

# JUNIOR RIVERHAWKS

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

### AGES

We accept athletes of all skill levels from Kindergarten through 8th grade.

- Spring Season 7on7 - Grades Kinder through 8<sup>th</sup>
- Fall Season Flag - Grades Kinder through 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Fall Season Tackle - Grades 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>
- Fall Season Cheer – Ages 5 through 14

### REQUIRED INFORMATION NEEDED TO REGISTER

Registration is open during the months of May, June, and July and a very small portion of August. You can register online on our website [HERE](#). Please note the following requirements:

**Information needed when registering:** your participant's full name, details, correct address, emergency contact details, any medical history, name of participant's doctor and phone number, preferred hospital in town.

**Documents needed when registering:** birth certificate, grade verification (report card or a screen shot of PowerSchool account that shows name, grade, and year), and address verification in the form of a utility bill **ONLY** (electricity, gas, water, sewer, garbage or landline phone only). Sorry, cell phone & internet bills are not allowed.

**Additional information needed:** a close-up picture of your athlete. Please, no hats.

The CBYF dictates what is admissible for verifications. ***These rules are firm, and the league does not deviate unless there are extenuating circumstances.***

We have a registration payment program available to those who may need to pay over a specified time. Remember, though, that it is best to register early to fully utilize the payment plan. The plan consists of a down payment and then 4 additional payments on pre-determined dates where payment will come directly out of the payment method you select at registration (usually, a debit or credit card). Make sure to pay your registration balance in FULL by August 1st. NO exceptions.

The registration fee covers jerseys, equipment costs, field costs, field use fees, and certified official's fees. None of the coaches or staff of the Junior Riverhawks are paid and receive no compensation or fees for their services.

We are always looking to improve the registration process to make it easier for all involved, so there may be changes in the process year to year.

## LATE REGISTRATIONS

We typically do not accept late registrations due to equipment needs as well as stated rules set for by the CBYF. However, we will do our best to get your child on a team IF we determine that we can provide the necessary equipment and jersey to your participant, and it falls within the rules. Please be sure to register on time so that we may be able to ensure equipment availability.

## LIVING OUT OF BOUNDARY AREA

The Junior Riverhawks program is open to kids living within the Chiawana High School boundaries. The purpose of our program is to develop kids as athletes and teammates. Our job is to get kids ready to play at the next level. Playing with teammates with whom they will be attending school will give them a huge jumpstart in their high school career.

If you do not live within the boundaries, we will allow out-of-boundary registrations on a case-by-case basis but we strongly encourage you to register with a Junior Program that is within the boundary of your home address.

You can input your address at this link to find out if you reside within our boundaries: [BOUNDARY MAP](#)

*If you try to register and the system prevents you from registering due to your home address, **please stop**, navigate to our downloads page, then download and complete either the Seasonal Waiver OR the Transfer Form. Then, email the completed form to [info@juniorriverhawks.org](mailto:info@juniorriverhawks.org).*

- Seasonal Waiver is only good for ONE season per year
- **Transfer Form** carries over from season to season

*These forms can also be found on our Downloads page, [HERE](#).*

## PLANNING AHEAD

Our football season begins in mid-July with training camp consisting of two weeks of un-padded tryouts. These are very important weeks for our kids to become acclimated to the workout and the heat. Full-contact padded practices typically begin mid-August AFTER coaches acclimate their athletes to helmets for one week, then helmets & pads the next week, and then full gear in the third week.

Teams are typically determined by the second week of August. Regular season games typically begin early/mid-September. The regular season ends in late October and the playoffs run into the first few weeks of November. Super Bowl Weekend is typically on the second weekend in November. There are small variations from year-to-year, but this is generally the pattern for each season.

## TIME COMMITMENT

Compared to other youth sports the time commitment is considerable. Practice will be up to 3 to 4 days of practice per week until the regular season begins. After the games begin, practices are normally

reduced to 3 practices per week. This is subject to change and will be communicated by the Head Coach. Older divisions practice more. Younger divisions do not. In addition to practices, games will be played on Saturdays. Most games are played locally in the Tri-Cities. However, due to the growth of the CBYF, we may play games out of town. See "[traveling](#)", below.

There are normally 6 games per season with the possibility of two or more weeks for playoffs, if the team qualifies. This also depends on how many teams each separate junior program fields through registrations.

## HOW WE BUILD OUR TEAMS

Every athlete who joins JRH will be placed on a team per grade level, excluding Cheer Team. PLEASE NOTE: we do not allow parents to choose what team their athlete will be rostered to. Any special requests to be placed on a team will be determined on a case-by-case basis. We strive to keep our teams as even and fair as possible.

Grade levels are:

- Tackle teams: 4th grade - 8th grade
- 7v7 teams: K-1st, 2nd/3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th grade
- Flag Football: only available to athletes in kindergarten - 3rd grade

\*\*If teams exceed the max quantity, per CBYF rules, we must split teams. Team split rules can be found in the CBYF's rule book.

## PRACTICE LOCATIONS/DAY/TIME

Practice location is mandated by the Junior Riverhawks. We "rent" fields through the Pasco School District and strive to provide a location that is convenient for drop-off and pick-up, especially for families with multiple players to pick up. In addition, due to insurance coverage, all teams must practice at one location on designated days and times set forth by the school district.

All coaches determine and dictate when practices will be held. **We will not have practice information to share until late July or early August.** We understand that planning is critical but, unfortunately, we will not be able to communicate specific days and times until we get closer to the season.

- Tackle teams will practice three to four times per week with games on Saturdays.
- Flag will practice two to three times per week with games on Wednesdays.
- Cheer will practice three or more times per week with cheer activities on Saturdays.

## GAMES

All games for tackle will be held on Saturdays. Locations are throughout the Mid-Columbia Basin to include outlying communities. All game day information and scheduling is provided directly by the league. Information is typically communicated in late August. Game times are anywhere from 9:00 am to midafternoon.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

Practice is almost never cancelled due to the weather. We will practice in the rain, cold, heat, or snow, as long as it's safe for our players. You must be prepared for weather conditions.

JRH has implemented guidelines to deal with extreme heat at all youth football games and practices. It is designed to provide participants with a standard of safe play in situations of extreme heat. The two values that JRH will consider when modifying or canceling games/practices are air temperature and relative humidity. The combination of these two elements reflects the heat index. We will rely on the heat index reading that is updated hourly by the National Weather Service or NOAA.

IF practices are altered or cancelled, information will be sent to coaches, first, then posted to our Facebook page followed up with an email to members. Please note that we cannot call all parents as it's not feasible for us to call roughly 300+ people.

## TRAVELING

While JRH is not a traveling football program, we are members of Columbia Basin Youth Football League (CBYF). We play against other junior programs located in the Tri-Cities as well as programs in our North Division and a soon-to-be-announced new division. There are 30+ Junior Programs in the league!

We may have to travel out of town for 1 or 2 games. Examples include Prosser, Sunnyside, Connell, Walla Walla, etc. PLEASE make note of this!

Each team has six regular season games. If teams succeed during the season, there are two weeks of playoffs followed by the Super Bowl.

## PLAYING TIME

Each player in our league is guaranteed a certain amount of play time. Information regarding MPR will be communicated as the season nears. Teams with large rosters will have players rotating on offense, defense, special teams, or both.

It is especially important to understand that we do not just coach football or cheer. We are training and teaching kids to be productive young men and women. That said, in the older age groups, it is at the coach's discretion to play a participant who does not attend and participate in practices with no valid excuse. In football, you MUST practice with your team. It's about the safety of the individual and the team. We absolutely will not tolerate, or play, a player who refuses to attend the necessary practices.

Parents do not dictate where their child will play or what position. Head Coaches decide. We also will not tolerate fighting or posturing over a position. Each player will play in the position dictated by the coach. If you absolutely believe that your child is a quarterback, you must talk with the coaching staff privately, away from practices and games. We will not tolerate any interference during practices or games. Each child has an opportunity to try out for positions. Ultimately, the coach will have the final say on where he thinks the player should be playing.

## SPORTS PHYSICALS

We HIGHLY recommend that your child receives a physical annually if you participate in sports activities. If your child has some form of condition, it is important that your child be cleared by a physician to play football. You will be required to complete a Medical Waiver and Emergency Contact form.

## VACATIONS

Inform your coach as soon as you can. Please remember that football and cheer is a TEAM sport. Coaches will absolutely need to know if you will be gone. With that said, if you have any flexibility, try to schedule around the football season, especially August.

## EQUIPMENT

JRH provides football equipment for everyone. Each athlete will receive a helmet with chin strap, shoulder pads, padded football pants. Learn more about equipment [HERE](#).

We refit our players every year to make sure equipment is fitted safely. Each year, we purchase additional field and player equipment, and we also recertify helmets, get shoulder pads cleaned and re-strapped. No deposit is charged for this equipment, but you will be billed if any part is not returned at the end of the season at the following rates:

- Helmet: \$175
- Shoulder Pads: \$90
- Pants: \$20

TACKLE game jerseys are customized with the players' last name and number. As such, there are absolutely NO refunds.

Flag and 7v7 jerseys are NOT customized but players do get to keep them.

You will be responsible for cleats and any other equipment you choose to utilize (e.g., padded athletic shirts/sleeves, extra practice pants/pads/girdles, hand warmers, helmet visors (clear only), etc.). JRH partners with Dick's Sporting Goods and are often provided with discounts or coupons codes for purchasing equipment, which we share broadly with the JRH family as they become available.

## EQUIPMENT ISSUES

Many problems can be corrected using the tools and supplies that each team has, so contact your coach or team mom for assistance. If they cannot resolve the issue, then they will arrange to get you a replacement.

It is extremely common for your helmet to hurt your head for the first couple of weeks. They must be tight fitting to protect the head, and this tightness can result in some discomfort. Every effort will be made during equipment hand out to ensure a correct fit. Our coaches are USA Football Certified for equipment fittings. We recommend that once you get your equipment, wear your helmet for 15 to 30 minutes a day prior to practice beginning to break it in. And remember, when you wear it, pull it all the way down, HARD.

Many issues with football helmets can be solved by adding or removing air to adjust the liner. Your coach has the proper pump and needle to make this adjustment, DO NOT try to add air at home, doing so will result in a popped bladder, ruining the helmet until it is replaced.

## OWNED EQUIPMENT

To use any personally owned equipment you are REQUIRED to have completed, signed, and have an approved PSE (Personal Sports Equipment) form each year. This form is required for the use of any helmet and shoulder pads that are personally owned by the player/parent. In addition, personally owned equipment must meet or exceed all minimum safety requirements for use in youth football.

Helmet - Required to have equipment inspected and a new PSE Form every year. A helmet is required to meet or exceed all minimum safety requirements for use in youth football. Helmets are required to be white with Blue/Black facemask unless approved by JRH. The helmet must be purchased new from an authorized dealer. Please retain proof of purchase. The helmet must be professionally reconditioned every two years and proof is required.

Shoulder Pads - required to have equipment inspected and a new PSE Form every year. Owned shoulder pads must meet or exceed all minimum safety requirements for use in youth football. Shoulder pads must meet or exceed the safety level of the shoulder pads provided by JRH.

## COACHES

At the time of this FAQ revision, we have several coaches on staff who are USA Football Heads UP Certified. This means that each coach goes through coaching education, safe tackling, proper hitting, concussion awareness, and proper equipment fitting. Several of our coaches have been coaching youth football for over 20 years in Texas and the Pacific Northwest.

Applicants for head coaching positions are reviewed and selected by the Board. Assistant coaches are selected by the head coach, usually from amongst the parents of their players. All coaches – head and assistants – will be required to become USA Football Heads UP Certified. Details will be provided on how to do this.

Child safety is our priority. All coaches, assistant coaches and any volunteers in direct contact with players must complete a criminal background check. Head coaches should have a basic knowledge of football and can apply it at youth level. Head coaching requires commitment. All head coaches must be 18 years old or older. Assistant coaches, reporting directly to the head coach can be aged 18 or over. Coach trainees may be allowed with the consent of the Board. The maximum number of coaches allowed on the field during a game is 1 head coach and 3 assistant coaches.

We are always recruiting high caliber coaches. Please keep in mind that our kids come FIRST. While we are extremely competitive, we will not allow trophy chasers. We are all about the health, safety and development of our registered participants. Winning is great, but if you are not capable of coaching correctly at this age group, we will pass on the opportunity. Developing fundamentals is paramount.

If you or someone you know is interested, you may send an email to [info@juniorriverhawks.org](mailto:info@juniorriverhawks.org).

## COACH COMPLAINTS

Any communication with the coach must be done away from practice and/or game time and must be done in private. More times than not, addressing the coach privately and respectfully results in the situation being resolved. If, however, your concern has not been addressed please bring your concern to the President, Karen Godino.

Please keep in mind we have a minimum play standard that coaches are to adhere to. There are exceptions and each situation is different. Coaching styles do vary. So, unless you feel that the coach is being abusive to a player, give coaches grace to implement their game plan with his/her coaching style.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Our program is bigger than any one player, coach, or spectator. To uphold the goals of the Junior Riverhawks & CBYF and ensure that all participants have the benefit of a safe and fun learning environment, all parents, guardians and other adults and attendees of the Junior Riverhawks & CBYF events, including but not limited to practices, competitions, and banquets, must behave accordingly in a respectful, courteous, and sportsmanlike manner at all times. ALL adults - including parents, guardians, coaches, spectators, volunteers, officials - MUST abide by the Code of Conduct. If any of these rules are broken, we will impose a penalty. The Junior Riverhawks Code of Conduct can be found on our website [HERE](#)

## SAFETY

We take safety seriously. Each of our coaches are certified by USA Football's nationally renowned "Heads Up Football" program. We only purchase helmets that meet the highest standards in the industry. When it comes to football safety, we strive to set the standard.

## MEDICAL CONDITIONS / DISABILITIES

We ask for any pertinent medical information up front at the time of registration, including allergies. It is *CRITICAL* that you inform us so we can accommodate as best we can. Knowing the facts helps coaches to pivot and adjust accordingly. We keep all medical information strictly confidential.

If your children's doctor is willing to sign your medical release and you are willing to work hard and play your best, you can have a good football experience. However, we would recommend contacting our President, Karen Fancy-Godino, to discuss your specific details and any concerns you might have. Again, we keep all information strictly confidential.

## FUNDRAISING

There will be member fundraising in both seasons - spring & fall. Volunteers are always needed to help facilitate fundraising efforts.

Fundraising helps us to keep costs down. Regular registration fees collected will purchase a jersey/uniform with the remaining allocated to field use fees, referee fees, equipment, and other miscellaneous expenses.

We will continue to utilize partnerships with local businesses and will be actively pursuing sponsorships.

## FEES

Our current fees are under review for the 2023 season.

## REFUND POLICY

We do not offer refunds. However, there are extremely specific reasons why we may offer a family a refund (moving/relocation, medical necessity, etc.). We do not issue any refunds past the first week of practice. Please make absolutely certain your child wants to play or cheer.

Email [info@juniorriverhawks.org](mailto:info@juniorriverhawks.org) for questions.

## SCHOLARSHIP ASSISTANCE

Please use the Contact Us form regarding financial limitations. A player will never be turned down due to lack of funds. It is especially important to the coaches and staff of the JRH that all who would like to play football have the chance, regardless of family finances.

## TEAM SIDELINE ACCOUNT

All registered members will need to sign up for a Team Sideline account. We are excited to provide our families with a robust program that helps facilitate communications and scheduling. Please download the Team Sideline app on your mobile device to stay fully informed.