

Parsippany PAL

Flag Football Rec League

6 v 6

League Mission, Principles, Rules

Overview

- The game is 6 on 6, minimal-contact, non-blocking, non-screening, youth flag football.
- First possession is determined with a coin toss. Youth Captains come out to Center Field with Coach
- All players are eligible receivers.
- There is no kicking in this style of play.
- Game officials will use preventative officiating when possible.
- No foul or penalty flag stops a live play. However, pre-snap fouls will stop the action.
- Players cannot make contact that is considered unnecessary or provokes roughness.
- Fields are 25 yards wide and a minimum of 50 yards long. Field dimensions may be modified if physical space requires it.
- Officials will mark the ball where the ball was at the time it became dead; not at the hips/flag belt.
- The ball will be spotted in the middle of the field after each play.
- Fields have a “no run zone” five yards from the end zones. Will be marked/or notified by an Official
- When the ball is spotted in a “no run zone” the offense must execute a pass play that breaks the line-of-scrimmage.
- An “onside play” is available in the final two minutes of the game.
- There is a mercy rule if the score differential is 27 points or more.

Clock Operations

Scheduled Block	Length of Game	Periods	Halftime	Time outs	“stop clock” or “pro clock”
60 minutes	40 minutes	Two 20-minute halves	2:00 minutes	Two per half	Used in the last two minutes of game

Offense

- Possessions will begin on the 5-yard line.
- The play clock is 25 seconds.
- Snaps must be made between the center’s legs.
- The player taking the snap cannot run the ball past scrimmage unless pursued by a defender.
- An audible 7-second “sack clock” is administered by an official. When the “sack clock” expires it is treated as an incomplete pass and the ball is returned to scrimmage. The QB must throw the ball within the “sack clock.”
- Teams will have four downs to gain a first down at mid-field.
- Once across mid-field and awarded a new set of downs, teams will have four downs to score unless awarded an automatic first down by penalty.
- On fourth down coaches must decide if they want to “go for it” or “punt”.
- If they “go for it” and fail to achieve the line-to-gain, the opposing team takes the ball from where it

became dead.

- If they choose to “punt” a game official will move the ball to the opponent’s 5-yard line, change of possession.
- Ball carriers may legally use backward passes and legal pitches behind the line-of-scrimmage.
- Fumbles and muffs (including snaps) are dead when they hit the ground.
- Receivers must have one foot inbound with possession to be a legal catch.
- Ball carriers are allowed to juke and spin as evasive maneuvers to advance the ball as long as they do not put another player’s safety at risk. They may NOT Jump or leave their feet while running the ball. If that occurs, the official may rule the play dead at that spot.
- Jump cuts or advancing between two defenders is allowed if they do not initiate noteworthy contact with the defender or put another player’s safety at risk.
- Ball carriers may not dive, lunge, or hurdle etc., to advance the ball.
- Ball carriers may not physically deny defenders the opportunity to capture their flag. This is called ‘flag-guarding’ and is a penalty.
- After a play the offense is responsible to retrieve and return the ball to the nearest game official.

Defense

- Before a legal snap a rush line will be set 7 yards from the line-of-scrimmage.
- Legal rushers must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line-of-scrimmage at the snap.
- Defenders may enter the backfield once the ball is handed-off, passed forward or backward or the ball touches any other offensive player other than the player who took the original snap.
- Interceptions during all live ball plays may be returned for points, including during Point-After-Touchdown (PAT). Exception: During overtime intercepted balls are ruled as dead balls.
- Defenders may safely dive to capture an opponent’s flag but must avoid excessive contact.
- Stripping or attempting to strip the ball from a player in possession is illegal.
- Whether or not a ball was tipped in the air has no bearing as it pertains to fouls (illegal contact, personal foul, roughing, etc.).

Scoring

Touchdown	6 points with the chance to go for a 1, 2, or 3 point after touchdown attempt (PAT)
Point After Touchdown (PAT)	1 point from the 5-yard line, pass play only 2 points from the 10-yard line, run or pass 3 points from mid-field, run or pass
Safety	2 points will be awarded to the defense and possession of the ball at the 5- yard line (going out)
Forfeits	Recorded as 27-0

Overtime

- There is NO Overtime during Regular Season games. During the playoffs, when regulation time ends in a tie, teams will conduct one-play overtime series until a winner is determined. Teams will alternate on offense.

RULE 1: GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

1. Our Governing Philosophy

- a. Our mission is to provide a superior football experience to our players, coaches and spectators.
- b. Flag football is a finesse game, not the brute strength game of tackle football. Play accordingly.
- c. Remind yourself and others no college scholarships are handed today, so just relax and enjoy.
- d. We retain the right to amend, update or edit these rules as situations require.
- e. Our rule book is an evolving document. Your feedback is appreciated. Send comments or questions to jay@parsippanypal.org.
- f. This document uses the pronouns he, his, and him for readability and is not an act of genderbias, the program seeks and encourages inclusive participation.

2. Our Game Officials

- a. Some of our officials are young people learning the craft. Please treat them with respect.
- b. Our officials administer the rules of this league not any other organization past or present.
- c. Our officials are encouraged to use the “preventative style” of officiating which allows them to talk to, remind and help players avoid violations whenever feasible. Cautions and teaching points are appropriate most times.
- d. It is not the mission of game officials to flag every small, nuanced infraction of traditional football rules or other insignificant issues that do not produce a significant unfair advantage.

3. Your Required Personal Conduct

- a. Players, coaches, spectators, and officials must avoid profanity.
- b. Disrespectful language; racist, sexist, homophobic remarks; obscene or threatening gestures/ behavior; and bullying are prohibited by anyone attending our events to include coaches, players and spectators.
- c. Foul play will not be tolerated.
- d. Any staff member who hears or sees anything that in his judgment is an infraction of the required personal conduct standards may require the person responsible to leave the event.
- e. If a player or non-player fails to comply with our requests, we have the authority to forfeit the game and have that individual(s) removed from the rented complex.
- f. Fighting will lead to an immediate ejection, possible suspension or even a lifetime exclusion.
- g. Alcohol, intoxicants, tobacco products, vaping, weapons and drones are prohibited at our events.
- h. Our staff, game officials, players and non-players must comply with the rented facility's rules.

4. Your Required Team Conduct

- a. For the safety of our officials and their ability to administer the game all team personnel and spectators must remain at least two yards off the sidelines.
- b. Our staff will determine where spectators can and cannot observe from and will err on the side of safety for our players and game officials.
- c. Officials may require boom boxes or other noise-producing devices be turned off or eliminated as they may interfere with the official's ability to communicate and administer the game.
- d. After the game teams are required to clean up and remove any garbage they brought with them.

5. Rosters

- a. Only players on an officially approved PARSIPPANY PAL roster may participate.

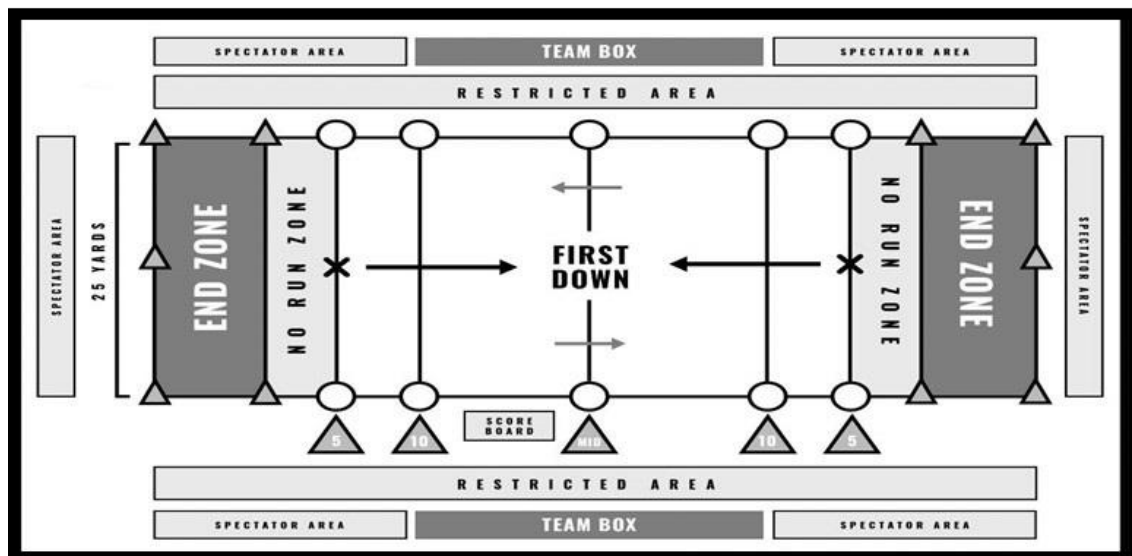
- b. Teams may play two players down to avoid a forfeit.
- c. The opposing team is not required to “adjust down” when a team cannot field the required number of players but may do so to show sportsmanship.
- d. If a team “borrows” a player(s) from another team to give them the required number of players, the game will be recorded as a forfeit and the game may be played.

6. Coaches Conduct / Bench Fouls

- a. We ask that coaches maintain the spirit and the intent of our rules
- b. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their sidelines to include players, spectators, guests and their team staff.
- c. In all our recreational leagues the offense may have one coach on the field and they must be ten- yards deeper than their deepest player.
- d. In our recreational leagues one defensive coach may stand in the defensive huddle but must be off the field before the snap. Game officials will strive to allow coaches to clear the field in an expeditious manner but must keep the game moving. Coaches may be called for Delay of Game if they can’t clear the field promptly.
- e. Coaches who elect to be on the field cannot interfere with a play or imminent play in any physical or verbal way (examples may include inadvertent screening or blocking, blocking the lines-of- sight, impeding a player or official, becoming entangled in the play or distracting from their opponents’ cadence). If they do, the team may incur a bench foul.
- f. Coaches are prohibited from “chasing the play down field” in the way a game official does.
- g. Coaches are responsible to know down and distance.
- h. Coaches, or any other person, are not allowed in the restricted area along the sidelines

7. Our Basic Field Layout / Diagram

- a. Each team will pass through one “No-Run-Zone” as indicated by the directional arrows.
- b. The “X” is where most possessions will begin (5-yard line) and marked with a colored disc cone.
- c. The ball will be spotted at the 5-yard line for a touchback or a safety, unless moved by penalty.
- d. The only first down line-to-gain on the field is at mid-field and marked with a colored disc cone.
- e. A colored disc cone will mark where “No-Run-Zones” begin.
- f. Team boxes are established well off the sidelines and between the 10-yard lines.
- g. No player or non-player may be in the restricted area during a live ball. This area is 2 yards wide from the sidelines.



RULE 2: UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT

1. Safety

- a. Players should wear a protective mouthpiece *in their mouths* while on the field-of-play (optional).
- b. Players should wear pants or shorts that do not have pockets, belt loops, zippers, or exposed draw strings.
- c. Players must wear closed-toed shoes. Cleats with exposed metal are never allowed.
- d. Players may wear eye protection to include prescription glasses or flexible sunglasses.
- e. Jewelry that might endanger players must be removed before play or taped to the body.
- f. At the recreational levels players may wear stocking-style caps, baseball caps or soft shelled helmets. Baseball caps must be turned backwards.
- g. Soft shelled helmets are NOT required.

2. Flag Belts

- a. Players must wear flag belts provided by PARSIPPANY PAL.
- b. Our flag leagues use a one-piece, clip-on belt (pop-socket flags) with two permanently attached hanging, branded (PARSIPPANY PAL), yellow high-visibility vinyl flags.
- c. All teams in the same league must all use the same version of our branded flags during play.
- d. Flag belts must be worn as designed and be free of obstructions or alterations.
- e. Altered or tampered flags could result in an ejection or forfeiture.
- f. Flags cannot be the same or similar color as a player's pants/shorts. Similar is at the official's discretion.
- g. If a player loses his/her flags, there is a \$5 charge for a replacement set.

3. Team Jerseys

- a. Players must wear a PARSIPPANY PAL - approved jersey.
- b. If a player does not have a team jersey with him it is permissible, at staff's discretion, to wear a street shirt. –
- c. It is the team coach's responsibility to clear a non-team jersey/street shirt with the game officials and check player registration with PAL Staff before the game.
- d. All players must wear their team jersey as an outer garment. It is not permissible to wear jackets, rain gear, etc., over the team jersey while on the field-of-play. It is permitted while in the team box area.
- e. Players must strive to ensure their jerseys are long enough to remain tucked in during the entire play. If a jersey is not long enough to remain tucked in, the player must wear the flag belt over the jersey.
- f. When a shirt is untucked at the snap a "holding" call on a defender is unlikely when a defender is making a fair and legal attempt at the ball carrier's flag and ends up with their opponents' jersey in lieu of the flag belt. Keep shirts tucked.

The PAL will provide LEAGUE APPROVED GAME BALLS

RULE 3: CLOCK MECHANICS & OPERATIONS

1. General Timing Procedures

- a. Games are 40 minutes long (two 20-minute halves).
- b. Halftime is two minutes.
- c. Each team will have two timeout per half.
- d. Team timeout is 30 seconds. After 30 seconds the official will audibly place the offense on a 25- second play clock.
- e. Timeouts will not roll over from the first half to the second half.

- f. Team coaches are encouraged to yell “clock?” or “clock check?” in lieu of “time?” to avoid confusion when requesting a team timeout.
- g. The clock will run continuously during the first half unless a team timeout is used or play is stopped by an official (example: deal with an injury, challenge, referee conference, etc.).
- h. A stop clock or pro clock will be in effect in the final two minutes of the second half.
- i. Officials will give a verbal two-minute warning as close as possible to the actual two-minute mark but will not interrupt a live play.
- j. The time remaining on the clock should be announced after every play inside the final two minutes of the game.
- k. The clock will not run during point-after-touchdown attempts (PATs) in final two minutes of the game.
- l. Our staff may enter the field during any dead ball situation to address matters they believe should not wait till half-time or the end of the game by calling a “Staff Time-Out”.
- m. The offense has a 25-second play clock to snap the ball before a delay of game penalty is assessed.

RULE 4: COIN TOSS

- a. Game officials will confirm with team coaches during the coin toss that the teams are prepared to play in a sportsmanlike manner and are properly and legally equipped. Safety is everyone’s responsibility.
- b. Game officials will issue a warning about unsportsmanlike conduct, excessive rough play, etc., during the coin toss.
- c. First possession is decided using a coin toss. The official will decide who calls it.
- d. The head official will ask the “calling captain” his choice of “heads” or “tails”. The official will ask the opposing team to repeat and confirm the choice before flipping the coin. The head official will then confirm the call.
- e. The team winning the toss shall choose one of the following options (Game officials: Always ask a coach, do not let players make the decision):
 - a. Begin on offense.
 - b. Begin on defense.
 - c. Designate which goal their team will defend.
- f. The loser of the coin toss shall make a choice of the remaining options.
- g. The team that started the game on offense will start the second half on defense.
- h. Teams will play in the opposite direction in the first half and the second half.
- i. In order to keep to schedule, the game clock shall start one minute after the coin toss formalities have ended whether the teams have taken the field or not.

RULE 5: SCORING

1. Scoring Chart

Touchdown	6 points with the chance to go for a 1, 2, or 3 point after touchdown attempt (PAT)
Point After Touchdown (PAT)	1 point from the 5-yard line, pass play only 2 points from the 10-yard line, run or pass 3 points from mid-field, run or pass
Safety	2 points will be awarded to the defense and possession of the ball at the 5- yard line (going out)
Forfeits	Recorded as 27-0

2. Point After Touchdown (PAT)

- a. Following a touchdown, once the scoring team’s coach has informed an official of which point conversion choice they want to attempt and the ball is either spotted or the ready-to-play whistle is blown, the decision cannot be changed unless the scoring team uses a team timeout.
- b. If a penalty occurs during an extra point attempt, the penalty will be assessed but the extrapoint value remains the same.
- c. Point conversion choices cannot be changed after a penalty.
- d. Personal and unsportsmanlike fouls by the defense on a successful PAT are enforced on the next possession, or next spot in overtime periods.
- e. Fouls committed by the offense on a successful PAT will result in penalty yardage assessed and the down replayed.
- f. Fouls committed by the offense on an unsuccessful PAT will be declined by rule (exception: personal and unsportsmanlike fouls)
- g. Fouls by the offense during a PAT attempt that carry a loss-of-down penalty (flag guarding, illegal advancement, illegal pass, etc.) will result in the PAT being “no good” and the attempt will not be repeated.
- h. Fouls by the defense during an unsuccessful PAT attempt will result in a retry after the options are administered. The offense may opt to accept or decline penalty yardage before the retry.
- i. Interceptions on PATs may be returned by the defense for 2-points.

3. Fouls during PAT attempts (REVIEW)

	Successful Attempt	Unsuccessful Attempt	Penalties That Carry Loss-of-Down	Unsportsmanlike And Personal Fouls
Foul by Offense	Yardage assessed, Retry the attempt	Attempt no good, no retry	Attempt no good, no retry	Carries over to the next possession
Foul by Defense	Declined, attempt is good	Yardage assessed, Retry the attempt	Not applicable	Carries over to the next possession

4. Safeties (*Team A is the team that initiated the snap. Team B is the team that began the play on defense*)

- a. A safety occurs when the ball becomes dead in Team A’s end zone or Team A commits a foul in their end zone.
 - i. Examples include:
 1. Team A caused the ball to become dead in their own end zone (fumbles, muffed snap, backward pass that hits the ground).
 2. Team A player in possession of the ball has his flag pulled in his own end zone.
 3. Team A’s ball carrier goes out-of-bounds behind his own goal line.
 4. Team A commits a foul inside their own end zone.
- b. Team B exceptions:
 - i. A flag pull immediately after an interception by Team B in the end zone is a touchback, it’s not a safety.
 - ii. A Team B player going out-of-bounds behind the goal line immediately after an interception in the end zone is a touchback, it’s not a safety.
 - iii. If the ball is intercepted by Team B in the end zone and Team B fouls in the end zone before the ball is brought back into the field-of-play (example: flag guarding),

the result of the play is a touchback, and the foul will be administered from the touchback spot. This will not result in a safety.

- iv. If the ball is intercepted Team B between the 5-yard line and the goal line and the player's momentum takes him into the end zone where the ball becomes dead in Team B's possession ... OR ... Team B fouls in the end zone (example: flag guarding), the ball belongs to Team B and the penalty will be assessed from the spot where it was intercepted. It is a touchback. It is not a safety.

5. Onside Play Option

- a. This option is only available to the team behind in score during the final two minutes of the game and only immediately after the trailing team has scored and completed their PAT attempt.
- b. This is an untimed down.
- c. This option is not available after the trailing team has scored a safety.
- d. This option is never available to the team ahead in points.
- e. After the trailing team has scored and completed the PAT attempt, the team coach of the trailing team must inform the game officials they intend to attempt an onside play.
- f. The ball is placed at the offensive team's 5-yard line, going out.
- g. The one play is treated exactly like a fourth down play including the assessment of penalties.
- h. The offense must advance the ball to or past midfield after all live ball penalties have been assessed in order to retain the ball.
- i. Dead ball penalties will not be considered in determining if the line-to-gain was achieved.
- j. If a Roughing penalty occurs the offense will receive a 10-yard penalty and repeat the down, they will not automatically retain the ball.
- k. If the offense retains the ball, the next zone-line-to-gain will be established (i.e., goal line) and clock operations will go back to normal stop clock procedures.
- l. If the offense is unsuccessful with its onside play attempt, the defense will take possession of the ball at mid-field unless the attempt ends up as an interception returned to the end zone for six points and a PAT attempt.
- m. There are multiple onside plays available in a game as long as the provisions of lines 1-5 of this section are still valid.

6. Mercy Rule

- a. The mercy rule will be invoked if the score differential is 27 or more points in the second half.
- b. When this occurs, the final score will be recorded as the score at the time the mercy rule was invoked. No more score recording will be done.
- c. If both coaches agree, the game may continue as a "scrimmage" and a running clock will be used.
- d. Once the Mercy Rule is invoked and coaches agree to continue the game as a scrimmage, the trailing team will begin their possessions at mid-field for the remainder of the game.
- e. Officials reserve the right to end the game if teams or coaches are not acting in a sportsmanship like manner (for example, running up the score as punishment, trash-talking, rough play, etc.) Please play and coach in the spirit of the league.

RULE 6: OFFENSE

1. General Offense

- a. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped. After all players have "set" one player may go "in motion".
- b. There are no "free plays" for the offense. After the game official blows the ready-for-play

whistle and the snapper puts his hand on the ball, no player may enter the neutral zone until the ball is moved to start the snap.

- c. Snaps must be made between the center's legs.
- d. Teams will have four downs to gain a first down at mid-field.
- e. Once across mid-field and awarded a new set of downs, teams will have four downs to score unless awarded an automatic first down by penalty.
- f. On fourth down coaches must decide if they want to "go for it" or "punt".
- g. If they "go for it" and fail to achieve the line-to-gain the opposing team takes the ball from where it became dead.
- h. If they choose to "punt" a game official will move the ball to the opponent's 5-yard line, change of possession.
- i. Any quick or abrupt movement by a single player or multiple offensive players in unison, which simulates the snap, is a false start. This includes, but is not limited to, a quarterback thrusting his hands forward when there is not a simultaneous snap. This is a judgment call.
- j. All players must substitute from their sideline only. This allows the defense to be aware of their presence and avoids deceptive plays by the offense.
- k. It is a dead ball foul if any player on offense enters the neutral zone before the snap.
- l. "Center Sneaks" are not allowed. The ball must completely leave the center's hands. The center must take at least two steps backward to receive a hand off.
- m. Direct snaps are legal to any player not on the line-of-scrimmage. The player receiving the snap is considered the passer and cannot run the ball past the line-of-scrimmage unless rushed or pursued by the defense.
- n. Ball carriers may use backward passes and legal pitches behind the line-of-scrimmage.
- o. The ball will be declared dead if any portion of the ball carrier's body other than his hands or feet (knee, elbow, buttocks, or ball-in-hand, etc.) touches the ground.
- p. The offense is always responsible for quickly retrieving the ball and returning it to an official or to the line-of-scrimmage at the end of each play.

2. Blocking / Illegal Screening

- a. Blocking is obstructing or physically contacting an opponent with any part of the body.
- b. Illegal Screening is when an offensive player materially impedes the defender from getting to the player with the ball by abruptly stepping in the defender's path or taking a position (two or less normal strides away) in a defender's line of travel that forces the defender to abruptly veer around his opponent. This is a judgment call.
- c. Physical-contact blocking (as seen in traditional football) and non-contact blocking "screen blocking" (as seen in basketball) are not allowed even if unintentional. This is a difficult transition for traditional football players.
- d. Ball carriers cannot use their teammates as a screen by "juking around" or "hiding behind" them.
- e. A penalty may be called even when an offensive player accidentally obstructs a defender.
- f. Offensive players must be aware that they may be penalized for screening by simply chasing the play and providing an inadvertent block or screen.
- g. Passers caught between a ball carrier and a rushing defender will not be considered to be screening if there is no clear and obvious attempt to be doing so.
- h. "Pick plays" (often seen in basketball) or "rub routes" are not allowed as these plays are designed to initiate contact or to screen-out defenders. Receivers going down field after the snap may not initiate contact with an opponent.

3. Fumbles / Muffs

- a. The ball becomes dead when it hits the ground.
- b. If a passed, pitched, muffed (uncontrolled touch) or fumbled ball is intercepted before becoming dead it remains a "live ball".

- c. Forward fumbles that hit the ground will be marked where the ball carrier's feet were when he lost control and not the spot where the ball hit the ground.
- d. Backward fumbles are marked where they hit the ground. Backward passes that hit the ground are considered fumbles.
- e. Muffed snaps will be marked where the ball hits the ground.

4. Running/Jumping/Diving/No Run Zones

- a. The player initially taking the snap (QB) may not run the ball past the line-of-scrimmage unless he is rushed or pursued by a defender.
- b. Jump cuts or advancing between two defenders is allowed if they do not initiate noteworthy contact with the defender or put another player's safety at risk. This is a judgment call by the game officials.
- c. No player may hurdle over another player.
- d. Ball carriers may not dive, lunge, or fall forward in a perceived intentional manner to advance the ball or achieve a line-to-gain. This is a judgment call.
- e. Diving by the defense to capture a ball carrier's flag is legal. However, game officials may still make judgment calls about contact. Teaching Point: Play the flag, not the player's body.
- f. Ball carriers must make every effort to avoid a defender who has established a stationary position.
- g. Runners may leave their feet to avoid collision or falling on another player.
- h. "No Run Zones" are enforced as a safety measure to discourage power-runs, diving, etc., near the goal line. When the ball is spotted inside a "No Run Zone" the offense must execute a forward pass that breaks the line-of-scrimmage.

5. Flag Guarding/Stiff-Arming

- a. The ball carrier's flags must be accessible to the defense throughout the play.
- b. Flag guarding is the act of a ball carrier denying a defender the opportunity to capture his flag in any physical way.
- c. Flags may not be tucked in pants, tucked under jerseys, worn improperly, looped around the waist belt, or knotted.
- d. The ball carrier shall not flag guard by flailing of arms, using their hands, arms, elbows, or extremely dipped shoulders to deny the opportunity of an opponent to remove a flag.
- e. The ball carrier may not swat a defender's hands away nor pin the flag against his body using the ball or hands.
- f. An official may call flag guarding if he feels that a ball carrier's natural running motion gave the ball carrier a decisive advantage over the defender and the running motion caused part of the ball carrier's body to block a de-flagging attempt.
- g. What constitutes flag guarding is up to the official's judgment. We recommend you carry the ball with your hands held high on the body to avoid flag guarding. This is one of the most difficult transitions for traditional football players.
- h. The ball carrier may bend at the knees to dip low, side cut, skip, or take short hops.
- i. Tampering with the flag in any way to gain advantage is illegal and will be dealt with under the Unfair Acts Rule.

Examples of flag guarding: stiff arming, pinning the flag, swatting, using the ball as a stiff arm, etc.



6. Pass Plays

- a. An audible 7-second “sack clock” is administered by an official. The required cadence is a consistent 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, Sack!
- b. When a sack occurs, it is treated as an incomplete pass and the ball is returned to scrimmage.
- c. Only one forward pass per play.
- d. Once the ball has passed the line-of-scrimmage it cannot be returned to behind the line-of-scrimmage and thrown forward legally.
- e. To be a legal pass both feet of the passer must be in or behind the neutral zone when the ball is released.
- f. All offensive players are eligible to receive a pass unless they have stepped out-of-bounds of their own accord.
- g. Offensive players may not re-establish themselves in the field of play or participate in anyway once they have stepped out-of-bounds on their own accord.
- h. When an offensive player touches the ball after stepping out-of-bounds it will result in a foul for illegal participation.
- i. Any offensive player who receives either a forward or backward handoff behind scrimmage can pass the ball from behind the line-of-scrimmage.
- j. If the passer’s flag has been pulled while the passer still has the ball in his hand, it is a sack.
- k. There is no allowance given for the passer’s arm being in motion at the time of the sack. Ball-in-hand at all equals a sack.
- l. An underhand forward pass (shovel pass) is legal and if it is dropped, it is ruled an incomplete pass, not a fumble.
- m. A backward pass that is dropped or incomplete is ruled a fumble. The ball will be spotted where it hits the ground.
- n. Any player, including the passer, may catch and advance a loose ball that has not been grounded.
- o. Intentional Grounding: A passer may not throw the ball into an area behind the line-of-scrimmage where there is no offensive player to avoid a loss of yardage or conserve time. It is legal for the passer to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball to the ground immediately (spiking) after receiving either a direct hand-to-hand snap or from the “shot gun” formation.
- p. CATCHES: A pass is completed when the receiver simultaneously places at least one foot inbound and maintains possession. If the ball comes out of the receiver’s grasp due to contact with the ground or while going to the ground the pass is incomplete. Simultaneous catches between a defensive and offensive player become dead automatically and go to the offense.

RULE 8: DEFENSE

1. General Defense

- a. Stripping or attempting to strip the ball from a player’s hand, including the quarterback, is illegal.

2. Rushing the Passer

- a. Before each play is allowed to begin an official will mark off a 10-yard rush line.
- b. Defensive players that “rush the passer” must begin the play at this 10-yard mark or further away from the line-of-scrimmage.
- c. Players not rushing the passer may defend the line-of-scrimmage but not enter the backfield unless the ball is handed-off, passed, pitched or touches another player.
Teaching Point: Run- Pass-Options invite defenders to legally cross the line-of-

scrimmage.

- d. If the ball makes contact (touches) with any player other than the player who took the snap, the defense is eligible to cross the line-of-scrimmage. They may elect to or not.
- e. If the ball makes contact (touches) with any player other than the player who took the snap and the defense does not cross the line-of-scrimmage and pursue the ball carrier, the player that took the snap is not permitted to run the ball past scrimmage. Simply touching the ball to another player does not permit the passer to run.
- f. A defensive player that *insignificantly crosses* the rush line before the snap and immediately self-corrects and returns to his side of the rush line before he rushes is not penalized. Think “re-set”.

3. Roughing the Passer

- a. During the passer’s drop and throughout his entire throwing motion, the passer cannot be touched above the upper waist in any material way.
- b. Defensive players may not “crash” the passer’s throwing arm, shoulder, or body even if the ball is touched first.
- c. Making contact with the passer while blocking or attempting to block a pass may result in a roughing the passer penalty.

4. Flag Pulling Mechanics

- a. Flag pulling is the legal removal of a flag from an opponent who has possession of the ball.
- b. No player has the right to over aggressively “body up”, “wrap up”, “play through”, “bull rush”, charge, spear or lead with a shoulder, tackle, or attempt to tackle an opponent even to capture a flag.
- c. Pushing out on the sidelines is not permitted unless the defense was making a fair, legal, and reasonable attempt to pull the ball carrier’s flags, i.e., the defender’s hands were aimed low at the ball carrier’s hips and flags and not high up on the body.
- d. Pushing, striking, holding, slapping, or tripping while attempting to pull a flag is not permitted.
- e. Defenders may dive to attempt to pull the ball carrier’s flag, but this must be done in a safe manner in the judgment of the covering official.
- f. A defensive player may not pull the flag of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
- g. Any defensive player who removes the flag from an offensive ball carrier is encouraged to show good sportsmanship and hold the flag above his head to assist the officials in locating the spot where the capture occurred.
- h. Players may be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct for throwing, spiking, obscuring, or delaying the ball carrier in recovering his pulled flag.
- i. If a ball carrier’s flag inadvertently comes apart or falls off during the play, the ball carrier will be ruled down where the flag belt detached.
- j. If a receiver has an incomplete or missing flag belt when he catches the ball the play will be called dead where the receiver caught the ball.
- k. When a ball carrier flag guards and a defensive player pulls the ball carrier’s flag simultaneously, no penalty will be called for flag guarding.
- l. A missing flag belt is a violation not a penalty and will not delay the game or stop a live play.

5. Pass Coverage / Interference

- a. This is a “free release” league.
- b. Defenders cannot “chuck”, “jam”, “bump”, “press”, etc., a receiver.
- c. Receivers may not intentionally make contact with defenders as they progress down field.
- d. A player may “find” their opponent by reaching out and placing a hand on him if touching does not delay or impede him. This is not considered pass interference.
- e. Pass interference normally occurs above the waist; entangled feet are not considered

pass interference.

- f. Incidental contact is not considered pass interference.
- g. Contact away from the direction of the pass is not considered pass interference but may be a separate foul.
- h. Pass interference indicators are:
 - i. Shoving or pushing off to create separation.
 - ii. Making noteworthy contact before the ball arrives.
 - iii. Playing through the back of an opponent.
 - iv. Hook and turn: grabbing the torso and turning an opponent before the pass arrives.
 - v. Early material contact by a defender who is not playing or looking for the ball.
 - vi. Arm bars, restricting, or grabbing.
 - vii. Blocking downfield before the ball has been touched, commonly seen through “pick plays”.
 - viii. Cutting off the path of a receiver by being in front of him and slowing down or being beside him and “riding” them off his path to the ball.
- i. Whether a pass is catchable or uncatchable has no bearing on pass interference.
- j. All passes are considered catchable.

6. Interceptions

- a. Intercepted passes remain live and may be returned for points.
- b. Intercepted passes during Point After Touchdown (PAT) attempts may be returned for 2 points.
- c. In the event of an interception, the intercepting team must secure the ball with “clean hands” to be legal i.e., they must not have committed a foul before or simultaneous to the interception.
- d. If the intercepting team gained the interception with “clean hands” they will be awarded a first down where the ball becomes dead (flag pull, stepping out-of-bounds, fumbled, etc.)
- e. Fouls by the intercepting team after an interception will be assessed either from the spot of the foul or the end of the run (whichever affects the intercepting team worse).

RULE 9: OFFICIATING

1. Momentum Rule

- a. If the ball is intercepted between the 5-yard line and the goal line and the player’s momentum takes him into the end zone where the ball becomes dead in his possession or the intercepting team fouls in the end zone (example: flag guarding) the ball belongs to the intercepting team and the penalty will be assessed from the spot where it was intercepted. It is not a touchback. It is not a safety.

2. Marking / Spotting the Ball

- a. When the ball becomes dead it will be re-spotted near the center of the field. A hash mark system will not be used.
- b. The ball will be spotted wherever the ball was at the time of the flag pull or wherever the ball carrier left the field-of-play.
- c. A ball spotter/ball marker or line judge shall be used to mark the line-of-scrimmage. The marker will be placed on the sideline adjacent to the line-of-scrimmage.
- d. If a ball carrier’s flag inadvertently comes apart or falls off during the play, the ball carrier will be ruled down where the flag belt detached.
- e. If the ball is intercepted in the end zone and the intercepting team fouls in the end zone before the ball is brought back into the field (example: flag guarding), the result of the play will be a touchback and the foul will be administered from the touchback spot. No safety.

3. Forfeits and Ending the Game

- a. The game may not end with a penalty unless it is declined. All offensive loss-of-down penalties that occur with time expired in either half will end the game or half.
- b. Offsetting penalties will not extend the half or game.
- c. Forfeits that occur before the contest are recorded as 27-0. Forfeits that occur once the contest is underway will be recorded as that score or the actual score when the forfeit occurred, whichever is greater.
- d. If a team plays in a habitual rough manner the game may be forfeited.
- e. No period or half can end if there is an obvious timing error or any other irregularity has occurred.

4. Cool Down Period

- a. All unsportsmanlike conduct and egregious personal fouls will be accompanied by a cool down period at a minimum.
- b. Before, or instead of, disqualification or ejection an official may order, but is not required to, a player a “cool down” period if the official chooses.
- c. Players should think of this “cool down” as a warning before being disqualified or ejected and be thankful for it.
- d. This period will consist of five plays and will be tracked by the official who ordered it.
- e. The player must be off the field for five plays regardless. A score or other event does not release the player back to the field. He must stay off the field for five plays.

5. Disqualifications and Ejections

- a. Disqualifications, Ejections and Unsportsmanlike Conduct are the only three penalties that cannot be declined. They are completely the option of the game officials. The yardage portion of the penalty may be declined but the infraction itself cannot.
- b. The difference between disqualification and ejection is completely the determination of the presiding referee and may not be appealed.
- c. Disqualifications are normally reserved to address lower-level transgressions.
- d. A disqualification will last for the remainder of the game the player was disqualified for.
- e. A disqualified player may play in the next scheduled game.
- f. An ejected player may not play in the next scheduled game. They must sit out at least one additional game.
- g. Any official may disqualify a player.
- h. To eject a player all officials must agree and it must be reported to the field manager before play resumes.
- i. Ejections and disqualifications may occur for but are not limited to:
- j. A second unsportsmanlike or personal foul on a single player
- k. Any act deemed egregious by the head official
- l. Disrespectfully addressing or intentionally touching a game official
- m. Four unsportsmanlike and /or egregious personal fouls by one team (forfeiture)
- n. Fighting

6. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- a. Disrespect toward an official, coach, spectator or another player will constitute unsportsmanlike conduct.
- b. Players shall not “showboat”, taunt, spike the ball or flag belt toward an opponent, or be excessive in any way, to include using force against or verbally attack or harass another player.
- c. Celebrations are fine but keep them short, conservative, and not directed at an opponent.
- d. Use of inflammatory words or gestures is prohibited.
- e. If unsportsmanlike conduct occurs during a live play and the team did not score on that play, the penalty will be assessed from the new line-of-scrimmage, i.e., it will be added to

or subtracted from the end of the play.

- f. Players cannot make contact that is considered unnecessary or provokes roughness.
- g. If roughness is habitual for a single player, disqualification or ejection procedures may apply.
- h. If roughness is habitual for a team, forfeiture procedures may apply.

7. Fighting

- a. Fighting will lead to immediate ejection, possible suspension, or lifetime exclusion.
- b. Fighting is any act or attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage a player or non-player in a combative manner unrelated to football. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempting to strike, or striking with the arms, hands, legs, feet, or foreign object whether or not there was contact.
- c. Any player who comes off the sideline to participate in a fight will be disqualified or ejected.
- d. If either team leaves the bench during a fight the game will be forfeited immediately.

8. Bench Fouls or Warnings

- a. Teams may incur bench fouls for a variety of reasons to include but not limited to:
- b. Players or non-players interfering with play or an official
- c. Disrespect toward officials or other players or non-players.
- d. Players or non-players in the designated restricted zone during a live play
- e. Non-players on the field of play
- f. Teams not remaining in the designated team box.
- g. Coaches on the field or becoming entangled in a live play.

9. Inadvertent Whistle

- a. If an official blows an inadvertent whistle, he will declare the ball dead where the ball was at the time of the inadvertent whistle. The team against which the action offended may have the option of accepting the play (i.e., the yards gained and the down advances) or replaying the down from the original line of scrimmage.
- b. If the ball was in the air when the inadvertent whistle occurred, it will be returned to the line-of- scrimmage and the down will be replayed.
- c. If a penalty marker is thrown before an inadvertent whistle, an accepted penalty will be administered as in any other play situation. When the foul is accepted, the inadvertent whistle is disregarded.
- d. When an inadvertent whistle is triggered by an unfair act, or an act used to deceive or confuse a game official, the officiating crew may use their collective judgment to fairly adjudicate the situation. It may result in a yardage awarded, a score granted, and/or the guilty player disqualified, etc. It is solely up to the officiating crew to decide.

10. Unfair Acts Rule

- a. Neither team shall commit an act which, in the judgment of the game officials, tends to make a travesty of the game.
- b. The head official or other staff members may enforce any penalty or remedy any situation with anything he considers equitable -- including awarding of a first down, a line-zone-to gain, a replay, a score, forfeiture, removal of forfeiture or any administrative issue or situation or not covered specifically in these rules.
- c. If an ineligible player (example: not on the roster, previously disqualified or previously ejected) is discovered by any means (example: observation, challenge, etc.) participating in a live ball play, that team will forfeit the game and the Unfair Act is assessed to the head coach.

11. Last Player Rule and Penalty






- a. If the last defensive player physically contains the ball carrier (e.g., bear hugs, flagrantly holds, pushes the ball carrier out-of-bounds, tackles, attempts to tackle, etc.) without making a clear, safe and legal attempt to pull the ball carrier's flag or commits illegal contact, the offensive team will be awarded at least one line-zone-to-gain distance from the spot of foul and an automatic first down.
- b. In the spirit of the Unfair Acts Rule, officials have the discretion to award a score if a flagrant foul occurred inside the final line-zone-to-gain if they reasonably believe a foul is the only thing that prevented the ball carrier from scoring. To evoke this rule there must be total agreement of all game officials who saw the foul.



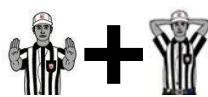








12. Rule Modification



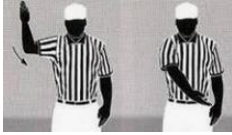






- a. Modifications of these rules for local sensitivities and practicalities may be accomplished with the coordination and approval of the Director of the Parsippany PAL.

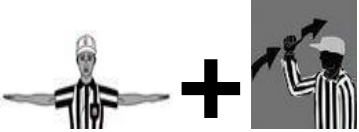
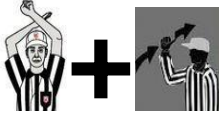
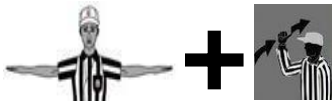
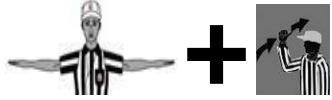
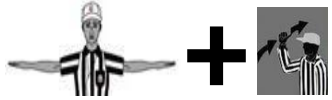





6 on 6 PENALTY CHART



- Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal when yardage is more than half the distance.
- All penalties may be declined except cool downs, unsportsmanlike, disqualifications, or ejections
- The yardage portion of any penalty may be declined.
- Most fouls carry a 5-yard penalty except those that are bad contact or bad conduct.
- Where to administer a penalty is determined by the action that happened during the down.
- Administer the penalty from the line-of-scrimmage if the foul occurred during a dead period or live loose ball period (pass play). The exception to this rule is Roughing the Passer, see below.
- Administer the penalty for offensive plays (when the ball is in possession of a ball carrier) from the spot of the foul or the end of the run whichever penalizes the offending team the most (flag guard, screening, blocking, intentional grounding, holding, illegal advancement, illegal pass, stripping, charging, personal fouls etc.)

5-Yard Dead Ball Penalties	Yards	Signal
Delay of Game (whistle action dead)	5	
False Start / Snap Infraction / Illegal Procedure (whistle action dead)	5	
Offside / Encroachment (whistle action dead)	5	
Illegal Motion / Shift (whistle action dead)	5	 <small>illegal shift - 2 yards illegal motion - 1 yard</small>
5-Yard Loss of Down Penalties	Yards	Signal
Illegal Advancement Early Run (offense), Diving, Hurdling, No Run Zone Violation, etc.)	5	

Flag Guarding / Stiff Arm	5	
Illegal Screen (no physical contact)	5	
Offensive Pass Interference	5	
Intentional Grounding	5	
Illegal Forward Pass / Handling	5	
5-Yard Penalties	Yards	Signal
Illegal Rush (Defense)	5	
Stripping or Attempted Strip	5	
Holding	5	
Early Flag Pull (Defense)	5	
Defensive Pass Interference	5 + Auto First Down	
Illegal Substitution (too many players during live play)	5	

10-Yard Penalties	Yards	Signal
<p>Charging / Bull Rush</p> <p>(possibly an egregious personal foul, automatic cool down, possible disqualification or ejection)</p>	10	
<p>Blocking (physical contact)</p>	10	
<p>Roughing the Passer (Defense)</p> <p>(possibly an egregious personal foul, automatic cool down, possible disqualification or ejection). May be administered from the previous line-of-scrimmage or added to the end of the run, offended coach choice.</p>	10 + Auto First Down	
<p>Unsportsmanlike Conduct</p>	10	
<p>Unnecessary Roughness</p> <p>(possibly an egregious personal foul, automatic cool down, possible disqualification or ejection)</p>	10	
<p>Leading with Shoulder</p> <p>(possibly an egregious personal foul, automatic cool down, possible disqualification or ejection)</p>	10	
<p>Tackling</p> <p>(possibly an egregious personal foul, automatic cool down, possible disqualification or ejection)</p>	10	
<p>Illegal Contact</p> <p>(possibly an egregious personal foul, automatic cool down, possible disqualification or ejection)</p>	10	
Disqualification / Ejection	Yards	Signal
<p>Fighting (Auto Ejection)</p>	10	

Second Unsportsmanlike by Same Player / Coach (Disqualification / Ejection)	10	
Second Egregious Personal Foul by Same Player (Disqualification / Ejection)	10	
Fourth Unsportsmanlike or Egregious Personal Fouls by same team	10	
Intentionally Touching or Disrespectfully Addressing Game Official	10	
Habitual Roughness	10	
Special Enforcement	Yards	Signal
Bench Warning	Warning	
Bench Foul	5, 10, 15 then 15 for all subsequent	
Illegal Touching	Loss of Down	
Last Player Rule (Defense)	Awarded at least one line-zone- to gain	
Unfair Acts	Referee's Discretion	

Cool Down (must be enforced on all unsportsmanlike conduct fouls and egregious person fouls at a minimum).	5 plays minimum may be more at official's discretion	
Mercy	When the point differential is 27 points or greater	

While this is a minimal-contact league, contact does occur on occasion. The vast majority of contact is unintentional and insignificant. Players, coaches, and spectators must understand that contact is impossible to avoid and is usually a result of bodies moving in space simultaneously and the nature of the sport. It is the job of each player, coach and official to keep contact to a minimum through self-control, training, and enforcement.