.

S3: No League shall permit any of the above referenced persons to participate in any manner whose background check reveals a conviction for, or guilty plea to, any crime involving or against a minor. In addition, other charges and convictions may be an indication of an unfit volunteer, and therefore a League may prohibit any individual from participating as a volunteer if the League deems the individual unfit to work with minors, as long as the League applies the same criteria uniformly for all individuals seeking to volunteer.

S4: All Leagues must conduct a nationwide search that contains the applicable government sex offender registry data using a preferred background check provider or a government agency sponsored state search of criminal records. Additionally, if a League utilizes only a state sex offender registry check, that League must also perform a national database or a Federal background check search. If a local organization becomes aware of information, that an individual, including, but not limited to, volunteers, athletes and hired workers, has been convicted of or pled guilty to any crime involving or against a minor, the league must immediately contact the applicable government agency to confirm the accuracy of the information.

Upon confirmation of a conviction for, or guilty plea to, a crime against or involving a minor, the league must prohibit the individual from participating in any manner. Due to the fact that Pop Warner Little Scholars Inc. has no direct operational control over the selection of volunteers, each League shall be required to indemnify and hold harmless Pop Warner Little Scholars Inc. against all legal actions based upon allegations arising from a failure to enforce all or part of this regulation. Failure to comply with all or part of this regulation may result in the suspension or revocation of the league charter, the removal of league and/or association volunteers, ineligibility for participation in region and national play/competition, and as well as significant legal liability.

Part III: Pop Warner Regulations All Programs



Part IV: Enforcement Policy

POLICE POWERS/HEARINGS & APPEALS

All Pop Warner organizations – Leagues, Associations, and Teams will be called upon from time to time to do the following:

- A. Resolve disputes between member organizations and individuals.
- B. Take action to enforce National and local rules and regulations.
- C. Discipline both adult and juvenile members.

NOTE: NATIONAL POP WARNER DOES NOT HANDLE APPEALS.

Each League is advised to set up its own tribunal to handle matters in a timely fashion at the local level. WARNING: Failure to do so could result in being taken to court. The National Office will intervene only in rare instances at its sole discretion. Please refer to the Pop Warner Administrative Manual for hearings and appeals guidelines.

MINIMUM MANDATED PENALTIES

Minimums are established to assure that the punishment for listed offenses will occur in a uniform fashion. More severe penalties may be levied where circumstances warrant or for repeated offenses.

S1: ADULT OFFENSES

- A. **Ejection from Game/Competition:** Automatic one week suspension from practice, including the following game.
- B. **Endangerment of Juveniles:** Suspension for 1 year.
- C. **Fighting:** Suspension for 1 year.
- D. **Cheating:** Suspension for 1 year.
- E. **Threats:** Suspension for 1 year.
- F. **Gambling on Game/Competition Outcome:** Suspension for 1 year.
- G. **Lack of Cooperation/Obstruction:** Suspension until compliance is achieved.
- H. **Falsification of Official Documentation:** Suspension for 1 year. This would include, but not be limited to: parental consent, medical examination, proof of age, proof of scholastic eligibility, and/or background screening forms.

Additional adult offenses that are specific to football include:

- A. **Run-Up-the-Score:** Probation unless found to be intentional, then suspension for 1 week.
- B. **Teaching Prohibited Offensive & Defensive Techniques:** Suspension for 1 year.
- C. **Violation of Mandatory Play Rule:**
 - 1. First Violation: SUSPENSION (may be reduced to probation).
 - 2. Second Violation: PROBATION REVOKED and original suspension reinstated. Dismissal if original suspension still in effect.

Upon suspension of any penalty provided herein, an accused shall be placed on probation, among the general conditions of which shall be: (1) that the accused be and remain of good behavior and that he

Part IV: Enforcement Policy

strictly enforce all rules and regulations of Pop Warner; and (2) that the accused prepare and submit to his League his/her written plan to supervise implementation of the Pop Warner Rules/Guidelines.

The failure of a convicted coach to comply with this provision will be deemed a second violation.

S2: JUVENILE OFFENSES

Fighting, intimidation, disrespect for authority or blatant disregard for rules of competition shall be cause for ejection from a game/competition. Any juvenile ejected from any game/competition for cause shall be ineligible for participation in their next game/competition. If an ejection happens during the last game of the current season, the ejected juvenile will serve their 1 game suspension the first game of the following season. A second ejection during the same season shall be cause for removal from the team for the balance of that season. Any juvenile charged with criminal activity may be removed to ensure the safety of other athletes.

S3: TEAM AND ASSOCIATION OFFENSES

A. FAILURE TO KEEP FAITH WITH JUVENILES & PARENTS is defined as any deliberate practice or failure of a team or association which placed the health, welfare and safety of juveniles in jeopardy, or exploits or treats them in such a manner that the juvenile becomes a "tool" of the team.

To file this charge, the violation must result from team or association policy, and not be an aberration of one individual. This implies that the practice is carried out by order of, or with the knowledge of, the officership, and no steps are taken to end it.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Probation of the organization coupled with permanent suspension of its president and all others who participated in the practice. Upon a second offense, suspension of the organization until all officers are removed.

B. FIGHTING/RIOTING/INCITEMENT TO RIOT: Game related: forfeiture of the game for first offense; forfeiture of the season for second offense within the same season. Scrimmage related: at the discretion of the League. Competition Related: forfeiture of the competition.

S4: REGION AND NATIONAL PLAYOFFS

Investigations and hearings concerning Region and National Championships and Playoffs will be conducted by the National Office and/or appropriate Region Staff in accordance with Pop Warner's Dispute Resolution Policy as stated in the Administrative Manual and/or communicated by the National Office.

S5: ADDITIONAL OFFENSES

Any and all other offenses which are committed by any party may be subject to the minimum penalty of probation.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

Except as specifically modified for Pop Warner Football, all games are to be played under the state rules (including state adoptions) for varsity football of the applicable governing body-either the individual state member of the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations or the National Collegiate Athletic Association. It is recommended that each coach have their own copy of the current year's high school rules. Learn more about how you can order a copy from the National Federation at www.nfhs.org or from the NCAA at www.ncaa.org.

RULE 1: AGES AND WEIGHTS

S1: JULY 31 CUTOFF-LEAGUE AGE

The player's age on July 31st of the current year shall be the player's age for the coming season.

S2: OPERATION OF AGE/WEIGHT SCHEMATICS

Option 1- the traditional age/weight schematic provides a uniform series of three basic years of age qualification for each level of play, with a fourth year of eligibility falling under more stringent weight restrictions (the "older/lighter" player). The "older/lighter" player is indicated by an asterisk. (See Rule 1, S4)

Option 2- the age based schematic provides levels starting with 5/6 yr. olds and no minimum or maximum weights.

Please note programs may not arbitrarily eliminate any ages from the levels, i.e. choose not to allow older/lighters etc.

S3: SPECIAL NOTE FOR MITEY-MITES & 8u, 9u

Mitey Mite, 8U and 9U are training levels, free of any pressure to with an emphasis on the individual being supported and empowered to develop, improve and become the best version of themselves. For Mitey Mites and 8u, a Local & Regional Champion may be declared. Beginning in 2023, 9u teams will have a chance to compete at the Pop Warner Super Bowl. Beginning in 2024, 9U coaches will NOT remain on the field during game play. This is no longer an option of the League.

A. There shall be:

1. No blitzing.
2. No rushing of punts, field goals or point after touchdown (while attempting a kick) in Mitey-Mite, 8u, 9u play.
3. No more than six (6) defensive players can be on the line of scrimmage or rush the ball, linebackers must be 3 yds. off the line of scrimmage, corners must be 5 yds. off line of scrimmage and safeties must be 7 yds. off line of scrimmage.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

4. Offensive and Defensive players on the line of scrimmage must be in a 2-point stance and may not line up over center. Penalty for violation of the above: First violation: Warning; Additional violations: 15 yards unsportsmanlike conduct.

S4: TACKLE AGE/WEIGHT SCHEMATIC

Level Name	Ages	Certification Weight	End of Season Max
TINY-MITE	5-6-7	35-80 lbs.	89 lbs.
MITEY-MITE	7-8-9	45-105 lbs.	114 lbs.
JUNIOR PEEWEE (older/lighter)	8-9-10 11*	60-120 lbs. 60-100 lbs.	129 lbs.* 109 lbs.*
PEEWEE (older/lighter)	9-10-11 12*	75-135 lbs. 75-115 lbs.	144 lbs.* 124 lbs.*
JUNIOR VARSITY (older/lighter)	10-11-12 13*	90-160 lbs. 90-140 lbs.	169 lbs.* 149 lbs.*
VARSITY (older/lighter)	12-13-14 15*	105-185 lbs. 105-165 lbs.	194 lbs.* 174 lbs.*
JUNIOR BANTAM (older/lighter)	12-13-14 15*	120-175 lbs. 120-155 lbs.	184 lbs.* 164 lbs.*
BANTAM (older/lighter)	13-14-15 16*	135-190 lbs. 135-170 lbs.	199 lbs.* 179 lbs.*

The asterisk () provisions in each level allow the so-called “older but lighter” player to also qualify. The last year of eligibility falls under more stringent weight restrictions, per above.

A league shall not add the “in-season” growth allowance as a means of upping maximum weights or increasing certification weights.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

S5: AGE-BASED SCHEMATIC

Level Name	Ages	Rules to Follow
6u	5-6	Tiny Mite
7u	6-7	Tiny Mite
8u	7-8	Mitey Mite
9u	7-8-9	Mitey Mite
10u	8-9-10	Jr. Peewee
11u	9-10-11	Peewee
12u	10-11-12	Jr. Varsity
13u	11-12-13	Jr. Varsity
14u	12-13-14	Varsity

** 2-point stance for offensive and defensive linemen must be used in the following levels of play: TM, MM, 6u, 7u, 8u, 9u.

** No kickoffs permitted in the following levels: TM, MM, 6u, 7u, 8u, 9u.

Rules 2 through 5 a specific to programs that are using the Age/Weight Schematic.

RULE 2: INITIAL WEIGH-IN; FIRST PRACTICE

Until the first practice session, no convenient means will exist for the team to conduct this weigh-in. Its purpose is to serve as one final check of qualification and to screen out for special attention each player whose weight will bear watching by the team staff, the players, and parents throughout the practice period, because it is slightly below the minimum or slightly above the maximum weight for that particular level. Those failing the initial weigh-in will not continue as eligible candidates for the team (See Rule 6). The initial weigh-in is not the certified weigh-in and may be conducted on less than a medical quality scale.

RULE 3: IN-SEASON DETERMINATION OF WEIGHT

Each team will have its players checked on Game Day PRIOR TO EACH GAME during the season to assure that the weight standards are being maintained. Agreements between teams/coaches to waive weight requirements are not permitted.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

S1: IDEAL METHOD

The ideal method of in-season weight checks can only be used when all playing facilities used throughout the program include dressing facilities. If so, pre-game weigh-ins, in shorts, will be conducted before every game and will be scheduled so that they are completed not later than fifteen minutes before kickoff. A medical scale will be used. If not available, a lesser scale may be used if its accuracy can be checked against a weight of known value. The weigh-in will be conducted by a League-assigned Weigh Master.

S2: ACCEPTABLE METHOD

The following alternate method of in-season weight check (with uniform and equipment allowance) shall be used where dressing facilities are not available:

- A. A weight allowance shall be established for the wearing of the uniform and protective equipment which will then be subtracted from the player's total scale weight. In cases of marginal overweight or marginal underweight, the team shall be entitled to a strip weight, in shorts, of the player concerned. Strip weight checks will be conducted in dignity, away from unnecessary personnel.

To facilitate the weigh-in process, the scale should be one that can be set up along "pass" or "fail" limits, i.e., be capable of being preset to balance at the maximum and minimum allowable weights for the particular level of play. In this way, a line of players can step onto the scale and have their weights quickly judged as falling at or below the maximum. Next, the scale can be reset to balance at the minimum "pass" weight so players can be judged to weigh at or above the minimum weight. For judging a player's weight, all weights shall be rounded to the nearest full pound-i.e., a player weighing less than 1/2 pound above a full pound will be rounded down, while a player at or above 1/2 pound will be rounded up.

- B. The following weight allowances for the wearing of equipment and uniform shall be used. All weights are without a helmet. Cold climate areas: add 1 pound to all weights given when wearing full sleeve cotton jersey with undergarment.
1. Tiny Mite & Mitey-Mite - 7 lbs.
 2. Junior Peewee & Peewee - 8 lbs.
 3. Junior Varsity & Varsity - 9 lbs.
 4. Junior Bantam & Bantam & Unlimited - 10 lbs.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

S3: CHALLENGE METHOD

Weight check by challenge or other than above prescribed methods is not acceptable.

S4: INTEGRITY OF WEIGH-IN

Once a weigh-in has been conducted, no equipment shall be exchanged unless the equipment is found to be unsafe, and/or damaged.

RULE 4: IN-SEASON WEIGHT INCREASE

The allowable increase in maximum weight for any level of play shall be calculated as follows, beginning with the first regular season game: These weight allowances may only be granted after the participant has passed the original certification.

1st week	- 0 lbs.
2nd week	- 1
3rd week	- 2
4th week	- 3
5th week	- 4
6th week	- 5
7th week	- 6
8th week	- 7
9th week	- 8
10th week	- 9*

*No more than nine (9) pounds may be added to the maximum weight after the tenth week. Teams cannot add more than 1 pound per week. The above schedule begins with the first week of League scheduled games. Teams advancing to the Super Bowl will be allowed a one (1) pound increase at the national weigh-in.

RULE 5: FAILURE TO PASS IN-SEASON WEIGH-IN

S1: WEIGH-IN BEFORE EACH GAME A player failing a weigh-in will be disqualified from participation in that game only. He may sit with the team on the bench after he has removed his helmet and shoulder pads.

S2: Determination of Weigh Master as to the weight eligibility of a player is final.

RULE 6: CUTTING OF PLAYERS

In addition to those reasons listed in Articles 8 & 9, any player must be cut who:

- A. Weighs 6 or more pounds above the maximum weight for the selected level of play, at the time of the initial practice session.
- B. Weighs 3 or more pounds less than the minimum weight for the selected level of play, at the time of the initial practice session.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

RULE 7: CERTIFICATION OF PLAYERS

In addition to the stipulations found in Articles 10-12, to be certified onto a team roster, a player shall qualify under the following:

- A. A player shall meet the age requirements as specified on the applicable age/weight schematic. (See Rule 1, S4)
- B. At certification, a player who fails to make the weight for the team he has been practicing with, but falls into the weight bracket of another division, must be moved to the other division as part of certification.
- C. A League shall not add the "in-season" growth allowance to the certification weights as a means of upping the maximum weights or increasing the certification weights.

RULE 8: ROSTER SIZE

S1: MAXIMUM ROSTER SIZE

Not more than 35 players shall be certified onto a team roster. A team with less than 16 certifiable players will not be permitted to form and play. The League may establish a minimum higher than 16 for a team to be allowed to form and participate.

S2: MINIMUM ROSTER SIZE

A minimum of 16 players must be dressed and eligible to start each game. Also, if you start a game with 16 players, you can finish a game with 15 eligible players. Each League may establish a minimum number higher than 16, but once adopted, it must be kept for the entire season, including post-season bowl games. Each League shall have the option to determine whether or not a team which fails to dress the minimum number of players shall forfeit the game or whether the game shall be rescheduled. Any team which forfeits two successive games by reason of an insufficient number of players shall be investigated by the League for a determination as to whether to forfeit the balance of the season. Please note Pop Warner strongly recommends a minimum of 20 players.

RULE 9: PLACEMENT OF TEAMS IN DI/DII/DIII

Leagues & Regions will make their best effort to assign teams to DI/ DII/ DIII in the various levels of play. Below is a list of criteria that will be used to determine where to slot a team.

- Number of Teams at each level per Association
- Coaching Staff (returning/new)
- League Standings
- History in League, Region & National Playoffs
- Super Bowl Participation
- Any questions/issues regarding where to place a team will be decided by Regional & National Offices.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

- Teams must declare I/II/III by the first Monday in October in the PW Roster System. Once a team has been approved for I/II/III they cannot change divisions unless approved by your Region Director.

RULE 10: MANDATORY PLAY RULE

The following shall be the Minimum Mandatory Play Rule (MPR) for all Pop Warner teams. Each league may set a higher number of Mandatory Plays, but never less than the minimum set by PWLS. All MPRs should be based on eligible players at the time of the game.

JPW-BAN, 10U-14U

16-25 players - 10 plays

26-30 players - 8 plays

31-35 players - 6 plays

TM-MM, 6U-9U

16-25 players - 12 plays

26-30 players - 10 plays

31-35 players - 8 plays

6u, 7u- Will follow the same MPR requirements as the Mitey-Mites. The plays must be from the line of scrimmage and declared "active."

- All players shall be provided their mandatory plays by participation in "active" plays, without the intent to minimize the action or integrity of the plays. Plays such as, but not limited to, having the center snap the ball to the quarterback, and then the quarterback fall to the ground, take a knee, spiking the ball regardless of whether the ball is moved or not while substitutes are playing other positions, shall NOT be considered as active plays.
- A play shall not count toward fulfillment of the MPR if the play results in a penalty which causes the down to be replayed.
- All players shall receive their mandatory plays by the end of the third quarter, or they shall enter the game at the start of the fourth quarter, and remain in the game until they have received their required number of plays.
- Failure to adhere to MPR requirements will result in forfeiture of game in addition to enforcement policies outlined in Part IV, S1.
- In addition, a player denied his/her required number of plays will start the next game and receive double the number of Mandatory plays in that game. Failure to comply with this provision will be deemed a second violation.

Each League shall establish its own system for enforcing the MPR, and must provide a simple handout or digital file describing its MPR so that this information is made available to each coach throughout the entire League, before the beginning of the season. The Nationally preferred system is that used in the National games.

RULE 11: THE FIELD AND MARKINGS

S1: The home team is responsible for the preparation of the playing field and all required accessories for a game. All fields will be

Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

equipped and marked in accordance with high school standards. Lime and other caustics shall not be used.

S2: The bench area is reserved for players, coaches, and authorized team personnel only. The sideline areas are reserved for the game physician and chain crew, with the balance of the sidelines kept clear except for the presence of medical and law enforcement personnel, and authorized members of the press. Each League shall be permitted to determine on which side of the field the chain crew shall operate. In the absence of a League stated position, the local high school rules shall apply.

S3: An 80-yard field is permissible for Tiny Mites, 5/6, Mitey-Mites, 7/8, Junior Peewees, 8/9/10 and Peewees.

RULE 12: GAME BALL

S1: The ball shall be of a good grade leather, rubber or composite material with specifications in the area of:

Levels of Play	TM, 6u, 7u MM, 8u, 9u	JP, PW 10u, 11u	JV, V, JRB 12u, 13u, 14u	Bantam
Manufacturer	Ball Size/Model Number			
Wilson	K2	TDJ	TDY	TDY
Nike	Peewee	Junior	Youth	
Rawlings	R2CFB PW-B	R2CFB- J-B	R2CFB-Y-B	
Spalding	Rookie	Junior	Youth	Youth

Wilson is the Official Football of Pop Warner and will be used during Regional & National Championships. Notwithstanding any other provisions in league bylaws, the Wilson/Pop Warner design ball is approved for all Pop Warner play as stated above. Equivalent footballs may be used, but the specifications must fall within the range of those specified above for each division of play.

S2: The use of stick-um on the football or the application and use of such on any player's hands is not allowed.

RULE 13: PLAYER DESIGNATIONS

S1: Each player shall wear a number between 0 and 99 inclusive. Number "00" is illegal and shall not be worn. No duplicate numbers shall be permitted.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

S2: During a game in which a PA system is used, the number of any player committing a foul shall not be publicly announced.

RULE 14: REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

The following items shall be worn by players in all divisions beginning with physical contact in practice sessions:

- A. **Helmet:** Only helmets bearing the NOCSAE Seal of Certification may be worn. All helmets must bear the current NOCSAE approved "Warning Label" in a visible position on the outside of the helmet. This "Warning Label" is the same label that is furnished by all helmet manufacturers and quality reconditioners. Programs must follow manufacturer's guidelines for reconditioning and no helmet older than 10 years may be used per new industry guidelines. (Note: Regulations regarding chin straps and face guards are to be followed per the National Federation or NCAA regulations, whichever is applicable.)

Equipment Note: Helmet visors are not allowed according to the NFHS rulebook, unless it is completely clear and glass-like. If a visor is slightly tinted and an Official can see the tint on his/her game data card the visor MUST be removed. There are NO exceptions.

- B. **Shoulder Pads-**must be for Football not Lacrosse, Hockey etc.
- C. **Pants:** One Piece or Shell & must cover the entire knee cap
- D. **Hip Pads:** One Piece or Shell
- E. **Tail Pads:** One Piece or Shell
- F. **Thigh Guards:** One Piece or Shell
- G. **Knee Pads -** must cover the entire knee cap
- H. **Jerseys** (see Rule 14, S1 for more detail)
- I. **Mouth guard:** All mouth guards must have a keeper strap, and be attached to helmet face mask at all times.
- J. **Athletic Supporter or Compression Shorts** (male players only)
- K. **Shoes:** In all levels of play: sneakers, molded rubber cleats (soccer style), or detachable rubber or plastic (football style) cleats are permitted. No metal cleats are permitted. Cleats may not exceed a 1/2" in length. Special Kicking shoes are not allowed.
- L. **Eyeglasses:** When worn, shall be of athletically-approved construction with non-shattering glass (safety glass) or contact lenses.
- M. Any additional protective equipment worn by players shall be allowed with league approval.
- N. Jewelry of any type shall be prohibited, except religious or medical medallions, which must be covered by the player's uniform.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

- O. The wearing of headgear containing knots, including beads and/or decorative hair ornaments is prohibited.

S1: Jerseys: With respect to Pop Warner core value that every child plays, each football jersey should feature numbers that are clearly visible and legible from the stands and press box. Visibility helps ensure proper record of playing time per our Mandatory Play Rule (Rule 10).

1. Home & Away Jerseys

- a. All teams will be required to have Home and Away jerseys.
- b. The body of Home Jersey (inside the shoulders, from the yoke to the bottom of the jersey) shall be Dark in color.
- c. The body of Away jersey (inside the shoulders, from the yoke to the bottom of the jersey) shall be White in color.

2. Jersey Body

- a. The front and back of the jersey shall be solid, without graphics or decoration NOT including the number, from the yoke to the bottom of the jersey, front and back.
 - I. A gradient of two solid colors may be used; on the Home jersey, both colors need to be Dark, while the Away jersey both colors need to be light.
- b. Gradation is defined as a visual technique of gradually transitioning from one color hue to another and the blending of the two solid colors will NOT be declared as another color.
- c. The shoulders of the jersey, as well as a vertical band directly under the armpits (typically about four inches in width), may contain a design or contrasting color.
- d. No design may infringe on the number.

3. Jersey Numbers

- a. Number must be placed on the front and back of the jersey. See Part V, Rule 13 for availability and use of numbers.
- b. The numbers shall be centered horizontally and be a minimum 6 inches high on the front and minimum 8 inches high on the back.
- c. The color and style of the number shall be the same on the front and back.
- d. The body of the number shall be clearly visible and legible.
- e. If the body of the jersey features a gradient, then the body of the number needs to be one single color.
- f. A border(s) is permitted to be on the number. If the number is the same color as the jersey, the border(s) should be a

Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

minimum of ¼ inch and clearly and markedly contrast with the jersey and number color.

- g. Only numbers 0-99 are permitted.

5. Game Play

- a. The Away team is responsible for avoidance of similarity of colors, but if there is doubt, the referee may require players of the Home team to change jerseys.

- b. The terms “white” and “dark” have specific meanings. Jerseys of competing teams must contrast each other. The away jersey must be “white” in color. The dark jersey must be a dark color such as black, navy blue, forest green, etc.”

- c. Consult with your region if you are unsure about this before securing new jerseys.

6. The Official Authorized Pop Warner Patch must be displayed on every uniform for games and competitions. Football Patches must be placed on left front chest. Top of the patch should be in line between v-neck and sleeve.

Failure to have any of the above required equipment during a game, shall subject the participant to be removed until such time as the required equipment has been repaired, replaced or added. The use of any altered equipment shall result in player disqualification if in a game. Eye black with Logos is permitted.

RULE 15: BLOCKING AND TACKLING RESTRICTIONS

Both the National Federation and NCAA rule books contain extremely strong language on blocking and tackling. It is the responsibility of every Pop Warner coach to be fully informed of, and abide by, all such rules of the governing body (National Federation or NCAA) under whose jurisdiction his state falls, and to review the same every year. In addition to other specific prohibitions in the National Federation and NCAA rule books, no butt blocking, chop blocking, clipping, face tackling or spearing techniques are permitted in Pop Warner. If such techniques or any others not in compliance with the National Federation or NCAA are taught and implemented by Pop Warner coaches, said coaches shall be removed immediately. There is no free blocking zone on the field in Pop Warner. This applies to all Pop Warner programs regardless of whether you follow NCAA or NFHS Rules.

RULE 16: LENGTH OF PERIODS

Maximum length of periods by level of play are:

Tiny Mite	8 minutes
Mitey-Mite thru 14u	10 minutes
Jr. Bantam, Bantam	10 minutes

RULE 17: INTERMISSION LENGTH

Between 1st & 2nd; 3rd & 4th quarters - 1 minute

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

Intermission between 2nd & 3rd quarters, otherwise known as
halftime - 10 minutes

Mandatory Warm-up period following Intermission - 3 minutes

RULE 18: TIME CLOCK

The referee shall decide where the clock will be kept if the field is not equipped with a scoreboard timing device. In any event, the referee has final authority to have the clock kept on the field if, in his judgment, the home management's clock operator is not qualified.

RULE 19: TIME OUTS

A team shall be permitted no more time outs than are permitted by the rules of the current National Federation of State High School Associations or the current NCAA rule book, depending on which body governs a state or section thereof.

RULE 20: KICK OFFS

To start the game, half, after a TD, field goal or safety the ball will be placed on the 35 yard line. This will apply to the Tiny Mite, Mitey Mite, Jr. Peewee, Peewee, 6u, 7u, 8u, 9u levels.

RULE 21: DUAL PARTICIPATION

Participants in Pop Warner are permitted to be rostered on their middle school team, unless otherwise prohibited by state and other local regulations. Per Pop Warner rules, all Pop Warner rosters are certified and official no later than the first Monday in October; no players may be added after this point (see Article 12).

A middle school team is defined as an interscholastic athletic team or club sponsored by a public or approved independent school. This rule does not apply to those participating on high school teams, including freshman, junior varsity and varsity.

RULE 22: PLAYERS

S1: A free substitution rule is always in effect.

S2: It is STRICTLY PROHIBITED for a player or group of players to participate in any practice session or game with players from another division of play (i.e., Junior Varsity vs. Varsity, 10u vs. 11u).

S3: Injured player: Once removed by reason of injury, a player shall not re-enter the game without the approval of an official licensed athletic trainer or medical professional who is not a parent/ guardian of the player.

RULE 23: REGARDING INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

S1: There are five (5) unequivocal definitions of an ineligible player, from which there are no appeals. Further, these violations shall result in forfeiture of all games in which the ineligible player

Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

was a member of the team. If found during the regular season and the team's record will still qualify it for playoffs, the ineligible player shall be removed from the team and the team permitted to proceed. There are no exceptions.

- A. Player certified while overweight or underweight
- B. Player overage or underage
- C. Player residing outside of legal boundaries without mutual agreement (waiver) of appropriate League(s) and/or Associations.
- D. Falsification of any player certification/registration documentation. (see Articles 6 & 10)
- E. Simultaneously participating with youth tackle football leagues, teams or events that are not under Pop Warner's governance. (Exception: See Rule 21).

S2: If a team is found to have an ineligible player participating during Playoffs or Championships, that team shall be removed from postseason play and forced to forfeit results per S1 above.

RULE 24: COACHES REQUIREMENTS

A coaching staff is in complete charge of the team whenever it is together on the practice or playing field, traveling as a group to and from practice sessions and games, or together for any team function, such as a banquet. The coaching staff is under the direction of the Head Coach; other coaches are called Assistant Coaches. All Football Coaches and Assistant Coaches must complete and pass the USA Football Heads Up Football program to be eligible to coach.

Successful completion of the USA Football Heads Up Program is valid for 1 year. The following applies to all coaches:

S1: The Head Coach, Assistant Coach(s) or Football Commissioner must be 21 years or older in order to supervise at all practices, games and functions. The Head Coach can only be rostered as the Head Coach on 1 roster.

S2: An Assistant Coach must be at least 18 years of age. A football team may have a maximum of five (5) assistant coaches, plus a maximum of one (1) Coach-Trainee, (1) Equipment Manager, (1) Trainer, (1) Team Parent

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

S3: Teams are permitted to carry a Coach-Trainee, who must be a minimum of 16 years of age and a maximum of 17 years of age.

S4: The Head Coach will determine the assignments of the Assistant Coaches.

S5: In the absence of a specialized, trained person affiliated with the team in the medical area (physician, paramedic, specially trained volunteer, Certified Athletic Trainer), one of the coaches must be the holder of a current Red Cross Certificate in Community CPR and First Aid, or the P.R.E.P.A.R.E. Course by the National Center for Sport Safety (www.sportssafety.org) or its equivalent.

S6: Coaches are to be selected by methods approved by League rules and/or by-laws in accordance with National Rules.

S7: Once approved for coaching, a coach is automatically terminated at the close of each season. To coach the following year, the same League approval is required. Any violation of the rules committed by a coach during the season, even though the hearing is not held until after the close of the season, is still under the jurisdiction of the sponsoring association and/or League.

S8: Coaches do not make Team or League policy. Rather, they carry it out. However, on the playing and practice fields, the coaching staff is in complete charge and shall not be interfered with except in cases of rules violations and any other conduct deemed by higher authority to be contrary to PWLS rules and policies.

S9: The Head Football coach has final responsibility for his/her actions, those of his/her assistant coaches, players, staff and parents.

S10: Each League shall establish its own rules regarding the placing of coaches with sons, daughters or siblings within its own boundaries.

RULE 25: SCORING VALUES

Touchdown	6 points
Point after TD by run or pass	1 point
Point after TD by kick	2 points
Safety (awarded to opponent)	2 points
Field goal	3 points
Forfeit (offended team wins by)	1-0

RULE 26: SCORES

S1: LOPSIDED/INTENTIONALLY RUN UP SCORES

Any time a team goes up by 28 points or more, the following will occur:

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

The official clock will become a running clock immediately when the 28th point is scored and once started can only be stopped for injury of a player or at the discretion of a referee for injury of a player or at the discretion of a referee. It cannot revert to a game clock operation for the remainder of the game.

- A. Once a 28-point difference is obtained between the two opponents, the winning team cannot pass the ball or run sweeps outside the tackle. If the winning team fails to abide by this rule, each violation will be a loss of down and a 5-yard penalty. This is at the discretion of the game referee. If at any point during the remainder of the game the point difference drops below 28 the clock will continue running; however regular rules would apply, i.e. teams would not be required to run between the tackles etc. If a 28 point difference is reached again, PW Rule 22 stipulations i.e. running between the tackles etc. would take effect.
- B. There will be no Blitzing by either team once the clock becomes a running clock and the lopsided rule is in effect.
- C. There will be no onside kicks at kickoff by the winning team.
- D. The winning defensive team cannot advance a fumble or pass interception. The ball is blown dead immediately. The winning offense may start play from the spot of the turnover.
- E. The winning team must make every effort to replace starting players with reserves. Failure to do so will call for an immediate investigation and possible one game suspension if found guilty.
- F. BOTH teams' defense cannot have more than 4 players on the line of scrimmage with linebackers set at least 5 yds. off the line of scrimmage and defensive backs must be at least 10 yds. off the line of scrimmage.
- G. Any coach who employs types of plays without the intent to maximize the action of play shall be in violation of this rule.
- H. The teams are still required to complete the mandatory play rule.
- I. An investigation will be conducted if a game ends with a score differential of 28 points or more.

S2: FULL INVESTIGATION

When the statements of the coaches are in disagreement, the League shall require the Head Coach and all Assistant Coaches of each team to submit written answers to the following questions:

- A. What in your opinion caused the lopsided score?
- B. Is there any ill will or animosity among the coaching staff of Team A toward the coaching staff of Team B?

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

- C. To your knowledge, have there been any threats between and among the children prior to the game?
- D. Has your team ever been involved in a lopsided score before?
- E. What actions were taken by the coaching staff of Team A to prevent the score differential from reaching 28 points after it reached 18 points?
- F. In retrospect, is there anything you feel could have been done to prevent the score differential from reaching 28 points? If so, what?

Based upon the answers to the foregoing questions, the League shall determine whether or not to conduct a hearing. The answers to these questions may not be used in any way at the hearing, unless presented at the hearing by one of the witnesses.

RULE 27: SIDELINE PERSONNEL

In addition to the coaching staff, a team may have additional support personnel positioned within a team box during the game. The total number of team support personnel, including coaches, in a team box shall not exceed 10.

All rostered administrative/coaching staff (10) MUST complete and pass the USA Football certification program to be eligible to coach/be rostered.

RULE 28: RADIOS AND COMMUNICATION DEVICES

No radios or other communicative devices shall be allowed during game situations to relay information to the coaching staff on the sidelines or players on the field.

RULE 29: SCOUTING

Scouting football teams is permitted in the form of video tape, film and written reports. Scouting is only permitted during a game situation. Scouting any type of practice is strictly prohibited. Pre-season games/Scrimmages with officials and no coaches on the field may be scouted. Scrimmages with Coaches on the field may not be scouted.

S1: Drones and Unmanned Aircraft are prohibited from being used during practices and games.

RULE 30: CAMPS

S1: No Pop Warner organization or personnel associated within, shall require or mandate that a Pop Warner football team, in part or in whole, with or without coach(s) attend a football camp. There shall be no exceptions. However, a Pop Warner football or spirit team, in part or in whole MAY attend a camp if they so choose to, providing the following conditions are met:

Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

- A. Coach or other team affiliated personnel does not make it MANDATORY.
- B. Camp provides as part of its services an accident insurance plan for camp participants.
- C. All Football camps must be completed by July 15.

S2: Any camp shall NOT be endorsed or sponsored by any League, Association, or Team, which does not provide as part of its services, an accident insurance plan for the camp participants.

RULE 31: NO TAXI SQUADS

No team is permitted to run a “taxi” or “reserve” squad.

RULE 32: PRACTICE

S1: DEFINITION: To prevent possible bending of the rules and as a protection for children, practices are defined as a gathering of players or spirit participants, without minimum number, in the presence of at least one (1) coach, where one or more of the following activities take place:

- A. Chalk talk/skull session
- B. Viewing of fundamentals film
- C. Group conditioning
- D. Individual skills sessions (QB, receiving, blocking, tackling, kicking, etc.)
- E. Group skills sessions
- F. Dummies and other inanimate contact
- G. Play run through without pads (shorts & T-shirt)
- H. Play run through with equipment, but without contact
- I. Intrasquad scrimmages with full pads and equipment

As can be seen, a so-called “party” at a coach’s home, where films are shown, or where football or spirit teams are talked about, can be deemed a practice session, as can a “party” at a parent’s home where one or more coaches are present. Use of a football field is not required to satisfy the definition of a “practice session.” Each League is directed to establish a policy with respect to home videos and/or films of games or competitions and the viewing thereof. Pop Warner strongly recommends League/Associations discourage “parties/ practice sessions” at coaches homes. All the activities/ practice sessions that are referenced in A-15-S1, must include a minimum of 2 coaches in attendance the entire session.

S2: Pre-season practice shall not begin until August 1st (or later). The actual date will be determined in accordance with climate and

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

other factors determined by the League in establishing a common starting date for all teams within its jurisdiction.

In all Leagues, the first week of practice shall be devoted entirely and exclusively to conditioning, not wearing pads; however, helmets shall be permitted. Leagues may add more time beyond this required first week for the conditioning period.

S3: All practices must be attended by one person holding a Red Cross Community CPR and First Aid Certificate, or the P.R.E.P.A.R.E. Course by the National Center for Sport Safety (www.sportsafety.org) or their equivalent, if not by an EMT or volunteer physician (such as a parent of one of the participants).

S4: BEFORE LABOR DAY: No team may schedule more than 10 hours of practice per week before Labor Day. A week is defined as Monday-Sunday. Not more than 2-1/2 hours of practice may be scheduled on any one day.

S5: AFTER LABOR DAY: Practices after Labor Day weekend are limited to 6 hours per week. A week is defined as Monday- Sunday. Practices after Labor Day weekend are not to exceed 2 hours per day.

S6: BREAKS: Break time is not counted against the ten (10) or six (6) hours per week or 2-1/2 or 2 hours of allowed practice time. Water breaks should be given as needed and when requested by participants. A mandatory 10 minute break after each hour of practice shall be required. Break time is not counted against the hours per week or per day allowed practice time. Water breaks should be given as needed and/or when requested by participants.

S7: Any player added after a team has formed and/or after the season has started, must be subject to the same 20 hours of conditioning as mentioned in S12 of this Rule.

S8: The following exercises and drills are banned from all practices and pre-game warm-ups; leg lifts, neck bridges (sometimes referred to as neck rolls), Bull in the Ring and the Oklahoma Drill. Leg lifts with knees bent are acceptable.

In addition to the requirements for practice in Article 15, the following also apply:

S9: WARM WEATHER PRECAUTIONS

Teams must guard against serious heat problems, which in extreme high school and college cases have occasionally resulted in death. The training regimen of any team practicing under high heat and/ or humidity conditions must:

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

- A. Limit or eliminate laps entirely. Do not assign laps for disciplinary reasons.
- B. Schedule practices for early evening, after the sun is low in sky.
- C. Give players all the water they want to drink, when they want it. Do not substitute soft drinks for water.
- D. Each coach must keep an eye on all players and his fellow coaches for the slightest sign of heat exhaustion or fatigue.
- E. A fifteen minute break is mandatory in the middle of each practice, not to be counted against practice time.

S10: FULL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

At all practices, pre-season or in-season, where person-to-person or person-to-dummy contact takes place, each player must be dressed in the full complement of protective equipment described in Rule 14, "Required Equipment."

S11: CONTACT

- A. No full-speed head-on blocking or tackling drills in which the players line up more than 3 yards apart are permitted. (You may have two linemen in stances immediately across the line of scrimmage from each other. You may have full-speed drills where the players approach each other at an angle, but not straight ahead into each other.) Intentional head-to-head contact is forbidden.
- B. Coaches must limit the amount of contact (Live/Full/Thud) at each practice prior to Labor Day to a maximum of 30 minutes per day and 120 minutes total for the week. After Labor Day contact is limited to a maximum of 22 minutes per day and 65 minutes total for the week.
- C. In this context, "Live/Full/Thud contact" means any drill or scrimmage in which players go Live/Full-speed or Thud with contact –e.g. one-on-one blocking and/or tackling drills; line vs. line full-speed drills; and/or scrimmages.
- D. Thud - By definition, involves initiation of contact at full speed with no predetermined winner, but no take-down to the ground. Initial contact, particularly with linemen, is just as physical with "Thud" as with "Live Action."

S12: CONTROLLED INTRASQUAD SCRIMMAGE

After the first week of practice (10 hours) for conditioning, and after the second week of practice (10 hours) in pads in which contact has occurred, teams may engage in joint practice sessions with other team(s) in what are called controlled intrasquad scrimmages. So as to avoid any misinterpretation, 20 hours of practice is required before teams are permitted to engage in joint practice sessions with other teams in what are called controlled intrasquad scrimmages.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

In a controlled intrasquad scrimmage, there is prior agreement between coaching staffs that:

- A. Coaches will be permitted on the field.
- B. Long time-outs are taken between plays so that coaching staffs can instruct and critique their players.
- C. Coaching staffs may inform each other of the plays they are going to run so one team can concentrate on its offensive sets while the other improves its defense and vice-versa.
- D. Officials can be present during scrimmages.
- E. Game score is not kept; scoring is not the primary goal.
- F. No official time is kept other than to assure the practice maximum is not violated. A mandatory ten minute break is taken at the end of one hour, said break not to be counted against the allowed practice time.
- G. No player or team is permitted at any time to engage in a controlled scrimmage or any form of contact drills involving a player, players, or team from a different Age/Weight level of play.

RULE 33: SCHEDULES

S1: SCHEDULED GAMES

- A. The chart in sub-section B summarizes the number and types of games teams may play during a season by each Age/Weight level.
- B. A League may schedule a maximum number of total season games as shown in Column D. The maximum number of each type of game permitted by level of play is shown in columns A, B, and C. A League may schedule fewer regular season games than the maximums shown in column B, but must play a minimum of six (6).



Part V: 11-Man Tackle Playing Rules

Division:	Regular Pre-Season (Max.)	Total Season Schedule (Max.)*	Post Season/ Bowl Games (Max.)	Number of Games (Max.)
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	
TM, 6u, 7u	1	8	1	10
MM, 8u, 9u	1	10	2**	13
JP, 10u	1	11	2	13
PW, 11u	1	11	2	13
JV, 12u, 13u	1	11	2	13
V, 14u	1	11	2	13
JB	1	11	2	13
B	1	11	2	13*

Regular Season Schedule includes any League playoffs.

In any level, a team may play any combination of games in columns A, B, and C (up to the maximum in each column), but shall not exceed the total number of games in Column D. Pre-season exhibitions (Column A), league playoff games (part of Column B), and post-season bowl games (Column C) are not required to be played. Regional/National playoffs and championships are not included in any of the above.

Bowl Games are defined as post season games between teams of different leagues. Teams may play post season games within their league as long as the maximum number of games is not exceeded.

** Mitey Mite, 8u, 9u teams are only permitted to play (2) post-season games either in their own league/conference or in another league/conference upon written approval of both leagues/ conferences and the Region Director.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

S2: SCHEDULING PROHIBITIONS

- A. Under no circumstances will a team be allowed to play a game, scrimmage, or practice against a team of another level (i.e., Junior Varsity vs. Peewee, Varsity vs. Jr. Bantam, etc.).
- B. No team may schedule a game against a team whose ages and weights are not FULLY in compliance with those printed in this rule book, unless both teams have identical approved variances.

S3: COMMON REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements apply to all scheduling beginning with practice and ending with post-season bowl games:

- A. No team, on its own, may arrange a game. All games, regardless of type, must be arranged through or with the sanction of the League of which the team is a member.
- B. Prior account will be taken of all local and state laws pertaining to the scheduling of athletic contests.
- C. A period of at least four (4) full days (96 consecutive hours) will elapse between the end of any game for a given team and the beginning of the next game for pre-season exhibitions, regularly scheduled league games, post-season and bowl games. A League shall be permitted to waive the four (4) full days (96 consecutive hours) to 2 1/2 days (60 consecutive hours) ONLY to permit the conclusion of the regularly scheduled season.
- D. The League schedule officially begins with the first regular season game. All eligible teams must be certified as outlined in A,10 prior to the first League regular season game.

RULE 34: POSTSEASON & BOWL GAMES

S1: Teams from all levels are permitted a maximum of two (2) postseason Bowl Games with the exception of the Tiny Mites, 6u, 7u. Tiny Mite, 6u, 7u teams not participating in League Championships may participate in 1 post-season game within their league.

S2: For a team to be eligible for bowl game participation, the following conditions must be met:

- A. All requests for Bowl Game participation must be made through the Region Director or their designee.
- B. The team's League must be represented at its Annual Region Meeting.
- C. The team's League must have paid any Region Dues by October 15.
- D. All rosters from its League must be approved and in the Pop Warner Roster System by the first Monday in October.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

- E. Requests to participate must be made by the designated League official only.
- F. All bowl game contracts shall require the written approval of the Leagues involved.

S3: Strip weights are not required, but there shall always be official weigh-ins in accordance with Pop Warner's standard weigh-in procedures as outlined in Rule 3.

S4: All special criteria such as fees, etc., shall be immediately sent to a team expressing interest in playing the game.

S5: The applicable state standard (NCAA or National Federation) and the Pop Warner National Rule book will be the only rules in effect at all bowl games, and Regional or National Championships.

S6: Any League or team that arranges a bowl game(s) without approval from the Region Director or his designee, will be subject to disciplinary action, which could include a fine not to exceed \$500.00, as decided by the Region Director.

S7: Regional Championships may be held in the following divisions: MM, JPW, PW, JV, 8u, 9u, 10u, 11u, 12u, 13u, 14u.

S8: National Championships are held in the following divisions: JPW, PW, JV, 9u, 10u, 11u, 12u, 13u, 14u.

S9: Supplemental rules to the jersey rules found in Rule 14, S1:

- A. All teams must register game jerseys (Home and Away) with their Region for approval prior to Regional Championships via photographs or images.
- B. If new jerseys are sought for the Pop Warner Super Bowl, they need to be approved by the Region prior to the national event otherwise, it is expected the same approved jerseys worn at regionals will be worn at nationals.
- C. Wearing illegal Jerseys will result in suspension of the Head Coach from that game. This rule applies to incorrect color or any other condition which renders the jersey illegal. In addition, the game will start with 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty against the team in violation.
- D. Home Teams are required to wear Dark and Visiting Teams are required to wear a White jersey beginning 2024.
- E. All other jersey rules will continue to follow Federation Jersey Rules.

RULE 35: TIE BALL GAMES

S1: In the Tiny Mite, 6u, 7u levels, all regular season games ending in a tie shall stand as ties with the exception of League

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

Championships or Bowl Games. In the other levels, Pop Warner strongly recommends Leagues break ties in all regular season games using the established high school tie-breaker for the state in which they reside.

S2: Ties must be broken in League playoff/championship games using the “ten yard overtime procedure” tie-breaker as outlined in National Federation High School Rules.

S3: Ties during regular season games are allowed to stand as ties. However, if as the result of any regular season tie, a situation develops whereby two or more teams are tied for first place and one team has to be selected to represent its League in the League playoff series, there are two options to determine which team(s) advance -a special tie-breaking game (1 extra game) will be played during mid-week between the last regularly scheduled game and the first playoff round or Leagues can utilize the National High School Rules “ten yard overtime procedure” to determine which team(s) advances into the playoffs The provisions of Rule 29, S3: “Common Requirements to All Scheduling,” will apply.

S4: In all Regional/National Championship Games, the “ten yard overtime procedure” tie-breaker as outlined in National Federation High School Rules will be used without exception.

S5: Sudden Death tie-breakers are prohibited.

RULE 36: CONTACT WITH OFFICIALS

If a player or adult should strike (hit) a game official, the offender shall be subject to suspension and/or being permanently banned from Pop Warner activities.

RULE 37: REGIONAL/NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ELIGIBILITY

S1: Must be declared League/Conference Champions by or prior to first weekend in November. If a team is found to have an ineligible player participating in League playoffs or Championship game(s) that team is not eligible to move forward in the postseason.

S2: Must have filed a certified roster with the Region and National by the specified cut-off date.

S3: It is highly recommended that football teams competing be accompanied by the corresponding spirit teams at all games, except when the region cheer championships are being held at the same time.

S4: All teams must be accompanied with a copy of the certified roster, league registration forms with photo identification, birth certificates, medical release forms, and scholastic eligibility forms.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

S5: An absentee sheet for any participant absent from a certified roster must accompany said team.

S6: All fees (Regional & National) must be paid prior to participating in the postseason. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

S7: National Championships are held in the following divisions if there are enough teams: JPW, PW, JV, 9u, 10u, 11u, 12u, 13u, 14u.

RULE 38: TINY MITES, 6U, 7U

Tiny Mites, 6U and 7U are training levels, free of any pressure to with an emphasis on the individual being supported and empowered to develop, improve and become the best version of themselves. Scores may be kept & a local championship is permitted. The following are specific rules that must be followed for the Tiny Mite, 6u, 7u levels.

S1: Players: Maximum 35, Minimum 16

S2: Field Length: can be 80 or 100 yards.

S3: Scholastic Fitness: Report card from school or letter from parent.

S4: Coaches: Two coaches from each team are permitted to be on the field with the team. Once the team breaks from the huddle, coaches must stay back 10 yards from the line of scrimmage.

S5: If associations have more than one team, age groups must be equally distributed across team roster. If one team, associations cannot stack by age group.

S6: No Kickoffs or punting. Game will start on 35 yd. line. On 4th down, a team has the option of (a) running or passing the ball from scrimmage (b) move the ball back to the opponent's 35 yard line and start offensive play from there.

S7: Penalties: Major penalty 10 yds. Minor penalty 5 yds.

S8: Game Time and Time Outs: Each quarter is 8 minutes. Game will consist of four (4) quarters. Halftime will be 10 minutes. Each team is allowed two (2) timeouts per half.

S9: Scores may be displayed on scoreboard. Tie breakers are permitted in League Championship and/or Bowl Game.

S10: Ball will be blown dead if fumbled behind the line of scrimmage. However, the ball will be live if fumbled beyond the line of scrimmage.

Part V: 11-Man Tackle

Playing Rules

S11: Playing Time: All players must play the required minimum plays per game. It is recommended that a platoon system (offense/defense) be utilized to help teach the game. Each team must have three (3) captains per game. Every player on the team must be given an opportunity to be a captain.

S12: Offense: All offensive backs must be lined up behind the offensive line in some type of formation. You will be allowed, however, to split one offensive back no more than five (5) yards outside the tight end. Offensive line must be in a 2 point stance.

S13: Defense: No defensive player can be placed directly over the center. Player must be three (3) yards off the center. Defensive line must be one (1) yard back from the offensive line and in a 2 point stance. Defense must run 6,4,1 set. No more than six (6) defensive players can rush the ball. No blitzing.

S14: Game ball should be the Wilson K2 size.

S15: Pop Warner Official Rule Book, Tiny Mites Same as Mitey Mite (Rules) plus R-1: S-3A.

S16: Teams not participating in League Championships may participate in 1 post-season game within their league. Teams may play a combination of 10 total games; a maximum of 1 pre-season game and 8 regular season games and 1 post season game within their league for a season total of 10 games.



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Part VI: 6, 8, and 9-Man Tackle Playing Rules

All Pop Warner Rules and Regulations apply to 6, 8, and 9-man football except for those differences outlined in the National Federation Rules. Certain modifications to the Federation Rules will be used to suit the philosophies of Pop Warner Football. These options are available to all programs across Pop Warner. The goal is to provide various opportunities and entry points into the game of Football for all.

ARTICLE 1: AGES & WEIGHTS

Without exception, the same ages and weights apply to 6, 8, and 9-man football as are used in all Pop Warner 11-man tackle programs. (See Rule 1, S4)

ARTICLE 2: ROSTER SIZE

	Minimum	Maximum
6-Man	10	15
8-Man	12	18
9-Man	14	20

ARTICLE 3: POST-SEASON PLAY

Post-season play is allowed in 6, 8, 9-man Pop Warner Football. Post-season play must be against chartered Pop Warner League 6, 8, 9-man football teams of similar ages and weights.

Under no circumstances may 6, 8, 9-man Pop Warner teams be merged to play against 11-man teams at any time. Further, 11-man teams may not drop players to permit playing a game with 6, 8, 9-man Pop Warner teams.

ARTICLE 4: MERCY RULE

When one team is 36 or more points ahead at the end of the first half or it takes this lead during the second half, the game is ended at that point.

ARTICLE 5: 6-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES

6-man tackle football can be played on a 100-yard field. However, if available, the 80-yard field should be used. If necessary, a 100-yard field can be converted to 80-yards with special markings, such as pylons. The smaller field is 80 yards between goal lines and 40 yards wide with 15-yard side zones. The location of the goal posts will remain the same.

Part VI: 6, 8, and 9-Man Tackle Playing Rules

11-man rules are used for 6-man football with these modifications:

Rule 1: The offense must advance the ball 15 yards instead of 10 in four downs.

Rule 2: At least 3 offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage.

Rule 3: There will be no direct running of the ball across the line of scrimmage.

Rule 4: The ball may be advanced across the line of scrimmage in the following ways:

- A. Kick
- B. Forward pass
- C. Clear pass (lateral) behind the line of scrimmage, e.g., the receiver of the snap (quarterback, tailback, etc.) must execute the clear pass (lateral) to another player before the ball can be advanced beyond the line of scrimmage.

Rule 5: If a fumble occurs before a clear pass (lateral) and if an offensive player recovers it, he may not carry it beyond the scrimmage line.

Rule 6: If a passer catches his own forward pass, it is incomplete.

Rule 7: All players are eligible to catch a forward pass except the passer.

Rule 8: Kickoffs are made from the kicker's 30-yard line.

Rule 9: On an 80-yard field, the ball is snapped after a touchback and is free kicked after a safety from the 15-yard line.

ARTICLE 6: 8-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES

If available, an 80-yard field should be used for 8-man football. If so, the same field restrictions apply to the 8-man field as for 6-man football.

11-man rules are used for 8-man football with these modifications:

Rule 1: At least 5 offensive players will be on the line at the snap.

Rule 2: Only players at the right and left ends of the line are eligible pass receivers.

Rule 3: All backs are eligible pass receivers if they are legally behind the line of scrimmage at the snap. The passer cannot catch his own pass.

Part VI: 6, 8, and 9-Man Tackle Playing Rules

Rule 4: Direct running is allowed in 8-man football.

Rule 5: On an 80-yard field, the ball is snapped after a touchback and is free kicked after a safety from the 15-yard line.

ARTICLE 7: 9-MAN RULE DIFFERENCES

A 100-yard field will be used for 9-man football.

11-man rules will apply to 9-man football with these modifications:

Rule 1: At least three receiving team players will be within five-yards of their free kick line.

Rule 2: At least five offensive team members will be on the scrimmage line at the snap of the ball.

In addition to the general regulations found in Parts I-III, the following rules govern all participants playing Pop Warner Flag Football and 7v7 non-contact Football.

All Spring Flag and 7v7 (NC) programs must be completed by July 15th. Rookie Tackle from USA Football is another option for local Pop Warner programs. Rules are available for download on the Pop Warner Website.

Membership is open to any legitimate sponsor, such as recreation departments, YMCAs, Boys Clubs, PAL, and so forth. Requests for flag and 7v7 (NC) leagues to operate in chartered Pop Warner tackle league territories will be considered by the National Football Commissioner.

Flag and 7v7 (NC) leagues become members of Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. If sponsoring flag or 7v7 programs, tackle leagues (already members) do not gain a second membership. Separate registration fees are charged for flag and 7v7 membership.

Part VII: Flag Football

ARTICLE 1: ORGANIZATION

The League is the basic unit of organization which consists of a minimum of four (4) teams in the same age division.

ARTICLE 2: REGISTRATION

Each league must conform to the insurance provisions found in Part I, National Remarks.

ARTICLE 3: DIVISIONS OF PLAY

S1: League age cut-off date is July 31st of the current year and shall be the participants' league age for the coming season.

S2: There are no height or weight restrictions on players.

Division Name:	Ages:
Cat	6U
Cub	7U
Bobcat	10U
Wildcat	12U
Panther	14U
Challenger	5-18*

S3: Spirit Teams shall follow the overall age and division of play referenced in S2 above. In addition, all flag spirit teams must follow Pop Warner Spirit Guidelines as outlined in the spirit section of this rule book.

S4: Pop Warner leagues can offer an all-girls flag division as a Fall/Spring sport starting with the 2024-2025 season.

S5: Ages shall be verified by methods outlined in Part III, Article 6, S-3.

S6: If a player starts a season in one division, he must finish in that division.

S7: A player is ineligible if he is simultaneously a member of a school tackle program or if he is playing Pop Warner tackle football. He is also ineligible if he is competing in another flag football program (unless as part of school curriculum).

S8: A player shall furnish a written consent to play from either a parent or legal guardian.

Part VII: Flag Football

S9: A signed medical form provided by PWLS is required to be submitted each year by a parent or legal guardian that attests the youth athlete is physically fit and there are no observable conditions which would contra-indicate playing football.

ARTICLE 4: FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

RULE 1: PLAYERS

S1: A game is played between two teams consisting of seven (7) players each.

S2: Each team roster shall have a maximum of 18 players, and a minimum of 10 players. A forfeit will result when the minimum is not met.

S3: Only players appearing on the official team roster in the PW Roster System are to be counted as players. The Roster is completed and active in the PW Roster System before the first game of the season and verified by the league in a process called “certification.”

S4: The offensive team must have (4) players on the line and (3) players in the backfield. The defensive team may choose any formation.

A. Any defensive player lined up seven yards off the line of scrimmage is eligible to rush.

S5: Mandatory Play Rule: All players will play a minimum of 10 plays. Failure to abide by this rule will result in forfeiture of that game.

S6: A team will have 30 seconds to put the ball in play after the ready signal. (45 seconds for Cat & Club divisions)

A. The quarterback has seven-second pass clock to get rid of the ball.

S7: A younger division student athlete MAY play/participate in an OLDER division, but an older division student athlete may NOT play in the YOUNGER divisions.

RULE 2: PLAYING FIELDS

S1: The field shall be rectangular with lines and zones and shall follow the design mentioned below.

A. 60-yard field: This field yardage includes 5 yard end zones and is 30 yards wide, divided into 2 zones of twenty yards each between two end zones of ten yards each. It is 53 1/3 yards wide.

B. Goal Posts are unnecessary as points after TD (conversion) are made only by passing or running and there are no field goals kicked.

Part VII: Flag Football

- C. A conversion line will be marked 3 yards from the goal line and at an equal distance from each sideline.
- D. A kickoff area will be marked (usually by an "X") as follows:

S2: Each possession starts at the 5-yard line after Scores, Turnover on downs and/or Halftime.

S3: The following field equipment will be used:

- A. A Down Marker will be used to indicate the number of the down.
- B. A Zone Marker will be used to indicate the distance to go for a first down (placed at the forward zone line).
- C. Corner Flags with flexible staffs will be placed at the four sections of the end zones and the sidelines. Soft pylons may be used if flags are unavailable.

RULE 3: EQUIPMENT

S1: GAME BALL

Each PWFF league will determine which ball will be used during its games.

S2: FLAGS

- A. Each player must wear a belt with the number of flags designated as "standard" by the league, which will be 2 flags.
- B. The flags will be attached to a belt and extend or hang from each side of the player's body (hip).
- C. Flags will be 14-20 inches long and a minimum of 2 inches wide.
- D. The belt must be tight to prevent being turned around during a de-flagging.
- E. The home team will wear light flags and the visitors will wear dark flags.
- F. The securing of flags to the body, waist or belt, other than provided by S-2-B, is illegal.
- G. Jerseys cannot be worn over flags. (Jersey Tuck Rule)
- H. If a player's flag is inadvertently lost, he is ineligible to handle the ball.
- I. Flags are to be of contrasting colors, different from game uniform. Definitions of uniform shall be game pants and/or jersey.

NOTE: The flags will be attached to a belt made for that purpose. Such a belt has equal resistance at the point of attachment of flags, thereby ensuring an equal effort necessary to de-flag a player.

Part VII: Flag Football

S3: GAME UNIFORMS

- A. All team members must wear the same color jersey.
- B. All uniforms must have the Official Authorized Pop Warner Patch displayed in the designated areas as determined by National.
- C. All jerseys will be numbered, front and back.
- D. Any type of pants may be worn provided said pants have no front or side pockets.
- E. **Jerseys will be tucked in at all times.**
- F. Sneakers are the preferred shoe; however, non-detachable, rubber-cleated shoes are allowed. No other footwear is acceptable.

S4: EYE GLASSES

Eye glasses, when worn, shall be of athletically-approved construction with non-shattering glass (safety glass).

S5: MOUTH GUARDS

Mouth guards are required and keeper strap is not necessary.

RULE 4: PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT

S1: Spiked or street shoes.

S2: Padding of any kind, including hard surface padding, such as shoulder pads and hip pads. However, players may wear soft shell helmets, but they must be always secured while on the playing field.

S3: Hard metal or any other hard substance on a player's clothing or person.

S4: Anything that conceals the flags.

S5: Slick or sticky substances such as grease or glue.

S6: Any equipment, in the opinion of the referee that will endanger or confuse players.

RULE 5: REFEREES

S1: There will be at least two (2) referees.

S2: The league may assign more than two referees for a game.

S3: There shall be at least three (3) referees for a sanctioned PWFF playoff or championship game.

S4: Each game official will carry a handkerchief and drop it whenever an infraction occurs.

Part VII: Flag Football

RULE 6: THE RULES OF THE GAME

S1: PLAYERS

- A. The free substitution rule is always in effect and a player may enter the game any time the ball is dead.
- B. All offensive players are eligible including the center

S2: TEAM CAPTAINS

- A. Each team will have at least one captain on the field at all times during the game.
- B. The captain will address the referees only on matters of interpretation and to obtain information.

S3: TEAM COACHES:

One coach for each team will be permitted on the field in the 6U, 8U & 10U only.

S4: TIME

There will be:

- A. Two 20-minute running clock halves for all divisions.
- B. Three (3) time-outs per half. (30 seconds)
- C. Ten (10) minutes between halves.

S5: LAST MINUTE OF THE GAME

The clock WILL stop in the final minute of the game on these actions:

- A. Incompletions
- B. Out of Bounds
- C. QB Sack and kneel downs
- D. Change of Possession
- E. Penalties. (NOTE: If it is an offensive penalty, the clock WILL start on the official unless it is a dead ball foul) a turnover on downs and/or Halftime.

S6: NO KICKOFFS

Each possession starts at the 5-yard line after scores.

S7: PUNTING

Teams are not permitted to punt.

S8: DOWNS (First down and zone to go)

- A. Each team will have three consecutive downs to advance the ball into the next zone or to score a touchdown.
- B. Once a team enters into the next zone, it is a first down and a new series of downs begins.

Part VII: Flag Football

- C. A team failing to move the ball into the next zone will lose possession. The opposing team takes over at the point where the ball is declared dead and begins its series of first down and zone to go.
- D. The forward part of the ball touching any line will be the determining factor in measuring for a first down.
- E. A down will be repeated if provided for by the rules (See Rule 13).
- F. When the offensive team is within the last zone and has a first down, it will be first down and goal to go.
- G. At the conclusion of each down, the referee will place the ball in the center of the field (equal distance from sidelines- not on a hash mark).

S9: DE-FLAGGING

- A. There shall be NO tackling of the ball carrier, passer, or kicker.
- B. The player carrying or having possession of the ball is down when the flag is removed from his waist (deflagging). The defensive player shall hold the flag above his head and stand still.
- C. The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier to remove his flag. An accidental touch of the body or shoulder while reaching for the flag shall not be considered a violation; however, touching of the head or face shall be considered a violation.
- D. A defensive player may not run over, push, or pull a blocker away from him. He may push him sideways if he gets past him, but he cannot push the blocker down.
- E. A defensive player must go for the passer's flag. He cannot touch the passer's arm.

S10: BLOCKING

Blocking is not permitted.

S11: BALL CARRIER

- A. The ball carrier cannot use his hands or arms to protect his flags. The defensive player must have the opportunity to remove the ball carrier's flags.
- B. The ball carrier cannot lower his head to drive or run into a defensive player.
- C. Stiff-arming by the ball carrier is illegal.
- D. The ball carrier cannot spin, hurdle or dive to prevent a defensive player from removing his flags.
- E. He may run in any direction until the ball is declared dead.

Part VII: Flag Football

S12: CENTER (also see S9)

- A. The center must snap the ball between his legs.
- B. Center cannot take a handoff from the QB.

S13: PASSING

- A. All backfield men are eligible passers.
- B. Passing will be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage only.
- C. A lateral pass is a pass thrown parallel to the line of scrimmage or back toward the passer's own goal line. A lateral pass is not considered a forward pass.
- D. A forward pass is a pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage toward the defensive team's goal line.

S14: RECEIVING

- A. All players are eligible to receive forward passes.
- B. A receiver may catch a ball even if he steps out-of-bounds or out of the end zone as long as he comes down with one foot in bounds.
- C. Two or more receivers may touch a ball in succession resulting in a completed pass.
- D. If an offensive and defensive player catch a pass simultaneously, the ball is declared dead at the spot of the catch and the passing team is awarded possession.
- E. An offensive player cannot be out-of-bounds and return in-bounds to catch a pass. This will be ruled an incomplete pass.

S15: DEAD BALL

All balls touching the ground are immediately dead. For example, the ball is declared dead at the following times:

- A. When the ball carrier touches the ground with his body, other than hands or feet.
- B. When the ball carrier's flag has been pulled.
- C. If a pass receiver or ball carrier has a missing flag (ball is dead at that spot).
- D. Following a touchdown, safety or touchback.
- E. When the ball goes out-of-bounds for any reason.
- F. If the center snap hits the ground before reaching a backfield man.
- G. When the ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble or muffed ball. **THERE ARE NO FUMBLE RECOVERIES IN PWFF!**

Part VII: Flag Football

- H. If a lateral pass touches the ground (ball is declared dead at that point). If a lateral pass goes out-of-bounds, the ball is ruled dead at the point it crosses the boundary line.
- I. If a forward pass strikes the ground or is caught at the same time by an opposing player(s).
- J. When a player on the kicking team touches a punt before a player on the receiving team.
- K. A free catch (cannot be advanced).

S16: MERCY RULE

If a team is up by 30 or more they only have TWO downs to get a first down and TWO downs to score until that point difference is trimmed below 30 pts; than regular game rules are restored.

The team that is behind by 30 or more points will start their offensive possession at the +10 yard line and get FOUR downs to score. If the point difference is trimmed below 30 pts, Regular game rules are restored.

RULE 7: SCORING VALUES

Touchdown.....	6 points
Point after TD by run or pass.....	1 point
Point after TD by kick.....	2 points
Safety (awarded to opponent).....	2 points
Field goal.....	3 points
Forfeit (offended team wins by).....	1-0

RULE 8: TIE GAME

S1: Tie games will go into the record as such and will not be played off in regular season play.

S2: All Tournament Games:

- A. Ball will be placed in the center of the field. The referee will toss a coin in the presence of the two team captains. The winning captain will have the option of putting the ball in play at mid-field.
- B. Each team will have four (4) consecutive downs and the winner will be the team gaining the most yardage in its series of downs (penetration).
- C. Penalties will count as plus or minus yardage.
- D. Intercepted passes will count as incomplete passes.
- E. If the yardage is still the same at the end of each team's four down series, the series will be repeated.

Part VII: Flag Football

RULE 9: INJURED PLAYERS

Once removed from a game because of injury, a player must sit out at least one down, and may not re-enter the game without the approval of attending medical personnel.

RULE 10: PRACTICES

S1: Practice cannot begin until August 1 for the fall season, and until February 1 for spring season.

S2: Practices are limited to three days per week, not to exceed 1-1/2 hours each practice, while school is in session, and when school is not in session, practices are limited to four days per week, not to exceed 2 hours duration.

RULE 11: SCHEDULES

S1: Maximum number of games per season shall be as follows for each division of play:

Division	Pre-Season	Regular Season	Tournament
Cat	0	6	No
Cub	0	6	Yes*
Bobcat	1	6	Yes*
Wildcat	1	8	Yes*
Panther	1	8	Yes*

*Whatever number needed in the tournament program is allowed.

RULE 12: TOURNAMENT PLAY

S1: If a league decides to enter tournament play, it must have all its rosters approved in the PW Roster System.

S2: Teams for which a tournament team roster has not been approved in the PW Roster System will be declared ineligible by the Tournament Director.

- A. Each team arriving at the tournament site brings its tournament roster.
- B. This roster will be matched against the approved roster in the PW Roster System, and a copy is sent directly to the Tournament Director.

Part VII: Flag Football

S3: All divisions are allowed to enter Pop Warner Flag Tournaments upon approval of their leagues.

S4: Tournament teams will be allowed to play as many games as it takes to win at a tournament level, but may not play more than two (2) games in one day.

S5: PWFF Tournaments will consist of not less than two (2) nor more than four (4) teams per division of play in either a single or double elimination tournament. NOTE: Tournament Director must notify all participants of type of tournament at least one week in advance.

S6: PWFF Playoffs or Invitational Tournaments are played only as post-season games.

S7: Tournament teams will be selected by any method the league chooses.

S8: Players competing in tournament play must be listed on league and tournament rosters and must have played in at least one-half (1/2) of the team's regularly scheduled games prior to the start of tournament play.

S9: Particulars regarding Playoff and Invitational Tournaments will be available each year from the National Football Commissioner.

S10: Awards for PWFF Tournaments

- A. Each participating team shall receive a trophy for its place of finish in the tournament. Awards will be furnished by the host site.
- B. Participant awards for individual players will be left to the discretion of the host league.

S11: The host league shall determine which of the two standard PWFF playing fields will be used. The Tournament Director will inform all participants of same at least one week in advance.

S12: The host league shall determine which of the two standard PWFF playing fields will be used. The Tournament Director will inform all participants of same at least one week in advance.

Part VII: Flag Football

RULE 13: PENALTIES

OFFENSIVE PENALTIES

- A. **Offensive Pass Interference:** 10-yard penalty and replay the down
- B. **Illegal motion (2 men in motion):** 5-yard penalty and replay the down
- C. **Illegal Formation:** 5-yard penalty and replay the down
- D. **Illegal Run:** 5-yard penalty and loss of down
- E. **False Start:** 5-yard penalty, replay the down
- F. **Illegal Forward Pass:** 5-yard penalty and loss of down (QB steps over the LOS or QB throws a forward pass behind the LOS)
- G. **Blocking:** Ball is placed at the spot of the foul and loss of down
- H. **Leaping:** Ball is placed at the spot of the foul and loss of down
- I. **Flag Guarding (including stiff arms):** 5-yard penalty from the spot of the foul and loss of down
- J. **Unsportsmanlike conduct:** 15-yard penalty (possible ejection)
- K. **Delay of Game:** clock is stopped and a 5-yard penalty
- L. No Intentional Grounding Penalty

DEFENSIVE PENALTIES:

- A. **Defensive Pass Interference:** 10-yard penalty and replay down unless it is an offensive catch; Offense decides. 1st down can occur depending on the yardage.
- B. **Illegal Contact (holding, jams, etc.):** 5-yard penalty and replay down unless it is an offensive catch; Offense decides. 1st can occur depending on the yardage.
- C. **Defensive Holding while pulling flag:** 5-yard penalty added to the end of the play and replay down. 1st down can occur depending on the yardage.
- D. **Illegal Flag Pull (before player has ball):** 5-yard penalty and replay down. 1st down can occur depending on the yardage.
- E. **Offsides:** 5-yard penalty and replay down. 1st down can occur depending on the yardage.
- F. **Illegal Rushing (before a hand-off has occurred):** 5-yard penalty and replay the down; offense decides depending on the result of the play. 1st down can occur depending on the yardage.
- G. **Inadvertent Tackle:** 5-yard penalty added to the end of the play and replay down.

Part VII: Flag Football

S1: UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS

- A. Offensive and Defensive (15-10).
- B. Disqualification of guilty player or players if repeated.

S2: UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- A. Fighting (15-10)-offenders ejected from game.
- B. Defensive player pulling offensive player's flag to make him ineligible for play (15-10).
- C. Insulting and abusive language (15-10).
- D. Interference with progress of the game by coaches or any other team personnel (15-10).
- E. Illegal play (15-10).
- F. Team leaving field before game is completed (15-10). Failure to return-Forfeit. Win for team remaining on the field.
- G. Failure of home team to control players or fans (15-10).
- H. Forfeit if not controlled.

RULE 14: PROTESTS

S1: Only protests involving rules' interpretations or the eligibility of a player shall be considered-never the judgment of an official in calling a play.

S2: Protests are decided at the local level in accordance with the administrative procedures of the league.

RULE 15: THE RULES OF THE GAME BY DIVISION

S1: 6u & 8u Division Rules & Goals

- A. **UNLIMITED** Runs
- B. **45**-second play clock
- C. **ONE** Coach is allowed on the field for both offense and defense

Although the game is serious to the kids, from Pop Warner's viewpoint, this division is a training level, completely free of any pressure to win, with a total emphasis on learning. With that being said, we want to be flexible with our rules and get our student-athletes lined up properly as well as teach them the fundamentals of football. The Deception Rule will be in effect to help with the integrity of the passing game for both offense and defense.

Run Game Rules for 6u and 8u: A play will be considered a run play, when the ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage, or if a player takes a hand-off from the quarterback and does NOT cross the line of scrimmage. A play in which a player takes a hand-off from the quarterback, and then throws a forward pass will be considered a pass play, and NOT count as a team's run play

Part VII: Flag Football

S2: 10u Division Rules & Goals

- A. **30**-second play clock
- B. **ONE** run per offensive possession
- C. **NO** runs 5yds from the End Zone
- D. **NO** runs on extra points
- E. **ONE** Coach is allowed on the field for both offense and defense

In this division, we want to encourage the teams to start focusing on passing the ball more than running the ball. The Deception Rule will be in effect to help with the integrity of the passing game for both offense and defense. We want the players to start applying proper QB, WR, and DB fundamentals; alignment and assignments in the passing game.

S3: 12u & 14u Division Rules & Goals

- A. **30**-second play clock
- B. **NO RUNS**
- C. **NO** Coach allowed on the field

Every-down is a pass play; essentially 7v7 pass game. We want the players to start sharpening their skills as a QB, WR, and DB that they have learned and apply it in a fun, safe yet extremely competitive format.

Passing Game Rules for 6u-14u: The Offense **MUST** throw the ball within:

- A. **6u, 8u & 10u 6 seconds**
- B. **12u 4 seconds**
- C. **14u & up 3 seconds**



Part VIII: 7v7 Non Contact (NC)

ARTICLE 1: OVERVIEW

The benefits of playing 7v7 non-contact football include:

- A. Perfecting the Passing Game. Because teams cannot tackle or run the ball, QBs have the chance to work on their accuracy and timing when throwing a football.
- B. Helps You Stay in Shape. Seven on seven football is a great way for players to build up their stamina on account of all the running involved.
- C. Plenty of Repetitions. Instead of just running drills which can be monotonous, 7v7 football allows players to practice different game scenarios. This could be a great way for high school kids, or any level, to get ready for their next game.
- D. Less Chance of Injuries. By eliminating tackles, players can focus on their running and passing without having to worry about defending themselves. Some leagues require players to wear soft-shell helmets to protect themselves from head injuries, which already don't occur often because there's no tackling.
- E. Great Exposure. Although college coaches and recruiters are prohibited from actually attending 7v7 games, increasing coverage of tournaments has become available, giving football players more opportunities to showcase their skills.
- F. Defensively: Alignment and Assignment Perfect. Defensives have the ability to practice their man and zone coverages with the understanding that every down is a passing down. Resulting in advanced preparation and understanding of the game, slowing the speed of the game down which in turn will minimize injuries.

RULE 1: PLAYING RULES

S1: Minimum number of players: 8. Maximum number of players: 16.

S2: The season starts in January. It can end no later than July 15th.

S3: Each play must be run within 30 seconds after the ball has been reset.

S4: Each team is allowed up to two games per week.

S5: Each team must complete six hours of practice before playing their first game.

S6: Each team is allowed up to three two-hour practices a week. A week goes from Monday to Sunday.

Part VIII: 7v7 Non Contact (NC)

S7: The playing field will be 40 yards in length, plus a 10 yard end zone.

S8: The quarterback is NOT allowed to rush with the football. He must throw a pass on every play. He cannot scramble beyond the line of scrimmage.

S9: The field will be marked with two (2) lines -- a 10-yard line and a 25-yard line.

S10: There will be two divisions of play: Warner Division – 10, 11, 12 year olds. Tomlin Division – 13, 14, 15 year olds.

S11: Warner Division uses the Pop Warner Junior size ball. Tomlin Division uses the Pop Warner Youth size ball.

S12: The player's "play age" is how old the player will be on July 31st of that current year (i.e. the same registration age as a Fall Tackle Player).

S13: All teams must have insurance approved by Pop Warner. Rosters must be submitted and approved through the PW Roster system.

S14: All competition is within your conference. Any travel outside of your conference must have an approved event request form.

S15: The goal of this program is to provide a safe learning environment for players to build their skills while having FUN!

S16: 2 halves of play: 20 minutes running clock each half. 10 minute halftime.

S17: 2 timeouts per half. Clock stops for timeouts. Timeouts are 90 seconds each.

S18: Each player must play a minimum of 10 plays per game.

S19: You can have playoffs but they must not exceed two rounds of play.

S20: Each team may have up to three (3) coaches. The head coach must have PW football certification.

S21: All coaches/volunteers must fill out the volunteer application and have a current passing background check.

Part VIII: 7v7 Non Contact (NC)

S22: Each play ends when a “defensive” player touches the receiver with one hand below the neck or the pass falls incomplete.

S23: The quarterback has four seconds to pass the ball across the line of scrimmage or the play is blown dead. A defender can't cross the line of scrimmage until the quarterback passes the ball.

S24: Only two first downs per series is possible, achieved when reaching the 25 yard line within four (4) downs and the same is true when they cross the 10 yard line.

S25: NO running plays are allowed. All players are eligible receivers.

S26: This is a non-contact game and any flagrant contact is cause for immediate ejection. As always, any unsportsmanlike conduct is also cause for ejection. The Referee's decision is final on all plays; there will be no tolerance for arguing and only a coach may ask for a rule clarification. All rules in the Pop Warner Member/Adult Codes of Conduct will apply.

S27: If a player/coach is ejected, they are not eligible to play/coach in the next game. If ejected a 2nd time during the season, the player/coach is finished for the summer season and may be subject to additional sanctions that carry over into the Fall Tackle season.

S28: All passes must be forward. No laterals.

S29: No fumbles; the ball is dead if it touches the ground.

S30: All possessions will start at the 40 yard line.

S31: No punting or field goal attempts.

S32: No protests. The decision of the game officials is final.

RULE 2: SCORING

Offensive Scores:

- A. Touchdown scores 6 points.
- B. 1 extra point attempt. Attempt will be from the 10 yard line. (1 point)

Defensive Scores:

- A. Defenses can also score in 7v7 football. Defenses score three (3) points each time they intercept a pass.
- B. If the defense is able to turn the offense over on downs, they score two (2) points.

Part VIII: 7v7 Non Contact (NC)

RULE 3: PENALTIES

Offensive Penalties:

- A. Blocking or Holding: 10 yards from line of scrimmage, ejection for flagrant contact violation
- B. Illegal Motion/False Start: 5 yards
- C. Offensive Pass Interference: 10 yards from line of scrimmage
- D. Delay of Game: Clock stops, 10 yards from line of scrimmage

Defensive Penalties:

- A. Tackling or Holding: 10 yards from line of scrimmage, ejection for flagrant contact violation
- B. Offside: 5 yards from line of scrimmage
- C. Pass Interference: 10 yards from line of scrimmage
- D. Illegal Rushing of the Quarterback: 10 yards from line of scrimmage
- E. Delay of Game: Clock stops, 10 yards from line of scrimmage

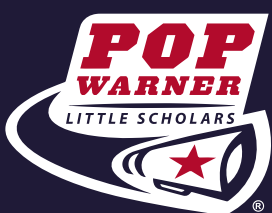
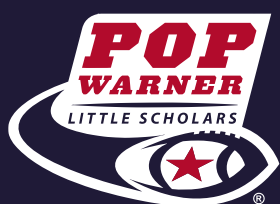
Part IX: Challenger Division

The Challenger Division rules are patterned off of Pop Warner's Flag Football rules. Please contact the National Office for more specific division rules.









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