



CITY OF SEMINOLE RECREATION DEPARTMENT
2023 YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES

This is a **RECREATIONAL** league. **There are no scouts, scholarships or anything else of that nature hinging on the outcome of any game, it is meant for kids to have fun; PERIOD.** The Seminole Recreation Department is in charge of the league and has final authority regarding all league rules and regulations.

SCHEDULE AND PLAYOFF PROCEDURES:

- Games will be played at the Holland G. Mangum Recreation Center. All warm-up time can take place in used field space.
- League will consist of 6 regular season games, followed by single seeded elimination playoffs. All teams will make the playoffs.

GAME TIMES:

Time Limit: Games will consist of two 20-minute halves with a running clock and a two (2) minute halftime period. Clock will stop automatically at final 2-minutes in second half. From this point on clock will stop on any dead ball or out of bounds play.

- Time Outs: ONLY Three 60 second time-outs per team during a regulation game. Time outs will not carry over to Overtime. Game clock will stop for coach's and official time outs.

GAME PLAY:

- The game will be played five on five. No roster substitutions will be made unless approved by league officials. Each player must play at least 50% of each game. When a team has less than five players it will be up to the coaches and League Coordinator to determine if game will be played for standings or if game will be forfeited. If game is forfeited it may still be played just for fun with teams adjusting players on field. Only registered players may be allowed to play in a game.
- Teams must have a minimum of 4 players ready to play no later than 5 minutes after the coin toss is completed. If a team does not have the minimum players ready to play the game will be forfeited by that team (forfeits are scored as 35 – 0). Opposing team must drop down to 4 players to match.
- **MERCY RULE:** For all Leagues, when a team leads by 35 points or more at any time in the game, or by 28 points in the second half, the score will be taken as the game of record. However, the game will **continue** for the duration of the regulation game clock. No additional points will be tallied for either team.
 - Once a team is leading by 35 points, that team can only operate with 2 downs per side of field the remainder of game.
- Playing Time
 - All players must play a minimum of half the game. Any special circumstances need to be brought to the attention of the League Coordinator by a coach or parent.
 - League Coordinator will issue a warning to the Coach if it is observed that not all players are not getting ample playing time (a minimum of 50%).

- Upon continued abuse of this rule, mandatory substitutions will be implemented every 5 minutes.
- Sportsmanship – Players should be encouraged, not criticized, by their coaches. The game officials are in control of the game and may not be abused in any manner. The recreation staff fully supports the officials. Coaching does not include intimidating the officials. Coaches should try to encourage parents to give positive feedback to their players, and not argue with officials.
- Jr. League – 1 Coach allowed on field. Sr. League – No Coach allowed on field

Penalties:

- Officials and Recreation staff may call penalties at any time before, during and after the game.
- **Any player fighting will be suspended for the remainder of the game and the following game. Additionally, depending on the severity of the incident, players may be suspended from league play for the remainder of the season at the discretion of the Recreation Director.**
- If a player is ejected from a game for any reason, they will be automatically suspended for at least his/her next game or longer. Repeated offenses will result in expulsion from the remainder of the league. If this occurs no refund will be granted.
- Ejected players must meet with Recreation Staff before returning to practice, games, etc.
- Unruly spectators will result in a warning to, unsportsmanlike conduct foul, and finally removal from the field.
- If a coach is a no-show or ejected from a game, Recreation staff will resume duties for the remainder of the game, if a parent does not step in to coach. The coach will be subject to disciplinary action from the administration.
- Coaches who are a “No Show” must meet with Recreation Staff before returning to practice, games, etc.

STANDINGS AND SCORES

- In the event of teams having identical records the following will be used to break ties:
 1. Win-Loss between head to head competition (*A forfeit automatically eliminates forfeiting team*).
 2. Point differential between head to head competitions (team with the greatest margin of victory).
 3. Each team’s average point differential for all games played during the current season (Games won by forfeit are excluded; differentials are based on average of games played).

EQUIPMENT & UNIFORMS

- All players must wear the team jerseys supplied by the Recreation Department. Players are to wear athletic shorts with no pockets.
- **Mouth guards are required.**
- **No metal cleats**
- Game balls are provided by the League. Teams may use another football other than the one provided if both team coaches agree and the official approves the ball.
- No jewelry will be allowed to be worn by any player during the game.
- If a player/ team does not abide, a penalty for each improper uniform will be given.



YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

LOS - Line of Scrimmage & LOD - Loss of Down

Penalties

Officials will call all penalties & determine if any contact is incidental (a judgement call)

Players CANNOT question calls. Head Coach may ask official about a call/ rule interpretation

ALL penalties either assessed from LOS or a Spot Foul

Games cannot end on a defensive penalty unless offense declines

If distance to goal is shorter than penalty yardage, half the distance to goal will be assessed

Any LOD on final down results in automatic turnover on downs

Spot Fouls

Defensive Pass Interference or Defensive Holding - Automatic First Down (from spot)

Tripping or Defensive Unnecessary Roughness = +10 yds & First Down (from spot)

Offensive Fouls – 10 yds & LOD for all below:

Screening, Blocking, Charging, Flag Guarding, and Unnecessary Roughness

Defensive Penalties

+ 5 extra yards from LOS (replay down*)

Offsides, Illegal rush, Illegal flag pull, Roughing the passer, & Taunting

Offensive Penalties

- 5 yards from LOS (replay down*)

Offside/False start, Illegal forward pass, Offensive pass interference, Illegal motion, Delay of game, Impeding the rusher, Illegal procedure, Taunting

Ballcarriers CAN spin but CANNOT jump. Out of control spinning will be called flag guarding

Live Ball/Dead Ball

Ball can be snapped between legs or tossed to side, but must be on ground to start

Substitutions can be made on any dead ball

Teams must have a min of 4 players on field to play

Play is dead when: *ball carriers' flag is pulled or falls off, steps out of bounds, knee hits ground, incomplete pass, ball hits ground, touchdown, PAT, or safety is scored.*

Any player who starts a play without a flag is down where they touched ball

There are NO fumbles, ball is put where carriers' feet were at time of fumble

In case of inadvertent whistle, offense has two options: take ball where it was when whistle blew or replay down from original line of scrimmage

Overtime

Winner is determined by whichever team scores more points within single OT period. No timeouts allowed in OT

Winner of the coin toss chooses offense or defense to start

Each team takes turn with 1 play from either Defense's 5 yd line for one point **OR** Defense's 10 yd line for two points. It is up to the offensive team to go for 1 or 2pts

If team that begins on offense converts, the team that started on defense gets a chance to win or tie the game

If both teams score and complete same amount of points on conversion, then the process is repeated. Whichever team went on defense last, now starts with offense

Both teams must go for two from the 10 yd line entering the 2nd round of OT

Final points earned will be added onto each team score

Equipment

All players must have mouth guards

Home team wears dark color, Away team wears light color (if reversible)

Jerseys must be tucked in at all times

Shorts with pockets must be taped

All jewelry deemed hazardous by must be removed

NO metal cleats

Game

Captains from both teams meet with the official for a coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. Visiting team calls the coin toss

Winner has choice of offense or defense. Loser of coin toss chooses which direction to defend on the field. There is NO option to defer to the second half

Offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5 yd line & has 4 plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, again they have 4 plays to score a touchdown

If a team hasn't crossed midfield, they will be permitted to forfeit their 4th down attempt, and the other team will take possession at their own 5-yd line.

If they choose to attempt a fourth down conversion and don't pass midfield, ball will be placed wherever the play ends, or at the previous LoS if there is an incomplete pass

If offense passes midfield and fails to score, the ball changes possession and new team takes possession at own 5 yd line.

Interceptions will be spotted wherever the receiving player is down.

All possession changes other than as noted above take place on offense's 5 yd line.

Team change sides in second half, and possession will go to the team who started on defense.



YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

Unsportsmanlike Conduct - 15 yds

No physical contact may be used to stop the ball carrier to remove their flag. Absolutely no physical contact with players with intent to alter routes is allowed.

Remember this is flag football not contact football. While we understand the nature of football is a physical game and some contact will occur during play, we will not accept a flagrant disregard of the rules.

Timing

Games consist of 2 twenty-minute halves (running clock)

Game clock only can be stopped upon: Timeout, Official timeout or Under 2 minutes in final half if dead ball or out of bounds (clock stops on PAT's/possession changes under 2-minute rule)

Each time ball is spotted, offensive team has 30 seconds to snap the ball

Officials can stop clock upon their discretion. In the event of an injury the clock will stop.

Scoring

Touchdown: 6 points

Safety: 2 points (Flag must be removed in endzone for safety)

Extra point: 1 point (5 yd line) OR 2 points (10 yd line)

OT winner: Add 1 or 2 points to winning team's score (determined on final possession)

Once a team is leading by 35 points or more, or 28 in the second half, the game is officially over. However, both teams still play out their time. Team leading only allowed 2 downs per side of ball.

Running

The QB cannot run beyond the line of scrimmage with the ball

Direct handoffs or tosses are allowed as long as behind the LOS. Teams can perform multiple handoffs as long as behind the LOS.

The player who receives the handoff can throw the ball as long as he or she remains behind the LOS

The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is

Center sneak play is NOT allowed. The QB can NOT handoff the ball to the center on the first handoff of the play. However, the QB can pass to the center as long as there is "space and time" between the initial snap

No Run Zone

'No Run Zones' are located 5 yds before midfield and 5 yards before the goal line in each offensive direction.

If the ball is spotted on or inside the 'No Run Zone', the offense MUST use a pass play to achieve a first down or TD

Rushing passer

Players that rush the passer must be 7 yds from the LOS when the ball is snapped (unlimited players may rush). Before each play, 7 yds from the LOS are marked off by the referee.

The rusher has a clear path to the passer and any interference by the offense to impede will be considered screening

Players can line up at LOS and mirror the QB but cannot rush.

Passing

All passes must be forward and be received beyond the LOS. Only 1 forward pass per play

Laterals and screen passes are allowed as long as they occur behind the LOS.

Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the LOS

The quarterback has seven (7) seconds to throw the ball

If no pass is thrown within 7 seconds, the play is whistled dead

Once the ball is handed off or passed (behind LOS) there is no seven (7) second rule

Referee will verbally count out the 7 seconds for the QB

If the QB's flag is pulled before the ball leaves his or her hand, the play is ruled dead and spotted where the QB's feet are

Interceptions can be returned for TD's and 2 points on PAT

If pass is tipped/blocked by the defender and the QB catches the ball, the play is whistled dead and considered an incomplete pass

The QB may throw the ball to avoid a sack, pass must go beyond the LOS

Receiving

All players are eligible to receive a pass (including the QB if the ball has been handed off behind the LOS)

Only one player is allowed in motion at a time prior to the snap

A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

Once the ball is advanced beyond the LOS: the current ball-carrier is the only player allowed to have possession of the ball until the play is dead AND the remaining offensive players cannot impede the defense from attempting to pull the offensive player's flag.

(no screening or blocking; no running next to the ball-carrier)