

Nash County Recreation & Senior Services



Youth Flag Football Rules

START OF GAME

A. Coaches and captains will meet at midfield, visiting team make the call of heads or tails

B. Options are:

- **Offense**
- **Defense (keep in mind you could end up playing defense for the start of both halves.)**
- **Defer to the second half (if opposing coach chooses defense, then you could end of playing defense at the start of the second half)**

I. Ages: 4-6, 7-9, 10-12 as of January 1, 2019

II. Roster: Roster will have a minimum of 7 players and a maximum of 10 players

III. Minimum Participation Requirements

- Every substitute must enter the game when:
 - i. 4-6 age group every 2nd down
 - ii. 7-9 age group every 3 minutes
 - iii. 10-12 age group every 5 minutes

IV. Each team will consist of a maximum of 7 players on the field with a minimum of 5 to start.

- Both teams will play the same number of players.
- Any offensive set will be permissible, providing that there are at least four (4) players on the line prior to the snap. If 5 v 5 there will be 3 players on the line.
- Any defense can be used and there are no limits to the amount of rushers on defense.

V. The offense will have 30 seconds to snap the ball after the officials have put the ball in play.

VI. All players, except the quarterback, are eligible to catch a forward pass. (No self-pass)

VII. The offensive team will have four (4) downs to make it across a “zone line” (which consists of the 20, 40, and 20-yard lines.

- After crossing the line, assuming there are no penalties against the offense, the team in control of the drive will be awarded a new set of downs.
- Three or four point stance is only permitted for the snapper.
- The offensive team is in charge of retrieving the football. Inside the 5yd line the if the QB is rushed, then he can run. Only inside of the 5yd line-if the QB is not rushed,

he has to pass. He will have 10 seconds to make a play, if a play is not made it will result in a loss of down.

VIII. The rectangular field for ages 4-12 will have dimensions as such: 240 feet (80 yards) by 120 feet (40 yards).

IX. Physical tackling, holding, stiff-arming and deliberate roughness will not be permitted at any time.

X. Two flags must be worn by each offensive and defensive player.

- Tackling is considered once a ball carrier's flag belt has been safely removed, without penalty, and the play is whistled dead.
- At no time can the ball carrier be restrained, held, or pushed.
- Should the ball carrier's knees strike the ground in the midst of a run, then the play is to be ruled dead.
- Furthermore, should a ball carrier's flag belt come off without being pulled, then the defense must touch the runner (one or two hand tag) to stop play.
- A ball carrier is not allowed to slap a defensive player's hands away. This is known as "flag guarding" and will result in a 10-yard penalty from the spot of the infraction.

GAME LENGTH

I. The game will be played in two (2) halves:

- 4-6-year-old 16-minute 6 v 6 (pee wee ball)
- 7-9-year-old 18-minute 7 v 7 (Jr. ball)
- 10-12-year-old 20 minute 7 v 7 (Jr. ball)

II. Prior to the start of the game, a coin toss will be conducted to see who has the ball first.

III. The clock will be stopped during the last two minutes of the 1st & 2nd half only for the following reasons:

- Penalty
- Official Time Out
- Team Time Out
- First Down (Clock starts immediately after referee marks the ball ready for play)
- Injury on the field
- Incomplete Legal or Illegal Forward Pass
- Player Runs out of bounds
- Safety or Touchdown
- Touchback
- Any new possession for a team
- Inadvertent whistle

IV. Halftime will consist of five minutes.

V. Each Team will be allowed (2) timeout, lasting 60 seconds, per half. Timeouts will not carry over to the next half.

BLOCKING

- No part of the body except the feet shall be in contact with the ground and the feet must remain on the ground for the duration of the block.
- Blocking will be by **SCREENING ONLY**. That is, a blocker must hinder a defender's movement through positioning rather than body contact.
- During a block, the body must remain upright with elbows and hands touching the body at the side or behind the back.
- While incidental contact may occur, blocking/pushing penalties will be called against the player who initiates contact.
- The defense may **not** use hands, arms, or legs as a wedge to gain an advantage over a blocker.

Scoring

A. Point values will be as follows:

-Touchdown:	6 points
- Safety:	2 points
- PAT from 3-yard line:	1 point
- PAT from 10-yard line:	2 points
- PAT from 15-yard line:	3 points

Conversion attempts

- **From the 3-yard line 1 point (MUST BE A PASS PLAY)**
- **From the 10-yard line 2 points (MUST BE A PASS PLAY)**
- **From the 15-yard line 3 points (RUN OR PASS PLAY)**

Touchdown verification

- The player scoring the touchdown must raise their arms so the nearest official can de-flag the player. If the player is not de-flagged with one pull, and the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed, the player is disqualified and it is a foul.
- Each possession by the offensive team, either to start a game, a half, or after a score, will be started on their own 10-yard line.

- The offensive team will be given four (4) downs to cross the 15-yard line for a first down.
- Ties will stand for regular season games.

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 can defend on the line of scrimmage.

2. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is 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 he/she crosses the line of scrimmage, he/she may legally rush the quarterback.

v.

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 yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
- ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5 yards from line of scrimmage 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 yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).

c. Special circumstances:

- i. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the ten second clock in effect.
- ii. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.

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 making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty-10 yd penalty.

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 flag is pulled.

a. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

Penalties

5 yd penalties:

- Improper equipment
- Encroachment
- Illegal substitution
- Illegal formation, motion, shift, snap, or procedure
- Helping the runner
- Delay of game
- False start
- Illegal position (offensive player not within 15 yards of the ball)
- Offensive player not within 15yards of the ball
- Player out of bounds when ball is snapped
- Intentionally throwing a backward pass or fumbling out of bounds (loss of downs)
- Illegal forward pass (loss of down) - Intentional grounding

10 YD PENALTIES

- Illegal participation
- Hurdling
- Flag Guarding
- Illegal removal of flag
- Illegal use of hands, arms, legs or body
- Strip or attempt to strip the ball
- Unsportsmanlike conduct

- Unnecessary contact of any nature
- Throw runner to the ground
- Drive or run into player (offensive or defensive)
- Hurdling or Jumping over any player
- Tackling the runner
- Roughing the passer, plus automatic first down
- Illegal offensive screen blocking
- Interlock interference
- Defensive use of the hands
- Obstructing or holding the runner
- Illegal participation
- Illegal flag belt removal
- Intentionally kicking, swinging an arm, hand or fist at opposing player (ejection)
- Intentionally contacting an official (ejection)
- Flagrant personal fouls such as spiking, kicking, throwing the ball, fighting etc.
- Defensive pass interference, plus automatic first down (if intentional or flagrant, the team may be penalized an additional 10 yards) Can't pull shirt and allow 1-2 steps for receiver.
- Illegally secured flag belt
- No penalty can move the ball over half the distance to the goal line

When the flag is cleanly taken from a ball carrier the down shall end and the ball is declared dead.

- A player who removes the flag from the ball carrier should immediately hold the flag above his head to assist the official in locating the spot where the capture occurred.
- No flag guarding such as slapping with the hand or stiff-arming.
- Under no circumstances, will any player be permitted to jump or hurdle another player (10-yard penalty).
- Fumbles will result in a dead ball

Both coaches(if needed) from each team will be allowed on the playing field during a game.

- Substitute players and assistant coaches must stay on the far sidelines in the center of the field between the 15-yard lines.
- Coaches are expected to closely observe their players at all times to be certain that none are overly fatigued.
- **Coaches are expected to set good examples of sportsmanship for their players. They should not tolerate poor conduct either in practices or games. No profanity or poor sportsmanship, from either players or coaches, will be tolerated.**

OVER TIME AGES 7-9 & 10-12 ONLY

- Each team will start 1st & Goal from the 10-yard line, the object is to score a touchdown. Teams will have 4 downs to score. If the score remains tied after 1st overtime, the game will continue until there is a winner.
- If the first team with the ball scores, the opponent will still have a chance to tie/win the game.
- Extra Points will be attempted after each score.
- If the defense intercepts a pass and returns it for a touchdown, they win the game. If they do not return the interception for the touchdown, the series is over, the ball will be placed at the 10-yard line and the original defense will now be on offense.
- Each Team will be allowed one (1) timeout, lasting 60 seconds Timeouts from the previous half or overtime will not carryover.

NO CENTER SNEAK FOR ANY AGE DIVISION

NOTE:

- ❖ Parents are not allowed on player side of the field, only coaches.
- ❖ Coaches/Players must stay between the 15-yard lines during the game.
- ❖ Coaches/Players are required to stay out of the way of the scorekeeper and referees along the sidelines. Any violation of this can result in a sideline infraction penalty. This is in the referee's judgment.
- ❖ NO METAL CLEATS ALLOWED
- ❖ Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. Trash talking includes talking to the officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators. If this occurs, the referee will give one warning. The second occurrence will result in the player or players being ejected from the game. **NCPR players/coaches/fans ejected will result in a two game suspension from games and practices.**

It is the responsibility of the coaches to call the office (252-462-2628) or Pie Burke (252-382-2804) as well as call members of their teams about cancellations due to inclement weather. You can also check our Facebook page for cancellation updates.

Inclement Weather

- A. Games shall be postponed when NCPR determines the field to be unplayable. **Managers** should contact the Recreation & Parks Department **AFTER** 12pm, and players should contact their managers.
- B. Under most conditions, a game will not be canceled. Managers need to make sure they have the official word from the Referee at the field or recreation staff that a game has been canceled. The original schedule will not be changed. Rained out games will be made up at the end of the regular season play, as much as possible.
- C. All suspended games will resume at the exact point where they were stopped.
- D. Nash County has developed the following inclement weather guidelines to ensure early response in various inclement weather situations. The National Weather Service issues weather advisories, watches and warnings to inform the public of inclement weather. Staff will stay attuned to these advisories and modify programs accordingly. Inclement weather judgment calls to cancel, suspend, postpone and resume are case by case depending on the forecast, radar development and visual observations of the sky. Should any of the following triggers occur causing undesirable and unsafe conditions; staff will alert the cancelation, suspension or postponement of an activity by using a whistle, air horn or megaphone. Participants, volunteers and other staff will be directed to a safe location until the threat or danger has passed and activities can resume.

Weather events include:

- Extreme Temperatures
- Severe thunderstorm watch or warning
- Lightning
- High winds
- A tornado sighting or warning

EXTREME TEMPERATURES

HEAT ADVISORIES

The heat index ranges issued by the National Weather Service range from little danger from heat; 65² - 81⁹ too dangerous to health; 106⁹ -115⁹ and above. High air temperatures and relative humidity distress individuals differently. Parents of children, adult participants and staff should take into consideration their own physical health conditions in making the decision to participate in an outdoor activity during a heat advisory. Proper hydration including the use of sunscreen, resting in shaded areas and wearing proper attire will be emphasized.

Action:

Staff will monitor heat index levels along with other weather related variables to determine if an activity needs to be postponed.

WINTER WEATHER

Program modification may take place when temperatures are forecasted to be or fall below 40 degrees. Outdoor activities may be cancelled or moved indoors. If temperatures fall below 40 degrees during an activity, staff will monitor the situation and act if necessary.

Action:

In the event of inclement weather involving snow and ice, program modification and a change to facility operating hours may take place. Any closings or adjustments to facility hours will be determined by the County Manager or Recreation Director. Decisions regarding cancellations or adjustments to programs can be made by Recreation staff.

SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS

Staff will monitor all available weather alerts issued by the National Weather Service, media and what is visibly seen and heard while outdoors. A severe thunderstorm can produce damaging winds up to 58mph with heavy down pours, and possible hail. There is a potential risk of flying debris, localized flooding and lightning strikes.

LIGHTNING AND THUNDER

Program modification will take place when lightning is detected within 10 miles of the facility by radar, visual monitoring or if thunder is heard. Staff will monitor all available weather alerts issued by the National Weather Service, media and that is seen and heard while outdoors. Lightning is an electric spark discharge in the atmosphere, occurring within a thundercloud, between clouds, or between a cloud and the ground. Lightning is very dangerous and is accompanied by tremendous flashes and roars of thunder. Outdoor activities will be suspended when lightning is detected within 10 miles of the facility. The location of lightning can be determined by the NWS, a storm monitoring device and by counting time between thunder and lightning strikes. Once lightning is seen, count the number of seconds until you hear thunder. Divide the number of seconds by 5. The answer is distance in miles of the lightning. Therefore, 10 miles would be 50 seconds.

Action:

If lightning is seen, or thunder heard, immediately suspend outdoor activities. Seek shelter* immediately and avoid trees, canopies, or tents. No activity will resume until there is no less than 30 minutes from the last strike or from the last sound of thunder is heard. Staff will keep track of time to ensure activities are not resumed until it is safe. Once the threat and danger has passed staff will announce that it is safe for the activity or event to resume.

People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electric charge. Therefore, it is safe to perform CPR, if needed. Ideally, injured persons are moved into a safe shelter. Lightning-strike victims who show signs of cardiac or respiratory arrest need emergency help.

WIND

Program modification will take place when strong gusts of wind are detected by radar. Staff will monitor all available weather alerts issued by the National Weather Service, media and take initiative to secure loose objects to prevent objects from becoming airborne projectiles.

Action:

In conditions of winds reaching 58 MPH or higher (according to NWS weather reports) outdoor activities are to be suspended. All participants and staff will be advised to immediately seek cover indoors or in an enclosed vehicle away from trees or areas where things can become airborne. Once the threat and danger has passed staff will inspect the area to ensure it is safe and announce that it is safe for the activity or event to resume.

TORNADO WARNINGS & WATCHES

A **Watch** means there is a potential for a Tornado or the Tornado exists and a **Warning** means it is happening or very likely to happen. Program modification will take place when a tornado warning is issued. Staff will monitor all available weather alerts issued by the National Weather Service and media. Immediate action will be taken to safe guard the health and well-being of all individuals in the immediate area.

Action:

When a tornado warning is issued within Nash County, outdoor activities will be suspended. Staff will advise all participants, staff and spectators to immediately move indoors and seek shelter*. Participants and staff will be directed to an area indoors away from windows and doors. Staff will continue to monitor the location of the tornado and prepare participants to respond. Large gym areas will be avoided at this time. Staff will instruct participants to get under a heavy piece of furniture or inside interior closets if the tornado threatens the immediate area. Participants and staff will assume the protective position by squatting low to the floor and covering their head. Children, visitors and participants may need guidance to prepare for a tornado. Never remove a person from a wheelchair. Have them bend over safely and put their hands over their head. Once the threat and danger has passed staff will check the health and well-being of all participants, contact EMS if there are injuries, access damage and guide participants to safety.

SHELTER

Shelter is defined as an ideal safe structure or fully enclosed building with plumbing, telephone and electrical service, which aid in grounding the structure. A fully enclosed automobile or school bus with all the windows rolled up is a reasonable shelter, although care must be taken to avoid contact with any metal inside the vehicle. Golf carts and convertible cars are not safe shelters. Dugouts and golf shelters are not safe shelters and are not grounded for the effects of lightening.

Avoid the use of shower facilities for shelter and do not use showers or plumbing during a thunderstorm; electrical current from lightening can enter the building through plumbing connections. It is also unsafe to stand near utilities or use a landline telephone during a thunderstorm because of the risk of the current traveling through the lines. Cellular and cordless telephones are safe.

If a suitable safe shelter is not available, it is best to avoid tall objects (trees, light poles, etc) that allow lightning an easy path to the ground. It is important to avoid being the tallest object. In an open field, people should crouch with their legs together, the weight on the balls of their feet, arms wrapped around their knees, and head down with their ears covered. The person should minimize contact with the ground and should not lie flat.

Updated 3/3/19