

2017 Rules & Regulations for Youth Flag Football

Revised 09/20/17

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Mission: WDCPRD Youth Flag Football is a program designed to promote the wholesome development of youth through this establishment with adult leaders. It also includes providing players with educational information and experience for the sport of flag football.

Purpose & Objective:

1. The purpose of the program is to give youngsters the opportunity to play the game of youth flag football in a safety-first environment. The District promotes balanced competition and the spirit of teamwork, good sportsmanship and fair play. Skill development, physical fitness and balanced development of your youth are values that are stressed in all youth sport activities.
2. Youth Flag Football provides a platform for establishing and building relationships and understanding between youngsters and adults. There are many examples to show that child/adult football experiences are positive life-shaping relationships.
3. The District does not sanction, (and in fact discourages) the exploitation of youngsters by over-zealous coaches, parents and other adults. The basic tenets of this program ensure the safe growth of youth flag football for youngsters by established and enforcing sound, standardized rules and regulations.
4. WDCPRD Youth Flag Football serves everyone interested in participating in youth flag football regardless of age, sex & weight. Specific divisions exist to serve various groups. The District offers three playing divisions for youngsters. They are the Pee Wee Division for grades K – 2nd, the JV Division for grades 3rd – 5th and the Varsity Division for grades 6th – 8th not to exceed age 14.

Introduction to the Rules

Playing Season: The playing season shall run during a time period of October through November of the current year.

Participant Registration – Consent to Play: Parents or legal guardians are required to fill out the registration and release of liability form declaring their child has permission to participate in said sport.

Physicals - Players **are not** required to have physical examinations before participating in District youth sport programs but it is highly recommended to do so. Your child should have an annual exam anyways, just mention to your child's physician all the activities your child is or may be participating in for the year.

Scholastic Eligibility: All players **should** be passing their school work, but the District does not police grades. Only the parent will determine whether or not the child should continue to play if grades are below average.

Falsifying age, grade (year in school) or birth information to make a player eligible for a lower or higher division is grounds for forfeiture of all games in which they have participated and suspension of the adult(s) knowledgeable of the falsification.

Player Cuts/Release of Player:

Cutting of players is not permitted; however, there are certain circumstances that may arise in which a player may be released from a team due to injury or discipline issues

A player will not be permitted to play if:

1. A player's parent has not filled out the required form.
2. A player shows no interest in the sport, is disruptive to other players and the instructions of the coaching staff, and/or becomes a discipline problem.
3. A player does not show up for practices. Participants must have a valid excuse from the parents or physician to miss practices.

Dropping and Adding Players:

1. The league may drop and add players up until the opening season scrimmages. After that, the rosters will be final for the remainder of the season.
2. Once the rosters are full, no player may be released/dropped to make room for additional players, experienced or not.
3. If a player suffers a season-ending injury or a player is released due to discipline issues and the team does not have enough players on their team to play the game that player may be replaced on the roster by a player who signed up late and was placed on a waiting list with the District, not hand picked or recruited by the coach.

Practices:

1. Practices can be held on a daily basis, but should not exceed 10 hours a week, 2 hours in one day.
2. All players, regardless of when they join the team, must have at least four (4) hours of practice with conditioning before they are allowed to participate in their first game.
3. At least one coach (who has completed a coaching packet & file it with the recreation district) must be present during every practice.
4. It is recommended at least one person with current First Aid / CPR certification be present at all practices. This can be a coach or parent.

Coaches:

1. All coaches must be approved by the District. Coaches must reapply for the coaching positions annually.
2. Head coaches must be at least 21 years of age. The head coach must have general knowledge of the game of football. Their coaching staff (assistant coaches) will be under his or her direction and should be 18 years of age or older if left in charge of a practice while head coach is gone.
3. Assistant coaches must be at least 18 years of age. They must have general knowledge of the game of football.

4. Head coaches are in charge of their players. They are responsible for their own actions, their assistants' actions, the actions of their players & parents.

"What makes a good coach? Complete dedication." – George Halas

"Organization is a habit" – George Allen

THE GAME

Rosters: Rosters shall not have a cap on the number of players, but it is recommended there be a maximum of 18 players.

Minimum Play Requirements (MPR)

1. All players will play in each game
2. All players must play a minimum of half a game.
3. Kick-off's, extra point tries or free kicks do not count as plays.

All plays must be from the Line of Scrimmage (LOS). **Penalties do not count as plays.** Plays that result in a quarterback dropping to his knee with the sole purpose of "playing it safe" while subs are in the game, will not count as plays.

Do not cheat a child of playing time. This is a recreation program, not a school program. Teach the kids how to play – your team is as strong as your weakest player. The best coaches I have ever seen worked harder and spent more time (a little before or after practice) with the players who needed it the most and those players excelled and sometimes carried the team in the end if the star player were injured or couldn't play for some reason.

Required Equipment

1. Mouth Pieces
 - The use of a mouthpiece by each player is mandatory
 - The strap on the mouthpiece must be trimmed in length not to exceed 2 inches, but visible to game officials.
2. Shoes
 - Players are encouraged to wear a plastic cleated shoe.
 - Metal cleats are prohibited
 - Players may also wear sneakers

Footballs

1. Pee Wee Division shall use a Pee Wee size football
2. JV Division & Varsity Division shall use an Youth/Junior size football

Length of Halves

1. Pee Wee shall consist of two (2) fifteen (15) minute halves.
2. JV Division shall consist of two (2) twenty (20) minute halves.
3. Varsity Division will consist of two (2) twenty-five (25) minute halves
4. A Team will have 30 seconds to put the ball in play after the ready signal has been given by the official.
5. There are no overtime quarters
6. Intermission will be ten (10) minutes but can end sooner if both teams (coaches) are ready to begin the second half.

Time Clock

1. The official clock is kept by the scorekeeper. If a scorekeeper is not present, the official clock will be kept by an official on the field.
2. If a scoreboard clock is used, the timekeeper must be approved by the game officials before the game starts.

Time Outs

1. There can be 4 timeouts per team per game.
2. Timeouts are not charged against a team for injuries or game official timeouts.

Injured Players

1. If a player becomes ill or injured during pre-game warm-ups or prior to the game, he / she may be declared ineligible to participate in the game that day.

Only with the permission of a parent, the League Official or person certified in First Aid, will he/she be declared eligible to return.

2. Once removed from the game because of injury, a player may not re-enter the game without approval of their parent, the League Official or person certified in First Aid.
3. Once treated for an injury off the field (Doctor's office, emergency Room, etc.) a player requires permission of a parent or legal guardian to resume playing flag football in the same season. A doctor's release is required.
4. Head injuries are to be closely evaluated before the player can re-enter a practice, scrimmage or game.

Ineligible Players

1. When ineligible players are found, all games of which the ineligible players have participated in are forfeited and will count in the league standings as such.
2. An appeals process may occur depending on the nature of the ineligibility regarding post-season play. However, regardless of the finding, the forfeitures still stand.

Scoring

Touchdown	6 points
Safety	2 points
Point after Touchdown (passing)	2 point
Point after Touchdown (running)	1 point
Forfeit	(7-0)

Run-Up Scores

There is nothing more demoralizing to a losing team than a lopsided score. When the score is run up intentionally it is even more demeaning. A run-up score is when a team continues to pour it on even after the game is in their favor and far out of reach for their opponents. Coaches who practice this will be disciplined by the League Officials. Considerate coaches will have substituted all their players before the above rules come into play. Lopsided games can be used as a working tool for skill development for inexperienced players.

1. Run-Up Scoring Rule: When a team has a 36 or more point lead over an opposing team, at the end of the first half, or this lead occurs in the second half, the game will be terminated at that point.

Tie Games – games that are tied shall stand. There is no over time period or tie breakers

Protests

1. Protests on matters of judgment rendered by any game official will not be heard.
2. Protests of eligibility of players will be heard
3. All protests must be in writing by the head coach and submitted to the WDCPRD District Office, 101 Park Ave. Bldg #3, Weaverville, CA 96093 no later than 24 hours after termination of the game in question. The District will call a hearing within 48 hours after receipt of the protest.

Penalties – Coaches: The following penalties are prescribed for coaches who are guilty of the following:

1. Failing to observe the Minimum Play Requirements MPR.
 - 1st Offense: probation, affected players are given double playing time in next game.
 - 2nd Offense: suspension for one game.
 - 3rd Offense: Suspension for the remainder of the season.
2. Cheating: Permanent suspension.
3. Playing ineligible players: Suspension for the rest of the season
4. Badgering game officials with threats and inciting fans to display poor sportsmanship:
 - 1st Offense: Suspension for two games.
 - 2nd Offense: permanent suspension.
5. Fighting of any kind – suspended for remainder of the season
Possible permanent suspension.
6. Teaching players dirty tactics:
 - 1st Offense: 1 game suspension.
 - 2nd Offense: permanent suspension.
7. Failure to keep the health, safety and welfare of players through conscientious coaching:
 - 1st Offense: 1 game suspension.
 - 2nd Offense: permanent suspension.

Penalties – Players – Players are to be removed from the game for the following:

1. Fighting:
 - 1st Offense: removal from game.
 - 2nd Offense: suspended from team
2. Disrespect for coaches, game officials and all team members:
 - 1st Offense: removal from the game.
 - 2nd Offense: suspended for one game (including practice).
 - 3rd Offense: suspended from the team.
3. Badgering opponents by word of mouth with the purpose of intimidation:
 - 1st Offense: removal from the game.
 - 2nd Offense: suspended for one game (including practice).
 - 3rd Offense: suspended for the rest of the season.

Penalties – Team

1. Failure to control your parents or fans:
 - 1st Offense: Forfeiture of the game in question.
 - 2nd Offense: Forfeiture of the team in question's next scheduled game.
 - 3rd Offense: Suspension of the team in question for remainder of season.
2. Failure of coaches to control themselves from actions arbitrary to the health, safety and welfare of players:
 - 1st Offense: probation for the entire team for the season
 - 2nd Offense: suspension of the entire team from the league

Interpreting Rules

Any question relating to the interpretations of these rules and regulations should be done in writing and sent to the District office. During games, the Head official/referee decision is final.

"Look for players with character and ability. But remember, character comes first." Joe Gibbs

Coaches Standard Of Conduct

To Players, coaches are living heroes. To parents and fans, coaches represent the best in football and a leader and role model for their children. A coaches conduct is always under scrutiny. Their actions affect their players, parents and fans. To this end, the District requires this standard of conduct from all of its coaches:

1. Coaches will always keep the health and welfare of players foremost and remove from a game any injured player whose injury is in doubt concerning his or her return to the game.
2. Coaches will always strive to set the example for their players on and off the field
3. Coaches will not berate or criticize a player in front of teammates, parents or fans. Give corrective information to the player(s) in a constructive manner to help necessitate changes.
4. Coaches will not berate or criticize game officials and will accept their decisions as fair.
5. Coaches will not run up the score on a weaker opponent.
6. Coaches will not incite fans or spectators into actions unbecoming to the game of flag football.

7. Coaches will respect the zero tolerance of Alcohol, Tobacco & Drugs Ordinance passed by the School District and its banned usage of these substances on school grounds and related facilities.
8. Coaches will not consume alcohol before or during a practice, scrimmage or game
9. Coaches will not use tobacco products on the practice field or during games.
10. Coaches will not use any illegal drugs prior to or during practices, scrimmages or games.
11. Coaches will encourage scholastics first.
12. Coaches will not use ineligible players and will take the responsibility of having proper forms on each and every player providing their eligibility at all times.
13. A coach will make sure that all players play one half the game.

Coaches on The Field

Coaches shall remain off the field at all times with the exception of a time out where the coach may show their player(s) what to do or where to go.

Pee Wee Division may have 2 coaches on the field to help align players.

The Pee Wee coaches shall assist in the alignment of players and the calling of plays. During the execution of a play, these coaches shall remain a minimum of five (5) yards behind any of the participating players. When both teams are at the line of scrimmage, both coaches must refrain from giving any further instructions.

If in the opinion of the game official, the coach continues to give instructions once the quarterback begins their cadence, or the coach becomes involved in the play in any way, a minor penalty shall be assessed.

Team Captains

Each team shall have at least one player on the field at all times who is designated as "Captain". It shall be through these captains (and the coach on the field) that the game officials shall communicate matters of interpretation of rules to determine acceptance or declination of penalties and to determine and disseminate other information. Game Officials are to try to remember the ages of the participants and to assist them in making decisions.

Placement of the Ball

At the conclusion of each play, the referee shall place the ball in the approximate center of the field, (midway between the sidelines), prior to giving the ready-for-play signal

For Point after Touchdown (P.A.T.), the conversion line will be marked 3 yards from the goal line and at an equal distance from each sideline. There are no field goals kicked in, only running or passing attempts into the end zone.

Downs/Yards to Gain

The offensive team shall have four (4) consecutive downs to advance the ball into the next zone, or to score a touchdown. (Regardless of the distance to the next zone: one (1) inch to twenty (20) yards.

Once the offensive team advances the ball into the zone, it is a first down and a new series of downs begins. A team failing to advance the ball into the next zone (after four (4) downs) loses possession of the ball to the other team.

The opposing team takes over at the point where the ball is declared dead and begins its series of first down and zone to go.

The forward part of the ball touching any line shall be the determining factor in measuring for the first down or touchdown

A down will be repeated if provided for in the rules. (See penalties)

When the offensive team is within the last zone and has a first down, it will be first down and goal to go.

Formations

When playing 8 on 8. The offensive team must have five (5) players on the line of scrimmage in "A" gap formation and three (3) in the backfield (at least 1 yard off the line of scrimmage).

When playing 6 on 6. The offensive team must have three (3) players on the line of scrimmage in "A" gap formation and three (3) in the backfield (at least 1 yard off the line of scrimmage).

The defensive team may choose any formation, **except no defensive player may be directly over the center**. The closest player to the center must be 3 feet from the ball and not in the gap. The player may not move forward until the ball has been snapped.

When a punt has been declared, the defensive formation must have five (5) players on the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. Both offensive and defensive players on the line of scrimmage are required to kneel for the punt play.

The "A" gap is guard, center, guard, within approximately six feet, (6') distance. The defense cannot run through the "A" gap.

The "A" gap is not broken up until the ball crosses the Line of Scrimmage (LOS).

Pee Wee & JV Division: The "A" gap is guard, center, guard, with feet touching prior to snap. The defense cannot run through the "A" gap marked area of the offensive line nor can the offense run up the "A" gap. The "A" gap is not broken up until the ball crosses the Line of Scrimmage (LOS).

Varsity Division: The defensive team cannot run through the A-Gap until the ball crosses the LOS.

The offensive teams guard, center, guard may go through the A-Gap only after the center has stood upright. The ball may not be run through the A-Gap.

De-Flagging

There shall be no tackling of any player to include the ball carrier, passer or kicker.

The player who has possession of the ball is "Down" when a flag is removed from that players' waist. The defensive player shall stand still and hold the flag above their head.

The defensive player may not hold or push the ball carrier down to remove their flag. An incidental touch of the body or shoulder while reaching for the flag will not be considered a violation, however, touching the head or face would be a violation.

A Defensive player must go for the passer's flag. They may not touch the passer's arm.

A defensive player may not run over, push or pull a blocker away from them.

They may push them sideways if they get past them. But they cannot push the blocker down.

Substitutions

Free substitution shall be in effect at all times. However, each player must play half the game.

Coin Toss

The game official(s) shall call the team captains together for a coin toss to decide a choice of "kicking" or "receiving" the ball.

The visiting team captain shall call the toss. The coin toss winner's team shall have the option to kick or receive.

The coin toss losing team will have the remaining choice. The losing team will have the first choice at the start of the second half.

Blocking

The blocker must be on their feet at all times while blocking. All linemen (except the center) may not assume a three-point stance or otherwise spring from a coiled or crouching start. Rather, they must simply stand at the line of scrimmage and await the snap. The center, though crouching, if they are to block, must first stand straight up.

Cross Body and roll blocking are not permitted.

A blocker cannot use their hands

Blocking shall be done with the arms and body in the form of shoulder and brush blocking only.

Butting, elbowing, and knee blocking are not permitted.

There shall be no two-on-one blocking for the ball carrier beyond the line of scrimmage

Interlock blocking and blocking a player from behind (clipping) is not permitted.

A defensive player is restricted in the use of his hands to the blockers, body and shoulders.

A defensive player may not lock or push a ball carrier out of bounds.

Punts

The offensive team may punt at any time. Punting intentions are announced to the referee by the team captain. The referee then notifies the defensive team.

- Rushing the punter is prohibited. When playing 8 on 8, both teams must have five (5) players on the line of scrimmage. When playing 6 on 6, both teams must have four (4) players on the line of scrimmage. Both offensive and defensive players on the line of scrimmage are required to kneel until ball is kicked. Punts must be announced before the ball is ready for play. There will be no movement by the offensive or defensive players until the ball is kicked. Penalty-5 yards.
- The ball may be advanced by the receiving team after it has touched the ground. However, if the ball hits any player and then touches the ground, the ball is dead at that spot.
- d. Quick kicks and fake punts are illegal.

The receiver has the option of a normal catch or a free catch. The receiver shall signify their intentions of a free catch by waving one hand clearly over their head at which point the ball is dead.

Center

The center must snap the ball between their legs.

They must have both feet at the scrimmage line with no part of their body beyond the forward tip of the ball.

They may adjust the ball one (1) time only per play.

The center must first stand straight up if they are to block, they may not fire out at an opponent. Nor may a defensive player make contact with the center until they have straightened up (unless blocked into them by another offensive player), or until the center has crossed the line of scrimmage.

Ball Carrier

The ball carrier may not use their hands or arms to protect their flags. The defensive players must have the opportunity to remove the ball carrier's flags.

The ball carrier may not lower their head to drive or run into a defensive player but must try to avoid contact.

The ball carrier may not stiff-arm an opponent, nor may they spin or hurdle to prevent a defensive player from removing their flag. Penalty will be assessed as a dead ball foul.

The ball carrier may run in any direction until the play is declared dead by an official.

Passing

A forward pass is a pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage toward the offensive team's goal. All backfield players are eligible passers.

A lateral pass is thrown parallel to the line of scrimmage or back toward the opposing team's goal. A pass may be thrown over-hand, under-hand, or side arm.

Receiving

All players are eligible to receive forward passes.

One foot must land (on the ground) in bounds, constitutes a completed pass, however, if a receiver steps out of bounds, even with one foot and returns in bounds, they become an ineligible receiver.

If an offensive and defensive player catch the ball simultaneously, the ball is declared dead at that spot and awarded to the offense.

Two or more receivers may touch the ball in succession resulting in a completed pass. Pee Wee must have one foot on the ground.

No diving to receive the ball. The ball will return to the LOS and loss of down. JV & Varsity may jump vertically only to receive the ball.

Any other jump or dive the ball will return to the LOS and loss of down. Both feet must be in bounds before the vertical jump. One foot must land (on the ground) in bounds before a fair catch is declared.

Dead Ball

The ball shall be declared dead when:

- The ball carrier touches the ground with any part of their body other than their feet.
- The ball carrier's flag is removed.
- The ball carrier or pass receiver has a missing flag.
- The ball goes out of bounds for any reason.
- Upon receiving a "Fair Catch"
- Following a touchdown, safety, or touch back
- The snap from center touches the ground before being touched by another player. This includes balls snapped over the quarterback's head (ball returns to the LOS). If a player touches the ball before touching the ground, it is a muff and is spotted where it touches the ground
- The ball touches the ground (except during punts and kick-offs). During punts and kick-offs, the ball is alive until touched by a player. If the kicking team touches it, it is dead at that spot and the receiving team takes possession.
- If touched by a receiving team player, the ball may be advanced. However, if the receiver muffs or fumbles the ball and it touches the ground, it is declared dead at that spot.
- If the defensive team intercepts a pass, the ball is declared dead at the spot, and the ball will be turned over to the team that intercepted the pass (ball) at that spot.

NOTE: There are no fumble recoveries in flag football