

# **YOUTH NFL FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

## **2011**



# **DOUGLAS COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION**

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**Youth NFL Flag Football League**  
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**YOUTH NFL FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES:**

All flag football games will be governed by NFL Flag football rules except as specified herein. All rules, changes, or exceptions to rules are subject to the Recreation Coordinator final decision. The Recreation Coordinator will retain final decision in all matters.

**I. PREGAME AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

- A. All players must be registered in the NFL FLAG Football program before participating in any league activities. This includes the completion of the DCPR registration form; consent to release waiver, parent's code of conduct, and the NFL Registration form.
- B. Participants must be between the ages of five (5) and fourteen (14) in order to participate in league play. The age bracket in which a player participates should be determined by the player's age as of September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.
- C. The league will be divided into four (4): Division 1 (coed, ages 5-6), Division 2 (coed, ages 7-8), Division 3 (coed, ages 9-11) and Division 4 (coed, ages 12-14).
- D. All players receive a reversible NFL FLAG jersey, mouthpiece, and an award.
- E. All teams will receive one ball bag that will include three (3) footballs for practice, two (2) footballs for game use, 10 mouthpieces and 10 flag belts with flags for each player.
- F. All ball bags with footballs and flag belts with flags must be returned to DCPR staff on the last day of games and include the league & player evaluation sheets before receiving your trophies.
- G. Teams are composed of a maximum of ten (10) players. Five (5) players per team on the field at once.
- H. The Recreation Coordinator may add or move players to teams as necessary.
- I. The coaches will determine practice times. Practice will not be more than twice a week or a total of 3 hours in one week.
- J. The following areas will not be allowed for practice:  
Lampe Park, Aspen Park, Douglas High School, Carson Valley Middle School, Gardnerville Elementary School, Stodick Park, Johnson Lane Park, Pau-Wa-Lu Middle School.
- K. Teams may use any open fields that are not being used by other leagues (i.e., Pop Warner, AYSO). If another team has reserved any facility, your team may have to vacate the site. The following sites may be available: Pinion Hills Elementary, Scarselli Elementary, Heritage Park, Westwood Park, Minden Elementary, Jacks Valley Elementary, Gardner Park, James Lee Park, DCSD Office, and Carson Valley Christian Center.
- L. Parents, families, and friends must sit on the opposite side of the field as the players and coaches during the game. Coaches are responsible for their fans. After a warning an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty may be assessed against the offending team coach. One coach in Division 1 will be allowed to coach on the field. Coaches in Division 2 will be allowed to coach on the field the first 4 games of the season, after that they will coach from the sideline. Division 3 & 4 Coaches must coach from the sidelines.
- M. The playing field is 30 yards wide and 70 yards long and is divided into two (2) 25-yard zones. End zones are 10 yards deep. Players not participating must remain 3 yards off the field at all times.

**II. Attire**

- A. No Metal cleats. Player will be sent off to change shoes. No bare feet or open toed shoes allowed. Turf or multi nipped shoes are preferred, rubber or plastic soled cleats are allowed. Inspections will be made.
- B. All Jewelry, necklaces, earrings, bracelets and wrist bands (including live strong bands), is prohibited.
- C. All players will wear a protective mouthpiece; **NO EXCEPTIONS**
- D. All players will wear their official NFL FLAG jersey during play. Modifications to any jersey will not be allowed. They must be tucked in the pants not the flag belt. The belt fastening portion of the belt

must be secured so it does not hang down or appear to be a flag. If the jersey is out the player is down upon the first reach for a flag.

- E. Players are responsible for their jersey and mouthpiece and flags.
- F. For safety concerns, players are prohibited from wearing pants/shorts with pockets. A player who shows up with trousers with pockets will have to have the coach tape the pockets closed. If this becomes a safety or fairness issue, the player may be sent off and the play may be recalled.
- G. All headwear except ski caps, when it is cold, is illegal. No metal in the hair.

### III. Game Time

- A. A coin toss will determine first possession. The team losing the toss will decide which end to defend in the first half.
- B. Game length is two (2) twenty minute running time halves. If the score is tied at the end of regulation, it remains a tie. There will be no overtime period.
- C. Each team will be allowed two (2) timeouts per half. Clock Stops. Referees will attempt to give an approximate 2 minute warning. Time outs will be one (1) minute in duration. There may be an official timeout to assist injured players at the referee's discretion. No parents or coaches will enter the field until waved on by an official. If a parent or coach enters the field to assist a player, that player will go to the sideline and a substitute will be required to replace the injured player.
- D. There will be a 5-minute half time.
- E. The offensive team will take possession at their 5-yard line and has three (3) plays to cross the midfield line. If they fail to cross the midfield line in three (3) plays, possession changes and the new offensive team will take over on their own 5-yard line.
- F. If the offensive team crosses the midfield line, they have three (3) plays to score a touchdown. If they fail to score in three (3) plays, possession changes and the new offensive team will take over on their own 5-yard line.
- G. The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play. There will be no foreword hand offs to the center. If he takes the ball on a hand off, it must be from behind the quarterback.
- H. No trick plays allowed. Players must be in the huddle or go to the center of the field before the snap.

### IV. During the game

- A. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- B. Prior to the start of the second half, teams will change side and possession will go to the team that started the game on defense.
- C. Each time the ball is spotted, the offense will have 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one (1) warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
- D. The appropriate league ball must be used: D1 & 2 (Blue NFLFlag Ball), D3 & 4 (Brown NFLFlag Ball).

### V. Scoring

- A. Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra Points: 1 point (from the 5-yard line, the offense must pass)  
2 points (from the 12-yard line, the offense can run or pass)
- Safety: 2 points (when the ball carrier's flag is pulled in the end zone, or the ball is dropped in the end zone)

### VI. Running

- A. **ABSOLUTELY NO BLOCKING IS ALLOWED.** Non ball carriers must stand still if a defender attempts to pull a flag of a nearby teammate.
- B. The quarterback cannot run with the ball on the direct snap from center.
- C. Direct hand offs and laterals behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. There is no limit to them as long as they are behind the line of scrimmage.
- D. "No-running zones," located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power runner situations.
- E. A player who takes a handoff from behind the line of scrimmage will be allowed to throw the ball.

- F. Once the ball has been handed off or a fake hand off, all defensive players are eligible to rush in an attempt to pull the flag of the person with the ball.
- G. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no jumping or diving).
- H. The ball is spotted from where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

## **VII. Receiving**

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

## **VIII. Passing**

- A. All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage. No screen passes.
- B. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- C. The quarterback has a seven (7) second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead and will result in loss of down. No yardage will be penalized. Once the ball is handed off, the seven (7) second rule no longer is in effect.
- D. Players will be allowed to return interceptions. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point the interceptor is down (flag pulled). Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.

## **IX. Dead Balls**

- A. Substitutions may be made at any dead ball.
- B. Play is ruled "dead" when:
  1. Ball carrier's flag if pulled
  2. Ball carrier steps out of bounds
  3. Touchdown or safety is scored
  4. Ball carrier's knee hits the ground
  5. Ball carrier's flag falls to the ground
  6. Ball hits the ground.

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

## **X. Rushing the Quarterback**

- A. All players who rush the quarterback must be a minimum of seven (7) 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 at the line of scrimmage.
- B. Once the ball is handed off or a hand off is faked, the seven (7) yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven (7) yards from the line of scrimmage.

## **XI. Sportsmanship/Roughing**

- A. If a referee or DCPR staff member witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, spiking the football, hard blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, the referee will assess a penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct and the player may be ejected from the game.
- B. If a player, coach, or spectator is ejected from a game, they must leave the park area. DCPR will not tolerate irate parents or spectators; they will be directed to leave if a referee or staff member believes their conduct is unsportsmanlike.
- C. Any coaches, players, or spectators ejected from a game will receive an automatic one game suspension. Coaches, parents, and spectators must meet with a Conduct Committee before returning.
- D. Coaches are responsible for the actions of their players and fans. The referee may ask the coach to address unsportsmanlike conduct by their players, parents and spectators.

- E. Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, all players, coaches, parents, or spectators may be ejected from the game.

## **XII. Bleeding and exposed blood**

- A. Any players with a bleeding wound and/or blood stained clothing must leave the game until all bleeding is stopped, all wounds properly covered, and all blood and blood stained clothing is removed.

## **XIII. Participation Rule**

- A. All players must play at least half of the game. Players will not play according to physical ability. The purpose of this league is to teach children the game of football, and to let them have fun.
- B. Regardless of how many practices each player has attended, rule “A” still applies.
- C. Players with a foreign object such as a cast or brace may be declared ineligible to play depending on the severity of the injury. Any object or piece of equipment that could cause harm to the player or players on either team will be declared ineligible to play. All incidents will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- D. A doctor’s clearance will be required for players with serious injuries. Without doctor clearance a player may be deemed ineligible.

## **XIV. Penalties**

- A. Defensive Penalties – All defensive penalties are assessed with giving the offense an automatic first down plus yardage (except #1 which will be 5 yards only, not a first down)
  - 1. Offside/Encroachment: 5 yards
  - 2. Defensive Interference: 10 yards
  - 3. Illegal Contact (holding, blocking, etc): 10 yards
  - 4. Illegal Flag Pull (before receiver has ball): 10 yards
  - 5. Illegal Rushing (rushing from inside 7 yards): 10 yards
  - 6. Unsportsmanlike Conduct: 15 yards (+ possible ejection)
- B. Offensive Penalties – All offensive penalties result in a loss of down minus yardage (except #1 which will be 5 yards but no loss of down.)
  - 1. Illegal Motion/False Start: 5 yards
  - 2. Illegal Forward Pass (pass receive behind LOS): 5 yards
  - 3. Diving/Jumping (to avoid flag pull): 5 yards
  - 4. Offensive Interference: 10 yards
  - 5. Flag Guarding: (Point of Emphasis) 10 yards**
  - 6. Delay of Game: 10 yards
  - 7. Illegal Contact (holding, blocking, etc): 10 yards
  - 8. Trick Play 10 yards
  - 9. Unsportsmanlike Conduct: 15 yards (+ possible ejection)
- C. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage unless the penalty is declined.
- D. Referees determine incidental contact that may results from normal run of play.
- E. Only team coaches may ask for rule clarification and interpretation. Judgment calls shall not be questioned.
- F. In the event of an inadvertent whistle, the play is ruled dead and the ball will be spotted where the ball carrier has the ball. After a completed pass (defensive or offensive), the ball is dead and spotted at the point of the reception.
- G. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty unless offense declines or is ahead.

**Douglas County Parks & Recreation reserves the right to make any modifications to the rules as they see fit for the betterment of the league and its participants.**