



YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

AIRWAY HEIGHTS – CHENEY – FAIRCHILD – MEDICAL LAKE

TEAM/PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

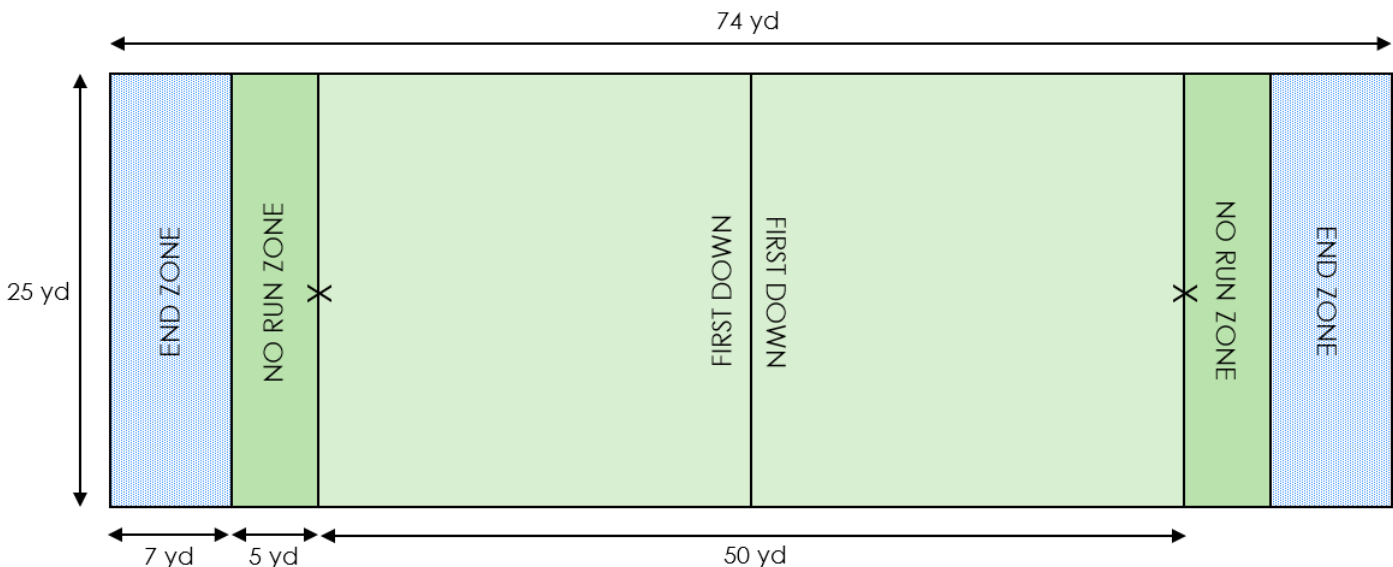
1. League administrators have final authority on all decisions and rule modifications regarding the program.
2. All players must be registered participants of the 4Rec Youth Sports program to be eligible to play in practice or games.
3. All players must meet age requirements of their division or get approval from their league administrator.
4. All players must have equal playing time.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT & SAFETY:

1. All players must wear like-colored jerseys/shirts. Shirts must be tucked in to shorts/pants at all times. Untucked shirts will be considered flag guarding.
2. Players are required to wear mouthguards.
3. All players must wear league provided NFL Flag Belts. 2 Pop Flags one on each side. Extra slack on belt must be wrapped and taped/secured.
4. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads and kneepads. Shorts or pants without pockets are preferred to prevent injuries – pockets and belt loops must be taped otherwise.
5. Shoe requirements: Athletic shoes or cleats. Cleats with exposed metal are not allowed.
6. Players are restricted from wearing jewelry such as bracelets, earrings, and necklaces during play and practice.
NOTE: If a player prefers a necklace/bracelet because of his/her religion or for medical identification it must be inside the jersey and/or taped.
7. Hats with bills are not allowed, and all hoods must be down.
8. Eyeglasses must have a safety strap. The safety strap must be snug to the head.
9. Long hair must be pulled back and/or contained. Headbands are an acceptable form of containment.
10. A player who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has any amount of blood or bodily fluid on his or her clothing or person shall be directed to leave the game until the situation can be treated appropriately. No player may return to the game with blood on clothing.

FIELD SPECIFICATIONS

64-yard field: 50 yard playing surface, 25 yards wide with 7-yard end zones. "No Run Zones" will be marked 5 yards off each goal line with a dashed line, and an "X" in the center. *Field size may be adjusted due to field availability and accommodation.*



1. GAME SET UP AND FORMAT

- 1.1** Each team will field five players. A minimum of 3 players is required to avoid a forfeit. The opposing team may still field 5 players.
- 1.2** One coach may be on the field for offense and defense to call plays and align players into position.
- 1.3** NFL flag football ball size is determined by age division: 7-8 division will use the "mini", 9-10 division will use the "pee wee" and the 11-12 division will use the "junior" size ball for practices and games.
- 1.4** Coin Toss determines first possession of the ball. Visiting team must call it in the air.
 - Winner of the coin toss must pick either offense or defense to start the game. Loser of the coin toss will pick direction. Teams may not choose to defer to the second half.
 - Teams will change sides after the first half. Possession will change to the team that started the game on defense.
- 1.5** Games are played in two 20-minute halves, running clock. Officials will stop the clock with 1 minute remaining in each half as the one-minute warning.
- 1.6** Halftime will be 5 minutes.
- 1.7** Play clock will be 30 seconds and will start once the ball is spotted. Teams will have 30 seconds to huddle and snap the ball. Officials will give a "Ten" call when 10 seconds remain on the play clock.
- 1.8** Each team will receive two 1-minute timeouts per half.
- 1.9** Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- 1.10** After a stop in the game clock, time will resume at the snap of the ball.
- 1.11** A first down will be awarded when the offense reaches the next consecutive first down line in 4 downs or less.
- 1.12** If the offense fails to reach a first down or score, it is a "turn over on downs" and the ball will change possession and be placed at the opposing teams no run zone.
- 1.13** Offense will always take possession of the ball on their no run zone, unless following an interception.
 - In the event of an interception, the intercepting team will take possession of the ball where they are downed following the interception.
- 1.14** A player is down when de-flagged by an opposing player, where the ball carrier goes out of bounds, or where flags fall off. The ball will be spotted where the pull was made or where the flag hit the ground. If a player's flags fall off before receiving the ball, they are down at the spot of reception.
- 1.15** There will be NO punting or kick offs.
- 1.16** At least three offensive players must always be lined up on the line of scrimmage.
- 1.17** Only one player lined up behind the line of scrimmage may be in motion prior to the snap of the ball. Players in motion must move parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
- 1.18** All players must be in a two-point stance. Placing hands on the ground prior to the snap of the ball will not be permitted. Exception: Center snapping the ball.
- 1.19** There are no fumbles. Once the ball makes contact with the ground, the ball is dead at the spot of the fumble. Fumbles on the snap of the ball will result in a loss of down and the ball being placed at the previous line of scrimmage.

2. SCORING

- 2.1** Touchdown is awarded when the ball breaks the plane of the goal line.
- 2.2** After a touchdown is scored, the scoring player will report to the ref, the ref will pull the flag to confirm the touchdown. Players may not pull their own Flags.
- 2.3** There will be no conversion after a touchdown is scored.

3. PASSING THE BALL

- 3.1** The quarterback will have a seven second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, the down is lost (considered a coverage sack), and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off the 7-second rule is no longer in effect.
- 3.2** Only one forward pass is permitted per play. Shovel Passes are permitted and considered a forward pass.
- 3.3** Laterals and pitches are considered "handoffs"

4. RECEIVING

- 4.1** All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off, behind the line of scrimmage).
- 4.2** A player must have one foot inbounds when making a reception.

- 4.3** In the event of a simultaneous catch by both an offensive and defensive player, possession will be awarded to the offense.
- 4.4** In the event a player's flag belt falls off, they are still eligible to catch a pass. The ball will be spotted where the catch is made.

5. RUNNING THE BALL

- 5.1** Running plays may happen anywhere on the field of play except in the "No Run Zone".
- 5.2** No "flag guarding". Players in possession of the ball may not block or guard opponents from pulling their flags. This includes stiff arms and running with hands low to side. Uniforms hanging over flags will be considered flag guarding.
- 5.3** Ball carriers must attempt to avoid contact with defensive players. No running over or through defensive players attempting to pull flags. This will result in a Charging penalty.
- 5.4** Ball carriers must remain on their feet at all times. **No jumping**, leaping or diving to avoid flags being pulled or to advance ball. This will be considered flag guarding.
- 5.5** Spinning is permitted.
- 5.6** "No Run Zones" are located 5 yards from each end zone. When the ball is spotted on or within the 5-yard line, the team with possession cannot run the ball. Result of doing so will be a loss of down and ball back at the previous line of scrimmage.
- Offensive penalties occurring within the No-Run Zone will extend the No-Run Zone.
 - Defensive penalties forcing the offensive team into No-Run Zone can be declined and down replayed.
- 5.7** Ball will be spotted where the ball is when flags are pulled.
- 5.8** The Quarterback is not allowed to directly run the ball across the line of scrimmage but is allowed to scramble in the backfield. Quarterback is considered the player who receives the snap from the center.
- 5.9** Reverse plays are not permitted (intentional change of ball direction by play design).

6. BLOCKING

- 6.1** No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.
- Players are discouraged from running alongside ball carriers down field to avoid screen blocking.
- 6.2** Offensive players cannot impede a defensive pass rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap.
- If a moving offensive player occupies the "path or line" of the rusher, then it is the responsibility of the offensive player to avoid the rusher. Any disruption of the rusher's path and /or contact will result in an "Impeding the Rusher Penalty"
- 6.3** If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher's responsibility to go around the offensive player to avoid contact.
- 6.4** Offensive players must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage.

7. DEFENSE

- 7.1** Rushing the quarterback:
- Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the seven second clock in effect.
 - Rusher's must be at least 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7-yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback. A rush can occur from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
 - A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.
 - If rusher leaves the 7-yard line before the snap, he/she may immediately drop back to act as defender with no offside penalty enforced.
 - Rusher's must avoid contact with offensive players that are stationary at the snap of the ball.
 - Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.

- 7.2** Players not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.
- 7.3** Defensive players may not make contact with offensive players using their shoulders, arms, hips, or knees.
- 7.4** Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the end of the run back.
- 7.5** Interceptions that occur and remain in the end zone will be considered at "Touchback", and the ball will become dead and result with the change of possession on the no run zone.
- 7.6** Stripping the ball from a ball carrier's hands is not permitted.
- 7.7** Flag Pulling:
- Defense may not grab and hold an offensive player's clothing in an attempt slow down or to pull flags. This will result in a "Defensive Holding" penalty.
 - A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in FULL possession of the ball. Pulling an offensive player's flag without the ball is not permitted and will be penalized.
 - Defense must drop pulled flags to the ground near the spot of the pull. Do not throw flags back or away.
 - Defenders cannot dive, tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.

8. LIVE BALL/ DEAD BALLS

- 8.1** Ball is live once it is snapped between the legs (direct or deep) or to the side to the quarterback.
- 8.2** Play is ruled dead when:
- The ball hits the ground.
 - Ball carrier's flags are pulled.
 - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - Any part of the ball carrier's body, other than his hands or feet touches the ground.
 - Ball carriers flag falls off (possession where the flags come off).
 - An official or field monitor blows a whistle.
- 8.3** Substitutions may be made only on a dead ball.

9. PENALTIES

- 9.1** All fouls and penalties will be assessed 5 yards. EXCEPTION: contact penalties will be assessed 10 yards. The down will be repeated and assessed from the line of scrimmage unless otherwise noted:

DEFENSE	
Offsides	5 yards and repeat down
Illegal Rushing (from within 7-yard marker)	5 yards and repeat down
Illegal Flag Pull (before receiver has the ball)	5 yards and repeat down
Roughing the Passer	10 yards and automatic first down
Substitution Foul (6+ players on field, player enters after play is in motion)	5 yards and repeat down
Pass Interference	10 yards and automatic first down
Illegal Contact (holding, stripping, unnecessary roughness)	10 yards and automatic first down
Unsportsmanlike Conduct (taunting, excessive celebration, etc.)	10 yards and automatic first down

OFFENSE	
Illegal Motion (more than one person moving)	5 yards and repeat down
Substitution Foul (breaking huddle with 6+ players)	5 yards and repeat down
Offsides/False Start	5 yards and repeat down
Impeding the Rusher	5 yards and repeat down
Delay of Game	5 yards and repeat down
2 nd consecutive Delay of Game	5 yards, clock stops, repeat down
Illegal Forward Pass (beyond the line of scrimmage, more than 1 pass per play)	5 yards and repeat down
Offensive Pass Interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)	10 yards and loss of down
Running Inside the "No Run Zone"	5 yards, repeat of down, extended "No Run Zone"
Flag Guarding (including diving/jumping to avoid or advance)	(Spot Foul) 5 yards and repeat down
Charging Unnecessary Roughness	(Spot Foul) 10 yards and repeat down
Blocking Foul (screening, blocking, running with ball carrier)	(Spot Foul) 10 yards and repeat down
Unsportsmanlike Conduct (taunting, excessive celebration, etc.) - following an offensive touchdown, 10 yards will be added to new possession	10 yards and loss of down

- 9.2** All penalties may be declined, except a false start (dead ball foul).

- 9.3** Penalties will not exceed half the distance to the opposing team's goal line from the line of scrimmage.
- 9.4** Officials' ruling is final and may not be questioned.
- 9.5** Game officials (referees and field monitors) determine incidental contact.
- 9.6** Penalties occurring during or after an interception will be assessed after the return and the ball is dead.

CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP - PLAYERS, COACHES, SPECTATORS

1. Any player who receives an unsportsmanlike penalty will automatically have to sit for three minutes before returning to the game. If a second penalty is called, the player is out of the game.
2. Coaches who personally acquire flagrant unsportsmanlike fouls during a game must leave the facility. Refusal will result in forfeiture.
3. Fighting will result in an automatic ejection from the game, and an automatic one game suspension (at the minimum) to be served the next game. When serving a suspension, the person in question may not be on the premises for any reason, unless cleared by the league administrator. Upon being ejected, the person in question must leave the premises immediately and not return to the premises while serving their suspension. Failure to abide by this will result in league staff contacting the appropriate authorities to have the person arrested for trespassing and will, in addition, run the risk of his/her team having to forfeit the game. *Any person involved in an altercation, guilty or not, will be ejected and subject to a potential one game suspension to be decided by league administrators. NO EXCEPTIONS!
4. Unsportsmanlike conduct by a team parent or fan will not be tolerated. One warning will be assessed, before a bench technical is given. The parent or fan will be required to leave the facility upon receiving a second technical foul. Refusal will result in forfeiture.
5. Officials and field supervisors are the sole judges on the field. They have complete authority over the game, players, coaches, and spectators. Their decisions are final and are backed by the league.
6. Rough play, profanity, or abuse of officials or league staff may result in immediate ejection and/or forfeiture of the game, based on referee's judgment. Only the coach may hold discussions on calls with officials or gym supervisors. A team must use a timeout to converse with officials/field supervisors.

LEAGUE CONTACTS

Airway Heights	Monika Kruml	(509) 309-2099
Cheney	Kylar Hunt	(509) 498-9251
Fairchild	Ryan Frost	(509) 247-9622
Medical Lake	Kylie Wright	(509) 565-5000 ext. 2