

# The Colony Parks and Recreation Department

## NFL Flag Football Rules



Revised 8/8/2024

Division	Ball Size
6 & Under Coed	Pee Wee
8 & Under Coed	Pee Wee
10 & Under Coed	Junior/Youth
12 & Under Coed	Junior/Youth

### I. Playing Field:

- The playing field will be 70 yards long and 30 yards wide with 10 yard end zones
  - 8U, 10U, & 12U** – 70 yards long and 25 yards wide with 10 yard end zones
  - 6U** - 50 yards long and 25 yards wide with 10 yard end zones

### II. Jerseys & Equipment:

- Jerseys and flag belts will be provided by PARD
- Home teams will wear white or the “lighter” color jersey
- Away teams will wear black or the “darker” color jersey
- Cleats are allowed, metal spikes are not permitted
- Players are required to provide and wear a protective mouth guard at all times while on the field
- Jerseys must be tucked in
- Shorts or pants must not have any pockets
- Shorts or pants must not be the same color as the flag belt and flags
- Coaches may play with their own ball on offense, but balls must be presented at the coin toss for officials and both coaches to approve. If balls are not approved, the game ball will be provided by PARD. Coaches must use at least the ball sizes outlined above, coaches may choose to play with a larger ball if approved prior to the start of the game. Game ball including its size MAY NOT change once the game has started.

### III. Game:

- Length of Game
  - 6U: Will consist of two (2) 15 minute halves with a 3 minute half time.
  - 8U, 10U, & 12U: Will consist of two (2) 20 minute halves with a 3 minute half time.
- The clock will run continuously. The clock will only stop for time-outs, injuries, and on each whistle during last 10 seconds of the second half. During the last 10 seconds of the second half the clock will start when the ball is snapped
- During the second half, when the clock reaches 5 minutes left to play if a team is ahead by 28 or more points the game will end
- The visiting team will call the coin toss. The winner of the toss has the choice to start the game on offense or defense. The loser of the toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense
- The game cannot end with a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it

### IV. Playing Requirements

- Players on the field:
  - 6U Division will play 4v4
  - 8U, 10U, & 12U will play 5v5
- All players are required to play a minimum of two series per half.
- Coaches will be held responsible to manage fair amount of playing time for all players on the roster.

### V. Timeouts:

- Each team will receive one (1) 60 second timeout per half.

### VI. Possession and Starting Drive:

- There will be no kickoffs or punting
- The offensive team will begin their drive on their own 5 yard line
- The offensive team will have 4 downs to reach or cross the half field line. If the offensive team does not cross half field after 3 downs they can elect to “punt”, the defensive team will then take over possession and start their drive on their own 5 yard line. If the offensive team elects to go for it on 4<sup>th</sup> down but fails to cross half field, the defensive team will begin their possession at the spot of the ball.

4. Once the offense reaches or crosses half field they will have 3 more downs to score. If the offensive team does not score the defensive team will begin their drive on their own 5 yard line.
5. ALL Interceptions will be live and can be returned; once the player who intercepted the ball is ruled "down" their team will start their drive at that spot on the field
6. Each time the ball is spotted, the offensive team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. After 30 seconds a delay of game penalty will be issued
7. After each play it is the offense's responsibility to get the ball back to the game officials

**VII. Scoring:**

1. Touchdowns: 6 points
2. PAT(point after touchdown): 1 point (5 yard line) or 2 points (10 yard line)
3. A PAT that is intercepted can be returned for 2 points
4. After scoring a touchdown the team must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1 point or 2 point conversion. Any change once a decision is made requires a charged timeout. A decision cannot be changed after a penalty.
5. Safety: 2 points
6. A safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. Runners can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defender, a flag falls out, they step out of bounds, their knee or arm touches the ground, a fumble, or if a snapped ball lands in or beyond the end zone. All offensive penalties that occur in the end zone will also be ruled a safety. 2 points and the ball will be given to the team that forced the safety.

**VIII. Coaches:**

1. On field Coaching:
  - **6U** - Coaches are permitted on the field to assist in calling plays, and setting players.
  - **8U** - Coaches are permitted on the field to assist in calling plays, and setting players.
  - **10U** - Coaches are permitted on the field to assist in calling plays, and setting players for the first three week of games. The remaining of the season only the offensive coach will be allowed on the field to assist.
  - **12U** - Coaches are permitted on the field to assist in calling plays, and setting players for the first three week of games. The remaining of the season only the offensive coach will be allowed on the field to assist.
2. The offensive coach must stand 5 yards behind the quarterback
3. The defensive coach must stand 15 yards behind their last defensive player
4. Coaches that remain on the sideline must stay in their "bench" area.
5. At any time during the season rules regarding coaches on the field may be adjusted or changed if issues arise

**IX. Spotting The Ball:**

1. The ball is spotted where the player's feet are when the flag is pulled.
2. The ball and the runner's foot/feet need to cross the goal line for an official score.

**X. Live Ball/Dead Ball:**

1. The ball is live at the snap and remains live until the officials whistle blows the ball dead
2. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball
3. The play is ruled dead when:
  - The ball hits the ground
  - The ball carriers flag is pulled
  - The ball carrier steps out of bounds
  - The ball carriers flags fall off
  - A touchdown, PAT, or safety is scored
  - The ball carriers knee or arm hits the ground
  - The receiver catches the ball while in possessions of 1 or no flags
  - The 7 second pass clock expires
4. There are no fumbles, the ball will be spotted where the ball hits the ground
5. A ball that hits the ground on a snap will be blown dead and spotted at that spot

**XI. Formations:**

1. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center)
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage
3. All players must become "set" before the ball is snapped, with the exception of the single player in motion.
4. The center must snap the ball with a rapid, continuous and fluid motion. They can snap the ball between his/her legs or to the side to a player in the backfield. The ball must completely leave the centers hands

## **XII. Running:**

1. The quarterback cannot run the ball unless they are rushed by the defense. They can run behind the LOS but they cannot gain yardage. (quarterback is the player who receives the snap)
2. Handoffs may be made in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offensive can use multiple handoffs.
3. **Pitches or laterals are permitted behind the line of scrimmage only.**
  - a. A pitch or lateral is an under hand throwing motion.
  - b. Backward passes are not allowed.
4. Runners cannot leave their feet to dive or hurdle.
5. Runners leaving their feet on a spin move or horizontal jump cut is allowed.
6. Center sneak plays aren't allowed
7. No run Zones are located 5 yard before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield. Once inside this zone, all plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff. While in the no run zone the defense will not be allowed to blitz/rush. **6U Exception:** There will not be any No Run Zones on the 6U field.

## **XIII. Passing:**

1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage
2. All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage, whether received or not are illegal forward passes
3. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack but the ball must go beyond the line of scrimmage
4. The quarterback has a 7 second "pass clock". If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds the play will be dead, the down will be lost and the ball will be returned to the line of scrimmage.
5. If the quarterback is in the end zone at the end of the 7 second clock the ball will be returned to the line of scrimmage

## **XIV. Receiving:**

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage)
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage
3. A player must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch

## **XV. Blocking:**

1. There is no blocking or contact permitted at any time during the game
2. The offense cannot impede the rusher in anyway. The defensive rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback regardless of where they lineup prior to the snap.
3. If an offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher's responsibility to go around the offensive players and to avoid contact.

## **XVI. Rushing, Defense & Interceptions:**

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. A marker will be on the field to designate this area. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the referee on every play. Any number of players can rush the quarterback
2. Players who do not rush can defend on the line of scrimmage, these players cannot cross the line of scrimmage
3. While in the no run zone the defense will not be allowed to blitz/rush.
4. **Once the ball is handed off the 7 yard rule is no longer in effect and ALL defenders can go behind the line of scrimmage**
5. **ALL Interceptions can be returned**

## **XVII. Flag Pulling:**

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier has possession of the ball
2. A defensive player cannot pull the flags off a player who does not have the ball
3. Defenders cannot hold, or run through the ball carrier in order to pull their flag
4. Defenders cannot "wrap up" a player to pull their flag, defender must make a play on the flag and not the actual player
5. Defenders who attempt to pull a flag and grab the player's jersey or shorts instead of the flag must release the jersey or shorts and reattempt to pull the flag. A holding penalty will be called on a defender who grabs a jersey or shorts and does not release them
6. If the flags fall off of a player inadvertently then the player will be ruled down where the flags land on the ground
7. Flag guarding is not permitted. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defenders access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder to cover up the flags or intentionally covering the flags with their jersey or ball

**XVIII. Penalties:**

1. The referees will call all penalties
2. Flag football is no-contact, ALL players offensive and defense should always avoid contact and play the ball(receiving) or the flag
3. Penalties that occur within the 5 yard line will be assessed half the distance to the goal
4. On delay of game penalties when the clock stops, the clock will start again when the offensive team snaps the ball

**Defensive Penalties:**

Pass Interference	Spot Foul and automatic first down
Offside	(+5 yards from LOS & automatic first down)
Illegal Contact (holding, bump and run, blocking, etc.)	(+5 yards from LOS & automatic first down)
Illegal Flag Pull (before receiver has the ball)	(+5 yards from LOS & automatic first down)
Illegal Rushing (start rush from inside the 7 yard marker)	(+5 yards from LOS & automatic first down)
Unnecessary Roughness	(+10 yards from LOS & automatic first down)
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	(+10 yards from LOS & automatic first down)

**Offensive Penalties:**

Flag Guarding	Spot Foul and -10 yards & loss of down
Illegal Motion (more than 1 person moving)	(-5 yards from LOS & loss of down)
False Start	(-5 yards from LOS & loss of down)
Illegal Forward Pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage)	(-5 yards from LOS & loss of down)
Impeding the Rusher (picks, blocking, pushing)	(-5 yards from LOS & loss of down)
Delay of Game-clock will stop	(-5 yards from LOS & loss of down)
Pass Interference	(-5 yards from LOS & loss of down)
Offensive player leaving their feet to avoid a defender	(-5 yards from LOS & loss of down)
Illegal Procedure	(-5 yards from LOS & loss of down)
Unnecessary Roughness	-10 yards from LOS & loss of down
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	-10 yards from LOS & loss of down

**XIX. Overtime:**

1. No overtime will be played during the regular season
2. Teams will use a coin flip to determine possession in overtime, the winner of the flip can choose to be on offense or defense. Home team will call the toss.
3. Each team will have a possession during the overtime period
4. The offensive team will have one play to convert the try. They can elect to go from the 5 yard line for one (1) point or go from the 10 yard line for two (2) points.
5. If both teams are still tied after the first overtime then a second over time will follow, the team that ended the first overtime on offense will start the second overtime on offense.
6. These procedures will continue until a game winner is determined.
7. All regulation rules and penalties are in effect.
8. There are no timeouts in overtime.

## XX. Standings

1. These tie breakers will be used to determine team standings:
  - Winning percentage
  - Head-to-head
  - Total points differential (max 28 points)
  - Total points against
  - Coin toss
2. In all forfeits, the score will be recorded as 7-0 in favor of the non-forfeiting team.

## XXI. Conduct/Sportsmanship Zero Tolerance Policy:

The City of The Colony has zero tolerance for unsportsmanlike conduct by any coach, player, or spectator before, during, or after a game. This includes but is not limited to: booing, shouting at the officials, or arguing any call. Expressing any negative behavior or comments, threats, or obscene gestures to players, coaches, or officials is also unacceptable.

1. Any player, coach, or spectator ejected from any league match will be suspended for a minimum of one (1) league match.
2. Players, coaches, and spectators who have been suspended must leave the complex and may not return until the completion of their suspension.
3. Each teams coach is held responsible for the conduct of their spectators and team participants.
4. No player, coach, or spectator shall interfere with the scorekeepers/officials. Any concerns regarding the scorekeepers/officials must be brought to the Athletics Staff onsite.
5. No fighting is allowed. First offense is a suspension for the rest of the season, second offense results in one year loss of eligibility in all league play or indefinite suspension if deemed severe.
6. Suspensions carry over from season to season.

## XXII. Miscellaneous:

1. Game time is forfeit time. A team must have 4 players in 8U, 10U, 12U present to begin a game. For 6U a team must have 3 players to begin the game.
2. No jewelry, headwear or other decorations may be worn during a game. Appropriate attire is determined by the referee.
3. Eligibility is determined by what age the participant was on 9.1.2024.

