

**CONSTITUTION
OF
ONTARIO FOOTBALL LEAGUE
(Revised May 2018)**

*Be it enacted and it is hereby enacted as General By-Laws of
Ontario Football League hereinafter called "OFL" as follows:*

ARTICLE 1.0 - DEFINITIONS

1.01 In this Constitution and other by-laws of the league, unless the context otherwise specifies or requires:

- a) **"OFL"** means the Ontario Football League
- b) The singular shall include the plural and the plural shall include the singular, the masculine shall include the feminine
- c) **"Member"** means an individual who has been duly admitted into the membership of the OFL
- d) **"Board"** means the Board of Directors of the OFL
- e) **"Director"** means a member of the Board of Directors of the OFL
- f) **"Division"** specifies age

ARTICLE 2.0 - OBJECTIVES

2.01 To foster and encourage maximum participation in organized minor football.

2.02 To provide young athletes in Ontario with the opportunity to play football in a competitive environment where they can develop their character, skills and overall physical fitness.

2.03 Young athletes will be taught the fundamentals of football through proper coaching techniques and in a knowledgeable and caring manner that promotes fair play and sportsmanship.

2.04 To provide various levels of competitive play that allow for the improvement of young athletes according to the goals of Long Term Athletic Development (LATD).

ARTICLE 3.0 - MEMBERS OF THE CLUB

3.01 Membership in the OFL shall be comprised of Member Associations that shall agree to abide by and comply with the OFL Constitution and By-Laws.

Terms of Admission for Member Associations are:

- a) A properly organized association of amateur football that is willing to comply with and abide by the Constitution and By-laws of the OFL.
- b) A centre sanctioned by the OFA to operate a spring or fall season football program. The OFL will align itself at all times with the most current OFA definitions regarding sanctioning.
- c) Willing to act in the best interest of the OFL, not the best interest of an individual centre and treat with respect all the other members of the league.
- d) Associations applying for membership must do so in writing prior to January 31 for admission in the current year. After January 31, the league Executive Committee may accept new associations on a probationary basis with any restrictions they deem appropriate.

3.02 The following are Member requirements:

- a) Any centre making application for membership to the OFL shall normally be expected to enter the minimum of a team in each of the Tyke, Atom, Peewee and Bantam divisions for the most favourable consideration.
- b) Applications made with the declared intent of participating at fewer than the aforementioned minimum of Tyke, Atom, Peewee and Bantam divisions will be accepted on the basis of the best interest of football in general and OFL in particular at the time of application.
- c) Members who do not meet the basic criteria of one team will be immediately considered no longer a member and is removed from the OFL's membership list.
- d) A member organization that has lost its membership under Article 3(c) may have their membership status reviewed if they are able to re-enter a team for the following year (season). They must re-affirm that entry for the next year (season) at the Annual General Meeting.
- e) When any centre does not fulfill their membership commitments to the league they are subject to review and possible expulsion by a 2/3 majority vote of the board of directors.

3.03 It is each member organization's responsibility to:

- a) Provide representatives to participate in the OFL Board of Directors.
- b) Provide its teams with properly approved protective equipment and uniforms.
- c) Participate fully in all OFL activities; all organizations in the OFL must receive a minimum eight (8) days notice of any League meeting. Every organization must have at least one (1) member at every OFL Meeting. For every OFL meeting that is not attended by the organization, a \$50.00 fine is due. If any organization misses three Board Meetings per year, their membership will be placed under review.
- d) Ensure that all individuals affiliated with that organization are familiar with the OFL Constitution, By-Laws and Regulations as well as any other restrictions and obligations.

3.04 All members must abide by and act consistent with the by-laws of the league and the membership privileges of any member organization who fails to do so may be revoked. Copies of

the by-laws are on file with the league secretary and are available for viewing by any member in good standing of the league. Any member organization may have its membership revoked at any time for conduct detrimental to the OFL by 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors.

3.05 All Associations that are currently members of the OFL can be found listed in alphabetical order in the by-laws.

3.06 The following membership fees will be assessed for OFL:

- a) Initial fee for first time entry for an association is \$800.00 (\$300.00 administration plus \$500.00 Performance Bond - see Article 18.02) payable at the time that the OFL Board of Directors votes for the association's acceptance into an OFL game schedule. This Initial fee can be reviewed and changed by the OFL Board of Directors on an ongoing basis.
- b) A yearly fee thereafter of \$300.00 per association payable at the Annual General Meeting.
- c) A yearly \$300.00 fee per team entry to be determined by the Board of Directors payable when the required numbers of players are registered to form a team.
- d) If an organization withdraws a team commitment after the commitment date they will be subject to a \$500.00 fine per team contracted. The organization must also pay the registration fee per team for the original commitment.
- e) Any member organization failing to pay their Annual membership fees in accordance with above may, on the 2/3 vote by the Board of Directors, be suspended from membership privileges.

ARTICLE 4 - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

4.01 The Board of Directors shall have ultimate and full operational control of the affairs of the OFL subject only to the provisions of the Constitution and shall consist of:

- a) *Board Representatives* who are appointed by each member association. There must be at least one representative available at each meeting from each member association.
- b) A managing *Executive Committee* will be elected by a simple majority vote from the eligible voters at the annual general meeting. Positions will be filled by representatives appointed by each member association.

4.02 The Board of Directors shall consist of at least one representative from each member organization. Where a member organization fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without, in the opinion of the board, having a reasonable cause therefore or fails to perform any of the duties allotted to their organization, the Secretary shall advise the relevant club and actions may be sanctioned by the board up to and including suspension from the league until the next Annual General Meeting.

4.03 The Board of Directors shall elect an Executive Committee exclusively from representatives of its members. Where a vacancy occurs on the Executive Committee (other than the President), the Board of Directors will elect from amongst its own representatives to fill the vacancy. Representatives from a member organization standing for an Executive Committee position must be present in order to be elected. The newly elected executive will have all the powers and responsibilities of that office for which he/she has been elected. If it is the position of President then the Vice President will step into that role and a new Vice President will be elected.

4.04 The Board of Directors may, at its discretion, elect an independent director to sit on the board and hold any office on the Executive Committee.

4.05 The Executive Committee of the league's Board shall manage the league's activities between Board meetings but cannot act unilaterally on items that are contrary to the league's Board direction. Any decisions made by the Executive Committee between Board meetings must be presented at the next Board meeting for ratification.

4.06 The Executive Committee shall consist of:

a) *President* - It shall be the duty of the **President** to preside at meetings of the OFL Board of Directors. It shall be the responsibility for the President to be the liaison between the Directors and the Executive and will act on the request of the Directors. The President will be the official spokesman and point contact for the OFL and shall perform such duties as may be required by the Directors.

b) *Vice-President* - The **Vice-President** will preside at meetings of the OFL, in the absence of the President and will be responsible for the ongoing operations of the OFL. The Vice-President will regulate functions, camps, exhibitions and regular & postseason games under the auspices of the OFL to ensure the integrity of the league is always upheld, and perform such duties as may be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors.

c) *Treasurer* - The **Treasurer** shall be the custodian of the books of account and accounting records of the League required to be kept in a manner acceptable to the Board of Directors and shall at all times be open to inspection by the Board of Directors, prepare and submit a financial statement at each Board of Directors meeting showing the receipts and disbursements, the accounts receivable and the financial position of the OFL, provide a written report at the Annual Meeting, oversee the financial aspects of the activities performed by any other member of the league charged with accepting or depositing funds on the behalf of the OFL and perform such other duties as may be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors

d) *Secretary* - The **Secretary** shall have the custody of the official records of the league including the insurance documents, and all official correspondence, keep the official record of all meetings, mail, send or email copies of all minutes to all Directors and maintain a league file for membership, give notice of all meetings in the manner prescribed by the Constitution and perform such duties as may be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors

e) *Registrar* - The **Registrar** shall inspect the registration records of all members of the league and perform such duties as monitoring registrations, numbers of players on a team, assisting with territory development with new franchises, a written report at the Annual Meeting.

f) *Eastern Director at Large* - The **Eastern Director at Large** shall perform such duties as may be required by the Executive and/or Directors.

g) *Western Director at Large* - The **Western Director at Large** shall perform such duties as may be required by the Executive and/or Directors.

4.07 The following specific responsibilities shall be managed by the Executive Committee and other Director committees as required:

a) Fund Raising

b) Scheduling

- c) Statistics
- d) Publicity
- e) Misconduct
- f) Trophies and Awards
- g) Post Season Coaches' Workshop and Banquet
- h) Other activities as arise from time to time

4.08 Should the public activities or statements of a board member be deemed to be not in the best interests of OFL, the board may, at its' discretion, levy fines, sanctions or other disciplinary rulings, including removal of a member organization's representative with respect to such activities or statements. Such action may be considered at any board meeting or AGM and shall be governed by 2/3 majority of the voting members.

4.09 Members of the Board of Directors and their families shall not enter into any business arrangement with OFL in which they are interested directly or indirectly, except with the unanimous consent of the board.

4.10 No Member of the Board shall be paid or kind for service rendered in his capacity as a Director of OFL. Any party including Directors can and shall be reimbursed for legitimate approved expenses in the course of carrying out his duties on behalf of OFL.

4.11 No Member of the Board is eligible to be elected to the office of President unless the member has previously served at least one term as a Director of OFL and is a current director of a member association.

ARTICLE 5.0 - MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

5.01 There shall be three (3) types of meetings of the OFL:

- a) Annual General Meeting
- b) Board of Directors Meetings
- c) Executive Committee Meetings

5.02 The Annual General Meeting shall be held on or within seven (7) days of the second weekend of February each year. The agenda to be the responsibility of the outgoing Executive Committee:

- a) Notification of this meeting and an agenda is to be sent by the secretary to each organization two (2) weeks prior to the annual general meeting.
- b) All representatives may have speaking privileges at the annual general meeting, but voting privileges are restricted to one vote for each member organization regardless of the number of representative at the meeting.
- c) Adoption of general motions and Constitutional, By-Laws and/or Playing Rules amendments require a 2/3 majority.
- d) Attendance at meetings shall be open to interested observers or invited guests where the President grants permission.

5.03 Where notice of a meeting is mailed to the member associations it will be deemed to be received generally by the members of the league. The accidental omission to any member or the non-receipt of notice by any member shall not invalidate any resolution passed or any proceedings taken at the meeting.

5.04 Any proposed amendments to the Constitution, By-Laws and/or Playing Rules must be submitted in writing to the President of the league at least thirty (30) days prior to any meeting of the club and provided to the member associations at least twenty-one (21) days.

5.05 An executive committee meeting must be called at the request of at least two separate members of the executive committee or by the president. A quorum for a meeting of the Executive is 2/3.

5.06 The Board shall meet each month, at a centres designated meeting place. The selected location will be decided upon at the previous meeting. The president shall chair such meetings, or in his/her absence, the Vice President or Registrar will chair the meeting. Any decisions arising out of a properly called board meeting shall be binding on the league and member clubs.

5.07 The President may call a meeting of the board or of the league membership whenever he deems necessary and shall notify each member of the board either verbally or in writing. The President may call a meeting of the board or of the league membership when requested to do so by four (4) or more members of the board.

5.08 A quorum for a meeting of the Board of Directors shall consist of a simple majority of all members of the Board in good standing and three (3) Executive Members.

5.09 Changes to the Constitution, By-Laws and/or Playing Rules can only be made at a board of directors meeting. A Motion for changes can be made at any meeting and voted upon unless such vote is objected to by any member organization. In the case of such objection, a Notice of Motion for changes must be made and voted on at the next scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE 6.0 - VOTING PRIVILEGES

6.01 Each organization shall have voting privileges of one (1) vote at any meeting.

6.02 Voting positions are provided to member organizations based on being current on all fees, monetary obligations and financial penalties within ninety (90) days prior to the meeting.

6.03 Members must be in attendance to exercise their voting privileges. Proxy votes are not allowed.

ARTICLE 7.0 - FINANCES

7.01 Only the President, Vice-President and the Treasurer are authorized to sign cheques in the name of the OFL. The signature of the Treasurer and one of the aforementioned shall be required on all cheques.

7.02 The fiscal year end of the OFL shall be the 31st day of December.

7.03 The financial records shall be properly reviewed annually and the financial statement shall be presented at the annual general meeting. The Treasurer shall provide a report of the league's financial condition at each regular monthly board meeting.

7.04 Members with signing authority may not be related to the Treasurer.

7.05 Cheques made payable to any member who has signing authority must have cheques signed by two other signing authorities.

7.06 The treasurer shall issue a receipt to evidence any monies received by the club and a duplicate receipt shall be kept and recorded by the treasurer.

ARTICLE 8.0 - SAFETY AND LIABILITY

8.01 Any damage or injury or loss suffered by any person or organization as a result of any direct or indirect actions of the league or of anyone acting on the leagues behalf, shall be the sole liability of the league and no member of the league shall be held personally liable. No members of the league are authorized to act on behalf of the league without the formal consent of the league, granted by the majority vote of the Board of Directors. Any member or person purportedly acting on behalf of the league without necessary authorization does so strictly at his own risk and liability. Should the league contribute or loan property or equipment to individuals or organizations, such is done with the understanding that the receiver will utilize the property at his own risk and agrees not to hold the league or any members thereof liable for damages that may result from any defect or shortcoming in the foresaid property.

8.02 No team shall participate in a game scheduled without the presence of a qualified person to tend to any medical or athletic injuries.

8.03 Members shall adhere to equipment manufacturer's recommendations for equipment testing, refurbishing and replacement.

8.04 Members shall have adequately trained or experienced personnel supervise the fitting of player equipment issued by the Members.

ARTICLE 9.0 - LEAGUE RESPONSIBILITIES

9.01 OFL will be responsible to:

- a) Provide as many games as schedule permits per tier/division.
- b) Provide trophies for the championship & runner-up teams.
- c) Host the league Championships at a site to be determined by the Board of Directors.
- d) Provide assistance and co-ordinate recruitment.
- e) Schedule the OFL Championship final to be no later than the second weekend in November.

ARTICLE 10.0 – GENERAL

10.01 The OFL Constitution and By-laws as shown in this book are intended as a general guide and cannot specifically cover each situation that may arise, the President in regular or special meetings, with a quorum of the OFL Board of Directors, will have authority to interpret and decide to the best

of their judgment with regard to all the circumstances or any special case, any matter pertaining to any and all clauses contained herein. Their decision shall be final. The OFL Board of Directors may appoint an Advisory Committee comprised of past presidents, and other members to advise on matters presented.

10.02 Any member who fails to uphold the rulings and enforce the decisions of the OFL will leave said member open to suspension/expulsion by the OFL Board of Directors

10.03 A catalogue of OFL approved forms for requesting and/or recording of information to be submitted to the OFL Office is included as an appendix in the Constitution. Forms will be reviewed and updated annually.

10.01 Error or Omission in Notice - No error or omission in giving notice of an annual or special meeting or any adjourned meeting, whether annual or special, of the OFL shall invalidate such meeting or make void any proceedings taken thereat and any voting delegates may at any time waive notice of any such meetings and may ratify, approve and confirm any or all proceedings taken or had thereat. For the purposes of sending notice to any delegate or Director for any meeting or otherwise, the address of any voting delegate or Director shall be their last address recorded on the books of OFL.

ARTICLE 11.0 – APPEAL PROCESS

11.01 Once the Vice-President has investigated and rendered a ruling (e.g. suspension, deeming a player ineligible, game protest, etc.), the team involved can render a protest within 24 hours of receiving the ruling to the Vice-President along with a payment of \$200.00 to cover the cost of the appeal process. The team's Director has to clearly state the grounds of protest and any additional information, which may be pertinent to render a new decision. The Vice-President will then re-evaluate the information provided and send it to the President to form a floating appeal committee comprised of three independent unbiased members to render a ruling.

11.02 Once the President receives the appeal, he/she will form an appeals committee to hear and rule on the appeal within 24 hours. The appeals committee ruling will be declared as final.

ARTICLE 12.0 – LEGAL COUNSEL

12.01 At each Annual General Meeting, the OFL shall appoint, if deemed necessary by the Board of Directors, legal counsel to hold office until he/she is re-appointed or his successor is appointed at the next Annual General Meeting.

12.02 The legal counsel may attend general meetings and may ask to attend OFL Board of Directors meetings.

ARTICLE 13.0 – LIABILITY

13.01 No member shall be held personally liable for any damages or injury or loss suffered by any person, club or organization as a result of any direct or indirect actions of OFL or of anyone on the OFL's behalf. No members of the OFL are authorized to act on behalf of the OFL without the formal consent of the OFL, granted by a majority vote by the OFL Board of Directors. Any members or person purportedly acting on behalf of the OFL without necessary authorization does do strictly at his/her own risk and liability.

13.02 Should the OFL contribute or loan property or equipment to individuals or organizations, such is done with the understanding that the receiver will utilize the property at his/her own risk and agreed not to hold OFL or any members thereof liable for damages that may result from any defect or shortcoming in the foresaid property.

13.03 Every Director or Officer of the OFL or any other person who has undertaken any liability on behalf of the OFL shall be indemnified and saved harmless out of the funds of the OFL, from and against,

- a) all costs, charges and expenses whatsoever which such Director, Officer or other person sustains or incurs in or about any action, suit or proceeding that is brought, commenced or prosecuted against him/her, for or in respect of any act, deed, matter or whatsoever made, done or permitted by him/her in or about the execution of the duties of his/her office or in respect of any such liability;
- b) all other costs, charges and expenses that he/she sustains or incurs in or about or in relation to the affairs thereof, except such costs, charges or expenses as are occasioned by his/her own act, neglect or default if such act, neglect is both wilful and wrongful.

13.04 No Director or Officer for the time being of OFL shall be liable for the acts, receipts, neglect or defaults of any other Director or Officer or employee or for joining in any receipt or act for conformity or for any loss, damage or expense happening to OFL through the insufficiency or deficiency of any security in or upon which any of the monies of or belong to OFL shall be placed out or invested or for any loss or damage arising from bankruptcy, insolvency, or fortuitous act or any person, firm or corporation including any person, firm or corporation with whom monies, securities or other assets belonging to OFL of for any other loss, damage or misfortune whatever which may happen in the execution of the duties of his/her respective office or trust or in relation thereto unless the same shall happen by or through his/her own act, neglect or default if such act, neglect or default is both wilful and wrongful.

ARTICLE 14.0 – SUSPENSIONS/SANCTIONS

14.01 All members will recognize suspensions and sanctions set forth by other football organizations. No player, coach or volunteer can participate in any OFL game or event while under suspension by another football organization.

ARTICLE 15.0 – FAIR PLAY STATEMENT

15.01 The OFL Code of Ethics has been developed to protect and promote the best interests of the game. Its primary purpose is to clarify and distinguish ethical and approved professional practices from those, which are detrimental, and to promote the principles of fair play in football. Its secondary purpose is to emphasize the purpose and value of football, and to stress proper function of all those involved in relation to schools, public and the players. The ultimate success of the principles and standards of the Code depends upon the football coaches, administrators, and players of the game. Individuals should never place the value of a win above that of instilling the highest desirable ideals and character traits in the players. The safety and welfare of the players should always be uppermost in their minds, and they must never be sacrificed for any personal prestige or selfish glory.

15.02 In teaching the game of football, coaches must realize that there are certain rules designed to protect the player and provide common standards for determining a winner and loser. Any attempts to beat these rules, or take unfair advantage of an opponent, or to teach deliberate unsportsmanlike conduct have no place in the game of football, nor have any coaches, guilty of such teaching, the right to call themselves coaches.

15.03 All member clubs on the OFL agree to abide by the code of conduct set out in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE 16.0 – GENDER EQUITY/ACCESS TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY STATEMENT

16.01 OFL prompts the principles of Gender Equity throughout its organizations and volunteer committees, by demonstrating a commitment to equity and access for women as athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers and leaders. Representation of OFL's committees and member organization administrations is a paramount important to reflect the individuals participating in tackle football programs in Ontario.

16.02 Access to all programs and committees are to be provided on a fair and equitable basis to all individuals wishing to volunteer their time and effort. Approval to participate in any program or committee will be based on the individual's ability to contribute to the program or committee and not on his/her gender, ethnicity, colour, religion, or physical ability. OFL is totally committed to a complete range of opportunities and choices to achieve personal, social and economic benefits from all our programs.

ARTICLE 17.0 – DRUG FREE STATEMENT

17.01 It is the position of OFL to oppose the use of Banned and Restricted Doping Classes and Methods and to be proactive in the area of education to discourage their use. This position is based on the fact that banned substances, which artificially enhance performance in training and competition, are harmful to health, ethically wrong, and ultimately a threat to amateur sport today.

17.02 OFL is unequivocally opposed to the use by amateur football athletes of any Banned and Restricted Doping Classes and Methods in contravention to the rules, and is equally opposed to any encouragement of the usage of such substances by individuals in positions of leadership, such as coaches, medical practitioners, sports scientists, the athletes themselves, or by any other members of the OFL.

17.03 OFL and its member associations agree to adopt and follow the Canadian Policy on Penalties for Doping Sport and the Canadian Doping Control Regulations as endorsed and provided by Sport Canada Centre for Ethics in Sport.

ARTICLE 18.0 – CONTRACT & PERFORMANCE BOND

18.01 Each team will enter into contract with the league to ensure that the team follows the rules as stated in the Constitution of the league and league playing rules while holding the league in high esteem at all times. Failure to do so can result in penalties assessed by the Commission, which may include suspension of the team.

18.02 A performance bond of \$500 must be posted by each team at the annual meeting of the OFL. This bond will remain on deposit with the OFL until such time as the club leaves the league.