



# Youth Flag Football Rules

*Better Sports For Kids...  
~ Better Kids For Life.*

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## City of Roseville's NFL Flag Football Rules

### PRE-GAME INFORMATION

1. All players must be registered with the City of Roseville's Parks & Recreation NFL Flag Football program before participating in any league activities. This includes the completion of the program waiver/release form and NFL waiver form.
2. Participants must be between the grade levels of 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade or approximately 6 through 12 years of age in order to participate in league play.
3. The league is divided into three (3) divisions: 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>& 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>.
4. All players will receive a reversible NFL Flag Football jersey and flags.
5. Teams are composed of a minimum of eight (8) and a maximum of twelve (12) players. There are five (5) players per team playing on the field.
6. The Program Supervisor(s) in charge of the Roseville NFL Flag Football program reserves the right to add players to and/or move players from teams if he/she feels it is necessary.
7. Scheduled practice times will be once a week for approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes.
8. Parents, families and friends must sit on the opposite side of the field from the players and coaches during the game.
9. The playing field is 30 yards wide x 70 yards long. End zones are 10 yards deep. Corners of the playing field and yard zones will be marked with cones.
10. Parents and spectators are strongly encouraged to promote good sportsmanship among all participants. All parents and spectators will treat officials and staff with respect. Please remember that many of them are volunteers and you are providing an example to your children when you are in attendance at practices/games.

### ATTIRE

1. Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections can and will be made. No bare feet or open toed shoes allowed.
2. Only pocket-less shorts or pants are allowed.
3. Flags must be worn on the hips.
4. Jerseys must be tucked in at all times.
5. Players are required to wear a protective mouthpiece during all practices and games. **No Exceptions.** Any participant without a mouthpiece will not be allowed to participate in any practice or game. Players receive a mouth guard before their first practice, they are responsible for providing their own mouthpiece if this one is misplaced.
6. All players are required to wear their official Roseville NFL Flag Football jersey and flags during games.
7. Players are responsible for taking care of their own NFL Flag Football jersey and mouthpiece.

## **GETTING STARTED**

1. A coin toss determines the first possession. The team losing the coin toss will determine which way they will play during the 1<sup>st</sup> half.
2. Game length is two (2) – 20 minute running time halves. Each team is allowed (2) – 60 second time outs per half. There maybe an official timeout to assist an injured player at the discretion of the referee. There will be a three (3) minute half time break.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball on their own five (5) yard line and has three (3) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its own five (5) yard line.
4. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its five (5) yard line.
5. The ball must be snapped between the legs to start play (5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Division).

## **DURING THE GAME**

1. There are no kickoffs or punts.
2. There is no blocking allowed at anytime anywhere on the field. Once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage all players on offense are no longer part of the play. Creating a screen or wall for the ball carrier will be considered a block.
3. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's five (5) yard line.
4. Teams change sides after the first 20 minute half. The losing team of the coin toss at the beginning of the game will gain ball possession at the beginning of the second half.
5. Each time the ball is spotted a team has thirty (30) seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one (1) warning per game before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
6. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
7. If a defensive penalty occurs on an extra point try, the offensive team retains possession of the ball with the ball being placed ½ distance to the goal line. The offensive team has the option to decline the penalty.
8. 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> – One coach is allowed on the field at all times. 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> – Coaches are not allowed on the field during regular play and must call plays from the sideline.
9. Following a touchdown, the offensive team has one (1) additional play to convert the PAT attempt. The team can elect to have the ball placed at the five (5) yard line and must run a pass play or they may have the ball placed at the thirteen (13) yard line and have the option of a pass or run play to cross the goal line. Despite the result of that play, the change of possession will always start at the 5 yard line.

## **RUNNING**

1. The quarterback cannot run with the ball.
2. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
3. Absolutely **NO** laterals or pitches of any kind.
4. "No-running zones," located five (5) yards from each end zone and five (5) yards on either side of the midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power running situations. In these zones there is to be no running or hand-offs. Once a team gets a first down the no-run-zone no longer applies at mid-field. Each team may only get one first down.
5. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
6. Once the ball has been motioned to be handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

7. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player. No diving or jumping to avoid a flag being pulled. If a player should dive or jump to avoid a flag being pulled the play shall be called dead at the point of the incident.
8. The use of a “stiff arm” to ward off an opponent is prohibited.
9. The ball is spotted from where the ball carrier’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

### **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. As in the NFL, only one (1) player is allowed in motion at a time.
3. A player must have at least one (1) foot inbounds when making a reception.

### **PASSING**

1. All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. The quarterback has a seven (7) second “pass clock”. If a pass is not thrown within the seven (7) seconds, the play is dead, loss of down. Once a ball is handed off the seven (7) second rule is no longer in effect.
4. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception.
5. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the five (5) yard line.

### **DEAD BALLS**

1. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
2. Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - Ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
  - Ball carrier’s flag falls off.
  - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground.
  - Ball carrier should leave their feet.
  - Ball carrier should attempt to dive.
  - Touchdown or safety is scored.
  - At the point of an interception (interception returns are not allowed).
3. There are no fumbles. No recovery of a “fumble” is necessary or should be attempted. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground with the offense keeping possession.

### **RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK**

1. One and only one player must rush the quarterback. The player who rushes the quarterback must start the rush from directly behind the designated rushing marker which will be placed eight (8) yards from the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is snapped the player may start the rush. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball has been motioned to be handed off, the eight (8) 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 eight (8) yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember. No blocking or tackling is allowed.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING**

1. If a referee or any other City Staff member witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, the referee will assess a penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct and the player will be “sat-out” or ejected from the game.
2. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
3. 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, staff or spectators). If trash talking occurs the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the coach, player or players will be “sat-out” or ejected from the game.

### **EJECTION’S and SUSPENSIONS**

1. Any coach/player/spectator ejected from a game may be suspended for a minimum of one (1) game, possibly longer if warranted. That one (1) game shall be the next scheduled game. Any coach receiving an ejection or suspension may be released from their coaching duties for the remainder of the season.

### **BLEEDING and EXPOSED BLOOD**

1. Any player with a bleeding wound and/or blood stained clothing must leave the game until all bleeding is stopped, all wounds are properly covered and all exposed blood and blood stained clothing is removed.
2. Any player and/or coach failing to comply with the official’s decision concerning the clean up of a bleeding wound and/or the removal of blood stained clothing shall be ejected from the game.
3. Any player and/or coach ejected from league play for failing to comply with the officials decision concerning the clean up of a bleeding wound and/or the removal of blood stained clothing shall be suspended for one (1) game. A second such ejection will result is suspension for the remainder of the season.

### **COACHES, LET YOUR KIDS PLAY**

- The temptation to be another Bear Bryant or Don Shula should wait. While teaching football skills and strategies is important, try to keep your lessons as simple and fun as possible. As your team grasps the basics, move on too more advanced ideas. Overloading young players with too much information too early can cause them confusion and you headaches. **REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN!!!** This program should be fun for the kids and for you as well.
- Help your players be good sports. After a game, shake hands with or do a cheer for the other team. Applaud good play on both sides. Treat all officials with respect; remember many of them are volunteers as well. While imitating you, your team won’t even know they are being taught a good lesson in sportsmanship.
- Regardless of whether it’s a game or practice, football at the youth level should always be fun. This requires a little creativity on your part, the parent/coach, to offer fun and to adapt methods throughout all aspects of the program. Incorporate games and low-key competitions to teach fundamentals rather than running traditional drills repeatedly.
- Yell encouragement, whisper constructive criticism. Keep all comments positive and never tolerate negative comments from your players, parents, staff and especially yourself.

**CITY OF ROSEVILLE NFL FLAG FOOTBALL PENALTIES**  
**ALL PENALTIES WILL BE CALLED BY THE REFEREES**

**DEFENSIVE:**

**Offsides** – 5 yards - On defense, if a player enters the neutral zone that player is offsides. (The down will be repeated)

**Pass Interference** – (Ball will be spotted at the point of the incident)

**Illegal Contact (holding, blocking, etc.)** – 5 yards

**Illegal Rushing (starting the rush inside 7 yard marker, starting the rush prior to the ball being snapped)** – 5 yards (The penalty will be assessed as if the defensive player has entered the neutral zone and is offsides. The down will be repeated)

**Extra Point Try (Defensive Penalty)** – Offense retains possession with the ball placed  $\frac{1}{2}$  distance to the goal line.

**OFFENSIVE:**

**Offsides** – 5 yards (On offense, once the players are set they cannot move except one player who may go into motion. (The down will be repeated)

**Illegal Motion (more than one person in motion, false start)** –5 yards (The down will be repeated)

**Illegal Forward Pass (pass received behind the line of scrimmage or Pitches/Laterals)** – Loss of down for illegal forward pass. Ball down at spot of foul for pitches/laterals.

**Offensive Pass Interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)** – 5 yards (*Loss of down*)

**Flag Guarding** – 5 yards (*Penalty will be assessed at the point of the incident*)

**Delay of Game** – Clock stops, 5 yards (*The down will be repeated*)

**Unsportsmanlike Conduct (taunting/trash talk/ pushing/ fighting)** – 10 yards (*spot of the foul*)

\*If the penalty yardage should be more than the distance to the goal, all penalties will be  $\frac{1}{2}$  the distance to the goal.

- REFEREE DETERMINES INCIDENTAL CONTACT THAT MAY RESULT FROM THE RUN OF PLAY.
- ONLY THE TEAM CAPTAIN MAY ASK THE REFEREE QUESTIONS ABOUT RULE CLARIFICATION AND INTERPRETATIONS. PLAYERS CANNOT QUESTION JUDGEMENT CALLS.
- GAMES CANNOT END ON A DEFENSIVE PENALTY, UNLESS THE OFFENSE DECLINES IT.