

Junior Riverhawks

General Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Last Updated: 2.11.2025

WHY SHOULD MY CHILD PLAY?

The values kids learn from football and cheer set them up for success on and off the field. The game inspires character, leadership, resilience and teamwork — key life skills that transfer from the huddle to the classroom and beyond.

AGES

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

- Spring Season co-ed 7on7 - Grades Kinder through 8th
- Fall Season Flag - Grades Kinder through 3rd
- Fall Season Tackle - Grades 4th – 8th
- Fall Season Cheer – Ages 5 through 14

HOW DO I REGISTER?

- Register for the season by navigating to “registration” tab from the home page – www.juniorriverhawks.org
- Click the enroll button
- Create a Team Sideline Account OR login if you have one
- Register the play
- Upload ALL necessary documentation (see below)
- Pay the fee
- Acquire your cleats and mouth guard (no exception on the mouth guard)
- Watch social media pages and check your emails
- Practice, play, and have fun

REQUIRED INFORMATION NEEDED TO REGISTER

- **Information needed when registering:** your participant’s full name, details, **correct** address, emergency contact details, medical history to include allergies or anything else that

we will need to know, 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). Sorry, cell phone & internet bills are not allowed.
- **Additional information needed:** a close-up, CURRENT picture of your athlete. (Seriously....get close up and snap a photo of their face. NO HATS.)

NOTE: these are not suggestions – ***they are REQUIRED***. You will not be able to register without these items. You will also not be allowed to participate in any JRH function, **including practices, until these items are checked and approved**. Coaches will be provided a roster of players that have cleared documents. If you are not on their list, you do not get to participate.

If we need further information or corrections to the documents, we will reach out to you for a maximum of three times – by email – to request the information or corrections. We are not babysitters – please upload the correct documentation required (per CBYF rules, we are not the bad guys).

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

REGISTRATION FEES

Registration fees are subject to change from season to season and are typically communicated when registration is opened each season. They fees are determined to reflect needs of the program (such as equipment) in addition to increases in all costs associated with running a program (referees, fields, etc).

Registration fees cover jerseys, equipment costs, field costs, field use fees, certified official's fees, miscellaneous fees (first aid, footballs, tackling dummies, etc). Volunteers and/or coaching staff are NOT 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.

PAYMENT PLAN

Fall Season ONLY. We have a registration payment program available to those who may need to pay over a specified time for fall season tackle and cheer only. The payment plan consists of one down payment (usually \$50) and then 4 equal payments every two weeks (subject to change). Payment will come directly out of the payment method you selected at registration (debit or credit card).

Full registration balance must be paid in FULL by August 1st. No exceptions.

FUNDRAISING

There will be member fundraising in both seasons - spring & fall. This is required.

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

Volunteers are always needed to help facilitate fundraising efforts.

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

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 certain your child wants to play or cheer.

Email 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.

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.

We welcome kids of all abilities.

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.

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.

LATE REGISTRATIONS

We do not accept late registrations due to equipment and uniform needs as we as stated rules set forth by the CBYF. This is a hard rule. 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 available to children residing within the Chiawana High School boundaries. Our program aims to develop participants as athletes and teammates, preparing them to compete at advanced levels. Playing alongside future schoolmates will provide a significant advantage as they transition into high school sports.

For those **not** residing within the boundaries, **we will consider out-of-boundary registrations on a case-by-case basis only**, though we highly recommend registering with a Junior Program aligned with your home address boundaries. We reserve the right to decline a transfer request. Denials are based on many factors.

To verify if you live within our boundaries, please input your address at the following link:

<https://teamsideline.com/sites/jriverhawksyf/boundary-check>

*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.*

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

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

WHEN ARE GAMES?

We won't know until at least 1.5 to 1 week prior to the start of the first game. The CBYF will dictate when practices can start and when the season opens. Once we know, you will know.

DO I GET TO REQUEST A TEAM?

No.

Parents and/or coaches are not allowed to pick their participant's team. Any special requests to be placed on a team will be determined on a case-by-case basis. A positive decision is rare. We strive to keep our teams as even and fair as possible.

HOW WE BUILD OUR TEAMS

Every athlete who joins JRH will be placed on a team per grade level, excluding Cheer Team.

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 (fall season)

**If teams exceed the max quantity of players, per CBYF rules, we must split teams. Team split rules can be found in the CBYF's rule book. As of this publication, the team split occurs at 34 registered players.

HOWEVER, the Junior Riverhawks reserve the right to split teams at 30, 31, 32, or 33 players. There are numerous factors that would determine an early split but the two main concerns are development and play time.

Moving forward, a league representative will be present at all team splits.

Coaches and parents do not get to dictate teams.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: for fall tackle teams, players will move up and play with the SAME team they played with the previous fall season. Team transfers are not allowed. We are held accountable and will be sanctioned if we move kids from one team to the other.

WHEN WILL I FIND OUT?

The coaches will contact parents. Please ensure you check your emails frequently. Coaches are busy, too. They will do their best to contact all parents and players just as quickly as possible, once they get their rosters.

REQUESTING TO MOVE TEAMS

No. This is a violation of CBYF rules. See above 'important information'.

PRACTICE LOCATIONS/DAY/TIME

Practice location is determined by the Junior Riverhawks. We will announce practice locations just as soon as we know. We "rent" fields through the Pasco School District because they are big enough locations to accommodate our large program. We 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.**

The question "When are practices" is asked frequently. Coaches determine when practices are held. We understand that planning is critical but, unfortunately, we will not be able to communicate specific days and times.

- 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 Saturdays.
- Cheer will practice three or more times per week with cheer activities on Saturdays.
- 7v7 teams will practice two to three times per week with TWO games on Saturdays.

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

PRACTICE LOCATION – CODE OF CONDUCT

We are held to strict standards by the school district. We must take care of the fields we are approved to use. Please make sure to pick up trash and personal items immediately. If we get complaints, PSD1 will strip our access to these fields, which is severely detrimental to ALL participants, teams, parents, coaches, and volunteers.

GAMES

All games are held on Saturdays. Locations are throughout the Mid-Columbia Basin **to include outlying communities**. Due to the growth of the CBYF, we may play games out of town. See "traveling", below. All game day information and scheduling is provided directly by the league. Game information such as time and location is typically communicated 1 to 2 weeks prior to the first game. This information is out

of our hands. We will not be able to tell you when a certain grade level players their game because it changes every season. Game times are anywhere from 9:00 am to midafternoon.

GAME DAY CODE OF CONDUCT

Be a good human. Cheer for EVERYONE. Violence of any kind – verbal or physical – will NOT be tolerated. All adults and players are bound by the CBYF and Junior Riverhawks Code of Conduct.

We will not tolerate bad behavior. We are a junior program representing the CHS Riverhawks (same colors, same logo, etc). As such, we will hold ourselves to the highest of standards.

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 (if remotely possible). Please note that we cannot call all parents as it's not feasible for us to call roughly 300+ people. We suggest to “like” our Facebook page so you are “in the know”.

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 the East, West, and North Divisions. 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, Yakima, etc. ***PLEASE make note of this!***

PLAYING TIME

We are a pay to play recreation (yet competitive) program. 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 or participate in practices with no valid excuse. In football, you **MUST** practice with your team. The safety of the player AND the team is paramount. We absolutely will not tolerate, or play, a player who refuses to attend the necessary practices.

If your child refuses to go in when called to substitute, the coach will go to the next available player.

Parents do not dictate where their child will play or what position. Head Coaches decide. We also heavily frown upon coaches who play "daddy ball". We 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 the next Payton Manning (quarterback), you must talk with the coaching staff privately, away from practices and games. If they still determine he's more of a receiver, running back, etc., that is the coach's decision. 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

Family is first but please remember that football and cheer are TEAM sports. We also realize that things come up and are planned well in advance of football practice. In the event your child misses practice, we will do what is best for his safety as well as the safety of his teammates. Inform your coach as soon as you can. With that said, if you have any flexibility, try to schedule around the football season, especially August.

EQUIPMENT

- 7on7: no equipment is provided. Player will receive a team jersey.
- Cheer: JRH will provide a rented shell, skirt, pom poms, and 1 bow. Parents are responsible for under clothes, shoes, etc.
- Tackle: JRH provides helmet with chin strap, shoulder pads, pants, and rental jersey should you choose to NOT purchase a custom tackle jersey (see below)
- Flag: JRH provides flag belts

****REQUIRED EQUIPMENT FOR TACKLE, FLAG, AND 7V7: mouthguards are required, no exceptions. Parents/guardians will need to supply.**

For tackle, 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: \$225
- Shoulder Pads: \$110
- Pants: \$35

Rented TACKLE game jerseys are NOT customized. We will hand out by size, first come, first serve.

Custom tackle jerseys are available for purchase at the current cost of \$58 (on top of the registration fee). This is 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 for the fall season and we are provided with discounts or coupons codes for purchasing equipment, which we share broadly with the JRH family as they become available.

EQUIPMENT HANDOUT

This will be communicated when information is available. However, moving forward, we will only host – at most – six different day/times to hand out gear. In 2024, we spent almost 76 hours (of free time), to get kids fitted. It is a huge undertaking and takes A LOT of person-power. If you, or someone you know, would like to help facilitate equipment handout, we could use all the help.

Parents are not allowed to fit their own player during handout.

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. It should fit about 1" +/- above brow line. However, every player's head is different. That is why helmets are so hard to issue.

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.

MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

Colored visors are NOT ALLOWED. We follow WIAA rules which state that visors must be 100% clear.

If you would like to change out your chin strap for one you purchased, please return the rented chin strap and then follow up with your coach to make sure the new chin strap is fitted correctly.

Back plates are allowed as long as the provided rental shoulder pads are not altered in any way, shape, or form.

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 then selected by the President. 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. No Excuses. If you assist at practices you, too, will need a 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 OR “daddy ballers”. 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.

Coaches do not get to dictate who plays on which team. In addition, they are bound by the rules of CBYF, the Junior Riverhawks, and all Code of Conducts.

If you or someone you know is interested, you may send an email to jriverhawks@gmail.com

COACH COMPLAINTS

Coaches are the backbone of this program (and all youth sports). Without them, there is no season and no team. Please remember that they, too, have a life, families, jobs, etc. yet they still stepped up to coach.

However, on the other hand, we will not tolerate “daddy ball”. If this happens, we will address immediately.

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 Fancy-Godino.

Coaching styles 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.

If all communication avenues have been exhausted and a perceived problem or situation needs to be addressed, we will address it with both the coach and the parents.

SIDELINE COACHING- PARENTS

Note that parent sideline coaching is not allowed and we will ask you to stop. This does NOT help in any way and is a detriment to your player, the coach, and the team. There will be one warning and then, if needed, we will ask you to leave.

If you have complaints and truly believe you can do it better, please consider stepping up and volunteering to coach.

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 at our discretion, including removal. 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.

For concussion information, please visit our website at www.JuniorRiverhawks.org. Click the "info" menu, then navigate to "downloads"

ALL injuries must be reported. Please email jriverhawks@gmail.com with all information: who, what, when, why and then provide a detailed account of what happened.

TACKLE FOOTBALL – PLANNING AHEAD

The season MAY commence in mid-July with training camp consisting of two weeks of un-padded workouts (subject to change). These are very important weeks for 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.

Regular season games typically begin early/mid-September. Teams will play 6 games (or 5 if they get a BYE). 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.

FLAG FOOTBALL- TIMING

The season coincides with the tackle program in the fall. This is for K – 2nd grade ONLY. Teams play 6 games over the course of 6 weekends. They will have one to two weeks of playoffs and then a modified super bowl OR tournament.

7v7 FOOTBALL – TIMING

The 7on7 Spring Season typically opens for registration sometime in late January to early February. Practices begin in March with games starting in April. The last weekend – a tournament – is typically held mid-May

**Note that 7v7 coincides with spring break and Easter holiday.

CHEER- TIMING

Cheer falls in line with the tackle season. The cheer team will perform at one OR two games per Saturday. The schedule is up to the Coach and they will coordinate and communicate the where/when/time.

PARENT VOLUNTEERING

As with all youth sports, parent volunteers are an essential component of the overall player experience. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the president, Karen Fancy-Godino, at jriverhawks@gmail.com. During the season you will be asked to volunteer for various roles with respect to your player's team. In 2025, this will be mandatory.

BYLAWS AND RULES OF PLAY

We are required to adhere to the Columbia Basin Youth Football (CBYF) Bylaws, Rules of Play, Code of Conduct, Junior Riverhawks Code of Conduct and Junior Riverhawks Operating Manual. Any violation to these rules includes warnings, sanctions, suspensions, and/or expulsions.