



YOUTH BASKETBALL LEAGUE RULES & REGULATIONS 2024



The objective of the Youth Basketball league is to develop character, skill, sportsmanship, and promote goodwill amongst participating individuals and teams. This leagues provides youth with the opportunity to play the game and encourages a fun atmosphere.

The Virginia High School League rules shall govern all procedures in the Suffolk Youth Basketball League except as modified below.

RULES

I. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

A. Eligible as of December 5, 2024 with proof of age and residency.

B. Divisions:

Tiny Ballers	4-5 years old
Novice	6-7 years old
Primers	8-10 years old
Junior Girls	11-15 years old
Junior Boys	11-12 years old
Majors	13-15 years old

C. All participants must present a birth certificate and signed parental release form before being allowed to play.

D. The Department will enforce all out of school suspensions. The coach/manager of a participant's suspension from his /her school should notify league commissioner. Failure to comply with this rule will result in forfeiture for the team if the player plays while suspended.

E. Any player that is suspended by the Department will not be eligible to participate in any practices or games for the designated suspension. Players that are in season/practicing on a high school team are ineligible (Junior Varsity, Varsity) until high school seasons are complete. Middle School teams exempt. Failure to adhere to this eligibility rule will result in automatic forfeit of games.

II. COACHES

A. All head and assistant coaches must be certified through NYSCA to coach youth sports at any time during the season, to include practice and games.

B. Only one head and one assistant coach will be allowed on the bench. **All coaches must be 18 years of age for Novice division and 21 years of age for Primer, Junior, and Major divisions.**
No spectators are allowed on the bench, only coaches and players

III. DRAFTING RULES:

A. Youth Basketball League will use a skill assessment for each league except Lil Dribblers and Novice. All players in those leagues will be placed randomly on teams by the Athletic Staff.

B. Each league will select teams based on the participant evaluation and coaches' draft, except for the Novice and Lil Dribblers leagues. All players in all drafted leagues will be required to attend the Draft Day. During this time, all participants are given an identification number and then perform a number of routine skills. Coaches will observe the players and then evaluate them based on their ability. After the Draft is concluded, the coaches will meet with the Athletic Staff to execute the player draft.

C. Most teams will receive the same number of players. Participants who miss the Draft Day or sign up late may be added to teams that are a player short.

- D. The picking order of the draft will be selected by random draw, immediately prior to the draft.
- E. The number of teams will be determined by the number of registered participants.
- F. Teams must select a player and cannot pass if a player is available.
- G. The sons/daughters of head coaches will be automatic picks in the draft and considered an "X" on the draft sheet.
- H. Assistant coaches' sons/daughters will be automatic first round draft picks. Only one assistant coach pick per team in the draft will be allowed. If the player is not picked in the first round by that team, he/she will be available for selection by any team beginning in round 2.
- I. The number of rounds in the draft depends directly upon the number of participants registered.
- J. All players in the Primer, Junior, and Major leagues are encouraged to participate in the draft. Any no-shows at Draft Day will be placed on teams, by staff, after all participating players have been chosen (*if there is availability*).
- K. Players are not permitted to change teams. There will be no refunds once drafts are concluded.
- L. Brother/sister combinations will automatically be placed on the same team. Parents may request (for any reason) that siblings not be drafted to the same team. Note: If one sibling is drafted and the other has not, the other sibling will be designated by an "X" on the draft board and the drafted player will count as a draft pick.
- M. There will be absolutely no trading or "swapping" of players for any reason once the draft for that age division is concluded. Once a player is drafted or placed on a team he/she will remain on that team for the duration of the season, unless an unforeseen problem arises that must be resolved by the Athletic Staff. **Any coaches found guilty trading or using ineligible players after the draft will forfeit all games in which the ineligible player participated, be removed from all coaching responsibilities (all sports) for a minimum of one year and the offending team will be ineligible for any regular season trophy or participation in any post season games. Once the draft is concluded and no other special circumstances are acknowledged, there will be no swapping or trading of players for any reason. If a trade is proposed for a special circumstance during the draft, and the Athletic staff concurs, all head coaches must approve the swap by majority vote. No swaps or trades can be made after the draft is concluded!**
- N. Requests to play on certain teams for any reason (friends, transportation, etc.) will not be honored by the City of Suffolk Parks and Recreation Department. All players must play on the team by which they were drafted or placed.

IV. SCHEDULES

- A. Number of Games – Games will be played in accordance with the schedule set by the City of Suffolk Parks and Recreation Department. All leagues will play approximately eight games.
- B. Practice – Teams are limited to one 1-hour and 30-minute practice sessions. Practices are not permitted on the same day as scheduled games, unless the game was postponed on that day. If possible during school nights, the Novice players are to practice no later than 7:30 p.m. Primer players are to practice no later than 7:30 p.m. and the Junior & Major League players are to practice no earlier than 7:30 p.m. Teams are limited to a maximum of two (2) outings a week, which includes practices and games. Practices will be held during the week from 6pm-7:30pm & 7:30pm-9pm. Subject to change per league administrators.
- C. Sundays-No Sunday practices will be permitted.

V. PLAYING RULES (Novice & Lil Dribblers)

- A. Novice and Lil Dribbler Rules – The basketball program provides youngsters with the opportunity to enjoy the game and develop and practice basketball skills at an early age. Conventional basketball does not accomplish these goals because young players do not get the opportunity to learn and practice the various skills of the game. The average youngster can learn to play and enjoy basketball with good instruction and day-to-day experience. For the beginner, the learning experience must be fun, with ample opportunity to practice all the fundamentals of the sport, like dribbling, passing, and shooting.
- B. The Novice and Lil Dribblers League basketball program should be organized to teach and develop basketball skills, teamwork, sportsmanship and have fun. This is an important period in every child's development. All players should be encouraged to do their best by managing personnel. The Novice and Lil Dribblers Leagues should be fun. If it isn't fun, it isn't a recreational program. The key to success is the careful selection of coaches. If the goal is to provide a program with maximum benefits, only the very best people should be selected to serve.
- C. The overall concept of the Novice and Lil Dribblers Leagues should be total participation in a congenial environment under the supervision of competent and concerned adults. The leadership must reflect a positive and constructive direction tempered with patience. If this program is worth doing, it should be done well.
- D. Coed League – The Novice and Lil Dribblers leagues are coed.
- E. Participation – Each player must participate in at least one full quarter. Each seven-minute period must not be interrupted, except in the case of an injury, illness, or other emergency situation. Players who have played their required time, may substitute or be substituted for during a quarter.
- F. Team Standings – Team standings or game scores will not be kept in the Novice and Lil Dribblers Leagues.
- G. Score Clock – Only the time and quarters will be maintained on the score clock. Scores will not be recorded.
- H. **Scorebook –No fouls will be recorded for Novice or Tiny Ballers in the scorebook.**
- I. Defensive Restrictions – The defensive team must retreat to inside the 3-point arc before the offense may bring the ball across the half court line. There will be no pressing beyond the 3-point arc until the offense initially penetrates the 3-point arc. When a violation of the defensive restrictions rule occurs, the referee/staff will stop the game and explain the violation. The ball will be put back into play where the violation occurred by the team that was in control of the ball.
- J. The defensive zone is defined as the area within the 3-point area.
- K. Offensive Restrictions – The ball must penetrate the defensive zone within 10 seconds after crossing half court before the shot can be taken. When a violation of the offensive restrictions rule occurs, the referee/staff will stop the game and explain the violation. The ball will be put back into play where the violation occurred by the offensive team.
- L. Foul Line Length – The foul line will be two feet shorter than the standard length.
- M. Basket Height – Baskets will be placed eight feet, from the floor (novice).
 - Level one for Lil Dribblers.
- N. Balls Being Put Back Into Play – After each timeout called, if the offensive team is in the back court, the ball will be put back into play in the front court at the 28' line/hash mark. The defense must remain in a defensive zone until the offense penetrates the zone. If the ball is hit out of bounds by a defensive player in the front court, the ball must be put into play in the front court. (Fast breaks are allowed only during the jump ball to start the game.)

- O. Possession Arrow – The ball must be touched by any player in-bounds unless a violation occurs to change possession arrow.
- P. Fast Breaks – Fast breaks will only be allowed on a steal or pass deflection during the game. Fast breaks will not be allowed after a shot ball or any type of rebound under or around the rim. The offense must allow the defense to set up before proceeding past half court.

VI. PLAYING RULES (Primer and above)

- A. Participation – Each player is required to start and finish one full quarter of the first half without Interruption except in the case of injury, illness, or other emergency situation. There will be no substitutions in the first and second quarters, except in the case of five fouls, injury, illness, less than 10 players or ejection. These players must be brought to the attention of the athletic staff. During the third and fourth quarters players may enter the game as a substitute or be substituted for. Participation does not have to be in consecutive quarters.
 - a) A coach who has a player arrive after the start of the game but prior to the start of the third quarter must play him or her in one full quarter of playing time. However, if a player arrives after the start of the third quarter the coach has the option to play this player or not in the fourth quarter. If the tardy player is placed in the game at the beginning of the quarter, he/she cannot be replaced unless an injury occurs.
 - b) Any player who is eligible to play may participate in any overtime period.
 - c) An injured player who is able to return to the game must replace the player who replaced him or her or a player who has completed his or her one full quarter of playing time. A player who replaced an injured player after the start of a quarter cannot use this time to fulfill their required playing time.
- B. Primer, Junior & Major Offensive & Defensive Restrictions –
 - Primer Division:** Defense will not exceed past ½ court during the 1st, 2nd and 3rd quarter. Full court Pressing is allowed in the 4th quarter only.
 - Junior Division:** Full pressing is allowed during 3rd and 4th quarter only.
 - Major Division:** Full court pressing is allowed during the entire game.
- C. Foul Line Length – The foul line will be standard for all Junior and above leagues. **Primer division will have the option of using the 1 foot shorter line.**
- D. Possession Arrow – The ball must be touched by any player in-bounds unless a violation occurs to change possession arrow.
- E. Basket Height – 10 ft. from floor.
- F. No dunking or attempting to dunk during practices or games. Penalty: automatic ejection and technical foul called with an additional automatic one game suspension, which will be assessed for the next scheduled game to include tournament games.
- G. Penalties – any violation of the required playing time rule will result in forfeiture of the game, to be determined by the department at a later date. The game in question will be played in its entirety, except for tournament play when a decision will be made at the site.
- H. Monitoring Substitutions – Before the game begins, the coaches give the scorekeeper the rosters of their players, including the players' numbers. The scorekeeper will check off each player when she or he enters the game.
- I. Excessive Lead Rule – A team with a 20-point or more advantage will not be allowed to press until the ball passes the half court line. The defensive team must retreat to five feet beyond the half court line. Penalty: Technical foul assessed to the head coach of the team in violation.

- J. At any time in the fourth quarter, a team is ahead by 20 points or more, a running clock will be in effect except for time outs or delays caused by an injury.
- K. Technical Foul Shots – During any given quarter of the game, only the five players in the game are eligible to shoot technical foul shots.
- L. Teams will consist of a maximum of 10 players except for special occasions.
- M. **Ball Size:**
 Lil Dribblers: Kid's Official Size (27.5)
 Novice, Girls, Boys Primer, Girls Junior: Women's Official Size (28.5)
 Boys Major, Boys Junior: Men's Official Size (29.5)
- N. **Slaughter Rule:** If a team reaches a 30-point lead over their opponent after completion of the 3rd quarter or at any point during the 4th quarter the game will be called.
- O. **Mandatory Play Rule:**
Novice, Primer, Junior, and Major:
 Each child will play a minimum of 1 full quarter in the 1st half of the game. Free substitution in the 2nd half will be at coach's discretion. **However, it is mandatory that each child play in the second half.**
 1. Each player must play allotted minimum time. **Except in the case of injury, illness, or other emergency situation. Failure to comply will result in the coach being suspended for: one game (1st offense), two games (2nd offense), and expulsion from league (3rd offense).**
 2. Players who have played their required time may substitute or be substituted for at the coach's discretion during the 2nd half of the game.
 3. Players arriving late will be eligible to participate as long as they are signed in and on the bench at the mandatory substitution mark.
 4. Players arriving prior to the 2nd quarter are guaranteed to play 1 combined quarter. Players arriving during the start of the 2nd half are guaranteed to play in the game. (Mandatory play rule).
- P. A team may start the game with four players. If a fifth player arrives, that player can enter the game on the 1st dead ball or at least be given the opportunity to sub on a dead ball.
- Q. A player may play on only one team during the season.

VII. **GAMETIME**

- A. **Tiny Ballers:** Four 6-minute quarters
Novice: Four 7-minute quarters
Primer: Four 8-minute quarters
Junior: Four 8-minute quarters
Major: Four 8-minute quarters
- B. A running clock will be used for all leagues. The clock will be stopped only on the official's timeouts, injuries, and on whistles during the last 2 minutes of the 4th quarter and during overtime. This includes the Novice division as well. All games will have a 1 minute period between quarters and a three (3) minute halftime.
- C. **Time-Outs:** Each team will be allowed two 30-second time outs per half that will not carry over.
- D. **Overtime:**

1. In the case of a tie after regulation, the overtime period will be two (2) minutes long (**clock will be stopped on official whistles**). If there is a tie at the end of two overtime periods, the game will be recorded as a tie.(Exception for Tournament Games)
2. One time-out will be granted for overtime periods.
3. No change of baskets for overtime periods.

F. **GRACE PERIOD:** All teams must be at the designated facility thirty minutes prior to the start of their game. Any team that does not have four players by the start of the game will forfeit their game. There will be a five (5) minute grace period given at the designated start time of the game.

G. **Game Forfeits:** If any team forfeits a game, the winning team will be appointed 25 points recorded in the scorebook for statistical purposes.

H. **Official Game** – In the event a game must be suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue play, the head referee shall declare it an official game if one complete half or more of the game has been played. If less than one-half of the game has been played, the game will be rescheduled from the start. If the score is tied after being declared an official game, the game will be rescheduled for overtime play until a winner is determined.

I. **Novice games will be officiated by recreation staff unless officials are assigned to that age group.**

J. Fouls: a player fouls out on the 6th individual foul. Teams will shoot 1 in1 on the 7th team foul per half and double bonus on the 10th team foul per half.

VIII. **PLAYOFFS**

A. Tie breaking process for advancement to the post-season tournament will be based on:

2 teams:

1. Head to head record between tied teams
2. Total points scored overall.
3. Coin Toss

3 or More Teams:

4. Total points scored overall.
5. Blind Draw

B. **Novice-** No playoffs

Primer, Junior, & Major -Based on number of teams in the Division

IX. **UNIFORMS**

A. Uniforms will be provided by the City of Suffolk, Department Parks and Recreation and may not be modified. T-shirts may be worn underneath uniforms.

C. Only department issued uniforms will be allowed except in extreme situations. Should individual shorts need to be worn they must be athletic shorts with no pockets, zippers, or belt loops.

1. Team warm-ups suites, socks, shooting shirts and any other apparel not provide by the City of Suffolk Parks and Recreation Department will not be allowed during game day. Only league provided uniforms will be worn during warmups/games.

X. **GENERAL UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

A. Any player or coach ejected from a game by an official for unsportsmanlike conduct will be automatically suspended from play for the next one (1) game as well as all practices during the suspension, or depending on the severity of the offence may be decided by league administrators to have a longer suspension. Any coach or spectator ejected from a game means they must leave the gym and the facilities premises entirely. If the spectator is a parent, they are asked to also take their child/player.

- B. Physical Abuse – Any player or coach guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct that involves physical abuse against another player, official, supervisor, or spectator will be automatically suspended from League play pending further investigation. This violation will also cause the Department of Parks and Recreation to actively assist the person assaulted in the prosecution of the guilty party.
- C. Once a player has been ejected, he must remain with his/her coach until the parents are notified.

XI. PROTEST PROCEDURES

- A. Protests will be accepted only for the infraction of the league rules.
- B. Coach shall notify scorekeepers of protest at the time of the incident.
- C. The score keepers shall notify referees of protest at the time of incident and inform the opposing coach of the protest. The scorekeeper shall note in the scorebook time remaining, score, and players on the court at the time of the protest.
- D. Protesting coach will then file a written protest by 5PM Monday or the next business day with this to the League Commissioner. (See score keepers for game review form to submit)

XII. AWARDS

- A. All players will receive league participation awards.
- B. Championship winners will receive a team trophy.
Runners-up will receive medallions.

Games shall be played in accordance with the rules and schedule distributed by the Department of Parks and Recreation. The Department reserves the right to modify these rules at any time it deems necessary. All coaches will be notified of changes.

Any questions on Suffolk Parks & Recreation Youth Basketball rules and regulations should be sent to the Suffolk Parks & Recreation League Coordinators at 757-514-7270 or 757-514-7254.

Thank you for you participation and GOOD LUCK this season!