

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Athletics & Facilities Services Division, 300 N Park Dr
Office: (703) 228-4747 / Inclement Weather: (703) 228-4715

2025 NFL Youth Flag Football League Rule Modifications

League games will be played under the [NFL Flag Rules](#) with select modifications amended by the League rules presented herein or declared by the League Commissioner. This rule modification sheet supersedes NFL Flag Grade Based Guidelines (Rule 18). **All rules are subject to League Commissioner's discretion.**

I. Equipment

- a) Mouth guards will be required. A mandatory pregame check, performed by the referees, will be conducted to ensure all eligible players have a mouth guard. Players will not be allowed to play without a mouth guard.
- b) Shorts and pants with pockets are prohibited. Players wearing shorts or pants with pockets will not be permitted to play unless the pockets are taped over. Games will not be delayed for a player to tape their pockets.

II. Timing and Overtime

- The clock will only stop for team timeouts in the first 46 minutes of regulation. During the final two minutes of regulation, the clock will stop on all incomplete passes, plays that end out of bounds, on a first down, and on a score. The clock will re-start with the following snap (exception - following a score, the clock will not run on a try for point and will restart on the following possession).
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 45 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning per game before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.

III. Coaches

- Coaches are allowed on the field to direct players according to need and division.
- **Grades 1-2** – Offense may have up to one (1) offensive coach on the field. Defense is allowed one (1) defensive coach on the field. Coach must be behind the deepest defender at the time of the snap.
- **Grades 3-12** – Coaches are permitted to coach only from the sideline.

IV. Penalties

- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- At the Referees discretion, a player may be given a warning or forced to sit out the remainder of the drive for rough play. Rough play is characterized by a player violently losing control of their body while performing football actions in which the chance for injury is drastically increased.
- Clear Path Penalty – If the ball carrier has a clear path to the endzone and is purposefully tackled (Not incidental contact) by the defender, the referee will award a touchdown to the offensive team.

V. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- If game officials witness any acts of unsportsmanlike conduct from either parents, coaches, and/or players, such as any physical or verbal abuse (including but not limited to vulgar language directed to opposing coaches or players, or any aggressive physical touch directed towards others) the game will be stopped and the offender will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the officials' discretion.
 - An ejection from the game will result in an automatic 1 game suspension from the league. Any repeat offender will result in further disciplinary that can include removal from the league. Any physical altercations can result in expulsion from the league.

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VI. **Protesting Ejections**

- The decision to eject a player/coach remains the discretion of game officials on site. Any ejected player/coach must leave the field and stadium at the request of the game officials and on-site monitor.
- If a coach disagrees with a decision to eject a player or a member of the coaching staff, and want to protest the automatic one (1) game suspension, the following steps must be completed:
 - An onsite monitor must be informed prior to leaving the field that a protest would like to be filed.
 - A confirming written protest must be submitted by the initiating coach to the Commissioner by email or hand-delivery within one business day. The written protest must contain the following:
 - a. Date, time, and place of the game in question.
 - b. Identification of the teams involved in the game.
 - c. Names of game officials
 - d. Statement of the situation/condition giving rise to the protest.
 - e. Summary of all essential facts involved in the matter being protested, including reference to any specific rules believed applicable.

Rookie Rules

VII. **No Pass Rush (1st & 2nd Grade Only)**

- Defenders may NOT rush the passer unless there is a legal handoff executed in the backfield.

VIII. **No Run Zones Eliminated (1st Grade Only)**

- Team may execute running plays anywhere on the field.

IX. **Snap Exchange Do Over (1st Grade Only)**

- If the 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, once per down. On a second consecutive occurrence, the down is consumed.

X. **Gameday Practices (1st Grade Only)**

- Teams have option to practice for first half of game.