



Lancaster Youth Football

FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

*The winning team of a forfeited game will receive fourteen points for the point differential of that game. Teams with less than the required number of participants at the scheduled start time will forfeit the contest.

*The officiating will be done by Lancaster Parks & Recreation Youth Football appointed officials who are in absolute control of the game.

*Teams are responsible for keeping their spectators under control. Misconduct of spectators, players or coaches can result in assessment of a penalty, ejection or forfeiture of the game. Spectators must also remain in the area designated by the officials.

*The official and or supervisor have the power to make decisions on any matters or questions not specifically covered in the rules.

*The LANCASTER YOUTH FOOTBALL Flag Football Rules will govern play: Any and all rule changes at the sole discretion of Lancaster Parks & Recreation.

1. Team Requirements

- A team shall consist of the number of Players determined by Lancaster Youth Football. A team can play with a minimum of 7 players.
- The offensive team must have any 4 players on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap.
- Substitutions are allowed between plays and during time outs.

2. Equipment and Facilities

- All players must wear shoes.
- Rubber cleated shoes will be allowed. Open toe, open heel or hard soled shoes will not be allowed. No metal cleats.
- Pants and/or shorts with belt loops and/or pockets are strictly prohibited. A player may not turn his or her shorts inside out or tape his or her pockets in order to play.
- Towels may not hang from a participant's waist or otherwise interfere with the removal of a flag.
- Covering Flags: A team will get 2 warnings, then a 10 yard penalty will be assessed. (No Warnings will be given)
- All flag belts must be free of knots. Penalty: Unsportsmanlike conduct and ejection from the game.
- Equipment such as helmets, billed hats, bandana's, pads or braces worn above the waist, leg and knee braces made of hard, unyielding substances, casts and all jewelry are strictly prohibited. Knee braces made of hard, unyielding substances covered on both sides with all edges overlapped and any other hard substances covered with at least 1/2 inch of slow recovery rubber or similar material will be allowed.
- Teams must use flags and Footballs provided by Lancaster Youth Football. Shirts must be tucked in the pants at all times.

3. Start of the Game and Timing

- Toss of the Coin-Three minutes before the start of the game, the referee/LYF appointee will conduct a captain's meeting in which he or she will designate which captain shall call the toss of the coin. The captain winning the toss will have a choice of options for the first half or shall defer his/her option to the second half:
 - to choose whether his or her team will start on offense or defense.
 - to choose the goal his or her team will defend
 - The captain, not having the first choice of options for a half, shall exercise the remaining option.
- Two time-outs a half are allowed per team.
- The ball must be put into play no more than 60 seconds after the official has placed the ball.
- Games will consist of two 20 minute halves with a three minute half time. Timing will be continuous for the first half and second half. The clock will only stop on official time-outs, injuries and at Referee/LYF appointee discretions.

- A team will be given 60 seconds to commence play. A team in violation will be given a warning. Then on any other 60 second subsequent violations, the violating team will be penalized by loss of down.

4. Game Rules

- Field dimension are 50 yards long with 10 yard end zones.
- The ball will be placed on the 10 yard line after every touchdown.
- A team shall have four consecutive downs to advance to the next zone line to gain (and earn a first down). First down line will marked at the 25 yard line.
- The zone line to gain in any series shall be the zone in advance of the ball, unless distance has been lost due to penalty or failure to gain.
- A new series of downs will be awarded when a team moves the ball into the next zone. (Crossing the designated 25 yard line)
- Flag Belt Removal
 - When the flag belt is taken from the runner, the down shall end and the ball is declared dead. The spot of the ball is determined at the point where the clip of the flag belt becomes detached, not where the belt falls to the ground.
 - If a flag belt inadvertently falls off, a one hand tag between the shoulders and the knees constitutes a capture.
 - A player may leave their feet to remove a flag.
 - The ball becomes dead when:
 - a legal De flagging occurs.
 - the ball carrier touches the ground with any part of their body other than the hands or feet.
 - a fumble hits the ground.
 - a snap from the center touches the ground. Officials discretion on the call.
- Each member of the offensive team is eligible to receive a pass unless the player voluntarily goes out of bounds during the play.
- The center, after assuming the position for the snap and adjusting the ball, may not move nor change the position of the ball in a manner simulating the beginning of a play. The ball must be snapped in one continuous motion, not necessarily between the center's legs, from the spot designated by the ball marker. The ball may be moved with approval by the official due to poor field conditions. The player receiving the snap must be 2 yards from the line of scrimmage during a scrimmage play and 1 yard from the line of scrimmage for a punt. Penalty: Illegal procedure.
- Before the snap, all offensive players must come to a complete stop for at least 1 full second. Only one offensive player may be in motion, and may not be

moving towards the opponent's goal line at the time of the snap. If two or more players go in motion before the snap, then this is considered a shift and all players must come set for one full second prior to the snap.

- For a legal catch, a pass receiver must come down with at least one foot in bounds.
- Rush-The defense must line up at least 1 yard from the line of scrimmage. This is true even when the offensive team is less than one yard from the end zone or the zone line to gain.
- NO RUSHING ON PASS ATTEMPTS. Rushing is only permitted on handoffs OR a simulated handoff is attempted.
- All offensive players must be momentarily within 15 yards of the ball. It must be clear who the seven offensive players are on each play. The intent of this rule is to eliminate all sleeper or hideout plays. These plays will result in a 10 yard penalty for illegal participation.
- Fumbles
 - Fumbles are dead when the ball touches the ground.
 - The ball is put into play at the point where the ball first touched the ground.
 - Any passed or fumbled ball that does not touch the ground may be advanced by any player catching the ball.
 - A ball fumbled into the offensive team's end zone will result in a safety. If the ball is fumbled into the opponent's end zone the result is a touchback (opponent's ball on their 10 yard line).
- The ball is placed on the 10 yard line after a safety. The team receiving the 2 points for the safety will put the ball into play with a series of downs.
- The ball is placed on the 10 yard line after a touchback. The team puts the ball into play with a series of downs.
- Extra Point Attempts- NO FIELD GOALS. A try for two points will be taken from the 5 yard line. A try for one point will be taken from the 5 yard line. If the defense should intercept a pass, play is dead.. A forward pass caught in the end zone will result in 2 points. A run into the end zone will result in 1 point.
- During the Regular Season, NO overtime periods shall be played. During the Playoffs, the overtime format will be repeated until a winner is declared. The winner of the toss shall be given the option of either offense or defense. If additional overtime periods are necessary, captains will alternate choices. Each team will be given 4 downs from the same 15 yard line to score a touchdown. If the first team scores, then the second team will still have 4 downs to attempt to win or tie the game. If the defense intercepts the ball and returns it for a touchdown, the game will be over. If not, the ball will be placed at the 15 yard line to begin the series of four downs. Conversion attempts will be held as in regulation play. Each team is entitled to one time out per overtime period.

5. Screening

Blocking, as in regulation tackle football, is **PROHIBITED!** A screen block shall take place **WITHOUT CONTACT**. The screen blocker shall have his or her hands behind his or her back. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during a screen block is **ILLEGAL!!!!** A blocker may use his or her hand or arm to break a fall or retain his or her balance. A player must be on his or her feet before, during, and after screen blocking. Penalty-personal foul, 10 yards.

6. Flag Belt Removal

- In an attempt to remove the flag belt from the ball carrier, defensive players may contact the body of an opponent with his or her hands. A defensive player may **NOT *INTENTIONALLY*** HOLD, PUSH or KNOCK the ball carrier down in an attempt to remove the flag.
- No player shall attempt to steal the ball, trip an opponent, contact an opponent who is on the ground, make unnecessary contact with an opponent, deliberately dive or run into an opponent or tackle the ball carrier. Penalty: personal foul, 10 yards (flagrant offenders will be ejected from the game and possibly suspended for the remainder of the season).

7. Kicking the ball

- 7.2 Protected scrimmage kicks (Punts)-
- **NO RUSHING ON PUNTS!! NO FAKE PUNTS!!**
- a. Punts **MUST** be announced before the ball is ready for play.
- b. **PUNTING TEAM** may only have the **CENTER** and the **PUNTER** on the field during punts. . (All other players must be on their teams sideline)
- c. **RECEIVING TEAM** may only have 2 players on the field to catch or down punt. (All other players must be on their teams sideline)
- d. The ball may **NOT** be advanced by the receiving team. The ball is dead at the spot where the kick is caught or ball has stopped.

8. Clarification

8.1 A defensive player may not remove an offensive player's flag when the offensive player does not have the ball. Similarly, the defensive player may not remove the quarterback's flag after the ball has been thrown. Penalty: Illegal flag belt removal, 10 yards.

8.2 A defensive player may not remove an offensive receiver's belt prior to the receiver touching the ball. Penalty: defensive pass interference, 10 yards and automatic first down.

8.3 A defensive player must avoid running into the quarterback behind the line of scrimmage. If a defender contacts the passer's hand or arm, whether or not he or she touches the ball, it is roughing the passer. Penalty: 10 yards and automatic first down.

8.4 A player may not fasten his or her flags to his or her uniform or belt other than prescribed in the rules. Penalty: 10 yards and automatic disqualification. The official will check the flags of each person who scores a touchdown or conversion.

Following a touchdown or conversion, if a player removes their flag belt prior to being checked by the official the score will be nullified.

8.5 Pushing or chucking a receiver/defender is not allowed. Penalty: Illegal use of hands. 10 yards.

8.6 An offensive player may NOT dive or hurdle over, through or into an opponent who is on their feet.

8.7 Any dead-ball penalty after a touchdown will be assessed on the extra point. Any dead ball penalty occurring after a conversion will be assessed on the next play from scrimmage at the 10 yard line.

8.8 An offensive player may NOT stiff arm or guard his or her flags by blocking them with their hands or the ball.

8.9 When an inadvertent whistle is blown by an official, the ball is dead at the point when the whistle was blown. The team against which the inadvertent whistle was blown has the option of accepting the play or replaying the down.

8.10 All players on the field must wear flags. Failure to do so will result in a five yard penalty, if noticed prior to the ball being snapped. If noticed after the ball has been snapped, then the player without a flag belt must be touched with one hand between the shoulders and the knees (after the ball has been snapped, a penalty cannot be assessed).

8.11 Spiking/Kneeling the ball after scores and conversions is considered unsportsmanlike conduct. Penalty: 10 yards.

8.13 The 60 second clock begins when the official signals "ready for play."

SUMMARY OF FOULS AND PENALTIES

Loss of 5 yards:

1. Required equipment worn illegally.
2. Delay of game.
3. Illegal Snap.
4. False start.
5. Encroachment.
6. Illegal Procedure.
7. Illegal forward pass (5 yards from point of pass and loss of down).
8. Intentional grounding (5 yards from point of pass and loss of down).
9. Helping the runner: the runner shall not grasp a teammate or be grasped, pulled or pushed by a teammate.

Loss of 10 yards:

1. Delaying the start of either half.
2. Two or more consecutive encroachments during same interval between downs. The initial encroachment 5 yards.
3. Illegal participation.
4. Offensive pass interference. (Loss of down)
5. Defensive pass interference. (Automatic 1st down)
6. Illegally secured belt on touchdown. (Revoke touchdown and loss of down)
7. Unsportsmanlike Conduct.
8. Spiking the ball or not returning the ball to the official during the dead ball.
9. Attempt to steal the ball from the carrier. 2cnd offense is unsportsmanlike conduct (disqualification).
10. Hurdling.
11. Unnecessary contact of any sort.
12. Roughing the passer. (Automatic 1st Down)
13. Defensive use of hands.
14. Guarding the flag belt (and stiff arming).
15. Illegal batting.

16. Illegal flag belt removal.
17. Personal foul.
18. Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct. (Disqualification)
19. Flagrant personal fouls. (Disqualification)
20. Intentionally tampering with flag belt. (Disqualification)
21. Illegal equipment.

****LANCASTER YOUTH FOOTBALL promotes and encourage good sportsmanship. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated in any form.****