

# **Aberdeen Family YMCA Flag Football Rules**

## **Co-Ed 1st – 5th Grade**

## **Girls' 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6th**

Adopted August 2017 Updated May 2024

### **PHILOSOPHY FOR FLAG FOOTBALL**

***Flag football for grades 1-6 for the Aberdeen Family YMCA will be a non-competitive, fun filled, fundamental learning experience that all kids will be able to participate in.***

***The league wishes to create an environment that will allow each youth to learn football fundamentals and skills, develop an interest in the sport, form new friendships, build on existing ones, and have a great experience either learning or continuing to play football.***

***Character development will be emphasized by the coaches and those helping run and organize the league. The YMCA's core values of: Honesty, Caring, Responsibility, and Respect will be emphasized and discussed at each practice and game. Sportsmanship and teamwork will be expected and lack of it will not be tolerated. Our main goal is to teach, learn, practice and enjoy the game of football. We believe that participation in athletics helps build strong character, strong minds, and strong bodies. KIDS NEED TO HAVE FUN!!!!***

# RULES

## Cancellations

- Game cancellations will be communicated through text alerts and posted on the YMCA Facebook. They may also be communicated through the Sports Director and optional by coaches if the weather is not agreeable.
  - If a team were to cancel away from the Y's given practice day, they are allowed to make up a practice on their own time and have to find their own location

## Uniforms

- Players may wear molded rubber cleats to play. No metal or removable cleats may be worn. No hard surfaces may be worn such as shoulder pads, hip pads or helmets. For grades 1-2, participants will be provided red & black YMCA t-shirts to wear during play. (Athletes will keep these jerseys at the end of the season) For grades 3-5, participants will be issued YMCA football jerseys for league play. If multiple layers of clothing are worn due to cold weather, the "Y" jersey or t-shirt should be the outside, visible, layer. Jerseys must be tucked in under the flags, there is no covering or hiding the flag under shorts, pants, jerseys, shirts, etc. Flags must be correctly worn, no tying at the waist, chest, or ankles. Must be clipped on over the jersey at the waist.

## Location

- ALL practices and games will be held at Central High School's practice fields (CHS)
- Since we now are incorporating a Girl's Flag program, practice and game locations may be different and will be declared before start of the season

## Football size

- Grades 1-2 will use the youth pee-wee size footballs
- Grades 3-5 will use the junior size footballs

## Practices

- The first 20 minutes of every practice MUST be dedicated to teaching fundamentals
- Kids need to learn the basics and be able to incorporate what they learn from you into play
- Practices will be 50 minutes long and allow for a 10-minute transition time for the next group to practice
- Cones will not be provided by the YMCA; coaches will have to supply cones or any other practice necessities except balls.

## Playing time

- A game will consist of one 50-minute time allotment (total). Teams will be allowed a 5-minute half-time (included). Games must start and end on time! Transition Time Between Games - There will be a 10-minute transition time between games. This time will be monitored to ensure all games start/end at the scheduled times.
- At the end of the games, **please make sure to have everyone collect their things** and move off the field as fast and efficiently as possible to allow room for the next teams to get on the field.

**Warm-Ups**

- Practice areas noted on the field map are available for warmups. Warm-ups are not included in playing time or transition time.

**Huddles**

- Teams will be allowed a maximum of 60 seconds to huddle prior to play/between plays. Coaches must monitor this time.

**Coaches on Field/Officials**

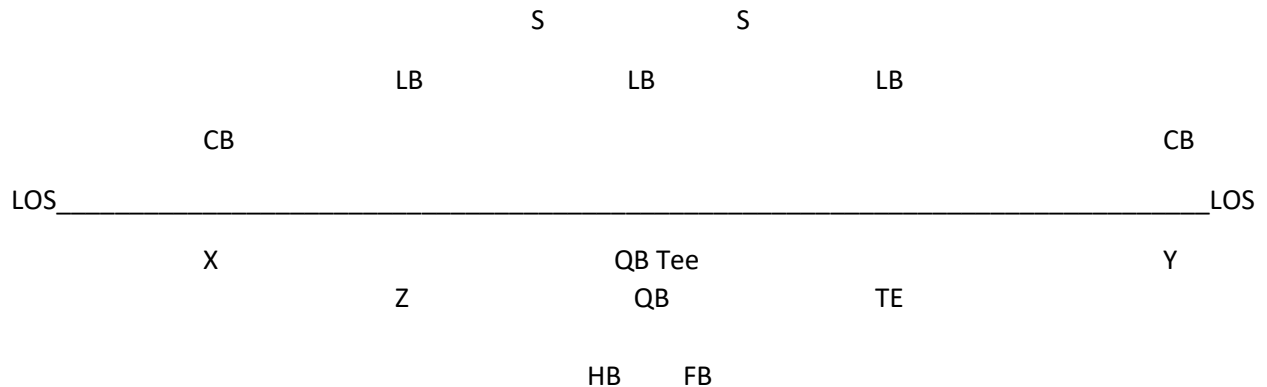
- Coaches may be on the field to assist the offense/defense in the 1st – 5th grade league. Referees (coaches on the field) will use judgment to eliminate delays of game due to coaching and adjust game time accordingly. Coaches will serve as officials during the game. The offensive team coach will officiate the backfield and the defensive team coach will officiate down field.

**Teams**

- Teams are compiled based off school/location
  - EX: if 7 kids from May Overby sign-up, unless told by the parents, those kids will all be on the same team. If 2 more kids from Lincoln were to sign-up and we have teams of 10 from every school but May Overby, we will put the two Lincoln kids on the May Overby team to fill the roster.
- Teams will be compiled from 8-12 kids ideally. It is often a roster may be smaller than others or some rosters may be larger. It is all determinative by the school and location of the kids.

**Team Play**

- A team must be composed of 7 players on the field, and not more than 2 of those players behind the line of scrimmage while on offense (QB and RB). - All players must rotate positions and not be assigned one position. - 7-man football will be conducted at all grades (1-6). - Defense will consist of 3 linebackers, 2 safeties and 2 corners. - Offense will consist of quarterback, X receiver on the line, Y receiver, TE on the line, Z receiver off the line, full back, half back.
- LB and S must remain 5 yards off the line of scrimmage prior to the snap of the ball – outside CB may lay up the line of scrimmage
- Formation Ex:



### Protests

- There are no protests in the league. Any disagreements on the field will be settled by coaches or Y Director will have to step in and may determine degree of situation

### Kickoffs

- There are NO kickoffs. Instead, the ball will be placed at the 20-yard line (1st -2nd grade), 30-yard line (3rd -4th grade) or 40-yard line (5th grade) and possession will be determined by the coin toss to start the game

### Possession

- Rock Paper Scissors, coin toss, coaches' agreement may all be used to determine who will start with the ball
- Teams will be given 6 total plays. They will play all 6 downs regardless of turnovers. **Possession will change after a touchdown though.**
- Following halftime possession will go to the team who started on defense or whoever would be on offense when halftime was taken.

### Downs/Turnovers

- A team has six downs to score from the 20-yard line for 1st & 2nd grades and 40 yard-line for 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades. The original line of scrimmage is the opposite End Zone. (Ex: 50-yard field with 5-yard end zones – makes it a 40-yard field – 35 yards + 5-yard No Rush Zone)
- Teams will alternate direction of play simulating a real game, when one team's drive is done the other team will begin in their own end zone at the line of scrimmage.
- If a touchdown is scored, the possession is immediately given to the opposing team and ball is placed back on the 20 or 40-yd line (according to grade). - After each down, the ball is spotted in the middle of the field. Hash marks are not used.
- Fumbles behind the line of scrimmage due to bad hand-offs or missed tosses will be blown dead immediately and not result in loss of down. The ball will be reset and the offense may continue from the same spot. Fumbles down field will be: marked back at the 20 or 40 if recovered by the defense and loss of down; or may be advanced if recovered by the offense
- Interceptions will result loss of down and ball placed back at the 20 or 40

### Downed Ball

- The ball carrier is down at the point where the ball is when the flag is removed from the belt at the waist. The tackler must stop and extend his arm upward with the flag in hand. The ball carrier cannot guard, shield, or hold onto his flag to prevent removal. The flag must be worn correctly!!

### Loss of Flag

- If a player without a flag handles the ball, the ball becomes dead immediately and may not be advanced. Points cannot be scored by this player unless a catch is made in the end zone.
- If a player not wearing a flag catches a ball, that ball is considered dead and no gain will be made
- Players are marked down where loss of flag happens
- Balls are called dead whenever a player without a flag were to run with/catch the ball

## Charging & Tackling

- The ball carrier may not run through a defensive player. The ball carrier must try to avoid contact. The tackler may not hold, push, nor run through the ball carrier. Tackler must play the flag not the ball carrier.

## Tackling

- Tackling a ball carrier is not permitted. Any action by a tackler other than pulling flags is deemed unnecessary roughness. Tackling is a judgment call by the official (coaches on the field).

## Blocking

- No part of the blocker's body may be in contact with the ground except feet. Blocker must use an upright position. Blocker may use hands as long as hands remain within the frame of the body. Holding a defensive player's body is considered illegal use of hands. A defensive player may not grab any part of an offensive player's body or jersey in an attempt to gain an advantage. A defensive player may not run through or over a blocker. A defensive player may only use quickness and cunning to gain an advantage.
- Proper block technique for flag football is two hands on the chest pushing the defender, no closed fists holding the jersey or wrapping around the defensive player

## Passing

- A forward pass may be thrown from any point behind the line of scrimmage.
- Laterals are allowed anywhere on the field
- Laterals are signaled as a pass made to anyone behind them

## Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive a forward pass. Flags must be intact. A player that does not have a flag is down upon reception. A player is considered inbounds if a ball is caught with at least one foot down inbounds.

## Running/Rushing

- For all Grades:
  - The time given on the QB Tee (7 seconds) will be the time allotted to throw the ball. Teams are not allowed to rush the QB within that time. Once the QB Tee time goes off, the QB must either throw the ball then or may proceed in rushing for yards. Once the timer goes off, the defense may make an attempt to sack or grab the QB's flag. Teams are **NOT** allowed to rush with the ball within 5 yards of the endzone.
- QB's will **NOT** be allowed to rush with the ball after the snap (until the time on the QB Tee is up)
  - QB's must conduct a hand off to any other position to constitute a run play
  - QB's may become an eligible rusher if the designated runner were to lateral the ball back to the QB
- There will be no blitzing or rushing the QB or RB before the snap of the ball. Once snapped the defense will remain behind the line of scrimmage until there is a hand-off by the QB designating a run play.

- Once in the “No Rush Zone” – QB’s are considered sacked upon the 7 second time allotment (Ex: QB snaps the ball and the QB tee time goes off, that QB is sacked wherever they were at the whistle).

**Tripping**

- Tripping is always illegal and is a judgment call.

**Field Dimensions**

- 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade – 20 yards x 25 yards + 5-yard endzone (30 yards length x 20 yard wide)
- 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade – 30 yards wide x 40 yards + 5-yard endzones (50 yards long x 30 yards wide)

**Other rules**

- 1st – 6th Grade - the quarterback holds the ball on the line of scrimmage and first says "Ready," which allows one of the players to go in motion; he or she then says "Go!" and the play begins.
- An age up allowance may be approved if brought forth to the Youth Sports and Program Director for approval.
- *Other rules will be the same as in High School football Penalties: Below is a list of penalties that are not allowed in 1st - 5th grade flag football. Any infraction of these penalties will result in re-do of the down.*

*Unnecessary Roughness*

*Delay of Game*

*Unsportsmanlike Conduct*

*Pass Interference*

*Illegal Use of Flags*

*Clipping / Offense Clipping*

*Offensive use of Hands*

*Defense Equipment Penalty*

*Defensive Use of Hands*

*Off-Sides*

*Illegal Procedure*

*Flag Guarding*

*Tackling the ball carrier*

*Too many players on the field*