

# Portland Parks & Recreation Flag Football Rules

2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Grade League

## League Philosophy

This program exists to serve the needs of our youth. All involved should be allowed to participate on an equal basis in a low competitive atmosphere. The primary focus should be on individual development (learning all the positions), FUNdamentals and teamwork. The main emphasis is on having fun, involving the family, and developing a positive self-image. Good sportsmanship is always expected from the players, coaches, and parents.

## Coach/Player Conduct

Coaches whose conduct conflicts with league philosophy may be reprimanded. Coaches are responsible for their own conduct as well as the conduct of their players and spectators. Any coach who is ejected by an official for misconduct shall be ineligible for the next game. The recreation department retains the right to further disciplinary action if the infraction warrants it. All ejections need to be reported to the recreation office the next day after the incident.

## Sportsmanship

To keep up with our philosophy and good sportsmanship, remember to shake hands with your opponents at the conclusion of the game.

## Format

- A. Teams will field five (5) players. If a team has less than five (5) players, they may borrow players from the opposing team. Teams will not play shorthanded.

## Attire

- A. Rubber cleats are allowed but not required – NO metal spikes
- B. All players are required to provide their own and wear a protective mouthpiece or mouthguard.

## Possessions

- A. Winner of the coin toss will receive first possession.
- B. The offense takes possession of the ball at its own 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield for a first down. Once a team gains a first down, it has four (4) plays to reach the end zone.
- C. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.
- D. If the offense fails to cross midfield, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.
- E. All possession changes, except interceptions, start at the offense's 5-yard line.
- F. Interceptions can be returned but not on conversion attempts after a touchdown
- G. Teams change sides at the start of the second half. Possession is given to the team that started the game on defense.

## Timing/Overtime

- A. Games consist of two (2) twenty-four (24) minute halves with a running clock.
- B. If the score is tied at the end of two halves, the game is considered a tie. There is not overtime.
- C. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has **30** seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning, then delay-of-game penalties will be enforced.
- D. Each team has one (1) 60-second timeout per game.

## General Offense

- A. The ball must be snapped between the center's legs to start a play. Shotgun snaps are allowed.

## Scoring

- A. Touchdown: 7 Points
- B. NO EXTRA POINT ATTEMPTS
- C. NO SAFETIES – Reset the ball at the previous line of scrimmage.

## Blocking/Screens

- A. No blocking or screening at ANY time
- B. Offensive players must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage.  
No running with the ball carrier.

## Running

- A. The quarterback cannot run with the ball **beyond** the line of scrimmage.
- B. Offense may use multiple handoffs **behind** the line of scrimmage.
- C. NO laterals or pitches **beyond** the line of scrimmage.
- D. The player who takes the handoff is allowed to throw downfield if they are behind the line of scrimmage.
- E. Once the ball is handed off, defenses may cross the line of scrimmage.
- F. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to advance the ball. No diving.
- G. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

## Receiving

- A. All players are eligible to receive passes.
- B. Only one player at a time is allowed in motion.
- C. A player must have one foot inbounds when making a catch.

## Passing

- A. The quarterback has a seven (7) second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off; the seven second rule is no longer in effect.
- B. Passes must be thrown behind the line of scrimmage, including feet.
  - i. Failure to comply, results in a loss of down.
- C. Interceptions returns are allowed.
- D. If a player in motion receives the snap, he is the quarterback and may not be rushed but is subject to the pass clock

## Dead Balls

- A. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball, in a timely manner.
- B. Play is ruled dead when:
  - i. Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
  - ii. Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - iii. Touchdown or a safety is scored.
  - iv. Ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
  - v. Ball carrier's flag falls off
  - vi. Receiver catches the ball, but lost their flag prior to the catch

- C. Note: There are no fumble recoveries. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground with the team who fumbled it still in possession unless it was on fourth down, then the opposing team gains possession at their own 5-yard line .

## Rushing the Quarterback

- A. There will be NO RUSHING of the quarterback. The quarterback has seven (7) seconds to pass the ball or they are automatically down. Players may defend the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, all defenders may rush and go behind the line of scrimmage.

## Penalties

### Offensive Penalties – 5 Yards from Line of Scrimmage and Loss of that Down

- A. False start
- B. Offsides
- C. Illegal motion
- D. Offensive impeding
- E. Delay of game
- F. Offensive pass interference
- G. Too many players on the field
- H. Improper equipment (equipment tampering, lack of mouth guard, missing/improperly placed flags, etc.)

### Offensive Penalties – 5 Yards from the Spot of Infraction and Loss of that Down

- A. Flag guarding
- B. Intentional contact (blocking, charging, tackling, tripping, pushing, holding, obstructing, stiff arming)

### Defensive Penalties – 5 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage, Automatic First Down

- A. Roughing the passer
- B. Intentionally removing a receiver's flag before he/she contacts the ball
- C. Illegally rushing the quarterback
- D. Too many players on the field
- E. Coach interference
- F. Improper equipment (equipment tampering, lack of mouth guard, missing/improperly placed flags, etc.)

### Defensive Penalties – 5 Yards from the Spot of Infraction, Automatic First Down

- A. Defensive pass interference
- B. Intentional contact (blocking, charging, tackling, tripping, pushing, holding, obstructing, stiff arming)

## Inclement Weather

- A. Flag football is played in all types of weather; please dress accordingly.
- B. The Recreation Coordinator will decide whether we will attempt to start games. During the game, officials (coaches) will have the final word. Coaches and parents may call the inclement weather line at (517) 647-3207 or visit <https://www.portland-michigan.org/387/Inclement-Weather>.
- C. Messages will be posted no sooner than 4:30 PM on gamedays.