



## Youngstown Flag Football Association

### 4on4 Rules and Regulations

#### I. The Basics of the Game

- No Contact or Blocking is allowed.
- The Quarterback cannot run the ball unless he has received a direct handoff behind the line of scrimmage.
- The player who rushes the QB must start 7 yards off the line of scrimmage.
- All players are eligible to receive a pass.
- Offense has 3 downs to cross midfield for a first down and then has 3 plays to score a touchdown.
- No kicking or punting.
- All possessions, except interceptions start at the 5 yard line.
- Touchdown is worth 6 points, extra point (5 yards out) = 1 point, (12 yards out) = 2 points, safety = 2 points.
- Games are divided into two 14 minute halves with 1 min half time. **The play clock will stop inside of one minute left in the game on an incomplection, penalty, change of possession, and out of bounds. There is a one minute warning and the clock will stop to set the pucks on first downs.**
- Interceptions can be returned.
- **All penalties are 10 yards** and assessed from the line of scrimmage. **On defensive holding calls, the offense has the option of taking the result of the play or ten yards from the L.O.S. and automatic first down.** Offensive penalties are loss of down and defensive penalties result in automatic first down for the offensive team.
- Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated.
- **If a team is more than 5 minutes late for the scheduled game it will be forfeited. Forfeits are worth 14 points.**
- A 28 point score differential ends the game.

## II. The Coin Toss

- The game referee will flip a coin before the start of the game. He or she will designate a team captain to call heads or tails.
- The team that wins the coin toss has the choice to take the ball first, defend the goal or defer choice to the second half. The team that loses the coin toss will have first choice at the start of the second half.

## III. The Players

- A team must start the game with no less than 3 players. A minimum of 3 players must be on the field at all times.
- A team's roster can consist of a maximum of 10 players with a maximum of 8 per game with 4 on the field and 4 substitutes.

## IV. Possessions

- All possession changes will start at the offensive team's 5 yard line. Exception: On interceptions, the team will take possession of the ball where the interceptor's flag belt is pulled.
- The offensive team has 3 plays to cross midfield for a first down, then 3 plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to get a first down or score, then the new offense team will take possession of the ball on their own 5 yard line.
- **There are no quick snaps. Officials must be set before the ball is snapped.**
- Players may not be moving forward when the ball is snapped.
- **If the referee notices any player that starts a play without a flag will result in a penalty.**

## V. Penalties

- All defensive penalties are 10 yards and an automatic first down.
- All offensive penalties are 10 yards and loss of down.
- All penalties will be assessed from the original line of scrimmage.
  - EXCEPTION 1:** Interception returns; Offensive penalties will be assessed from the point of interception. Defensive penalties will be assessed from the end of the play. Both result in automatic first down.
  - EXCEPTION 2:** Flag guarding is from the point of infraction.
  - EXCEPTION 3:** Unsportsmanlike conduct/Unnecessary roughness penalty is 10 yards added on to the end of the play.
- Only team captains may approach the referee about rule clarifications and interpretations. **Players cannot argue judgment calls.**
- A protest on a rule interpretation must take place before the next play is started. If a team protests a rule interpretation and is proven wrong, the team will be penalized as a delay of game.

- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty.
- **Any offensive penalty that occurs while the QB is in the end zone will result in a safety. (2 points).**
- DEFENSIVE PENALTIES: Offside/Illegal rush; Pass Interference; Illegal contact(holding, bump & run, blocking, etc...The referee will determine incidental contact which may result from the normal run of play.); Roughing the quarterback; Holding/Tackling; Last Man Rule(If there is no one between the player and the end zone, and it is clear to the referee that the player would have scored if they were not held or tackled, a TD will be awarded.)
- OFFENSIVE PENALTIES: Illegal motion/False start; Pass Interference(illegal pick, pushing off); Impeding the rusher; Flag guarding; Charging(offensive player must avoid the defender if he is set); Delay of game; Illegal contact;
- TRASH TALKING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. The referee has the right to determine language that is offensive. Trash talking is language that may be considered offensive to the referee, opposing team, or spectators.  
WFE RULE: Teams and players will be given a warning first, then a penalty, then ejection from the game or league at the referees' discretion.  
If the referee witnesses any act of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, or any other unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be immediately ejected from the game.

#### VI. Scoring/Time/Timeouts

- SCORING: Touchdown= 6 points  
Extra points:  
5 yards = 1 point  
12 yards = 2 points  
Safety = 2 points
- A player needs the football and at least one flag crossed the first down and end zone to be awarded the first down or touchdown.
- If the defense intercepts a pass on an extra point attempt and returns it to the end zone, the team will be rewarded 1 or 2 points based on what the offensive team was attempting on the extra point.
- Games are divided into (2) 14 minute halves, with a 1 minute halftime.
- Each team has two 60 second timeouts per game, one per half. Timeouts will not carry over to the second half.
- **There is a 25 second huddle clock.** The huddle clock will start once the line of scrimmage is marked by the referee.
- Referee may stop the clock at own discretion.

- The clock will stop for the 1 minute warning in the second half only if the score differential is 16 points or less. If the score differential is 17 points or more, the clock will not stop.
- The clock will stop on first downs inside of 1 minute in the game. Clock will start once pucks are set.
- Inside of 1 minute left in the game, the game clock will stop on incompletions, penalties, out of bounds, touchdowns, and change of possessions.
- Clock will not run on extra point attempts inside of one minute.
- A 28 point score differential ends the game.
- Any offensive penalty that occurs under 1 minute remaining in the game will result in a 10 second runoff.

#### VII. Attire

- Shirts must be worn, and tucked in at all times. If a player's shirt is hanging over their flag belt, holding will not be called.
- Holding will not be called on the defense if the offensive player is wearing pants or shorts with pockets or snaps.
- Teams may use their own footballs as long as they are regulation weight and size.
- Players are recommended to wear a protective mouthpiece at all times during a game.

#### VIII. Blocking

- Any type of blocking is illegal. Players must stop and stand still once the ball is caught and/or ran by a teammate.

#### IX. Passing

- All pass attempts must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The ball being tipped forward at any time is prohibited.
- Shovel passes are legal, but must be beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Only one forward pass per down.
- QB has a seven second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is ruled dead, with a loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven second rule is no longer in effect.
- Interceptions can be returned. Ball is spotted where defenders flag belt is pulled.
- If a penalty occurs on an interception return by the offense, the penalty will be assessed from the spot of the interception. (10 yards)
- If a penalty occurs on an interception return by the defense, the penalty will be assessed from the end of the run. (10 yards)

- Intentional grounding is not a penalty. However, all grounded balls must travel beyond the line of scrimmage, unless the ball is spiked after the snap when the quarterback is under center. **Shotgun spikes are a penalty.**
- **The rusher may not hit the quarterbacks' arm, or knock the ball out of his hand. The rusher must play the flags.**

#### X. Receiving

- All players must start with their flag belts on.
- All players are eligible to receive passes (including QB if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage.)
- Only one player allowed in motion at one time.
- Receiver is down where his or her flag belt is pulled. Exception: In order to achieve a first down, or a touchdown, **at least one flag and the ball must cross the plane of the first down line and goal line.**
- Receiver is down at point of reception if flag belt falls off before catch is made. If a ball carriers flag falls off with out being pulled off, he or she is down where he or she catches the ball.
- Receiver must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.
- If a receiver catches a pass and is pushed out of bounds by a defender while in the air, the referee has the right to rule the catch complete, if he judges that the receiver would have come down in bounds, had he not been pushed.
- Players that run out of bounds during a play are not eligible to come back in and make a reception.

#### XI. Running

- The QB cannot run the ball. The QB can only run the ball if he has taken a hand-off.
- **Handoffs must occur behind the player; handoffs in front of the QB are prohibited.**
- Only direct hand-offs behind the line of scrimmage are legal. Anyone behind the line of scrimmage can receive a hand-off.
- No laterals or pitches of any kind, anywhere on the field, are allowed.
- The player who takes the hand-off can throw the ball, as long as he does not pass the line of scrimmage before doing so.
- "No Running Zones" are designed to avoid short yardage power running situations.
- "No Running Zones" are located five (5) yards from each end zone, and five (5) yards on both sides of mid-field.
- "No Running Zones" come into effect only when offensive team is approaching a first down or the end zone. Exception: If the offensive team has already achieved a first down, but has been pushed back into a "No Running Zone", then the "No Running Zone" is no longer in effect.

- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Once the ball has been handed off, the seven second pass rule is no longer in effect.
- **Defensive players cannot pass the line of scrimmage, during a direct hand-off play, until the ball is handed off.**
- Spinning to avoid the flag puller is allowed. Jumping or diving to advance the ball is not allowed.
- The ball is spotted where the flag was pulled.

#### XI. Dead Balls

- All players must start with their flag belts on, offense and defense.
- **All defensive players must line up at least one yard off of the line of scrimmage.**
- Ball must be snapped between the centers' legs to start a play.
- A play is ruled dead when: Ball carriers flag is pulled; ball carriers flag falls off; ball carrier steps out of bounds; ball carriers knee touches the ground; ball carrier lets the ball hit the ground; ball carrier fumbles the ball away; and after a touchdown, or extra point is scored.
- There are no fumbles. Ball will be spotted where the player loses control of the ball.
- If the ball does not pass the line of scrimmage on an attempted pass, the play is ruled a dead ball, resulting in a penalty.

#### XII. Rushing the QB

- All players that rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. **The rusher is allowed a direct line to the quarterback long as he rushes from either side of the field and not up the "middle". The "middle" is considered 1 yard on both sides of the puck or line marker. The "middle" is a judgment call made by the referee since there are no hash marks on the field. The offense must avoid interfering with the rusher.**
- **If the offense is in a tight formation (foot to foot) then the rusher must rush one yard outside the formation. At that time, regular rushing/impeding the rusher rules apply.**
- **Once the ball is handed off, impeding the rusher and penalties on the QB (hitting the QB's arm) are no longer in affect.**

#### XIII. Overtime

- If the score is tied at the end of regulation, teams go directly into overtime.
- Coin toss determines possession. The team that did not call the opening coin toss will call the overtime coin toss.

- The team that wins the coin toss has the choice to take the ball first, or to defend first. Both teams will drive into the same end zone.
- Each team will start from the 12 yard line, driving into the same end zone. They will have two plays to attempt to score. If a team scores, they may attempt an extra point afterwards. (One or Two point conversion)
- The game is over when each team has had the possession of the ball an equal amount of times, and one team is able to score more points than their opponents.
- If the score is still tied after the first overtime, the team that defended first will start the second overtime on offense. **If the score is still tied after the 2nd overtime, there will be another coin toss to determine who starts first. The two teams will then have one play, from their own five yard line, and whoever gains the most yardage from their one play will receive one point, and the victory.**

#### XIV. Other

- **The Y.F.F.A. reserves the right to reduce or shorten games or the season due to inclement weather or any unforeseen force.**
- There is a maximum of 8 players per roster, with no more than 8 players allowed to play per game.
- **Roster/Waiver form must be turned in before your first scheduled game, or eligibility will be forfeited.** Also, rosters may be changed up to the 4<sup>th</sup> week of play, due to injuries or any unforeseen force. Hereafter, they are automatically finalized.
- All players must play in at least 6 games to be eligible for the playoffs.
- Any derogatory remarks or excessive language to degrade an official or player will not be tolerated. Incidents will be dealt with accordingly at league official's discretion. SEE PENALTIES.
- Fighting amongst players or game officials will also not be tolerated. Game suspensions and/or possible expulsion from the league will result. League officials will have the final decision on such matters. SEE PENALTIES.