



# Flag Football Rules



## 1. PLAYERS

- A) Players may participate in only **one (1)** organized Flag Football League/Division/Team sponsored by the City of Torrance Community Services Department.
- B) Players that are currently playing organized tackle football **are** eligible to play Flag Football.
- C) Once a player requests a refund, he/she cannot sign up again for that current season.
- D) Players may play in one division higher with coaches approval, but not in a lower division.
- E) A coach wanting to add a player must first get clearance from the City of Torrance Community Services Department. .
- F) A team consists of at least ten (10) players.
- G) A team must have five (5) players to start a game. After a grace period of five (5) minutes, a scrimmage game will be played.

## 2. SUBSTITUTIONS

- A) Substitutions are unlimited.
- B) Every player in attendance must play for a minimum time equivalent to a quarter of the game.
- C) **If the officials call a timeout due to an injured player, that player must sit out the following play (unless there is a team time out).**

## 3. EQUIPMENT

- A) All players must wear rubber-soled gym shoes or rubber cleats. Bare feet, street shoes or metal cleats are not permitted.
- B) Helmets and shoulder pads are not permitted.
- C) **Players wearing red, yellow, or striped shorts or jeans are not permitted to play.**

D) Players may not wear baseball caps, bandannas, or jewelry of any sort during games. **All participants are required to wear a mouth guard.**

E) All game balls will be provided by the City of Torrance Community Services Department. The ball sizes for each division are listed below:

Grades K-3	Pee Wee
Grades 4-6	Junior
Grades 7&8	Intermediate

F) Shirts **must be** tucked into shorts.

G) The City of Torrance Community Services Department will provide teams with official belts and flags for use during league games. Flags and flag belts **cannot** be covered by the shirt. Failure to follow this rule will result in an **unsportsmanlike penalty (12 yards L.O.D.)**.

#### 4. **GENERAL RULES**

A) All players must be listed on the “**Official Team Roster**” form.

B) Grade levels will be combined based on enrollment.

C) **ALL PLAYERS MUST HAVE A CITY ISSUED UNIFORM IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN EACH GAME.** If uniform shirt is lost or misplaced, a replacement must be purchased for \$7.00 prior to the start of the game.

D) Coaches playing ineligible players will be suspended for an indefinite period of time. The ineligible player will also be suspended and not allowed to play during the current season.

**NOTE: Questions regarding the eligibility of players may be raised verbally at any time by a coach or the program Supervisor.**

#### 5. **GAME CLOCK**

A) Games will be played in 25-minute running halves.

B) The clock is running for the entire game until the last two (2) minutes of the second half at which point it will stop for time-outs, scoring, penalties, out-of-bounds, incomplete passes or change of possession if the point spread is twelve (12) points or less.

C) There will be a halftime of approximately three (3) minutes between the halves.

D) Time expiration of either half with a defensive penalty gives the offense the choice to accept the penalty and have one final untimed offensive play, or end the half.

E) There will be **no** overtime period.

#### 6. **REST PERIOD**

A three (3) minute rest period will be allowed at halftime.

7. **TIME-OUTS**

- A) Each team is allowed two (2) 30-second time-outs per half. Any team ahead by 17 or more points may not call a time-out.
- B) In case of emergency or injury, an **official time-out** will be called. Any player responsible for an **official time-out** must leave the field for at least one (1) play.

8. **KICKING**

- A) **Grades K-4** - There will be **no** kick-offs. Instead, the ball will be placed on the first zone line to begin the game, after halftime and following a score. There are no free kicks on safeties. If the point spread becomes twelve (12) points or more, the team that is down will start at the midfield zone line.
- B) **Grades 5-8** - Kick-offs will be from the first zone line. The City of Torrance Community Services Department will provide tees for kicking.
- C) **On kicks, prior to contact with a player, any ball in the end zone will result in a touchback.**
- D) All kicked balls are live. Any dropped ball will be ruled dead when a defensive player enters a ten (10) yard "safety halo". Offensive players may pick up a dropped kick.

9. **SCORING**

Touchdown	Six Points
Conversion (3 yards)	One Point
Conversion (7 yards)	Two Points
Safety	Two Points

- A) **Point after touchdown** - The scoring team will request a conversion try of one (1) or two (2) points. They have one (1) offensive play to score.
- B) **Safety** - Occurs when an offensive ball carriers flag is pulled in the end, runs out of the end zone or drops the ball into/out of the end zone.

10. **HUDDLES**

- A) The offensive team **must form a huddle** (all eight (8) players within arm's distance and minimum five (5) yards from the sideline) prior to every offensive play. Illegal huddles will result in an **illegal huddle penalty**.
- B) During the last two (2) minutes of the second half, teams do not need to huddle prior to running an offensive play.

11. **PUTTING THE BALL INTO PLAY**

Grades K-4	35 seconds
Grades 5-8	25 seconds

- A) The ball is put into play with a snap from the center between his or her legs. **No center sneak is allowed.**
- B) The center may adjust the ball prior to the snap.

- C) After touching the ball, the center cannot remove their hands or move the ball to simulate a snap. This will result in a **false start penalty**.
- D) Failure to put the ball into play in the designated time will result in a **delay of game penalty**.
- E) **Motion** - One (1) offensive player may be in a lateral or backwards motion at the time of the snap/hike.
- F) Defensive team may not vocalize snap count/call or attempt to keep offensive team from hearing the snap count/call. This will result in an **unsportsmanlike penalty**.

## 12. DOWNS

- A) An offensive team has **four (4)** downs to advance the ball from the point of possession to the next forward zone line to get another set of downs. If the team fails to reach the zone line in **four (4)** downs, the opposing team will take possession at the point of the last dead ball.
- B) If the offensive team passes a zone line and then commits a penalty moving them behind that same zone line, they will need two (2) zone lines to gain a first down.
- C) A team may choose to **punt** on the fourth down rather than attempting to reach the next forward zone line. **Punts** must be declared prior to breaking the huddle. **No snap/hike** is required on punts; the punter may pick up the ball prior to kicking it. Procedure penalties are in effect for the offense during punts.
- D) Five (5) defensive players must be on the L.O.S. prior to a punt.

## 13. OFFENSIVE TEAM

- A) **Grades K-1** - The ball carrier **may not** run up the middle. The middle is defined as between the guard positions and will be marked by cones five (5) feet on either side of the center.
- B) **Grades K-1** - There will be only **one (1)** direct quarterback run per series of downs.
- C) **Grades 2/3-** Everyone except the ball carrier can run up the middle.

## 14. PASSING

- A) **All** players on the offensive team are eligible to receive passes.
- B) A catch is the act of establishing possession of a live ball in flight. If a player attempts to catch a ball while they are in the air, they must contact the playing surface with one foot for the catch to be legal. Referee judgment will decide if a player would have made a legal catch prior to an opponent's contact.
- C) Only one (1) forward pass can be thrown per down.
- D) If a player is close enough to contact the quarterback, any attempt to block a pass behind the line of scrimmage will result in an **illegal use of the hands penalty**. The defender should be going for the flags, not the ball.

## 15. BLOCKING

- A) Offensive players may only use standing blocking techniques.

- B) Any blocks below the waist or from behind are illegal and will result in an **unsportsmanlike penalty**.
- C) Players may contact the opponent's body between the shoulders and waist, provided the technique is legal. The legal techniques are as follows:
  - Extending the arms is allowed, **as long as** contact with the defensive player is kept while arms are extended.
  - Offensive player may "drive" the defensive player but may not push or shove away.
  - Hands shall remain inside the frame of the blocker and opponent's body.
  - Slapping or striking is not allowed.

16. **DOWNING THE BALL CARRIER**

- A) In order to down a ball carrier, either flag must be pulled from the belt by an opponent.
- B) In the case where a flag is missing or flags are not along the ball carrier's sides, contact by an opposing player will result in downing of the ball carrier.
- C) A downed ball carrier will give the ball to the closest referee. Failure to do so promptly will result in a **delay of game penalty**.

17. **PENALTIES/UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

A) **Ball Carrier**

- Running over or through a defensive player
- Using their hands or ball to shield their flags from a defensive player
- Pushing their blockers with their free hand
- Leaving their feet to avoid having their flags pulled

B) **Offensive Team**

- No huddle
- More than one (1) forward pass
- Running up the middle ( Grades K- 1)
- Multiple QB direct runs ( Grades K- 1)
- Simulated snap
- Illegal blocking technique

C) **Defensive Team**

- Rushing up the middle/between the cones ( Grades K-1 )
- Blocking a pass in close contact to the quarterback
- Not making a play for the flag of a ball carrier
- Pushing a ball carrier out of bounds
- Vocalizing/movement to simulate offensive snap/hike (See "Putting The Ball into Play")

D) **General**

- Inappropriate language/taunting
- Disrespecting referees
- Teams being outside of designated area ( on the sidelines)

18. **EJECTIONS**

Any player, coach or parent ejected from a game will also be suspended from their next scheduled game or longer. If the game is the last of the season, the suspension will be for the first game of the next year that the player/coach/parent participates. A suspended player/coach/parent shall not be allowed where the game is being played or have any contact with their team for the entire duration of the game in which they are suspended. Depending on the circumstance, the suspension could be for more than one (1) game.

19. **COACHES**

- A) Only one (1) coach and one (1) assistant coach are allowed in the team designated area ( on the side lines)
- B) **Grades K-1** – Two (2) coaches are allowed on the field during the game.
- C) Coaches are not to taunt, approach or argue with the opposing coach, spectators or officials. Coaches may ask for an explanation and it will be given at the official's discretion.
- D) Family, friends, and associates are the responsibility of the head coach.
- E) Unnecessary taunting or arguing with officials and/or the opposing team, coach or spectators may result in an unsportsmanlike penalty and ejection. **This applies to coaches, players and spectators.**

20. **DECISIONS OF THE OFFICIALS**

- A) The decision of the officials is **final**.
- B) All rule interpretations will be made at the time they occur.
- C) The **only** grounds for a protest will be on the eligibility of a player. A protest must be submitted in writing to the City of Torrance Community Services Department by 5:00 p.m. on the **next** working day.