



City of Salem Parks and Recreation  
 Sports Office – Division  
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## City of Salem Youth Football League

The purpose of Youth Recreational Athletic Leagues is to provide an enjoyable experience for each youth participant, while developing character, skills, sportsmanship, and promoting good will among all teams and individuals. Although sports are competitive by nature; the City of Salem Parks and Recreation Department's intentions are to place less emphasis on winning, while promoting the building of lifetime physical activity and health for each participant.

### BY-LAWS

The Youth Football leagues are governed by the National Federation of State High School Associations rules unless otherwise stated in these bylaws.

**Age Classification:** Age determined on September 30 of the current season.

League	Length of quarters or halves	Ball Size
<u>Biddy</u> • 6 & first year 7's	1 hour time limit (running clock)	Equivalent to Wilson K2
<u>Pee Wee</u> • Second year 7's & 8's	4, 8-minute quarters (5 minute halftime)	Equivalent to Wilson K2
<u>Little</u> • 9 & 10 year-olds	4, 8-minute quarters (5 minute halftime)	Equivalent to Wilson TDJ
<u>Junior</u> • 11,12 & 13 year-olds <b>Note:</b> 8 <sup>th</sup> graders are not eligible regardless of age.	4, 8-minute quarters (5 minute halftime)	Equivalent to Wilson TDY

### Playing Up

- Every player must play one (1) year in each age division before they are eligible to move up to the next age division.
- Once a player chooses to move up in age divisions they must remain in that division and will not be allowed to "play down" for the remainder of that season.
- No participant will be allowed to "play down" in any age division unless otherwise approved by the recreation department (i.e. medical condition, etc.).

### All Play Rule

Every player present must play a minimum of three (3) plays per half for a total of six (6) plays per game. A PLAY must meet the following stipulations:

- Each team must designate a coach to ensure that all players on their respective team plays their mandatory playing requirements.
- Players participating in kick-offs and punt returns must play the next consecutive play.
- Field goals and P.A.T.'s will not fulfill this requirement.
- All players must be involved in active plays with no intent to minimize the action or integrity of the plays in the game.

**Note:** The penalty for non-compliance to this rule will be the head coach's suspension for one game.

## Roster Size

- The roster minimum for any team is at least 14 players.
- Any team with 34 or more players must split into two teams.
- There shall be a limit of six (6) coaches on the roster and on the sideline during games. Coaches must be in coaches' shirts.

## Equipment

- **Cleats:** Only molded rubber cleats shall be worn for practices and games for the Bidy, Pee-Wee and Little Divisions. Junior Division: Players may wear removable or nonremovable cleats that conform to VHSL rules.
- No player shall participate while wearing illegal equipment. This applies to any equipment, which in the opinion of the umpire is dangerous, confusing or inappropriate (Per VHSL).
- **Casts/Braces:** Hard substances in its final form such as leather, rubber, plastic, plaster or fiberglass when worn on the hand, wrist, forearm or elbow unless covered on all exterior surfaces must have a minimum ½ inch thick, high-density, closed-cell polyurethane or alternate material of the same minimum thickness and with similar physical properties to protect an injury as directed in writing by a licensed medical physician. A written doctor's note and approval from the Salem Sports Office must be on file prior to participation in any games or practices.
- The City of Salem will provide all game balls, chains and down markers.

## Practices

### **Biddy League:**

- All players must practice in shorts and helmets for a minimum of four (4) practices before being allowed to participate with full pads (full pads = helmet and shoulder pads).
- No more than three (3) scheduled meetings per week prior to the first scheduled game of the season.
- Once games begin teams will be limited to no more than two (2) scheduled meetings per week with one being the game.
- No practices are allowed on Sunday.
- All practices are 1.5 hours in duration.

### **PW/Little/Junior Leagues:**

- Parks and Recreation will notify teams when practices may begin.
- All players must practice in shorts and helmets for a minimum of four (4) practices before being allowed to participate with full pads (full pads = helmet, shoulder pads and colored mouth piece).
- Before games start, teams may have no more than four (4) scheduled meetings Monday-Saturday at 2 hours in duration.
- Once games begin, teams may have no more than four (4) scheduled meetings per week at 1.5 hours in duration.
- No practices are allowed on Sunday.

**Note:** A **scheduled meeting** will be defined as any time players and coaches meet as a group. This includes but is not limited to scheduled games, practices, team meetings, jamborees or other unspecified events.

## Playing Rules (Any rule not covered in this section will fall under VHSL guidelines)

### **Biddy League Only:**

1. No score will be kept.
2. The ball will be placed on the 30-yard line with each team getting ten (10) plays regardless of the outcome of each play.
3. No punting or kick-offs.
4. Forty-five (45) second play clock will be in effect.

5. Each team will get one (1) time-out per half.
6. Clock will only stop for injuries and time-outs.
7. Two officials will be assigned to each scrimmage.
8. Only two coaches (per team) are allowed on field and are not allowed to interfere with the play of the game. Verbal instruction only. Violation will result in a 15-yard penalty.
9. A maximum of five (5) defensive linemen. Linebackers must remain 3 yards off the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped. Penalty is 5 yards.
10. Fumbles may not be advanced by the defensive team.
11. No defensive player is allowed to line up over the center.
12. At the conclusion of each game both teams (players and coaches) must meet at mid-field and shake hands. Failure to comply with this rule may result in disciplinary actions taken by the Recreation Department.

### **Pee-Wee/Little/Junior Leagues:**

1. Pee-Wee coaches are allowed on the field for the first two (2) games only.
2. There will be a thirty-second play clock for all leagues. Teams taking longer than 30 seconds to run a play will be subject to a delay-of-game penalty.
3. Colored mouth pieces must be worn. Clear mouth pieces are not allowed.
4. Unfair Acts: Neither team shall commit any act which, in the opinion of the referee, tends to make a travesty of the game. Football has been and always will be a game of deception and trickery involving multiple shifts, unusual formations and creative plays. However, actions or verbiage designed to confuse a team into believing there is a problem and a snap isn't imminent is beyond the scope of sportsmanship and is illegal. **Penalty:** 15 yards and loss of down.

5. Scoring:

Touchdown	6 points
Field Goal	3 points
Safety	2 points
PAT Kick	2 points
Pass/Run	1 point

6. Field Goals

- a. Pee Wee and Little –

- Once the referee whistles “ready for play”, the offensive team will have 30-seconds to snap the ball and for the kicker to attempt one kick. Penalty: 5-yard delay of game and replay down.
- Ball will be moved in 10 yards from the spot (no closer than the goal line).
- No rushing or contact made by the defensive team.
- The only “live” players are the snapper, holder and kicker.
- The offensive team must attempt a kick.
- Defensive teams must take a knee during all field goal attempts and make no attempt to block the kick.
- No fakes are allowed.

- b. Junior – Ball will be spotted on the line of scrimmage as per VHSL regulations. All players are “live” per VHSL regulations.

7. Point After Touchdown (PAT)

- a. Kicking Attempt

- Once the referee whistles “ready for play”, the offensive team will have 30-seconds to snap the ball and for the kicker to **attempt one kick**. Penalty: unsuccessful PAT attempt.
- Pee Wee – Ball will be spotted three (3) yards inside the goal line.
- Little – Ball will be spotted on the goal line.
- Pee Wee and Little - No rushing or contact made by the defensive team. The only “live” players are the snapper, holder and kicker. The offensive team must attempt a kick. Defensive teams must take a knee during all field goal attempts and make no attempt to block the kick. No fakes are allowed.

- Junior – Ball will be spotted from the three (3) yard line. All players are “live” per VHSL regulations.
- b. Run/Pass Attempt
    - Ball will be spotted from the three (3) yard line.
8. Punting:
    - a. Once the referee whistles “ready for play”, the offensive team will have 30-seconds to snap the ball and for the kicker to attempt one kick. Penalty: 5-yard delay of game and replay down.
    - b. No rushing or defensive contact on any punt attempt **(ALL LEAGUES)**.
    - c. The line of scrimmage for the returning team will be determined by where the returner catches and maintains control of the ball or where the ball stops rolling in the event the returner does not catch the ball. If the ball bounces forward off a returner attempting to make a catch, the ball will be spotted where it first touched the returner.
    - d. Teams must have a minimum of seven (7) offensive and defensive players on the line.
    - e. Coaches or team captain must inform the referee they will be punting on 4<sup>th</sup> down.
    - f. Penalty for rushing or defensive contact: 5 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.
  9. Head Coach’s in all age divisions must go to midfield with their respective team captains prior to the start of the game for the coin toss.
  10. Only Head Coaches and players will be allowed to call timeouts.
  11. On a change of possession the clock will start when the ball is snapped (per VHSL).
  12. At the conclusion of each game both teams (players and coaches) must meet at mid-field and shake hands. Failure to comply with this rule may result in disciplinary actions taken by the Recreation Department.
  13. 24 Point Rule:
    - a. If a team is ahead by 24 points or more in the first half, the team ahead will kick-off from their own 10 yard line.
    - b. If a team is ahead by 24 points or more in the second half, the trailing team will have the option of letting the opposing team kick-off from their own 10 yard line or take over possession of the ball on their opponent’s ten (10) yard line with four (4) downs to score.
    - c. If the team losing fails to score, the team leading will take over possession of the ball on their own 10-yard line, with 90 yards to go to score.
    - d. This process will repeat each time a 24-point or more margin occurs.
    - e. The clock will run continuously when the 24-point rule is in effect.
  14. Overtime:
    - a. Each overtime period will be played according to Virginia High School League rules (after coin toss to determine possession, maximum of two (2) alternating possessions from the 10-yard line (4 downs) for each team).
    - b. If tied after two (2) overtime attempts, the game will remain a tie.

### **Coach/Spectator/Player Ejection (All Leagues)**

- Any coach, spectator or player ejected from a game will be automatically suspended for the team’s next two (2) games and practices during that time.
- Any player or coach ejected from two (2) games in one season will be suspended for the remainder of the season.
- During the suspension, which starts immediately after the altercation, the coach, player or spectator must leave the City of Salem property immediately and will not be allowed to be present at the games or the practices until the suspension has expired. If they refuse to leave or attempt to come back before the suspension is over they will be suspended for the remainder of the season. This includes any altercation before or after a game.
- Additional penalties may be added at the discretion of the City of Salem Department of Parks and Recreation.
- All decisions made by the Parks and Recreation Department are final.

### **Unsportsmanlike Conduct By Coaches**

Penalty as per VHSL rules and loss of one (1) timeout.

### **Unauthorized Personnel**

Only coaches, players, and field officials will be permitted along the sidelines or on the players' benches. All coaches must be wearing a coach's shirt in order to be permitted on the sidelines. If they are not in proper attire they will be asked to leave the sideline.

### **Factors for League Playoff Seedings (Pee-Wee/Little/Junior Leagues)**

1. Best Record
2. Which team won the final regular season game played between the two teams that are tied.
3. Coin toss.

### **Standings**

All games played against teams from outside of Salem (i.e. Glenvar, Craig, Bedford, etc.) will count towards the overall record for those teams.

### **Coaches Background Screenings**

Each team's head coach and up to four (4) assistant coaches must complete the **Volunteer In Youth Sports Consent Form** and be approved according to the guidelines listed therein. Teams shall have at least one (1) approved coach at all practices and games. Any coach who willfully fails to comply with this background screening policy shall be automatically disqualified. **This is mandatory in order to Coach!**

### **Rained-Out Games Policy**

Any weekday that school is cancelled because of bad weather, practices and games will be called off for that night. You may also call the Youth Sports Office Cancellation Line (966-6900) for updated cancellation information.

### **Game Schedules, League Standings and Rescheduled Games**

Game schedules, league standings, rescheduled games and other information will be available by logging onto the City of Salem website, [www.salemva.gov](http://www.salemva.gov). Coaches will be responsible for checking the status of postponed games through this website on a daily basis. We will not mail out any reschedules.