

NEW YORK GAY FOOTBALL LEAGUE'S

**TRAVEL PROGRAM BYLAWS
(Open Division)**

Last Revised: January 30, 2022
Last Approved: February 26, 2022

I. NYGFL Mission

It is the Mission of the NYGFL to cultivate an inclusive and diverse environment for all members - gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning and straight allies and, in so doing, to encourage and empower each individual to reach their goals as an athlete, teammate, friend, leader and member of the greater New York community.

Moreover, the NYGFL strives to use its fundraisers, social and cultural events and the sport of flag football itself to break down stereotypes, eliminate prejudice and discrimination and to educate the general public about the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, questioning and straight allies community with the ultimate goal of fostering greater tolerance and empathy.

No one shall be excluded from participating on the basis of sexual orientation, gender and gender identity, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, political beliefs, athletic ability, physical challenge, HIV status or gender identity.

II. Travel Program Vision

Tournament teams serve as an extension of the league’s mission, with an emphasis on inclusion and player development. We want to build teams that have the personnel, skills, and mindsets needed to compete at a high level in their respective divisions. The leaders and players on all teams will embody a “One NY” mindset where we work together to support the overall success of our sister and brother teams.

III. Tournament Committee Structure

III.A. Tournament Committee. At the beginning of each tournament season, The Tournament Committee shall be appointed by the board and shall comprise of the Tournament Committee Chair, one (1) Open Division representative, and one (1) Women’s+ Division representative (“Divisional Representative(s)”).

III.B. Resignation, Removal and Replacement.

III.B.1. Resignation. Tournament Committee members can resign at any time by written notice to the NYGFL Commissioner and the Tournament Committee Chair.

III.B.2. Removal and Replacement. Any member of the Tournament Committee can be removed at any time by a simple majority vote of the Board.

III.C. Voting & Quarum.

III.C.1. Tournament Committee. All members will have an equal vote and must be present for a vote to take place.

III.C.2. Captains’ Voting & Quarum. When collaborating with captains, each captain will have an equal vote, and at least one captain must be present for a vote to take place.

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III.C.3. **Voting.** In connection with voting, “present” means physically in the room, on the phone, email chain, text chain, Facebook message, etc.

III.C.3.a. If contacting members through email, text, Facebook message, etc. the Tournament Committee must give the committee members, and captains where applicable, a reasonable amount of time to respond.

III.C.4. **Proxy.** There will be no voting by proxy.

III.C.5. All votes shall pass by a simple majority.

IV. TEAM RULES AND RECRUITMENT GUIDELINES

IV.A. **Sanctioned Teams.** The NYGFL Board shall determine the number of teams for each tournament season year. The Tournament Committee shall sanction NY Travel Teams, based on the number of teams indicated by the board, to represent the NYGFL in the two major national flag football tournaments – Pride Bowl and Gay Bowl.

IV.A.1. The Tournament Committee will organize open tryout sessions for players interested in joining the travel program.

IV.A.2. The Divisional Representatives will reach out to the players who are not initially chosen for a travel team to gauge their interest in staying involved.

IV.A.3. The Divisional Representatives will be responsible for keeping the Interested Player List (“IPL”) up-to-date and available to the Tournament Committee.

IV.A.4. Players will be added to teams from the IPL based on the needs of the team and their **expressed** preferences.

IV.A.4.a. All preferences must be communicated in writing to the Tournament Committee Chair or the player’s Divisional Representative.

IV.B. **Additional Teams.** In the event there is sufficient and sustainable interest within the NY Travel community for another team in any division and, contingent upon available capacity of the aforementioned tournaments, the NYGFL Board shall obtain feedback from the Tournament Committee, before voting, on whether to sanction that team by majority rule. If approved, the Tournament Committee Chair shall notify the greater community about the new team and its captain vacancy.

IV.C. Travel Player Eligibility

IV.C.1. Any active league member in good standing is eligible to participate in the travel program. Players shall be considered an active member of the NYGFL if they meet at least one (1) of the following criteria:

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- IV.C.1.a. Played on a NYGFL regular season team, and maintained playoff eligibility, within the past 4 seasons leading up to the Tournament Season.
- IV.C.1.b. Served as an active NYGFL referee for more than half of an eligible Fall/Spring season within the past 4 seasons leading up to the Tournament Season.
- IV.C.1.c. Served on the NGFFL board or NYGFL Committee within the past 4 seasons leading up to the Tournament Season.
- IV.C.2. New players who become active NYGFL members during the Fall Season that coincides with Gay Bowl are NOT eligible to play in the tournament unless they are considered as a “Wild Card Player” for their respective team.
 - IV.C.2.a. There are NO exemptions for this requirement.
- IV.C.3. **Wild Cards.** Teams are entitled to a maximum of two (2) Wild Card players on their roster.
 - IV.C.3.a. Wild Card players are individuals who are in Good Standing with the league but do NOT meet eligibility requirements.
- IV.C.4. All league members may practice with a tournament team and/or at tournament-focused development clinics. However, attendance at such practices shall serve as no guarantee to being included on a Gay Bowl team roster.
- IV.C.5. **Rosters.** All roster changes must be approved by the NYGFL Board. It is an expectation of the board that all captains work together to build competitive roster that are aligned with the league’s mission and vision.
- IV.C.6. **Roster changes.** In the event that there is a vacancy on a roster, the Tournament Committee can decide to shift a player or players from one team to another with a simple majority vote. This change must be submitted to the NYGFL Board for final approval.
- IV.D. **Unsanctioned Conduct.** Anyone who has been identified as someone attempting to undermine the success of the NYGFL’s Travel Program (whether it be by poaching players and creating shadow teams, etc.) will immediately be identified as participating in unsanctioned conduct by the Tournament Committee, in connection with the board, and considered not in Good Standing with the League. Their eligibility will be revoked and they will be unable to participate in the current Tournament Season and may be subject to further disciplinary action from the Board.
 - IV.D.1. **Appeals.** A player may appeal the change in their status by submitting a written request to the Board and Tournament Committee. The Board will convene to review the request, in a reasonable time, and reply in the regular course of business. The Board may request the player’s presence when they convene to review the request.

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IV.E. **Player Conduct and Suspension.** All travel player conduct issues will be dealt with by the NYGFL Board, in consultation with the Tournament Committee, in accordance with the league's policies and procedures.

IV.E.1. By participating in travel team activities and/or registering to play on a team, you are agreeing to be bound by the rules and regulations of the NYGFL and its Travel Program. Furthermore, you are agreeing to be governed by the league and travel program's leadership and tournament structure.

V. CAPTAIN RULES AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

V.A. All prospective travel program captains must submit a formal application to the NYGFL Board for consideration

V.B. All National Gay Bowl Tournament Captains must be active members in good standing with the NYGFL

V.C. National Gay Bowl Tournament Captain responsibilities include:

V.C.1. Ensuring that their team complies with the NYGFL and National Gay Flag Football League (NGFFL) Gay Bowl rules and bylaws.

V.C.1.a. Official NGFFL Bylaws are available here:

http://ngffl.com/Portals/0/NGFFL_Bylaws.pdf

V.C.2. Attending all organized player recruitment events, player tryouts, league-wide tournament fundraising and community activities.

V.C.2.a. If necessary, a team representative may attend such activities in lieu of the captain.

V.C.3. Registering their team with the NGFFL host city for the national tournament and ensuring that final rosters are submitted to the NGFFL. In addition, captains are required to ensure all players are registered with the host city for the tournament.

V.C.4. Coordinating all travel arrangements for their team, including transportation to/from the host city, transportation to/from the fields, and accommodations for all team players.

V.C.5. Attend all Gay Bowl Captains meetings and other related activities before and throughout the tournament weekend.

VI. Changes to Bylaws

VI.A. **Order of Events.** Only the NYGFL Board is authorized to amend these bylaws by two-thirds vote.

- VI.B. **Disclaimer.** Every scenario that may arise cannot possibly have been addressed by these bylaws. Therefore, if a scenario arises that is not addressed by the bylaws, the NYGFL Board has the sole discretion to address it in any manner they deem fair and just.