

2026 NFL FOUNDATION YOUTH FOOTBALL CAMP GRANT APPLICATION

ABOUT THE YOUTH FOOTBALL CAMP GRANT

The National Football League Foundation supports current and former NFL players and coaches who organize and host free, non-contact youth football camps during the summer. Grants range up to \$2,000.

The Youth Football Camp Grant is one of the most popular programs offered by the NFL Foundation. The camps provide a fun and positive experience for youth participants and those involved in hosting the camp.

NEW IN 2026: *The NFL Foundation grant-making focuses for the 2026 grant cycle are Youth Character Education and Social Justice. We also emphasize youth health and safety and ensuring all kids, regardless of physical ability, have an equal opportunity to play. Please explain in the camp objectives section of your application how you plan to address and incorporate these initiatives into your camp (e.g., overview of life skills presentation/messaging for camp participants; education for coaches, participants and parents on concussions and proper heat & hydration protocols, etc.)*

PLEASE NOTE: *The NFL Foundation recommends that all first-time applicants apply for the USA Football First Down camp grant. This customizable camp is offered through USA Football and gives players assistance in providing a positive football development experience to children in your community.*

The 2026 Youth Football Camp Grant application is available between: February and April 2026.

Grant determinations will be made following the application deadline. ***Please note, due to extremely high demand, special consideration for top-tier funding will be made to applicants who submit applications early. For those applicants submitting USA Football First Down applications with early spring camps, the NFL Foundation will use a time-based, rolling review process.*

YOUTH FOOTBALL CAMP GRANT

Who is eligible?

- Current NFL players
- Former NFL players who are both:
 - Vested under the Bert Bell/Pete Rozelle NFL Player Retirement Plan
 - Associated with nonprofit organizations and/or schools
- Current NFL coaches (head, assistant, special teams, etc.)
- Former NFL coaches (head, assistant, special teams, etc.) who are associated with nonprofit organizations and/or schools

Please note that the NFL Foundation will not review applications for any players or coaches who have not completed grant reports) for any past grants from the NFL Foundation.

What are the requirements?

Camps must:

- Be free for all participants
- Only allow instruction and participation in non-contact football (tackle instruction is not permitted)
- Include positive character and life skills messaging for the youth participants
- Offer at least 4 hours of activities (either on a single day or over multiple days)
- Incorporate health and safety information and learnings into the camp curriculum
- Be established in the NFL player or coach applicant's name AND be organized and attended by the player or coach
- Not be a source of revenue (e.g., salary, endorsements, etc.) for the NFL players, coaches and other involved parties
- Have insurance
- **Include an onsite licensed healthcare professional**

If approved:

- All receipts for items, food, etc. must be provided to the NFL Foundation in an online grant report
- The grant report must be completed no later than six weeks after the conclusion of the camp

Important notes:

- Applicants who have not hosted a youth football camp before are highly encouraged to host a USA Football First Down camp to help them provide a great experience for the kids in their communities. Previous NFL Foundation Camp Grant applicants also are encouraged to partner with USA Football on First Down camps. All 2026 clinics incorporate USA Football's Football Development components and training. Additional information can be found on page 7.
- The NFL Foundation requires that all receipts for items purchased for the camp (examples: t-shirts, water, food, whistles, etc.) be submitted in the grant report. Please make sure you keep all receipts. If a receipt is not provided, the NFL Foundation may request that the grant funds be returned.
- Due to the high volume of applications we receive for this program:
 - We do not accept faxed documents. All required documents must be submitted online using the upload functionality. If you have any issues, please request assistance through the online messaging system within your application.
 - The NFL Foundation can only support one camp grant per approved NFL player or coach applicant. Due to the popularity of this grant opportunity, multiple camp grants are no longer offered. Applicants will need to choose one camp site for funding consideration.

YOUTH FOOTBALL CAMP GRANT

In this application guide you will find tips and tools to direct you through the Youth Football Camp Grant application process, including:

- Information on USA Football's First Down Program (**see page 7**)
 - First Down is designed to provide you with a turn-key and ready-to-execute, non-contact youth football clinic in your community. Additionally, all skills and drills are selected based on USA Football's Player Progression Development Model, ensuring that participants learn age-appropriate football First Down in an enjoyable and safe environment.
- How to register and apply in the Grant Application Management System (GAMS)
- Details on the requirements for your application
- Information on the sections of the application and what you need to provide to the NFL Foundation to be considered for a grant
- Tips for a successful camp experience

Please read this resource carefully and consider all requirements before beginning this year's online Youth Football Camp Grant application. The guide contains new and updated program information, submission guidelines and requirements.

YOUTH FOOTBALL CAMP GRANT

All applicants need to complete a 5-step application process

STEP 1: REGISTER

Follow the steps below to register with the NFL Foundation. If you are already registered with the NFL Foundation, then you do not need to complete this step again.

- a. Visit www.nflfoundation.org
- b. Click on the “Register” button at the top of the page
- c. Fill out the information needed to create an account
- d. Once your email is confirmed, log in to your account

STEP 2: COMPLETE THE ONLINE CAMP GRANT APPLICATION

- a. Click on “View grants I am eligible for” to access the application you are eligible for
- b. Click “Apply”
- c. Fill out the Camp Grant application and submit it to the NFL Foundation for review
NOTE: The status of the application should say “Submitted.” If the status says “Incomplete” then the NFL Foundation will not review it. Please check the application and make sure that all required fields are completed so it can be submitted before the deadline.
- d. Once your application has been submitted the NFL Foundation will review it. The status of your application should say “Submitted” when you view your dashboard.
- e. Applicants should receive notification via email that the application has been submitted.

APPROVAL CRITERIA:

The NFL Foundation will determine grant awards based on:

- The level of the NFL player or coach’s involvement in the camp
- Strength of the camp programming and attention to youth character education and player health and safety elements
- Scope of impact on youth participants
- The overall quality of the application including narrative strength, completeness, and presentation and clarity of financial information

**Very few camps receive top tier funding

NOTE: The NFL Foundation will not consider an NFL player or coach’s profile or team when making a decision. Help to engage NFL Foundation reviewers by writing clearly about your camp, why it is important to you and how it will positively impact youth. If applicable, include personal success stories of a previous youth football camp you organized and hosted and how it made a difference to those who participated.

STEP 3: WAITING FOR REVIEW

The NFL Foundation will carefully review your grant application and supporting documents. The Youth Football Camp Grant application process is very competitive. Applicants should not assume they will receive a grant.

All grant determinations will be made after the deadline. Applicants should log into GAMS at that time to view the status of their application.

YOUTH FOOTBALL CAMP GRANT

STEP 4: APPROVAL = GRANT AGREEMENT & CHECK SENT

If approved, the NFL Foundation will create a grant agreement that outlines the terms and conditions of the award. The approved applicant will receive an email to inform him when the grant agreement is ready to sign. At that time, the applicant should log in to GAMS to sign the grant agreement. The grant agreement needs to be signed by the person who is legally responsible for hosting the camp and should match the name provided in the application.

The NFL Foundation will not send a grant check until:

- The grant agreement has been signed by the person who is legally responsible for hosting the camp and who should receive the check.
 - The agreement can be signed online or by printing the agreement, signing it, scanning the document and uploading it to GAMS
 - If you cannot scan the grant agreement document, please advise the NFL Foundation admin via the “Messages” function

NOTE: The grant checks will only be made payable to either the camp’s name or to the affiliated nonprofit organization or school. The NFL Foundation does not issue grant checks to personal bank accounts.

STEP 5: GRANT REPORT AVAILABLE/FINALIZING

Grant recipients will be required to complete an online grant report which will let the NFL Foundation know how the awarded grant funds were spent. This report must be filled out and submitted no later than 6 weeks after the camp has been held.

Every applicant receiving NFL Foundation grant funds must log into the GAMS system to complete the online grant report and provide copies of receipts and invoices.

Failure to complete the grant report is a violation of the previously signed Grant Agreement and will jeopardize your ability to apply for future NFL Foundation grant opportunities. Once you have completed your grant report by the requested deadline the NFL Foundation will review it. If the Grant Report is approved, the application will be "Finalized" and you will become eligible to apply for future NFL Foundation grants. If all information is not provided in the Grant Report then it will not be finalized until all issues have been resolved.

As a public charity, the NFL Foundation has an obligation to its donors to ensure that its funds are used properly and camp participants are provided with a positive experience. By requesting that our grant recipients submit programmatic and financial reporting information on their respective grant awards, the NFL Foundation is able to fulfill these obligations and help promote innovative youth and high school football programs nationwide.

USA FOOTBALL'S FIRST DOWN PROGRAM

Once again, all NFL player and coach applicants can choose to partner with USA Football on its [First Down](#) program. USA Football is the official governing body of youth and high school football and the youth football development partner of the NFL. The First Down program makes it easy to provide non-contact, youth football clinics in communities nationwide. All 2026 clinics will incorporate USA Football's Heads Up Football components and training.

THE PROGRAM

First Down helps provide support for players looking to host a camp, but who may not have all the pieces in place.

HOW IT WORKS FOR YOU

First Down is designed to help provide you with tips, resources and equipment for your non-contact youth football clinic at your desired facility. The objective is simple: make it easy for caring NFL players and coaches to provide a positive football development experience to children in their communities.

Interested applicants should complete the First Down Camp Grant Application.

Bold or highlight: The NFL Foundation recommends all first-time camp applicants apply for the First Down camp.

WORKING WITH USA FOOTBALL:

If a player or coach Camp Grant applicant is interested in hosting a USA Football First Down Camp as part of the Camp Grant program, he will have the ability to apply using the First Down application available on the website.

If your application for a First Down camp is approved a representative from USA Football will reach out to the applicant to confirm eligibility. USA Football will contact the applicant using the phone and/or email provided for the applicant's account so please ensure that this information is accurate and up to date.

If approved, USA Football will work directly with your camp to cover the costs of the items provided for the camp:

- Camp Insurance
- Registration system for campers
- Camp curriculum
- Football camp equipment (footballs, flag belts, cones, equipment bag, etc.)
- Promotion on USA Football website
- USA Football-issued press release on national First Down initiative
- Marketing assistance including graphics and images

You can use the remaining funds on the following items:

- T-shirts
- USA Football offers a partnership on First Down branded shirts. Please let a USA Football staff member know if interested.
- Food and drink
- For participants only
- Awards
- Reusable water bottles
- Lanyards - if used for registration or participation purposes
- Wrist bands for registration
- Cinch bags or other reusable bags
- Health items: sunblock, hand sanitizer, etc.
- Camp photos
- Athletic trainers

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE APPLICATION

Before starting your application, please note that the following information will be needed to complete an application. You can start an application and save it to complete at a later date as long as it is fully submitted before the deadline (**Remember: the application status must say "submitted" before the deadline in order to qualify for a grant**).

Inactive and repeat applications will be not be approved by the NFL Foundation administrator.

All applicants must provide the following information:

Contact Information

- The NFL Foundation asks for the NFL player or coach applicant's name and NFL career history.
- If more than one NFL player or coach is involved in hosting the camp, please provide the playing or coaching history for each participating player and coach.
- Please ensure that the contact information provided for your account is accurate and up to date. All notifications will be sent via GAMS to the email address on your profile.

Camp Overview

In this section, the NFL Foundation asks you to provide a detailed logistical plan of the proposed camp.

The NFL Foundation needs to know the:

- Location of the camp
- Date(s) and time of camp activities
- Schedule of proposed camp programming
- Curriculum

Just as important, the NFL Foundation will ask what goals the NFL player applicant and community hope to achieve by hosting the football camp.

Be prepared to answer questions about the purpose of the camp and ways your camp can positively impact youth and socio-economic factors that affect the community where the camp will be held.

NFL Player or Coach Involvement

In order for a camp to receive the NFL Foundation grant funds, NFL player and coach applicants must have committed a lot of time and energy into camp planning and be present and engaged for the entire length of the camp.

****PLAYER MUST SUBMIT SIGNED AFFIDAVIT OR PROOF OF PARTICIPATION – THE NFL FOUNDATION WILL NOT APPROVE ANY CAMPS THAT DO NOT HAVE WRITTEN, RECORDED, OR VERBAL CONFIRMATION OF PLAYER'S EXPECTED PARTICIPATION**

Security Plan

The NFL Foundation requires that all Camp Grant applicants consider and implement a detailed security plan to ensure the safety of the camp participants, NFL players and coaches and all those in attendance.

Provide details on how you plan to implement security procedures and what security personnel will be involved.

Affiliated Organizations

- Former NFL players and coaches are required to be affiliated with a nonprofit organization or school in order to host a camp.
- Current NFL players and coaches may choose to have their camps affiliated with a nonprofit organization or school but it is not a requirement for them.
- If your camp is affiliated with a nonprofit organization or school, you will need to complete this section of the application.

Budget:

Grant request and budget:

- Applicants are asked to provide a request for grant funds up to the \$2,500 maximum. Please note that increased interest in the Camp Grant program has limited our ability to award the maximum grant amount to many applicants.
- The NFL Foundation asks that you consider your budget carefully and plan to attract sponsors and in-kind donations to help offset the costs associated with hosting a camp.

- The NFL Foundation requires that at least 60% of the grant funds awarded must be spent on participant-related costs.
- Grant funds cannot be used to pay for hotel or travel costs for camp coaches.
- Budgets should not reflect gifts. Gifts for players and/or volunteers must not come from the camp budget (see table below for examples of gifts).

Acceptable budget expenses:

- Facilities – (site rental fee, gym rental...)
- Staff – (EMS, coaching stipends, security, photographer...)
- Camp Equipment – (tents, tables, chairs, PA, football equipment...)
- Participant Costs – (see table below for examples)*
- Camp Administration – (insurance, supplies, shipping, food, beverages (non-alcoholic)...)
- Marketing – (camp brochure, signage, banners, advertising, media...)

The below table lists examples of participant costs that can be covered by the grant funds, and examples of gifts that cannot be covered by grant funds:

Participant Cost Examples (can be covered by grant funds):	Gift Examples (cannot be covered by grant funds):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-shirts • Non-contact football equipment/uniform items (e.g., hats) • Food and drink • Awards (not monetary) • Reusable water bottles • Lanyards if used for registration or participation purposes • Wrist bands for registration • Cinch bags or other reusable bags • Health items: sunblock, hand sanitizer, etc. • Camp photos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed player cards or photos • Footballs – signed or unsigned • Gift cards or certificates (examples: gift cards to restaurants or stores) • Electronics • Towels for participants to take home

Required budget information:

The NFL Foundation requires that you submit a detailed and itemized operating expense budget for the camp.

The budget appears in a table in GAMS and has two significant functions.

1. You must detail the expense budget for the entire camp. This budget should take into account all costs associated with the camp and likely will be more than \$2,000 depending on camp length, location and anticipated attendance.
2. You must then attribute how you will spend the NFL Foundation grant funds if awarded. This budget informs the NFL Foundation how the grant money will be used for overall camp costs. All applicants must correctly complete the required budget table in GAMS in order for their applications to be considered complete.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE APPLICATION

Key Staff

- The NFL Foundation requires that all Camp Grant recipients provide a breakdown of paid and volunteer staff working on camp planning as well as résumés of key staff members involved.
- Camp staff includes family members, foundation staff, local nonprofit groups, school officials and all individuals associated with the planning and administration of the proposed camp.

* Requires attachment

Accredited Coaches

- The NFL Foundation strongly recommends using accredited youth and high school football coaches to teach football skills and supervise camp programming.
 - The NFL Foundation requests that you provide résumés of all coaches scheduled to participate in the camp.
- If coaching résumés are not available, please provide a detailed background of each coach's career in football, outlining experience and level(s) taught.

* Requires attachment

Medical Personnel

- The NFL Foundation requires that every camp provide a licensed healthcare professional trained in emergency medicine to attend the camp as a precautionary measure. You will be required to show proof of his/her confirmed attendance for the duration of the camp by providing a contract, letter confirming attendance or invoice for services.

* Requires attachment

Insurance Coverage

The NFL Foundation requires every applicant to have appropriate and adequate insurance coverage. Having insurance coverage is designed to protect you and your assets in the event of a catastrophic incident where you become legally obligated to pay for damage to property of others or injuries to others that arise out of your negligence.

- The coverage must be valid and current as of the proposed camp date.
- If you are hosting the camp in conjunction with a nonprofit organization or school, its coverage may suffice to cover camp activities.
- You should consult qualified insurance professionals to determine the level of coverage your camp and facility will need.
- Consider a policy that reflects the unique risks, exposures and operations of a youth football camp.

* Requires attachment

*USA Football Secures for First Down grantees

Evidence the Camp is Free of Charge:

The NFL Foundation requires that camps requesting NFL Foundation grant funds are free of charge to all participants.

- A flyer, advertisement or registration form is provided to the NFL Foundation as evidence.
- In no case is it acceptable for the NFL players, coaches or other involved parties to earn revenue as a result of operating the camp receiving NFL Foundation grant funds.

* Requires attachment

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE APPLICATION

W9 Form

The NFL Foundation requires applicants to upload a copy of their camp or affiliated nonprofit organization or school's signed W9 form.

- Please see the tip sheet for information on how to complete the W9 form.
- W9 forms that are not filled out correctly will not be accepted and will lead to delays in approval of an application and processing of grant checks.

* Requires attachment

*Not required for First Down applicants

SOME HELPFUL TIPS TO CONSIDER:

- Work together with your local community to offset camp costs (e.g., facility rental) by providing benefit to the local organizations that assist with hosting camp activities.
 - For example, partner with local high school or community organizations to secure fields to host your camp activities; propose the donation of camp equipment to the school or organization as reimbursement for field usage; allow the cheerleading team to provide concessions (snacks and beverages) as a fundraising opportunity; or provide autographed merchandise for a charity auction.
- Reach out to your apparel sponsor and use your product allotment to secure t-shirts, coaches' apparel and goody bag items for participants.
- Utilize accredited youth and high school football coaches to teach skills and drills at your camp. You can also log onto www.usafootball.com and register for their nationally accredited online coaching certification course to boost your teaching knowledge.
- Make a plan for how to keep all receipts organized, especially when camp is in session and things are busy (for example, consider having one person in charge of collecting all receipts and making copies of them in case any get lost).

BEST PRACTICES

Camp Curriculum

Hosting a successful youth football camp is a rewarding experience and a great way to make a positive impact in your community. Whether you decide to host a USA Football First Down clinic or continue with your traditional youth football camp experience, the NFL Foundation looks forward to partnering with you this offseason. Proper planning and execution will ensure that your camp is a successful, enjoyable and safe experience for all those involved. The NFL Foundation and USA Football have created a guide for Camp Grant applicants that includes youth football camp recommendations and best practices. We strongly encourage you to read this guide and implement these industry leading best practices to ensure that your youth football camp meets the highest standard.

INTRODUCTIONS

AGE	PHYSICAL SKILLS	MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL ABILITY
U-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agility • Balance - Static & Dynamic • Coordination • Speed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning new skills • How to be a group member • New challenges • How to practice
U-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength - own weight • Skill development depends on growth spurt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to improve • Commitment to team • Self-discipline • Understanding of single concept
U-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed • Core strength • Acceleration and deceleration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solving problems • Set simple goals • Trying hard all the time • Being confident • Making single decisions
U-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed - multi directional • Endurance • Footwork Patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to play • Personal short-term goals • Concentration • Self-confidence
U-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill development depends on growth spurt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to improve • Commitment to team • Self-discipline • Leadership • Understanding more advanced concepts

BEST PRACTICES

DAY OF CAMP

1. Camp preparation

- a. Check equipment inventory
- b. Check t-shirt inventory

2. Camp staff should arrive one to two hours early for preparation

3. Set-up skill stations, hydration stations, registration table

4. Station assignments

- a. Clinic Director should assign clinicians to a station
- b. Use the ratio of 1 coach to every 12 players

5. Set up hydration stations

- a. Water break will be worked into the daily schedule

6. Set up the registration table

- a. Print out an alphabetic list of participants
- b. Split participants into even groups based on age

7. Welcome should be done by the athlete/camp host

- a. Your goal is to get the participants excited for the day
- b. Instruct participants on appropriate behavior
- c. Announce to any parents still around that they must stay off the playing field but are welcome to stay and watch
- d. If parents choose to leave, inform them of the appropriate pick-up time

8. Warm-up should take place with the entire camp

- a. Clinicians should lead warm-up
- b. Line age based groups up along a sideline into spaced out lines

9. After warm-up

- a. Send one group at a time to their first station
- b. Ensure clinicians don't start the station until all groups are set

10. Breakdown

- a. A group breakdown should occur before every transition to a new station
- b. Final breakdown will occur at the completion of each camp as a whole group

11. Speaking points

- a. Life skills
- b. Motivation points on how to be successful, stay in school and become a better individual
- c. Character Development

12. NFL FLAG games (if applicable for First Down or NFL FLAG licensees)

- a. A fun competition will take place at the end of each day to encourage play
- b. Ensure every participant gets onto the field to play
- c. Spread the ball around to multiple participants

13. Closing Remarks

- a. Use this time to have a guest speaker or camp host to talk with the participants
- b. Focus on character development
- c. Encourage sportsmanship

BEST PRACTICES

STAFFING ASSIGNMENTS:

Camp Director

- A. Secure Facility
- B. Event Insurance
- C. Inventory check of all items shipped
- D. Review clinician manual
- E. Secure clinicians
 - a. Background checks
 - b. Signed waiver
 - c. Assign to a specific station
 - d. Send manual for their review
- F. Execute the daily schedule
- G. Monitor timeline
- H. Secure medical staff
- I. Emergency plan
- J. Camp clean up
 - a. Shipping equipment back
 - b. Collecting waivers
 - c. Complete post-event report and/or the survey

Clinicians

- A. Assist with registration
- B. Assist with keeping participants in their assigned groups
- C. Assist with station setup
 - a. Cones, flag belts, footballs
- D. Warm-up
- E. Station operation
- F. Breakdown and rotation

Volunteers

- A. Registration
- B. Ensure all participants have signed waiver
- C. Pass out t-shirts
- D. Place participants in waiting area
- E. Set-up hydration coolers
 - a. Ensure coolers stay filled
- F. Set-up lunch (if applicable)
- G. Breakdown and camp clean up

STATIONS:

- Throwing • Defense • Catching • Running •

CAMP PROMOTION

If approved, the NFL Foundation will make available a media toolkit for you to use in promoting your camp. The toolkit will include:

- Tips on how to reach out to media in the community where you will hold the camp to help build awareness.
- Suggestions for using social media and ways to work with the NFL Foundation staff to promote your camp before and after.

The planning and execution guidelines contained herein are provided for informational purposes only. None of the National Football League (NFL), its member clubs, NFL Foundation, NFL Ventures, L.P., the NFL Players Association, USA Football or any of their respective affiliates or subsidiaries will be operating the youth football camps or will have any liability or responsibility for any claim arising in connection with participation in the youth football camps.