



CITY OF LIGHTHOUSE POINT

FLAG FOOTBALL GAME RULES

1. PLAYING TIME:

- 1.1 All children are expected to play an equal amount of time in both the 1st and 2nd half in each game they participate in.

2. FORMAT

- 2.1 The game is played with five (5) players. However, a minimum of four (4) players must be on the field at all times.

3. PLAYER ATTIRE

- 3.1 Teams are designated as home or away based on the schedule.
- 3.2 Players are required to wear protective mouthpieces at all times during both games and practices.
- 3.3 The belt that holds the flags (not the flags themselves) must be secured to ensure they do not appear to be a flag. If the belt is hanging, flag guarding may be called.
- 3.4 Jerseys must be tucked in at all times. If a jersey is hanging out, flag guarding may be called.
- 3.5 All players must start with their mouthpieces in, jerseys tucked in, flag belts on, and flags properly secured at the hips.
- 3.6 No metal cleats are allowed.
- 3.7 No jewelry (necklaces, earrings, watches, etc.) is permitted.
- 3.8 Shorts and pants cannot have pockets.

4. EQUIPMENT

- 4.1 Jerseys, flags, and footballs will be provided for each team. These footballs are the mandatory game used footballs for all divisions. No other footballs are permitted.

5. COACHES

- 5.1 **Only 2 Game day Adult Coaches are permitted on the sideline during games.**
- 5.2 Coaches are required to wear the coach's shirt provided for the current season. Without this shirt, coaches are not permitted on the field/sideline.
- 5.3 All coaches must move to the sideline prior to the snap of the ball.
 - 5.3.1 Exception: **Only one 6U** coach can remain on the field during offense only.

6. POSSESSIONS

- 6.1 A coin toss determines which team gets first possession of the ball. The away team will call the coin toss. The winner of the coin toss has option to start on offense or defense. The team that starts on offense will start on defense for the second half.
- 6.2 Teams will switch directions at beginning of second half.
- 6.3 For each possession, the offense has three downs to obtain a first down by crossing midfield. Once crossing midfield, the offense gets three more down to reach the end zone.
- 6.4 **Fourth down option- On the first half of the field ONLY**, a team has a fourth down decision to make. A team may either choose to “GO FOR IT” or to declare a “TURNOVER”. If a team decides to “GO FOR IT”, they will have one play to cross midfield. If successful with this attempt. A first down will be awarded. If **not**, the **opposing team will take possession of the ball at the point of the failed conversion**. If a “TURNOVER” is decided this will effectively end the drive resulting in a change of possession. The ball will be placed at the 5 yard line.
- 6.5 A first down is obtained in two ways: the offense crosses midfield in three downs or a defensive penalty occurs with the result being an automatic first down.
- 6.6 If the offense fails to cross midfield or fails to reach the end zone within three downs, the result is a turnover.
- 6.7 There are no fourth downs.
- 6.8 Possession changes will start at the offensive team’s 5-yard line.
 - 6.8.1 Exception: Interceptions will be placed at the spot of the interception. Interceptions cannot be returned.

7. FIELD SETUP

- 7.1 The field setup for 12U and 13 will be as follows: 60 yards long by 40 yards wide with 10-yard end zones. The no run zones will be 5 yards from each end zones.

8. GENERAL OFFENSE

- 8.1 **NO INTENTIONAL CONTACT of any kind is permitted.**
- 8.2 No blocking is allowed, ALL blocking is illegal.
- 8.3 Any offensive player who continues running and impedes the progress of a defensive player who is attempting to pull the ball carrier’s flag will be called for illegal blocking.
- 8.4 The ball must be snapped between the center’s legs to start a play. Shotgun snaps are allowed.
- 8.5 There is a 45-second huddle clock, which starts once the line of scrimmage is marked and the ball is spotted.
- 8.6 Only one player is allowed to motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage. A motioned player does NOT need to stop, prior to the ball being snapped.
- 8.7 No laterals or pitches are allowed.

- 8.8 Spinning is permitted.
- 8.9 Jumping or diving to advance the ball is illegal. However, an offensive player may jump over a defensive player on the ground. Jumping or diving to make a catch is permitted.
- 8.10 The ball will be spotted at the location of where the flag was pulled.

9. PASSING

- 9.1 The quarterback has a seven (7) second “pass clock”.
- 9.2 If the ball is not thrown within seven seconds, the play is ruled dead and the ball is spotted at the original line of scrimmage.
- 9.3 There is only one forward pass per down. All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- 9.4 The passer must be behind the line of scrimmage, including feet. Failure to comply results in loss of down.

10. RECEIVING

- 10.1 All players are eligible to catch a pass, including the QB, but only if the ball was handed behind the line of scrimmage first.
- 10.2 Receivers must have one foot in bounds when making a catch.
- 10.3 A receiver is down where his or her flag belt is pulled.
- 10.4 If a receiver’s belt inadvertently falls off, the player is marked down where his/her belt fell off.
- 10.5 If a receiver’s flag inadvertently falls off prior to making a catch and later in same play catches the ball without replacing the flag, the receiver is down at the spot of the catch.
- 10.6 In the event of both the receiver and defender catch the ball and retain possession to the ground, the tie would go to the receiver.
- 10.7 A receiver cannot run out of bounds and come back in bounds to make a catch.

11. RUNNING

- 11.1 Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are legal. Anyone behind the line of scrimmage can receive a handoff. A player must completely let go of the ball for it to be considered a legal handoff.
- 11.2 There is no limit on the number of handoffs the offense can perform in a single play, as long as the ball never crosses the line of scrimmage.
- 11.3 The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball as long as he/she has not passed the line of scrimmage.
- 11.4 It is the responsibility of the ball carrier to avoid colliding with defenders that are in his/her path. Unintentional contact will not be penalized, provided the ball carrier

makes an effort to avoid it. Failure to attempt to avoid contact with a defender may be penalized.

12. DEFENSE

12.1 **No intentional contact of any kind is permitted.**

12.2 If a defender attempts to grab a player's flag and accidentally grabs their jersey, the defender must immediately let go before reattempting to pull the flag. Failure to do so will result in a holding penalty.

12.3 All defensive players must give the offense a one-yard cushion prior to ball being snapped.

12.4 Diving to pull a flag is allowed.

13. FLAG PULLING/GUARDING

13.1 A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier has full possession of the ball.

13.2 It is illegal to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier.

13.3 A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flag of a player who is not in possession of the ball.

13.4 Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to pulling the flag by stiff arming, lowering the head, arm or shoulder, or covering the flags with the jersey.

14. SCORING

14.1 A touchdown is worth 6 points

14.2 Following a touchdown, the offense is given the opportunity to score an extra point.

14.3 1 Extra Point is attempted from 5 yards from the goal line. This is a "No Run Zone" for **12u and 14u**

14.4 2 Extra Points is attempted from 12 yards from the goal line.

15. SAFETIES

15.1 A safety occurs when the QB or ball carrier is downed in his/her end zone, runs out of bounds inside his/her end zone, fumbles the ball inside his/her end zone, a bad snap resulting in the ball landing in the offensive end zone, or an offensive penalty occurs inside the offensive end zone.

15.2 If a safety occurs, the team that scored the safety will be awarded 2 points and receive the ball at their 5-yard line.

16. TIME

16.1 The ref may stop the clock at their discretion.

16.2 Each team is allowed one 60-second timeout per half.

- 16.3 Timeouts do not carry over into next half.
- 16.4 Games are played with two **24-minute** halves and a two-minute halftime.
- 16.5 The clock will automatically stop at the one-minute warning of the second half, only if the game is within 8 points. During this time, the clock will stop for an incompleteness, an extra point, when a first down is obtained, or if out of bounds.
- 16.6 Mercy rule is 35 points and the game is declared over.
- 16.7 There will be no overtime during regular season, only playoffs.

17. Overtime (Playoffs)

- 17.1 If the score is tied at the end of regulation, teams move directly into overtime.
- 17.2 The team that wins the coin toss has the choice to take the ball first, or defend first. Each team will start from the 12-yard line. They will have two plays to attempt to score. If a team scores, they may attempt either an extra point or a two-point conversion. Both teams will drive into the same end zone.
- 17.3 If an interception occurs the play is dead and a change of possession will occur.
- 17.4 The game is over when each team has had possession of the ball an equal amount of times, one team was able to score more points than their opponents.
- 17.5 If the score is still tied after the first overtime, the team that didn't have the choice in the first overtime will make the call for the beginning of the second overtime.
- 17.6 If the score is still tied after the second overtime, teams will go into **Sudden Death** play.
- 17.7 For **Sudden Death**, the ball will be spotted at the mid line. Each team will be given one down. The team that gains the most yard positive yardage from the original line of scrimmage will be declared the winner.
- 17.8 The team that was just on defense during the second overtime will start on defense.

18. MERCY PRECAUTIONS

- 18.1 A mercy is discouraged in this league. Coaches are asked to do what they can to avoid this result. In an attempt to assist with the prevention of a mercy in recreational play, we have implemented the following:
 - 18.1.1 If at any point during the game, there is a 28 point differential, the winning team will forfeit a defensive player. The winning team will only play with 4 players on defense until the point differential is lowered below 28 points or a mercy has been declared.
 - 18.1.2 The losing team may add a 6th player to their defense until the point differential is lowered below the 28 points or a mercy has been declared.
- 18.2 A **MERCY** is declared once a 35 point differential has been obtained. The game is officially declared over.

19. NO RUN ZONES

- 19.1 Will be enforced only in **8u, 10u, 12u and 14u divisions**.
- 19.2 Designed for short yardage situations.
- 19.3 Only comes into effect when the offensive team is approaching a first down (mid field) or end zone.
- 19.4 Running inside the no run zone, the play is ruled dead and loss of down.

20. RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

- 20.1 Only **10U, 12U and 14U** may rush the quarterback.
- 20.2 The rush marker will be designated by the referee seven yards from the line of scrimmage.
- 20.3 Any number of players may rush the quarterback as long as they are behind the rush marker when the ball is snapped.
- 20.4 If the offense draws the pass rusher(s) past the rush marker before the ball is snapped, the rusher(s) cannot rush that play. However, any defender still behind the rush marker may still blitz.
- 20.5 The rusher must take an angled path to the QB. If this path is crossed and contact is made involving the rusher and an offensive player then an offensive penalty will be assessed.
- 20.6 Once the rush angle is set, the rusher cannot change their path to the QB. If the path is changed, they will lose the right of way privileges. If contact is made, it will be called against the initiating player.
- 20.7 The rusher cannot run straight into the center.
- 20.8 Players not rushing the quarterback may defend the line of scrimmage.
- 20.9 The rusher may attempt to block a pass, but it is a penalty to make contact with the quarterback's arm.

21. REPLAY OF DOWN

- 21.1 If there is an inadvertent whistle during the play, the offense has the choice of either result of the play when the whistle was blown or to replay the down.
- 21.2 If there is an inadvertent whistle during a passing play and the ball is in the air, the down is replayed.
- 21.3 If a ball falls to or touches the ground during the initial center to quarterback exchange, the play is ruled a do over with no loss of down – **only in 6U**.

22. DEAD BALLS

- 22.1 A play is ruled dead if:
 - 22.1.1 The ball carrier's flag is pulled
 - 22.1.2 The ball carrier's flag falls off
 - 22.1.3 The ball carrier goes out of bounds

- 22.1.4 Any part of the ball carrier's body other than hand touches the ground
- 22.1.5 The ball carrier lets the ball touch the ground
- 22.1.6 A penalty occurs
- 22.1.7 QB runs out of time
- 22.1.8 After touchdown/extra point is scored
- 22.2 There are no fumbles
 - 22.2.1 The ball is spotted where the player loses control of the ball.

23. PROTEST RULE

- 23.1 A coach has the right to protest one rule interpretation per game. The head coach **MUST** have a **copy of the rules present** and call a **"Protest Time Out"**. The protest must take place before the next play is started. The official must stop the clock and read the rule in question. If no agreeable solution is determined, then an event liaison may arbitrate and will have the final say. If a team protests a rule interpretation and is proven wrong, the team will be charged a timeout. If the team doesn't have a timeout then that team will be penalized for delay of game. **Note: you cannot protest a judgment call. A judgment call is at the official's discretion.**

24. FORFEITS

- 24.1 In order to keep games on time, teams arriving more than ten minutes later than their originally scheduled start time will forfeit the game. However, when the said team does arrive, though the game is officially over, both teams may agree to play a scrimmage with the remaining game time.
- 24.2 Teams are required to have a minimum of four players to play a game; if a team is unable to field at least four players the game will be forfeited. However, if both teams agree, they may use the remaining game time to scrimmage.

25. OFFENSIVE PENALTIES – 5 Yard Loss And Loss of Down

- 25.1 False start
- 25.2 Offside
- 25.3 Illegal motion
- 25.4 Offensive impeding
- 25.5 Delay of game
- 25.6 Attempting to run in no run zone
- 25.7 Pass interference
- 25.8 Too many players on field
- 25.9 Improper equipment

26.OFFENSIVE PENALTIES – 5 Yards from Spot of Foul and Loss of Down

- 26.1 Flag guarding
- 26.2 Intentional contact

27. DEFENSIVE PENALTIES – 5 Yards from Line of Scrimmage, Automatic First Down

- 27.1 Roughing the passer
- 27.2 Intentionally removing receiver's flag before catching the ball
- 27.3 Illegally rushing the QB
- 27.4 Too many players on field
- 27.5 Coach interference
- 27.6 Improper equipment

28.DEFENSIVE PENALTIES – 5 Yards from Spot of Foul, Automatic First Down

- 28.1 Pass interference
- 28.2 Intentional Contact

29. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- 29.1 15 yard loss and loss of down for penalty on offense
- 29.2 15 yards from end of the play and automatic first down for penalty on defense
- 29.3 Using profanity, taunting, insulting or vulgar gestures, disrespectfully addressing any persons, illegally tripping, spiking or kicking the ball, spiking or throwing the flag, fighting or excessive celebrations.
 - 29.3.1 This includes all team members, coaches, families and fans representing team.
- 29.4 **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**
- 29.5 Depending on severity, players, coaches, or fans may be ejected.

30. EJECTIONS

- 30.1 Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct or personal fouls
- 30.2 Intentionally tampering with equipment
- 30.3 Bad sportsmanship

31. SPORTSMANSHIP

- 31.1 Trash talking is not allowed.