

SENECA VALLEY JR.
FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
OF CRANBERRY
GENERAL RULES
&
POLICIES

Revised February 22, 2023
(approved by Board on 3/13/23)

GENERAL RULES AND POLICIES

Pursuant to the By-Laws, the Association hereby promulgates the below General Rules and Policies. The General Rules and Policies are not part of the By-Laws but are a separate document. All terms defined in the By-Laws are incorporated herein.

1. COACHES. The coaching staff of each team shall consist of a Head Coach and a staff of Assistant Coaches. Teams may also utilize Student Helpers.

1.01 Head Coaches

- 1.01.1 Any individual wishing to be considered for any of the Head Coaching positions must submit an application for the football team or cheerleading squad he/she wishes to coach. Applications must be received by the Football and Cheer Coordinators on or before the deadline set by the Board for the current year.
- 1.01.2 The application of each Head Coaching candidate shall be distributed to the entire Board. In the event there is more than one candidate for the Head Coaching position of a team, the Board shall interview each candidate. The Board may also interview any other candidate to determine his/her fitness to be a Head Coach. After review of the applications and the interview of candidates (if applicable), the Board shall vote on the Head Coaching candidates.
- 1.01.3 An individual may apply for the Head Coaching position of a team in only one age group.
- 1.01.4 If the Board does not receive an application for a Head Coaching position at a specific age group, then the President, Vice President and the applicable Coordinator may appoint an individual to fill the vacancy, which will be subject to Board approval.
- 1.01.5 The position of Head Coach cannot be held in conjunction with the position of Football and Cheer Coordinator.
- 1.01.6 Head Coaches shall serve a term commencing from the time they are appointed by the Board until December 31 of the same year.
- 1.01.7 Head Coaches shall be responsible to ensure that his/her team, the players, Student Helpers and Assistant Coaches abide by and comply with the By-Laws, the Association's Code of Ethics, these General Rules, and the rules and policies of the League (defined hereinafter).
- 1.01.8 If a Head Coach resigns, the President, Vice President and the applicable Coordinator shall appoint his/her replacement, subject to Board approval.

1.02 Assistant Coaches/Student Helpers

1.02.1 Teams may have Assistant Coaches and Student Helpers. Unless limited otherwise by the League, the Head Coach has discretion to determine the number of Assistant Coaches and/or Student Helpers for his/her team.

1.03 Code of Ethics/Clearances/USA Football

1.03.1 All Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches shall sign and agree to the Association's Code of Ethics and acknowledge in writing their willingness

to comply with the rules, responsibilities and obligations of serving as a coach within the Association.

- 1.03.2 All Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches shall submit to a criminal background check and follow the Volunteer Clearances Policy set forth in Section 5 below.
- 1.03.3 On an annual basis, prior to the beginning of the season, all Football Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches shall complete the then current USA Football tackle football certification program (or others) as required by the Board of Directors and ensure that practices and games comply with the guidelines set forth by USA Football, including but not limited to those applicable to heads-up football, safety, injuries, concussions, and heat acclimation. No coach may participate in on-field activities until proof of current certification is provided to the Board of Directors.

2. **DISCIPLINE**

2.01 Policy

- 2.01.1 As stated in the By-Laws, the Association is committed to an environment in which all people are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has a right to an environment that is free from sexual harassment, intimidation, and the threat of physical or psychological abuse. Therefore, the Association expects that all individuals conduct themselves in a courteous, professional manner and all relationships within the association be free from harassment and bullying. Persons accused of violating this standard shall be given an opportunity to be reviewed by the Board. People found to be in violation of this standard shall be disciplined, which may include expulsion or prohibition from participating in Association activities indefinitely.

2.02 Procedure

- 2.02.1 Any Complaint received by the Board that a Coach, Member or player has violated the above policy, the By-Laws, these General Rules, the Code of Ethics, or the League rules, shall be investigated by a Review Board, consisting of the applicable Coordinator (either the Football or Cheer Coordinator) and a minimum of at least one of the following, the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, and/or the Treasurer as designated by the President.
- 2.02.2 The Review Board shall determine the best procedure to investigate and resolve the complaint based on the specific circumstances related to the individual complaint. In general, the procedure should be as follows:
 - The accused shall be informed of the complaint.
 - The claimant and the accused shall be given an opportunity to provide pertinent information regarding the claim to one or more members of the Review Board.
 - The Review Board shall interview witnesses and collect other information depending on the specific circumstances of the complaint.
 - If the accused is a player, and it is determined that there is evidence to support the complaint, the player's parents shall be notified of the complaint within 24 hours of such determination.

- The Review Board shall review the information collected and rule on the validity of the complaint.
- If deemed necessary by the Review Board, it may hold a hearing on the complaint.
- If the complaint is found valid, the Review Board has the discretion to impose a punishment that, in its sole discretion and judgment, it deems reasonable and just given the specific circumstance. The discipline may include, but is not limited to, a warning, probation, temporary or permanent limitations of certain rights or duties, or a temporary suspension.
- The Review Board may also recommend the expulsion of an individual to the Board. The Board of Directors, by a 75 percent vote at any duly constituted meeting, shall have the power to expel any Coach, Member, or player from the Association.

3. **FOOTBALL OPERATIONS.**

- 3.01 The Association shall join a football league or multiple football leagues (collectively referred to as the “League”) that the Board deems to best promote the objectives of the Association and that most benefit the players of the Association.
- 3.02 The Association, Board, Members, Coaches and players shall comply with the rules established by any such League. This shall include but is not limited to rules regarding practice and game play.
- 3.03 Any player who has successfully earned a position on any Seneca Valley School District football team is ineligible to participate on an Association football team during the same season.
- 3.04 Safety of the players is the paramount concern for the Association. The Association follows the USA Football guidelines for youth football. All Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches for football shall be USA Football certified for youth football.
- 3.05 The Association’s commitment to the players and Members is a well-organized, developmental football program. The expectation and commitment from the Association is that every player will be included in the game plan, practices and all aspects of football development during weekly practices, meetings, film sessions, activities and games. In return, players are expected to attend practice, pay attention to their coaches, adhere to the Code of Ethics, respect other players and make a meaningful effort to contribute to the team and organizations success. Coaches shall include every football player in the game plan, practices and all aspects of football development during the playoff season.
- 3.05.1 Every football player on K-2 and all JV teams are guaranteed 8 plays during the regular season games and formal scrimmages. During the playoff season, a player is not guaranteed a specific number of plays for a game.
- 3.05.2 With safety in mind, the Head Coach may reduce game play for any player that misses a practice (excused or unexcused) the week prior to a game. A player who routinely disrupts practice, violates the code of ethics or is

routinely tardy is also subject to a reduction in game play, with advanced approval from the Football Coordinator. Play time will be verified and documented weekly by the Head Coach or his designated coach. The Head Coach will send a report to the Football Coordinator no later than Monday each week during the season. Head Coaches that fail to comply with the minimum play rule may be sanctioned by the Football Coordinator or the Board. Sanctions can include suspension or expulsion of a Head Coach.

4. CHEER OPERATIONS.

- 4.01 The number of squads, competition status of each squad, cheerleaders per squad and their age levels, shall be determined by the Cheerleading Coordinator and Co-Coordinator. This is based upon the number of candidates and football teams the Association is aligned with for the coming season, subject to approval of the Board. To participate as an Association cheerleader, the participant must be at least in the first grade and not to exceed the eighth grade during the season.
- 4.02 Cheerleaders and parents must sign off on the Handbook to abide by the current year Rules and Guidelines established by the Cheerleading Coordinator, Assistant Cheerleading Coordinator, and approved by the Board.
- 4.03 The number of cheerleaders per squad shall be determined by the number of registrants. The selection committee shall consist of the Cheerleading Coordinator and the Assistant Cheerleading Coordinator. Each squad may, at the discretion of the Head Coach, have one mascot. The mascot shall be placed first by siblings. If more than one mascot is eligible, the mascot shall be selected by random drawing.
- 4.04 Cheerleaders must try out annually, if wanting to be on a Competitive Squad and those wanting to be on a Game Day Squad must attend orientation.
- 4.05 Candidates shall be taught and coached in all phases of cheerleading and given sufficient practice time. They shall then be judged by independent adults familiar with Association cheer requirement policies. Said independent judges shall be selected by the Cheerleading Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator. The Coordinators shall determine the judging categories prior to tryouts. The cumulative scores shall decide which candidates shall fill the open spots. In the event cuts need to be made, the decision of the Cheerleading Coordinators shall be final.
- 4.06 The coaching staff shall consist of the Head Coach plus one (1) Assistant Coach for each squad.

5. VOLUNTEER CLEARANCE POLICY.

- 5.01 Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, team moms, team dads, and Board Members, must obtain:
 - 5.01.1 A Report of Criminal History from the Pennsylvania State Police (Criminal Records check) every 12 months, and
 - 5.01.2 A Child Abuse History certification from the Department of Human Services (Child Abuse Clearance) every 36 months.
 - 5.01.3 A fingerprint based federal criminal history (FBI) submitted through an authorized agent is required unless the volunteer has been a resident of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the entirety of the previous 10 years.

Once a volunteer has submitted a fingerprint based criminal history for one season they will only need to submit the standard checks as outlined above. Volunteers who are not required to obtain the FBI certification because they have been a continuous resident of Pennsylvania for the past 10 years must swear or affirm in writing that they are not disqualified from service based upon a conviction of an offense under §6344.

- 5.01.4 All updated Clearances must be submitted to the Security and Clearance Coordinator on or before August 1 of the current year in order to maintain the volunteer position. Members who fail to turn in the appropriate documents prior to that date will be suspended from volunteering until the clearances are submitted.

6. **COMPREHENSIVE CONCUSSION AWARENESS PROGRAM**

- 6.01 Pennsylvania's Governor, Tom Corbett, signed the Safety in Youth Sports Act and the state General Assembly passed the law on November 1, 2011. The legislation was Senate Bill 200, and it was introduced by Senator Patrick M. Browne (R-Lehigh); it was pushed through the House by Representative Timothy P. Briggs (D-Montgomery), who introduced the companion bill, House Bill 200. This bill established standards for managing a concussion in a student athlete. It stated that in order to return to play the athlete must be evaluated and cleared by an appropriate medical professional. An appropriate medical professional is: a licensed physician who is trained in the evaluation and management of concussions, a licensed or certified health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and designated by such licensed physician, or a licensed psychologist neuropsychologically trained in the evaluation and management of concussions or who had postdoctoral training in neuropsychology and specific training in the evaluation and management of concussions. Information on the nature of concussions a student athlete may incur, and the risks associated with continuing to play or practice after a concussion has been diagnosed can be found on the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Department of Education web sites. *Each student-athlete and their parents or guardians must sign an acknowledgment of receipt of an information sheet on concussions prior to participation in athletics. All coaches must complete a concussion management certification training course before coaching any athletic activity.* Coaches are required to sit out any athlete if that child displays symptoms of a concussion. This legislation became effective on July 1, 2012. It pertains to

public schools and covers interscholastic athletics, school-sponsored cheerleading, and school-based club sports.

- 6.02 As a response to the growing concern over the rise in frequency in concussions to student athletes, the Association in partnership with industry experts, including those at UPMC, has developed this Comprehensive Concussion Awareness Program.

7. FINANCIAL POLICY.

- 7.01 Prior to the April general meeting, an annual budget is to be prepared and approved by the Board (“Budget”).
- 7.02 A summary of deposits and expenditures is to be presented by the Treasurer and approved by the Board on a monthly basis. The Treasurer shall also prepare and present monthly financial reports to the Board.
- 7.03 All anticipated borrowings (debt) incurred by the Association must be approved by the Board and voting membership. Credit cards shall not be considered debt if such expenditures are contained in the Budget and are paid in full within the credit card billing cycle.
- 7.04 Expenditures on behalf of the Association that are within the budget and over \$500 need to be approved in advance by the President and Vice President. All requests for such expenditures shall be emailed to the President and Vice-President, with a copy to the Treasurer, and shall be accompanied with a written quote describing the expenditure. If the requested expenditure is not in the Budget and less than \$500 then the President and Vice-President approval is required. If the expenditure is not in the Budget and exceeds \$500, then the President and Vice-President shall not approve the expenditure and refer it to the Board, which must then approve the expenditure.
- 7.05 The Treasurer shall not write a check or make a payment for over \$500 that is not approved pursuant to the above Section or that is greater than 7% of the amount approved.
- 7.06 Expenditures by Board Members on behalf of the Association that are \$500 or under do not need approval if they are contained in the Budget. Receipts shall be submitted to the Treasurer for any such expenses.

8. MISCELLANEOUS.

- 8.01 All Members shall sign a waiver/release allowing photographs of their player or cheerleader to be published on the Association’s website without written permission or release of the child’s parent or guardian. All Members shall sign a medical release form as required by the Association.
- 8.02 All players and cheerleaders must have a physical and shall submit a Health & Fitness Evaluation Form before participating in any practice, game, activity or event.
- 8.03 All Members shall sign and agree to the Association’s Code of Ethics. In addition, all boys and girls registered and participating in the programs offered by this Association shall sign and agree to the Association’s Code of Ethics.

- 8.04 These General Rules and Policies may be revised, modified or amended at any time by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
- 8.05 The Association may provide full or partial scholarships for those players or cheerleaders demonstrating financial need.