

# YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL RULES (Revised 9/28/2021)

## PLAYERS AND OFFICIALS

1. Teams consist of 7 players, but a team must have at least 5 players present at scheduled game time.
2. Uniforms can't cover FLAGS or BELTS.
3. No "baggy " shorts or shorts the same color of flags can be worn.
4. All officials' decisions are final. Protests can only be made on player eligibility and Rule Interpretation, not on judgement calls.
5. **Any coach/player that is kicked out of the game for unsportsmanlike behavior is automatically suspended for the next played game. Additional games suspended may be added due to the severity of the offense. The League Director reserves the right to suspend an individual player or coach due to unsportsmanlike behavior.**

## PLAYING REGULATIONS

1. The game will consist of 2 twenty (20) minute half's. The clock will run continuous until the last 1 minute of each half, and then the clock will stop at normal times (High School Rules).
2. Each team will receive 3 time outs per half, and 1 per overtime. The tie breakers are: (1<sup>st</sup>) head to head competition, (2<sup>nd</sup>) points allowed in head to head competition, (3<sup>rd</sup>) points allowed for the entire season.
3. Regular season games can end in a tie. During the post season tournament, If the game ends in a tie, each team will be given 4 downs from the 20-yard line, if the game is still tied after the 1<sup>st</sup> overtime then the whole process is done again until we have a winner.
4. All players are eligible to receive a pass.
5. **All blocking must be shield blocking only with hands and arms at the side or behind the back. The blockers hands must remain below their waist and next to their body.**
6. **Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. Use of arms and hands to contact and defeat block is illegal. Defensive lineman must line-up 3 yards from the line of scrimmage and no part of their body can enter that 3 yards area before the football is snapped.**
7. **If a player loses his flag before or after the ball is caught/intercepted he is down where he catches the ball or where the flag falls off.**
8. If a defensive player pulls an offensive players flag before the ball arrives, then the defensive player has to pull the other flag for the runner/receiver to be down. If both flags are pulled before the ball arrives, then the defensive player has to "touch" the offensive player with one (1) hand.
9. All fumbles are down when the ball touches the ground.
10. If the passer's arm is in a forward motion when their flag is pulled the play will be allowed to continue.
11. Two (2) forward passes are allowed as long as both passes are thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.
12. "Sleeper Play": If all offensive players come to the huddle, they may line up at any distance from the sideline. If there is no huddle, the offensive man must line up at least 5 yards in-bounds. If there is a huddle then all players must be in the huddle.
13. "Center Sneak": The QB must have sole and clear possession of the ball before he can hand it to the center.
14. Interceptions can be returned out of the end zone, but if the ball carrier leaves the end zone and goes back into it and gets his flag pulled a safety will result.
15. All 4<sup>th</sup> down punts must be announced. A team will be granted a 30 yard punt.
16. The defense may not detain the ball carrier's body in any way or push the runner out of bounds or a TD will be awarded.
17. The defense can not strip the ball from an offensive player (**Exception: if the offensive player is holding the ball away from their body in an attempt to gain a first down or break the plane of the goal line**). If the ball hits the ground, it is a dead ball and possession is given back to the offensive player.

18. The offensive player cannot stiff-arm, flag guard, or intentionally make contact with the defender or a 15-yard penalty will be called. The ball carrier is allowed spinning to avoid flag being pulled, but **can not** dive or hurdle a defensive player unless the defensive player is on the ground. **Defensive Pass Interference** results in an automatic first down past the point of the infraction. The ball will be spotted at the next 1<sup>st</sup> down marker. Inside the 20 yard line = half the distance to the goal line, in the end zone= 1<sup>st</sup> down from the 1 yard line.
19. **Offensive pass interference** is a 15-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
20. Offensive team must have a minimum of 3 players on the line of scrimmage.
21. Offensive team will have 25 seconds from the time the ball is spotted to snap the ball
22. **Kick-Offs:** A coin toss will decide who gets first possession of the football. The football will be placed at the 20-yard line. The team that wins the coin toss has the option to defer possession to the second half.
23. Extra Point: 1 point try (Kick or regular play) ball spotted at 3 yard line and 2 point try- ball spotted at 5 yard line
24. Extra Point and Field Goal: Football must be placed on the ground to be legally kicked. All kicks are dead-ball situations, but the offensive and defensive players must remain on their side of the line of scrimmage until the football is kicked. A two (2) point try can be intercepted and returned for 2 points and a one (1) point try can be intercepted and returned for 1 point.
25. Line of Scrimmage: **A) Bull Rush** (10 yards from the spot of foul and replay of down), **B) Elbows up** (10 yards from the spot of foul and replay of down), **C) Tripping (knee)** (15 yards from spot of foul and replay down).
26. Holding: **A) By Defense:** On a receiver prior to ball in air (10 yards from previous spot and 1<sup>st</sup> down. **B) On a ball carrier:** 10 yards added to end of run and the down counts or 10 yards from previous spot and replay down. **C) By Offense (on a rusher):** 10 yards from spot of foul and replay down.
27. **Inadvertent Whistle:** The team in possession of the football will have the option to replay the down or take the result of the play
28. **For Player safety, If a receiver catches a pass and has possession of the football in mid air, but has not landed in the field of play, and is intentionally pushed out of bounds before landing in the field of play, pass interference will be called on the defensive player. If this occurs in the end zone, then a touch down will be awarded.**