



## League Rules and Regulations!



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***WE WANT TO THANK ALL COACHES, PLAYERS AND PARENTS FOR CHOOSING TO PLAY NFL FLAG FOOTBALL WITH US.***

## **Important Items of Concern:**

- 1- MOUTH GUARDS ARE A MUST AND PLAYERS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PLAY WITHOUT ONE.***
- 2- OUR REFEREES ARE 13–17-YEAR-OLD KIDS, THEY DO NOT NEED TO BE HARRASSED AND VERBALLY ABUSED. MISBEHAVIOR TO OUR REFEREES WILL NOT BE TOLARATED.***
- 3- OUR PLAYERS ARE KIDS! THEY ARE ALL HERE TO HAVE FUN AND TO PLAY FOOTBALL.***

# RULES

## **I. GAME**

1. At the start of each game, referees will come to the field that the teams are assigned to play on. They will then check in all players; they will check that flags come out of the sockets of the belt. They will check that the flags are placed on the players hips. They will also check for the player's mouthpiece.

(It is a mandatory requirement that **ALL PLAYERS MUST HAVE A MOUTHPIECE** to play. A player caught on the field without a mouthpiece will not be allowed to play until that player has obtained a mouthpiece.)

2. The referees will then go to midfield and call for the head coach and captains from each team for the coin toss to determine which team will start with the ball.

- a. The visiting team shall call either one or two for the coin toss.
- b. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense.
- c. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction.
- d. Teams may **NOT** choose to defer to the second half.

3. The first offensive team takes possession of the ball on their own 5-yard line and has (3) downs to cross mid-field. Once a team crosses mid-field they get (3) more downs to score a touchdown.

- a. Down markers are provided for each field. Home team is responsible to find a volunteer to work the down marker. If no one is available from the home team, then the visiting team is ok to step in, but we strongly encourage the home team to take on the responsibility.

4. If the offense fails to cross mid-field or score a touchdown, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts on their own 5-yard line.

- a. all possession changes (except interceptions) start on the offense 5-yard line. Interception can be run for a touchdown, or the offense of the intercepting team will take possession where the ball carriers flag is pulled.

5. Teams change direction of play after half time. Possession goes to the team that started the game on defense.

- a. Half time is 5 minutes.
- b. Half time may be cut short by league officials for weather reasons.

6. No Run Zone is 5-yards before the end zone. Teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must start with a pass play (forward, swing or backward passes are acceptable) No tosses or handoffs will be permitted.

- a. Each offensive squad approaches only one No-Run Zone on each drive.

7. The game consists of two 20-minute half's and a 5-minute half time. Each team receives 3-time outs per half.

8. *Offensive play clock is 60 seconds for age groups 5/6 and 40 seconds for all other age groups.*
  - a. *On the point after touchdown (PAT) the play clock will remain at 60 seconds for 5/6 and 40 seconds for all other age groups.*
  - b. *On all turnovers or change of possession, the opposing Offense will have 60 seconds to take the field and snap the ball. (Offense is free to snap the ball when the refs have the ball and cone set.)*

## **II. Coaches**

1. *Coaches are typically volunteer parents or family members helping the players learn and enjoy the game of football. Parents are encouraged to always support the coach.*
  - a. *Coaches are expected to adhere to NFL FLAG powered by USA Football philosophies, coaching guidelines and code of conduct as well as TC NFL YOUTH FLAG rules and guidelines.*
2. *Scheduling, Standings and Playoffs.*
  - a. *Schedules are randomly generated. If you have a conflict with the schedule, you may request to have your game rescheduled. However, it is not a guarantee.*
  - b. *If the request to reschedule the game is granted, a team can only move one game a season and must have submitted the request **at least three weeks in advance**.*
3. *Scores will be updated online within 24 hours after all games have been completed.*
  - a. *Margin of victory at the end of the game, even if you score 17 more than 30 points (47) your score will only reflect a 30-point margin of victory. \*\*\*Example team 1 scores 17 points, team 2 scores 60 points. The posted score would be 17 to 47.*
  - b. *Scores **DO NOT COUNT** toward playoff seeding.*
  - c. *Tie breakers will be decided by a coin flip, if more than two teams are tied the team names will be drawn from a hat. (Coaches are welcome to witness the decision).*
4. *Coaches-- there is a 15-play rule, meaning that each player must get at least 15 plays per game (including playoffs and championship games).*
  - a. *COMPLAINTS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE WILL RESULT IN POSSIBLE SUSPENSION OR FORFEITURE OF GAMES*
5. *Mercy rule: After one team is winning by 28 points or more at halftime, the losing team has the option to go to scrimmage mode. If accepted, the score at halftime becomes the final score.*
  - a. *scrimmage mode: 20 minute second half is played with no timeouts and no score kept.*
6. *Inadvertent whistles (The coach of the offensive team at the time has a choice to replay the down or take the ball where the whistle was blown).*
7. *Only children who are officially registered with the league are permitted to participate in games. Registration ensures that all players are covered by insurance, have completed necessary waivers, and are aware of league rules and policies.*
  - a. *If a non-registered child is found to be participating in a game, the child will be immediately removed from the field. The team involved will forfeit the game in which the*

infraction occurred, as well as the following game. If the coach is found to be in violation of this rule multiple times, they will be disqualified from the season, or other actions deemed appropriate will be taken.

### **III. Scoring**

1. Touchdown is worth 6 points
2. PAT (Point after touchdown): A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-pt conversion (from the 12-yard line).
  - a. 1 point is played from the 5-yard line, also point attempt is **PASS ONLY!**
  - b. 2 point is played from the 12-yard line, also 2-point attempt may be run or pass.
  - c. Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a time out. Decision cannot be changed after a penalty.
  - d. If the PAT is intercepted by the defense, they may run it back for **2-points.**
3. Safety: 2-points
  - a. A safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. They can be called down when their flag is pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds, or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. **Not the hand.**
  - b. If the snap of the ball goes out the back of the end zone it is also a safety,
  - c. If there is an offensive penalty in the end zone it is also a safety.
  - d. If a runner drops ball in end zone it is also a safety.
  - e. If a backwards pass is dropped in end zone it is also a safety.

### **IV. Live Ball/Dead Ball**

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and the line of scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball/foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. Regarding the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a "courtesy" neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
4. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarter back is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.
5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
6. Any official may whistle the play dead, play is ruled "dead" when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground.
  - b. The ball carriers' flag is pulled, or falls out on its own.
  - c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.

- d. *A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.*
- e. *The ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground, NOT Hand. (Exception if the ball carrier touches the ball to the ground for balance).*
- f. *The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flags.*
- g. *The 7-count pass clock expires.*
- h. *Inadvertent whistle.*

**\*\*NOTE:** *there are no fumbles; the ball is spotted where the ball carrier's front foot was at the time of the fumble.*

- 7. *In case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:*
  - a. *Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed. Or replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.*
- 8. *A team is allowed to use a time out to question an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct, the team will be charged a time out. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the time out will not be charged, and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call to give each team the full benefit of each call. If officials do not agree the call on the field stands.*

## **V. Running**

- 1. *The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the player's front foot.*
- 2. *The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball unless rushed. The quarterback does have the ability to scramble in the backfield but cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage unless the referee signals a rusher has lined up behind the rushing cone. The quarterback is the offensive player that receives the snap.*
  - a. *For the quarterback to be eligible to run with the ball after a hand-off the hand-off has to be visible to the officials that it has changed possession.*
- 3. *Direct hand-offs or pitch backs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Hand-offs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.*
  - a. *"Center sneak" play - the ball must completely leave the center's hands on the snap, and he/she must step backwards off the line of scrimmage to receive a direct handoff from the QB before advancing the ball. The ball cannot pass back between the center's legs. If the center does not step backwards off the line of scrimmage it will be considered an illegal rush (5-yard penalty from LOS and loss of down).*
- 4. *Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind past the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is passed forward, or crosses the line of scrimmage, it belongs to the receiver/ball carrier.*
- 5. *The player who takes the hand-off can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.*
- 6. *Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.*
- 7. *Runners may not leave their feet in an uncontrolled manner to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding. Hopping and controlled spinning are allowed. We are focusing on the safety of the participants.*



8. *Spinning is allowed, but players must remain in control. Jumping in the air in a forward motion to advance the ball, while attempting to avoid a flag pull, is not allowed. Lateral moves to the left or right are permitted. There is a difference between jumping forward and hopping. Hopping is a light motion, while jumping is longer and higher. This is at the referee's discretion.*
9. *Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.*
10. *No blocking "screening" is allowed at any time.*
11. *Offensive players must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball carrier. This may result in an escorting penalty.*
12. *Flag obstruction- All jersey's **MUST** be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding. Player jerseys that can be tucked into pants/shorts must be tucked in. If the jersey is not long enough to be tucked in, the NFL FLAG belt must go over the top of the jersey.*
13. *"No-Run Zones", located five yards before each end zone, are designed to avoid short-yardage power running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE.  
(Reminder: Each offensive squad approaches only One No-Run Zone in each drive.*

## **VI. Passing**

1. *All passing must be from behind the line of scrimmage. Laterals or backward passes are allowed but must be received at least one yard back from the position of the quarterback. A second pass by a receiving player is allowed but must be in forward direction across the line of scrimmage.*
  - a. *Two forward passes will not be allowed on the same play.*

*Penalty: Illegal forward pass, 5-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and loss of down.*
2. *Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.*
3. *The quarterback has a seven-count "PASS CLOCK". If a pass is not thrown within the seven-count, play is dead, the down is consumed, and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off the seven-count rule no longer is in effect.*
  - a. *If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the seven-count clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS). A seven-count violation is considered an incomplete pass.*
  - b. *If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the play is dead and treated like an incomplete pass.*

## **VII. 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 and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.*
3. *A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.*
4. *In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.*

5. *Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line, unless that interception was in the end zone and not advanced.*
6. *All interceptions are returnable for scoring opportunities.*
7. *Impeding the receiver (Illegal Contact): Receiver has the right to run a clean route free of contact. Contact, hooking, pulling of jersey or bumping the offensive receiver during the running of the receiver's route will not be allowed and will be considered impeding the receiver (illegal contact).*

*PENALTY: spot foul, 5-yard penalty, automatic 1st down.*

## 8. *Pass Interference*

*Defensive players are prohibited from making any contact with the receiver that significantly hinders their ability to catch the pass. Prohibited actions include, but are not limited to:*

- a. *Pushing, shoving, or striking the receiver.*
- b. *Grabbing or holding the receiver's jersey or clothing.*
- c. *Making deliberate physical contact with the receiver's body before the ball arrives.*

*Defensive players are also prohibited from stepping into the receiver's path, obstructing their route, or impeding their ability to reach the ball in a reasonable manner.*

*Additionally, if a defensive player has their hands in the air in front of the receiver and is not making a legitimate attempt to locate and play the ball (face guarding), this will be considered pass interference, even if there is no physical contact. Defensive players must make a reasonable effort to locate the ball and make a play on it when their hands are raised in the direction of the receiver.*

## **VIII. Rushing the Passer**

1. *All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.*
2. *Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.*
3. *A special marker or the referee will designate a Rush Line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.*
  - a. *A legal rush is:*
    - i. *Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.*
    - ii. *A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.*
    - iii. *If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7-yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.*
    - iv. *If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage, they may legally rush the quarterback.*
  - b. *A penalty may be called if:*
    - i. *The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass - Illegal Rush (5-yard penalty from LOS and first down).*



- ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped offside (5-yard penalty from LOS and first down).
  - iii. Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off - Illegal Rush (5-yard penalty from LOS and first down).
- c. Special circumstances:
  - i. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback, seven second clock in effect.
  - ii. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play, however, if they do send a rusher, the rusher must verify with the official that they are in the correct position. Rushers **MUST** be behind the rushing cone prior to the quarterback settling behind the center. **There is no hopping back and forth at the cone.** \*\* Hopping back and forth will result in an illegal rush (5-yard penalty from LOS and first down).
  - iii. If the rusher leaves the 7-yard line before the snap, he/she may immediately drop back to act as defender with no offside penalty enforced.
- 4. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, **NO** contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then contacting the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty. The ball, while still in the hand of the QB, is considered part of the player.
- 5. **THE OFFENSE CANNOT IMPEDE THE RUSHER IN ANY WAY.** The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. If the "path or line" is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense's responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher's path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher's responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.
- 6. A sack occurs if the quarterback's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterback's feet are when the flag is pulled.
  - a. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

(Note: if any defense player or players are behind the rushing cone, even with the intent of not rushing, the Quarterback is free to run the ball if the player decides to do so.)

## **IX. Flag Pulling**

- 1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- 2. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags, includes pushing of the hips to force out of bounds.
- 3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
- 4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends.
- 5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who is not in possession of the ball.
- 6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, Dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the football or jersey. It is also flag guarding if the player's flags are not put on properly. Flags must be pointed

*outward of the body and the belt cannot be loose enough to spin easily. No excess belt is allowed, it must be cut to a reasonable length as to not have an extra tail hanging down.*

- a. If the flag belt spins during an attempt to pull a flag, the runner will be ruled down.*
- 7. Holding of the flag belt, Jersey, or shorts to pull the offensive players flag will result in a defensive holding penalty. Penalty--spot foul--5-yard penalty, automatic first down.*
- 8. Player's jerseys that can be tucked into pants/shorts must be tucked in. If the jersey is not long enough to be tucked in the NFL FLAG belt must go over the top of the jersey.*

## **X. Formations**

- 1. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and a maximum of up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.*
  - a. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.*
  - b. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage*
- 2. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.*
- 3. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.*
- 4. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.*
- 5. No plays are allowed to be designed that demonstrate examples of un-sportsman-like conduct, specifically plays that include fake fighting among teammates. \**

## **XI. Timing and Overtime**

- 1. Each team is allowed a minimum of one possession. The only exception is if the first offense team throws an interception that is returned for a touchdown. In this case the game ends with the defensive score.*
- 2. First overtime possession choice goes to the winner of the regulation coin toss. The loser of the first coin toss chooses the direction of play.*
- 3. All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.*
- 4. There is no clock or timeouts in overtime period.*
- 5. To start the overtime period, the offense will take possession of the ball on the 12-yard line. They will have three offensive possessions to score. If the offense scores, an extra point (1 or 2 pt.) conversion must be played. If the offense fails to score after three possessions, (barring defensive penalties) the opposing team will take possession of the ball on the same 12-yard line as the offense and advance in the same direction.*
- 6. Multiple OT periods: Multiple OT periods occur when both offensive possessions fail to score in the first Over Time Period. First possession of the second overtime will be the loser of the original regulation coin toss. The ball will be placed on the 5-yard line.*
- 7. The second overtime period will be considered the start of sudden death. The first team to score in the second or consecutive periods will be declared the winner.*

## **XII. Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

1. *If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, shoving or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. **No appeals will be considered. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!***
2. *Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player/players/coach/parent will be ejected from the game.*
3. *Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.*
4. *Ball carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.*
5. *Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.*
6. *Excessive celebrations and/or spiking the ball are not permitted and will result in penalties.*
7. *Flags should be dropped or handed back. They should never be thrown at or away from the ball carrier. They should never be spiked to the ground in an aggressive manner.*
8. *Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship, as well:*
  - a. *Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.*
  - b. *Keep comments clean and profanity free.*
  - c. *Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.*
9. *Fans are required to keep fields safe and kid friendly:*
  - a. *Keep the sidelines safe from coolers, chairs, tents and other children.*
  - b. *Spectators should stay off the fields while teams are playing \*\**
  - c. *Sit on the right team's side to avoid conflict. Home teams are always on the East side and Away teams are always on the West side.*

## **XIII. Eligibility**

1. *All players' Legal guardians must agree to the online waiver form at **NFLFLAG.COM** for their specific league before participating.*
2. *The league may also require a birth certificate for age verification.*

## **XIV. Equipment**

1. *The league provides each player with an official NFL FLAG jersey and an NFL FLAG belt. (NFL FLAG jersey and belt must be worn during play). Only the official NFL FLAG belts provided by the league are permitted for gameplay. Belts/Flags must be a contrasting color from the player's shorts or pants to ensure visibility and fairness. Belts/Flags that are the same or similar color as the player's bottoms are not allowed.*
2. *Players **must wear** shoes. Football cleats are encouraged. (Cleats with exposed metal or metal studs are **NOT ALLOWED** and must be removed.)*

3. *Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads. Braces with exposed metal are **NOT ALLOWED**.*
4. *Players must remove all watches, and earrings and any other jewelry that the referees deem hazardous to safety.*
5. *Player's jerseys that can be tucked into pants/shorts must be tucked in. If the jersey is not long enough to be tucked in the NFL FLAG belt must go over top of jersey.*
6. *Athletic warm-ups Pants/Shorts are allowed. NO jeans are permitted.*
7. *A player who has a cast may still play with a 1" padding around it and it must be inspected by league officials. Full arm cast will not be permitted.*

### **Again, a mouthpiece must be worn to play!!**

## **XV. Fields**

1. *The field dimensions are 30 yards by 70 yards with two 10-yard end zones, and a mid-field line-to-gain. No-Run zones precede each line-to-gain by 5-yards. However, field size may vary based on field availability for each league.*
2. *No-Run Zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays, while in the No-Run Zone.*
3. *Home team is on the East side of the field, Visitor/Away teams are on the West side of the field. We encourage parents /spectators to sit on the correct sideline to eliminate conflict.*
  - a. *Parents/spectators will be asked to move to the correct sideline with few exceptions.*
4. *Weather: All games will proceed at their scheduled time regardless of wind, rain or snow. Games will be delayed or suspended due to lightning strikes within a 5-mile radius of the playing fields. Weather delays are to be determined on the weather conditions at the field. Teams are required to keep in contact with league officials during suspended time to determine when play will resume.*

## **XVI. Rosters**

1. *The home team holds the privilege of selecting which side of their jersey they will wear for each game. This decision must be made with consideration of the opposing team's colors to ensure a clear distinction between both teams on the field. The home team will sit on the East side of the fields.*
2. *Visitor teams will wear a side of their jersey that is not similar in color to the home team's selected jersey. This rule is in place to prevent any confusion and to maintain clear visibility and differentiation between the teams for players, officials, and spectators. They will sit on the West side of the fields.*
3. *Teams must consist of at least 5 players; the league tries to make all teams with 10 players. Depending on participation some teams may end up with 12 players.*
4. *There is a maximum of 5 players per team on the field at a time. If a team only has 4 players available, they may still play, however the other team is not required to go down to 4 players.*
5. *Only children who are officially registered with the league are permitted to participate in games. Registration ensures that all players are covered by insurance, have completed necessary waivers, and are aware of league rules and policies.*
  - a. *If a non-registered child is found to be participating in a game, the child will be immediately removed from the field. The team involved will forfeit the game in which the*

*infraction occurred, as well as the following game. If the coach is found to be in violation of this rule multiple times, they will be disqualified from the season, or other actions deemed appropriate will be taken.*

## **XVII. Penalties**

### ***i. General***

1. *The referee will call all penalties.*
2. *Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.*
3. *All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot fouls)*
4. *Only the head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question judgement calls.*
5. *Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.*
6. *Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.*
7. *Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal. Additional descriptions of penalties are on the ref sheet.*

## **II. Spot Fouls**

Defensive Pass Interference	Automatic First Down
Holding	+5 yards & Automatic First Down
Stripping	+10 yards & Automatic First Down
Defensive Unnecessary Roughness	+10 yards & Automatic First Down
Screening, Blocking or running with the Ball Carrier	-5 yards & Loss of Down
Charging	-10 yards & Loss of Down
Flag Guarding	-10 yards & Loss of Down
Offensive unnecessary Roughness	-10 yards & Loss of Down

## **III. Defensive Penalties**

Offside	+5 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
Illegal Rush (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
Illegal Flag Pull (before the receiver has the ball)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
Roughing the Passer	+10 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
Taunting	+10 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
Defensive Pass Interference	SPOT FOUL, Automatic First Down
Holding	SPOT FOUL +5 yards & Automatic First Down
Stripping	SPOT FOUL +10 yards & Automatic First Down
Defensive Unnecessary Roughness	SPOT FOUL +10 yards & Automatic First Down
Illegal Contact/ Impeding the receiver	SPOT FOUL +5 yards & Automatic First Down
Too Many Players on the Field	+5 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down

## **IV. Offensive Penalties**

Offside / False Start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
Illegal Forward Pass (Pass received behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass beyond the line of scrimmage)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
Offensive Pass Interference	-10 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
Illegal Motion (more than one person moving)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
Delay of Game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
Impeding the Rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
Screening, Blocking or Running with the Ball Carrier (Escorting)	SPOT FOUL, -5 yards & Loss of Down
Charging	SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of Down
Flag Guarding	SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of Down
Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of Down
Illegal Rush	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
Too Many Players on the Field	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down

## **V. Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

First Offense	Warning
Second Offense	15-yard penalty & Loss of Down/Auto First Down
Third Offense	Ejection, 1 game suspension or ref a game
Deliberate Aggressive Physical Behavior	Automatic ejection, 1 game suspension

**Inadvertent whistle**, the offense has two options:

1. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed.
2. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.



## ***XVIII. Terminology***

<b><i>BOUNDARY LINES</i></b>	the outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines, and back of the end zone lines.
<b><i>LINE OF SCRIMMAGE</i></b>	(LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.
<b><i>LINE-TO-GAIN</i></b>	the line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
<b><i>RUSH LINE</i></b>	an imaginary line running across the width of the field seven yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.
<b><i>OFFENSE</i></b>	the squad with possession of the ball.
<b><i>DEFENSE</i></b>	the squad opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.
<b><i>PASSER</i></b>	the offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.
<b><i>RUSHER</i></b>	the defensive player assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him/her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or by blocking the pass.
<b><i>DOWN (1-2-3)</i></b>	the offensive squad has three attempts or (downs) to advance the ball. They must cross the line to gain to get another set of downs or to score.
<b><i>LIVE BALL</i></b>	the period that the play is in action. Generally used regarding penalties, live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
<b><i>DEAD BALL</i></b>	the period immediately before or after a play.
<b><i>WHISTLE</i></b>	sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for a timeout, halftime, or the end of the game.
<b><i>INADVERTENT WHISTLE CHARGING</i></b>	officials whistle that is performed in error.
<b><i>FLAG GUARDING</i></b>	the movement of the ball carrier directly at the defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head, making contact with the defender with a shoulder, forearm, or the chest.
<b><i>SHOVEL PASS</i></b>	an act by the ball carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball carriers flags by stiff arm, lowering elbow or head, or by blocking access to the runners' flags with hand or arm.
<b><i>LATERAL UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT</i></b>	a legal pass attempted beyond the line of scrimmage by throwing the ball underhand or pushing it towards a receiver in a shot-put type manner.
<b><i>TACKLE</i></b>	a backwards or sideways toss of the ball by the ball carrier.
<b><i>ESCORTING</i></b>	a rude, confrontational, or offensive behavior or body
	When a defensive player makes contact with an offensive player, forcing him/her to go to the ground.
	When an offensive player runs with the ball carrier that creates a natural screen or block of the pursuing defenders.

## **5-6 Year old division rules**

1. *This is a learning development division. Therefore, score will not be kept on the field.*
2. *There is no rushing the QB.*
3. *There is **No 5-yard no run zone** players may run the ball wherever the team is at on the field.*
4. *Referees will throw penalty flags for learning purpose (without actual penalty) unless penalty continues.*
  - a. *The following penalties will be enforced:*
    - i. *flag guarding*
    - ii. *blocking/escorting*
    - iii. *offsides*
    - iv. *illegal rush*
5. *Coaches may be on the field for huddles but must remain 5 yards behind the players when the play starts. Coaches must also remain still while the play is going on.*
6. *Down markers are **NOT** required.*
7. *60 second play clock.*
8. *There will be two referees on the field, with one in training.*
9. *There are no playoffs (8 game spring season) (8 game fall season).*

## **7-8 Year old division rules**

1. *Coaches may be on the field for huddles but must remain 5 yards behind the players when the play starts. Coaches must also remain still while the play is going on.*

*(Note: There will be referees in training in this age group as well.)*