



City of Riverside

Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department



Youth Flag Football Coaches Handbook



PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRAM

This program will provide youth with a non-competitive, entry level experience of the game. The basic fundamentals and rules will be taught in conjunction with sportsmanship and proper conduct of an athlete. Our main goal is to provide a non-competitive atmosphere where participants can succeed, feel good about themselves, smile, and have FUN. This recreation league stresses safety, FUN and participation. Score and standings will not be kept.

Coach's Responsibilities

All coaches must be fingerprinted and cleared by the City of Riverside or a City of Riverside approved Livescan vendor (This is required by California Health and Safety Code sections 1522 and 1596.871) and must attend the mandatory pre-season meeting, be a registered and cleared Municipal Volunteer for the City of Riverside, and read and sign the Coach's Code of Conduct. Coaches shall display good sportsmanship, ethical behavior and implement league rules in their practices and games. Respect and sportsmanship are core values of PRCSD Youth Sports Program. All Coaches and members of PRCSD Youth Sports Program are expected to reflect these core values in their words and conduct toward members of marginalized communities, including (but not limited to) the LGBTQ community. Coaches will provide participants the opportunity to participate in a healthy, supervised, safe and controlled environment. Team spirit and a sense of fair play should govern participation.

Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents and fans before, during and after games. Poor sportsmanship by coaching staff, team members or fans will result in a warning, an ejection and/or forfeiture of the game. The Head Coach is responsible for maintaining and having in their possession copies of the Team Roster and registration waivers.

A total of two (2) coaches are allowed per team. Only those coaches whose names appear on the Official Roster are permitted on the team sideline. The designated Head Coach will be the only one allowed to address the game management (i.e. City Staff and Site Director). Parents are allowed to assist with the permission of the coach and under the supervision of staff or registered volunteer/coach.

You are their **ROLE** model!!

They're just kids & it's just a game.

They're just kids playing a game **FOR FUN!**

"All kids need is a little help, a little hope, and somebody who believes in them."

-Magic Johnson

"Youth sports isn't just about the sport. It's about keeping the fun in the game and teaching your athletes lessons they can take with them in life."

-Coach John Burns

Taking a Stand on Bullying

Too often bullying behavior is passed off as “just a part of the game” or “kids being kids,” but it’s much more serious than that. Coaches, parents and league administrators must be on the lookout for the following indicators – both obvious and not-so-obvious – that bullying is taking place:

- Hitting or slapping with intent to hurt
- Calling players by unwanted nicknames
- Setting another player up to look foolish
- Tripping another player
- Repeated exclusion of another player
- Taunting another player
- Taking others' possessions
- Gossiping about another player
- Physical harm, including illegal use of legs and arms on the field
- Heckling other players
- Trash talking with ill-intent
- Verbal threats to hurt another player

What to Do When You See Bullying

As a coach, you are one of the single biggest influences in your athletes’ lives. In many ways, ending bullying behavior begins and ends with you. Here are nine ways to both prevent and stop bullying on your team:

1. **Be an anti-bullying role model.** Coaches can be a strong deterrent to bullying if they make it clear they are firmly against it. Your relationship with your players matter, and athletes who report having a good relationship with their coach are less likely to engage in antisocial behavior such as bullying.
 2. **Encourage players to report bullying** and create an environment at the start of your season that does not condone it. Discuss bullying and make sure you are there to supervise your players’ unstructured time (when bullying often occurs) during practices and games.
 3. **Have open discussions.** Talking about what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior on and off the field is an important part of reducing bullying. For example, discuss the difference between being aggressive during the game and using that aggression outside of practice and competition with the intention to harm.
 4. **Clearly state the punishment for bullying.** Be clear about the procedure that will be followed if bullying occurs (e.g. “If you bully, the punishment will be...”). Be particularly aware not to inadvertently blame the victim for being bullied.
 5. **Identify the origin of the bullying.** Coaches should take the time to identify the sources of bullying to help diminish reactionary behavior, such as retaliating against the bully. As a coach, you should help the victim find constructive ways to respond to the bully and remind them to always report incidents instead of retaliating.
 6. **Keep your players’ attention.** Supervising athletes closely and providing them clear goals can help reduce the frequency of negative interactions. Increased supervision during unstructured play is essential to prevent and reduce bullying, as this is the time in which most bullying occurs.
 7. **Protect all athletes equally.** Coaches and teachers tend to be more vigilant in protecting overweight victims against bullying, but make sure you look after and support all athletes equally.
 8. **Break up cliques.** Research shows that strong cliques within teams can lead to strong bullying and antisocial behavior toward other teammates. Emphasize the team as a whole over subgroups to maintain a positive and healthy team dynamic.
 9. **Don’t encourage harmful behavior.** Do not teach or condone aggressive behavior (such as slashing or head butting) on the field, as it can result in aggressive behavior off the field. Minimize retaliation against a team that is playing dirty by having your players channel their anger into more productive actions within the game.
- Remember that as a coach, you are in the most influential position to prevent and stop bullying on your team. Take the time to educate your players on unacceptable behavior and clearly explain the consequences for bullying.

General League Information

Tot, Pee Wee, Junior, A, B, and C Divisions

1. **Ages:** The Flag Football League is offered for youth 3-14 years of age. Participants must meet age and grade eligibility requirements as put forth by SCMAF.
2. **Tot and Pee-Wee Divisions:** Designed to teach boys and girls ages 3-6 years sportsmanship, team concepts and very basic skills associated with Flag Football, in a **non-competitive/teaching** atmosphere. No score or standings will be recorded.
3. **Junior Division:** Designed to teach youth age 7 years, sportsmanship and basic skills that can be carried over into future participation in the sport. No score or standings will be recorded.
4. **Division A, B and C:** Youth ages 8 - 14 years learn the skills of passing, blocking, running, and offensive/defensive plays to implement in game situations. Instruction is more advanced as the youth get older. Score will be recorded, however, standings will not.
5. **Verification of Eligibility:** Valid birth verification, such as a birth certificate, baptismal certificate, or documentation by a school official must be furnished at time of registration. Team players are subject to random checks by PRCSD Staff and Officials. In the event of question about age eligibility, documentation of proof of age/grade will be provided by the PRCSD Staff. Failure to provide documentation will result in suspension of play for the child.
6. **Practice:** Practice will begin the week of **September 19** and held at your local community center and should not be held more than twice per week.
7. **Location:** All games will be held at Arlington Heights Sports Park (9401 Cleveland Avenue)
8. **Format:** Tot, Pee Wee and Junior Division teams may play six (6) weeks of games beginning on Saturday, September 30, 2023 and ending on Saturday, November 4, 2023. A, B and C Divisions may play a eight (8) week game schedule beginning on Saturday, September 23 and ending on Saturday, November 11, 2023. There will be some games held on Wednesday nights starting on September 27th.
9. **Rosters:** Completed waiver, payment, and birth verification must be submitted to the PRCSD for each player prior to the participant beginning practices. Each upper division team will have a minimum of 8 and maximum of 12 participants. Tot, Pee Wee and Junior teams may have a minimum of 8 and maximum of 16 participants.
10. **League Information:** Coaches in A, B, and C Divisions must check-in with PRCSD Staff at their corresponding game table to submit their player line up fifteen (15) minutes prior to their scheduled game time. Questions will be addressed by the PRCSD Youth Sports staff.
11. **Participation Requirement:** There will be a minimum play rule for all divisional levels of play. All players will play four (4) **consecutive** minutes in the first and second half. Minutes cannot be carried over from one half to another.
12. **Forfeit Regulations:** Teams will be granted a ten (10) minute grace period for the **first game of the day only**. For all subsequent games, game time is forfeit time. However, all games will be played for fun and exercise. Teams that have less than the minimum players will borrow players for the opposing team. Teams will play two (2) fifteen (15) minute halves (Tots will play 10 minute halves).
13. **Protests:** There will be no protests, as the Youth Sports Staff will have final authority. A Youth Sports staff will be on site, at all times. The sports staff has the authority to rule and resolve all Youth Sports issues immediately.
14. **Standings:** Score will be recorded for A, B, and C Divisions. No score will be recorded for Tot, Pee Wee, or Junior Divisions.
15. **Poor Sportsmanship Ejection:** The minimum penalty for ejected players/coaches/spectators is ejection from the current game and removal from the premises (Adults only) and possible suspension from future game and or games. The Youth Sports Coordinator and Supervisor will decide if further suspension is warranted based on severity of actions. There will be no refunds or credits for ejections.

16. **Awards:** Participation certificates will be distributed to the coach prior to the end of the season. Certificates should be awarded to participants after the final game or at the end of season banquet.
17. **Inclement Weather:** In case of inclement weather, please call the sports line at **951-826-5449** or visit **www.teamsideline.com/riverside** by 7:30 a.m. on game day.
18. **Team Sideline:** Visit us online at **www.teamsideline.com/riverside** for up to date schedules and field conditions.

Picture Day: Picture Day will be held at Arlington Heights Sports Park and will be assigned by division. Picture times will be scheduled between 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Picture Day Dates:

Saturday, October 7th – All Divisions **Wednesday, October 11th** – Make – up Picture Day

Community Center Contact Information: Please contact one of the PRCS community centers for questions or concerns.

Bobby Bonds Park – Jovan Fontenot, Recreation Services Coordinator
951-826-5746 or jfontenot@riversideca.gov

Bordwell Park – Janet Palacio, Recreation Services Coordinator
951-826-5355 or jpalcio@riversideca.gov

Bryant Park – Raymond Aguirre, Recreation Services Coordinator
951-351-6135 or raguirre@riversideca.gov

Hunt Park – Paula Holden-Mitchell, Assistant Recreation Coordinator
951-351-6132 or PHMitchell@Riversideca.gov

La Sierra Park – Hilda Hernandez, Recreation Services Coordinator
951-351-6131 or hhernandez@riversideca.gov

Nichols Park – Brendan Moore, Recreation Services Coordinator
951-351-6130 or bmoore@riversideca.gov

Orange Terrace Community Center – Valerie Espinoza, Recreation Services Coordinator
951-826-5910 or vespinoza@riversideca.gov

Reid Park – Edgar Servin, Recreation Services Coordinator
951-826-5654 or eservin@riversideca.gov

Villegas Park – Felicia Brown, Recreation Services Coordinator
951-351-6142 or fbrown@riversideca.gov

Youth Sports Department Contact Information – email: Sportoffice@riversideca.gov

Jonathan Rodriguez – Recreation Coordinator – Youth Sports
951-826-5449 or jrodriguez3@riversideca.gov

Ebony Perkins – Recreation Supervisor
951-826-2045 or eperkins@riversideca.gov

News regarding upcoming youth sports information, and schedules can be found at www.teamsideline.com/riverside

Tot/Pee Wee Division Rules of Play

Game Official/Facilitators will be PRCS D Recreation Leaders.

1. **Players on Field**– Maximum of eight (8) players on the field of play for each team. Teams may borrow players from the opposing team, if needed. Players **must** have waivers on file to participate. Seven (7) players are required at all times to avoid forfeit.
2. **Coaches on Field**– Two (2) coaches for Tot Division can be on the field. One (1) coach for Pee Wee Division can be on the field. Only coaches who have been Live Scanned and cleared by the City of Riverside are permitted on the field for the entirety of the game. Coaches can only direct players while on the field, coaches cannot interfere with plays. Coaches may play quarterback position but must pass or hand the ball within five (5) seconds of the snap in order to keep the flow of the game going. One (1) coach may be on the sideline in the coach’s box.
3. **The Field**– The field dimensions will be 40 yards in length and 20 yards in width, with two (2) ten (10) yard end zones.
4. **The Ball**– Tot Division will use a Smart Start football; the Pee Wee Division will use a Rookie/Pee Wee size six (6) football.
5. **Game Time**– Tot Division games will consist of two (2), twelve (12) minute halves with a two (2) minute half-time. Pee Wee Division Games will consist of two (2), sixteen (16) minute halves with a two (2) minute half-time.
6. **Score**– No Score will be kept
7. **Line of Scrimmage**– Defensive players must line up a minimum of ten (10) feet away from the offensive line of scrimmage.
8. **Blocking**– Players must block with arms against their chest. Players cannot extend their arms or push opposing players while blocking.
9. **Ball Possession**– The ball will be placed at the mid-field line to begin the game and at the start of each half. Each team receives four (4) plays to score a touchdown, after the 4th play the ball returns to the mid-field line and is awarded to the opposing team.
10. **Flag Guarding**– Offensive players may not use their hands in an attempt to prevent opponents from pulling their flags. Players who do so will be called for “Flag Guarding” and the ball will be moved five (5) feet back from the spot of the penalty. Penalties shall be called at the discretion of the Game Officials (PRCS D staff). No appeals on plays/calls. If a player’s flag falls off before it is pulled, the play is dead at that spot.
11. **Charging and Tackling**– The ball carrier may not run through a defensive player, and must attempt to evade the defensive players. The defensive player must not hold or run through a ball carrier but must play the flag, not the player or the ball. The quarterback is considered the ball carrier until he/she releases the ball. A defensive player may attempt to block a pass as long as contact is not made with the passer. In an attempt to remove the flag from the ball carrier, defensive players may contact the body of an opponent with their hands. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the ball carrier down in an attempt to remove the flag.
 - A. **Defensive roughness against the ball carrier.** Violators involved in the following fouls may be removed from the game at the discretion of the Game Officials.

1) Tackling	3) Holding	5) Tripping	7) Pushing
2) Charging	4) Bumping	6) Pushing	

Severity of action and number of reoccurrences will determine penalties.
PENALTY: Five (5) yards and disqualification if decided flagrant by Game Official.
12. **SCMAF Blood Rule:** A player, coach, or official who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has blood on his body or clothing shall be prohibited from participating further in the game, until appropriate treatment has been administered. If first aid is required for a player, the player must be immediately removed from the game. A player, coach, or official will not be allowed to participate unless:
 - A) All bleeding has stopped.
 - B) Any exposed cut/scrape, which has bled, is completely covered.
 - C) Bloody clothing is removed.
13. **Unsafe Objects Not Allowed:** Jewelry, piercings, and any other items determined dangerous by PRSCS staff/Game Officials.

Junior Division Rules of Play

Game Officials/Facilitators will be PRCS D Recreation Leaders.

1. **Players on Field**— Maximum of eight (8) players on the field of play for each team. Teams may borrow players from the opposing team to field a full team. Players **must** have waivers on file to participate.
2. **Coaches on Field**— One coach who has been Live Scanned and cleared by the City of Riverside is permitted on the field for the **first** and **third** quarter of the game only. Coaches can only direct players while on the field; coaches cannot interfere with plays or play the position of quarterback. Coaches (1-2) that assist on the sidelines should also be Live scanned and cleared.
3. **The Field** – The field dimensions will be 40 yards in length and 20 yards in width, with two (2) ten (10) yard end zones.
4. **The Ball** – The Junior Division will use a Rookie/Pee Wee size six (6) rubber football.
5. **Game Time**— Games will consist of four (4), eight (8) minute quarters with a two (2) minute half-time.
6. **Score**— No Score will be kept.
7. **Line of Scrimmage**— Defensive players must line up a minimum of ten (10) feet away from the offensive line of scrimmage.
8. **Blocking**— Players must block with arms against their chest. Players cannot extend their arms or push opposing players while blocking. Players who do so will be called for illegal blocking and the ball will be moved five (5) feet from the line of scrimmage. Penalties shall be called at the discretion of the staff. No appeals on plays/calls.
9. **Ball Possession**— The ball will begin at the mid-field line to begin the game. Each team will receive four (4) plays to score a touchdown. At the end of the fourth down the ball will be turned over to the opposing team where the ball lies.
10. **Flag Guarding**— Offensive players may not use their hands in an attempt to prevent opponents from pulling their flags. Players who do so will be called for “Flag Guarding” and the ball will be moved five (5) feet from the line of scrimmage. Penalties shall be called at the discretion of the PRCS D staff. No appeals on plays/calls. If a player’s flag falls off before it is pulled, the play is dead at that spot.
11. **Charging and Tackling**— The ball carrier may not run through a defensive player, and must attempt to evade the defensive players. The defensive player must not hold nor run through a ball carrier but must play the flag, not the player or the ball. The quarterback is considered the ball carrier until he/she releases the ball. A defensive player may attempt to block a pass as long as contact is not made with the passer. In an attempt to remove the flag from the ball carrier, defensive players may contact the body of an opponent with their hands. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the ball carrier down in an attempt to remove the flag.

A. Defensive roughness against the Ball Carrier. Violators involved in the following fouls may be removed from the game at the discretion of the officials.

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|
| 1) Tackling | 3) Holding | 5) Tripping |
| 2) Charging | 4) Bumping | 6) Pushing |

Severity of action and number of reoccurrences will determine penalties.

PENALTY: Five (5) yards and disqualification if decided flagrant by Game Official.

12. **SCMAF Blood Rule:** A player, coach, or official who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has blood on his body or clothing shall be prohibited from participating further in the game, until appropriate treatment has been administered. If first aid is required for a player, the player must be immediately removed from the game. A player, coach, or official will not be allowed to participate unless:

A) All bleeding has stopped. B) Any exposed cut/scrape, which has bled, is completely covered. C) Bloody clothing is removed

Unsafe Objects Not Allowed: Jewelry, piercings, and any other items determined dangerous by staff/officials.

FLAG FOOTBALL GENERAL RULES

A, B, and C Division

Two SCMAF Certified Game Officials will officiate. One Recreation Leader will manage score table.

Article I

Eligibility

- A. The year born is the primary criteria for determining the age for competition. Age divisions may include one, two or three year age spans within a division. In a team sport, a player may play in the next highest age division, but may only play for one team per season. Players may not play down a division. Players must provide written verification of birth date. Special provisional players using grade for the division must provide written verification from the school for current grade. Coaches must have birth verification and emergency information cards at every game and practice.

Division

- A. Players who in a grade no higher than 8th are eligible. A player can be no older than 14.
B. Players who in a grade no higher than 6th are eligible. A player can be no older than 12.
C. Players who in a grade no higher than 4th are eligible. A player can be no older than 10.

Playing in a Higher Division

A player can play in one division above their listed age division. Participants may play in only one division and on one team in a season.

Article II

Flag Football Rules and Regulations

- A. The SCMAF Flag Football Committee and PRCSO Staff will have jurisdiction over all rules and regulations herein not covered.
B. Protests must be handled on the spot by the Youth Sports staff prior to the next snap. If the protest is not valid, the protesting team will be charged with a time-out.

Article III

The Field

- A. The field shall be marked off into four equal segments. The length and width will be regulated by the area available.
B. Official dimensions for playing field are 80 yards in length by 40 yards in width, with two (2) ten (10) yard end zones for Divisions A, B and C.

Article IV

The Player

- A. The game shall be played between two (2) teams of eight players each. Seven (7) players are required at all times to avoid a forfeit... A ten (10) minute grace period will apply to the first game of the day, all others will be deemed a forfeit at game time.
B. Any offensive formation will be allowed.
C. The defensive line-up is not restricted from any formation.
D. Direct runs by the quarterback across the line of scrimmage are **not** allowed. He/she must hand off or pass the ball. Penalties shall be called when the quarterback crosses the line of scrimmage, but Game Officials will allow the play to be completed.

Minimum Play Rule

- A. Each player must play a minimum of four (4) consecutive minutes which includes all offense, defense and kicking plays in each half. An official's time out, not charged to either team, shall be called nearest to the midway point of the quarter or on the next dead ball, for the purpose of meeting the minimum play rule. A player must start his/her consecutive minutes at either the beginning or midpoint of a quarter. Consecutive minutes must be played within one quarter in each half. Consecutive minutes begun in one quarter may not be carried over into the next quarter or half. Late arriving players, if time permits, must play the minimum consecutive minutes within the half of their arrival. Injuries that preclude the player from returning to the game are exceptions. Injuries that preclude the player out of play for more than one play will be ruled upon at the discretion of the OSFS/Official with respect to meeting the requirement of the minimum play rule. The penalty for violation of the minimum play rule will result in the forfeiture of the game. The scorekeeper and Game Official shall determine compliance.

Article V

Coaches and Spectators

- A. One coach from each team must stay between the 20-yard lines when on the sidelines. Coaches may not enter the field at any time. Players must stay in the players box at all times. Maximum of three coaches are allowed on the sideline during games.
B. Spectators must remain in the stands or in designated spectator areas whenever seating facilities or designated spectator areas are available. If stands are not provided, spectators must stay at least 5 yards from the sidelines and end lines. Spectators must sit on the opposite side of the team sideline.

- C. Failure to adhere to sections **A & B** will result in an “Official Timeout” and the coach of the team will be asked to address the parent/spectators. If the unsportsmanlike conduct persists, the game will be forfeited by the offending team.

Article VI

Equipment

- A. All game equipment, such as footballs, timers, and flags will be furnished by the City of Riverside (PRCSD).
- B. **JERSEYS:** Players must wear PRCSD issued T-shirts/uniforms. All participating teams are required to bring a white T-shirt as an alternative uniform. At the start of play, all T-shirts must be tucked into pants/shorts or one inch above Flag Football belt line.
- C. **PANTS/SHORTS:** Each player must wear pants or shorts that are a different color than the flag. (Flags are yellow and red). Pants/shorts cannot have pockets or belt loops.
- D. **FLAG BELT:** All divisions shall use a regulation three flag belt system. Flags must be a contrasting color to uniform pants. The flags must be a contrasting color to their opponent’s flags. Flags are provided by the City of Riverside, PRCSD.
- E. **SHOES:** Shoes must be worn; bare feet will not be permitted. Screw in or metal cleats are illegal. Use of molded rubber or multi-purpose shoes is recommended.
- F. **BALLS:** The A Division shall use youth size (Size 8) footballs. The B and C Divisions shall use the junior size (Size 7) football. Personal protective equipment, such as knee guards, arm guards, etc. shall be inspected by officials prior to each game. NO regulation football equipment such as helmets, pads, etc. will be allowed.

Unsafe Objects Not Allowed: Jewelry, piercings, and any other items determined dangerous by PRCSD staff/Game Officials.

With the exception of the following SCMAF modifications, current California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Eight Man Rules will govern our league.

Article VII

Game Time

- A. The game shall consist of four (4), eight (8) minute quarters. During running time, the clock shall be stopped for time-outs only. After a time-out the clock shall start on the next snap.
- B. A notification of the two (2) minute warning will be given at the end of each half, please note that the clock will stop only for the fourth quarter warning and not for the second quarter warning. The regulation clock will be used the last two (2) minutes of the fourth quarter. During that time, the clock stops for incomplete forward passes, out of bounds, penalties, time-outs, changes of possession, and scores. After a penalty, the clock will start depending on the previous play (clock stopped or running when foul occurred). If a declared kick is attempted, the clock will not start until the ball is kicked.
- C. Each team will receive four (4) timeouts per game, two (2) per half. Teams will receive one (1) additional time out for overtime periods. Timeouts may not be carried over.
- D. Teams will be granted a ten (10) minute grace period after scheduled game time for the first game of the day. For all subsequent games, game time is forfeit time.
- E. Sportsmanship rule: If a team is leading by 24 points or more, “running time” clock will be used. The clock will only stop for official time-outs. In addition, after any score, the trailing team will be awarded the ball at their own thirty-five (35) yard line in lieu of a kick off. Should the lead become less than a 24-point margin, the game will convert back to regulation timing and kickoffs.

Article VIII

TIE GAME

- A. **COIN TOSS:** A coin toss will be held immediately following regulation play. The winner of the toss will choose to be on offense/defense or will choose which side of the field will be used for play. The loser of the toss shall choose the remaining option and have subsequent first choice for each even numbered extra period.
- B. **EXTRA PERIOD: There will be no overtime in the event of a tied game.**
- C. **SCORING:**
1. When a team scores, they must attempt a two (2) point conversion.
 2. The team that scores the most points in the overtime period will be declared the winner.
 3. If both teams fail to score, the team that gains the most yards from the twenty (20) yard line is declared the winner.
- D. **INTERCEPTIONS:**
1. If a team intercepts the ball and returns it for a touchdown they will be declared the winner.
 2. If they do not score, they will start with the ball at the twenty (20) yard line and zero (0) yards will be awarded to the other team.
- E. **TIME-OUTS:**
1. Each team will have one (1) time-out per overtime period. Time-outs from regulation play will NOT be carried over into the

extra period.

Article IX

The Game

A. ENCROACHMENT is going into the neutral zone. The neutral zone is a space between the two scrimmage lines during a scrimmage down. This is established after the center has adjusted the ball, ready for the hike. If either team encroaches, the ball is dead, and a five (5) yard penalty will be assessed.

B. BLOCKING

1. **OFFENSE:** An offensive blocker may use only the standing block, with the forearms and hands folded to the body. Extension of the forearms or elbows is not allowed. No part of the blocker's body, except the feet, shall be in contact with the ground throughout the block. Four-point blocking will be allowed only on the initial charge by linemen.

2. **DEFENSE:** Defensive players are restrained in use of hands to pushing the shoulders and body of offensive blockers. Slapping or striking is not allowed and will be penalized.

C. CHARGING AND TACKLING

1. The ball carrier may not run through a defensive player, and must attempt to evade the defensive players. The defensive player must not hold nor run through a ball carrier **BUT MUST PLAY THE FLAG, NOT THE PLAYER OR THE BALL**. The quarterback is considered the ball carrier until he/she releases the ball. A defensive player may attempt to block a pass as long as contact is not made with the passer. In an attempt to remove the flag from the ball carrier, defensive players may contact the body of an opponent with their hands, but not with their neck or head. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the ball carrier down in an attempt to remove the flag.

2. Defensive roughness against the **ball carrier**. Violators involved in the following fouls may be banished from the game at the discretion of the officials.

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|
| A) Tackling | C) Holding | E) Tripping |
| B) Charging | D) Bumping | F) Pushing |

PENALTY: twelve (12) yards and disqualification if decided flagrant by Game Official.

D. THE KICKOFF

1. The kickoff shall be made from the 30 yard line from either end of the playing area. The receiving team must place a minimum of three (3) players within five (5) yards of midfield line. The kick-off must originate from the ground or the kicking tee. The ball shall not be placed on the foot of anyone and kicked. A drop kick will be allowed.

2. **OUT-OF-BOUNDS:** In the event that the ball goes out-of-bounds on the kick-off, the receiving team shall put the ball in play 15 yards in from the sideline. When the ball goes out-of-bounds between the receiving team's 30 yard line and the goal line, the ball will be put in play on the 30 yard line.

3. **ON-SIDE-KICK:** There are no onside kicks. The kicking team cannot recover an onside kick. The ball becomes dead and is put back in play on the ensuing play.

4. **Changing Goals:** Teams shall change goals at the end of the first and third quarter.

E. SCORING

1. Touchdown – Six (6) POINTS

2. Safety – Two (2) POINTS

3. Conversion – One (1) POINT. The ball shall be placed two (2) yards from the goal line for the attempt.

4. Conversion – Two (2) POINTS. The ball shall be placed five (5) yards from the goal line.

Note: NO kicking conversion allowed.

F. PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

1. No single penalty may be assessed that will move the ball more than half the distance to the goal line, whether the penalty be against the offensive or defensive team.

2. Any foul that occurs between downs, will be enforced from the spot of the snap.

3. For fouls during a down, the following enforcement principles will apply:

- a) If fouled **DURING LOOSE BALL PLAY:** Free kick, pass, kick, or fumble behind the scrimmage line or a run which precedes a pass, kick, or fumble behind the scrimmage line. The penalty will be enforced from the line of scrimmage.

Note: If the offensive team fouls behind the line of scrimmage on above plays, enforce from spot of the foul.

b) If fouled DURING A RUNNING PLAY: The penalty will be enforced at the end of the run. A running play is any run not followed by a pass, kick, or fumble behind the line of scrimmage.

Note: If the offensive team fouls behind the end of the run, the penalty will be enforced from spot of the foul.

4. If the last defensive player between the ball carrier and the goal line commits a foul on the ball carrier, a touchdown shall be awarded.

5. Any penalty which involves the loss of a down and occurs in a play following a change of possession, the penalty shall be enforced from the spot of the foul. The team obtaining possession will have a first down after the penalty is enforced.

6. A quarter must be extended by a timeless down except for unsportsmanlike or non-player fouls. A timeless down will be played if a foul occurred on the last play of a quarter, and one of the following occurred:

- a) There was a foul by either team and the penalty was accepted.
- b) There was a double foul.
- c) There was an inadvertent whistle and down is to be repeated.

G. ILLEGAL HIDEOUTS

1. All players must break from the huddle before each play. If the team does not huddle, all players must be at least five (5) yards from the sidelines when the ball is put into play, or they shall be penalized.

H. PASSES AND HAND-OFFS

1. All players are eligible pass receivers.

2. An incomplete lateral pass is a dead ball at the point of contact with the ground.

3. An intercepted pass in the defensive team's end zone may be run out of the end zone or downed in the end zone for a touchback. Touchbacks will be put in play at the 20 yard line.

4. During the scrimmage down, the ball may be handed forward behind the line...

a) To any lineman who has clearly faced his goal line by moving both feet in a half-turn and is at least one yard behind the line of scrimmage when he / she receives the ball.

b) To a teammate, who at the snap, was behind his line of scrimmage.

5. There may be any number of legal forward passes during a down, but each pass must be thrown from in or behind the neutral zone.

I. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

1. Swearing, obscene language or actions, etc., either on or off the playing field by the players, coaches, or spectators will not be tolerated. No player may show baiting or taunting acts or words which can cause ill will or any delayed, excessive or prolonged act by which a player may attempt to focus attention upon himself.

2. Any player/coach/spectator behaving unsportsmanlike will be subject to:

A) Warning by officials/site coordinator. **B)** Ejection of the game. **C)** Suspension from future games.

J. SAFETY

1. A fumble in a team's own end zone.

2. A ball carrier's flag is pulled in his own end zone.

3. A dropped, sideward, or backward pass in the offensive team's end zone.

4. An offensive foul in your own end zone.

Note: After a safety, the offensive team is allowed one play on their 20 yard line to kick-off to the opposing team.

K. DEAD BALL

1. The Referee shall declare the ball "dead" and the end of the down when:

a) A flag not removed by grabbing or pulling does not cause play to stop. In all situations where play is in progress and a ball carrier loses one or both flags either accidental, inadvertently, or on purpose, de-flagging reverts to a one-handed touch of the ball carrier between the shoulders and the knees.

b) The ball goes out-of-bounds or the ball carrier goes out-of-bounds.

c) A forward pass becomes incomplete.

L. FIRST DOWN

1. To keep possession of the ball, the offensive team must advance the ball past the zone lines in four downs. As soon as the ball is advanced over the zone line, the following down shall be a first down.

M. PUTTING THE BALL INTO PLAY

1. The ball is put into play by the center with a backwards pass, hand-off, or free kick situation.

N. FUMBLED BALL

1. The ball is dead at the point of contact with ground behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is declared “dead” when a fumble occurs beyond the line of scrimmage and spotted at the point where the possession of the ball was lost.
2. An intentional fumble is considered unsportsmanlike conduct and will be penalized from the point of the foul.

O. PUNTS AND KICKS

1. A kick which touches a player of either team and then touches the ground is dead at the spot of touching the ground and belongs to the receiving team at the spot, or at the spot of first touch by the kicking team.
2. Kicks or punts crossing the goal line shall be declared dead and automatic touchbacks, whether touched or not, and be put in play on the 20 yard line.
3. On a blocked punt, the kicking team may advance the ball if recovered behind the line of scrimmage, and remains in possession if the down was 3rd or less, or if the ball is advanced beyond the first down zone.
4. All punts and kick-offs are free kicks. A free kick is made under the restrictions which prohibits either team from advancing beyond the established restraining lines until the ball is kicked.
5. All kicks must be declared on any down (1st through 4th). On a kicking down, the defensive team must have a minimum of three (3) players on the line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked. Neither team may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked.
6. On all free kicks, the punter has ten (10) seconds from the time of the snap to punt the ball. The punter must begin the kicking motion directly behind the center (hiker).

P. SUBSTITUTIONS

1. Free substitution shall be employed at all times. Officials shall not tolerate substitutions that are obviously made to delay the game. A substitute becomes a player when he enters the field and communicates with a teammate or an official, enters the huddle, is positioned in an offensive or defensive formation, or participates in the play. A substitute must stay in for that play.

Q. INADVERTENT WHISTLE

1. The ball is dead and the down is ended when an official sounds his whistle inadvertently. When a penalty is declined for a foul which occurred during the down and there is an inadvertent whistle while:
 - a) A legal snap or pass is in flight or during a kick, the down will be replayed.
 - b) A player is in possession, the team may choose to accept the play or replay the down.

R. BASIC ENFORCEMENT SPOT (BES):

1. If a foul occurs during a down, the basic enforcement spot is fixed by the type of play. There are two types of play:
 - a) A loose ball play is any action during:
 - 1) A free kick or scrimmage kick. 2) A legal forward pass. 3) A backward pass or a fumble made from in or behind the neutral zone. 4) The run or runs which precede such legal pass, kick, or fumble.
2.
 - a) If a foul occurs during a loose ball play, the basic enforcement spot is the previous spot.
 - b) If a foul occurs during a running play, the basic enforcement spot is the spot where the related run ends. The run ends where the player loses possession if his/her run is followed by a fumble or pass. If the runner does not lose possession, his/her run ends where the ball becomes dead.

SCMAF Blood Rule:

1. A player, coach, or official, who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has blood on his body or clothing, shall be prohibited from participating further in the game, until appropriate treatment has been administered.
2. If first aid is required for a player, the player must be immediately removed from the game. A player, coach, or official will not be allowed to participate unless:
 - A. All bleeding has stopped
 - B. Any exposed cut/scrape, which has bled, is completely covered
 - C. Bloody clothing is removed.

Warming Up

Another important part of ensuring players perform to the best of their ability is simply having the players warm up correctly. Players should warm up for 10-15 minutes before practice and games to help reduce injuries and pulled muscles. **NOTE:** Warm-ups should be tailored to be age appropriate. Physical exercise should be used to enhance a healthy lifestyle and **not** be used as a form of punishment.

1. Move one arm across your body, almost as if you were going to take a backhand swing, hold for fifteen (15) seconds and repeat with the other arm.
2. Grasp the elbow of the arm in motion with your other hand and gently pull the arm further across your body, hold for a count of ten (10) and repeat three (3) times with each arm.
3. Interlace your fingers above your head. With the palms facing up, push your arms up and back gently, hold for fifteen (15) seconds.
4. With your arms overhead, hold the elbow of one arm with the hand of the other arm. Gently pull your elbow behind your head, creating a stretch, hold for fifteen (15) seconds, and repeat three (3) times.
5. Other areas of emphasis for stretching should include the back muscles, hamstrings, groin, and calf muscles. Some players may think that warming up is a waste of time; remind them that everyone including professional teams, must warm up. Warming up ensures in keeping all players healthy and playing like champions.
6. This leg stretch works the muscles in the groin. Start by kneeling on soft surface. Keeping back straight, place left foot on ground and gently press forward until knee is bent at a 90-degree angle (the knee is directly over the ankle). Place hands or elbows on left knee to stabilize and hold for 10 to 30 seconds and repeat three (3) times.
7. Sit on the ground with legs apart in a straddle position. Bend over right leg, then to the center, then to left leg. Hold each stretch for 10 to 30 seconds without bouncing. These stretches work the lower back, sides, inner thighs, and hamstrings (the muscles on the back of the thighs).
8. The side lunge stretch works the inner thighs, also called adductors, and the hips. Stand up straight with legs apart. Bend one leg to a 90-degree angle (straight line from knee to ankle) and keep the other leg stretched out straight, with toes and heels on the floor pointing out at about a 45-degree angle. Feel the stretch in the inner thigh and hold. Keep back straight.
9. Stretch the back and the hamstrings with a toe touch. Stand with arms hanging loosely at sides and feet together, with knees very slightly bent. Slowly roll down from the back and reach for the toes with your hands. Hold without bouncing.
10. Start in a seated position with left leg stretched forward, toes pointing up. Bend right leg and place the sole of the right foot along the knee or inner thigh of the left leg. Reach forward to the toes of the left foot until you feel the hamstring stretch (the hamstring muscles are on the backs of the thighs). Hold for 10 to 30 seconds without bouncing.
11. Run 100 – 300 yards with a thirty second rest in between and stretching.

COACHING & HAVING FUN

The PRCSD Team is committed to providing a recreation Youth Flag Football league with the emphasis on Safety, Sportsmanship, Teamwork, and Fun. Here are a few tips to assist coaches, parents, and players to have a great season.

1. **Have Fun!!!** Make sure the kids have fun! Make sure the parents have fun!! Listen to yourself and the way you talk to your players. If you're not having fun, get off the field, go to your car and listen to the Moonlight Sonata. Or Bach. Or Norah Jones. Not Metallica. Then come back and have some fun.
2. **Rules are Rules:** Please review the playing guidelines for your age group in the PRCSD Youth Flag Football Handbook. When in doubt ask questions. You can call the Youth Sports Office at (951) 826-5449 or contact by email at sportsoffice@riversideca.gov.
3. **You're the Coach:** Wear your Coach's shirt – Introduce yourself to the officials. Remember, you have one assistant on the sideline with you– make sure he/she wears the coach's shirt too. Also, try to look like a coach, not Laird Hamilton. Flip-flops and board shorts look good on the beach, but not the field. If you don't have a shirt, contact the PRCSD Sports Team. Remind your parents that you're the coach. Parents should cheer from the spectators sideline not the team sideline. All comments by coaches and parents should be made to your team and not the opposing team/parents. Positive comments only.
4. **The Youth Sport Staff are your Friend:** – Remember the Youth Sports Staff are trained in the very basics of football. Many are still learning the game. Staff are human beings, sometime during the season there will be a missed or bad call. Do not be surprised when it happens and do not overreact. Don't challenge/criticize the staff on any call during or after the game. Also, if you, an assistant coach, or a parent challenges, argues or verbally criticizes staff members, the head coach and the person who makes the challenge will subject the team to possible penalties. You and your assistant coach should stay in the coaches box or between the 20 yard lines the entire time unless asked by the staff to step onto the field, with the exception of the Pee Wee, Junior, and Tot division, as a coach is allowed on the field the entire game during defense.
5. **Coaches are like Scouts:** Be prepared – know in advance when you are going to substitute/rotate players during breaks 'Map it out'. Remember each child should play four (4) consecutive minutes in each half.
6. **Hydrate before you have to!** Make sure your players are drinking plenty of water before, during and after games and practices. Know the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke and what to do. Notify Sports Staff immediately if you observe a child, parent or coach display signs of heat exhaustion.
7. **Respect the Fields:** We have the best fields in the Inland Empire. Please clean up after yourself; have your 'snack parent' bring a trash bag and clean up after the team. Keep it clean and green!
8. **Field set-up and take down:** BE RESPONSIBLE. Please work with participants and parents to assist in picking up equipment after practices and or games. Please return all flags to the score table after games.
9. **Last but not least:** We appreciate your dedication and support. Without volunteers like you, kids wouldn't be able to have fun and enjoy the sport of Flag Football.

Safety Tips



1. Walk the field before each game and practice. Check for glass, holes, rocks or other hazardous conditions.
2. Keep your players alert at all times.
3. Pre-game warm-ups reduce the chance of muscle or tendon strain.
4. Inspect your equipment before each game and practice. Make sure items fit properly i.e. flags, shirts, etc.
5. Keep equipment out of harm's way when not in use.
6. Have players remove watches, rings, earrings, chains or metal objects that may be dangerous. We suggest that a player refrains from chewing gum or candy during the game/practice.
7. Keep spectators, especially babies and toddlers, a safe distance from the field of play/practice areas.
8. Rubber cleats are ok. Sneakers/tennis shoes are ok. Metal cleats, open-toed shoes, sandals and bare feet are **not** allowed.
9. Keep all players sitting on sideline when not playing/practicing.
10. No shorts with pockets (Tape if needed).
11. Coaches, officials, and score keepers are advised to wear masks during practices and games. Spectators are recommended to wear masks but are not required.

Tot, Pee Wee, Junior, A, B, and C Division Rules

Game Format	A Division	B Division	C Division	JR Division	Pee Wee Division	Tot Division
Agers	12 - 14 years old	10 - 11 years old	8 - 9 years old	7 years old	5 - 6 years old	3 - 4 years old
Total # of participants on team	8 min - 16 max	8 min - 16 max	8 min - 16 max	8 min - 12 max	8 min - 12 max	8 min - 12 max
Beginning Game	Coin Toss	Coin Toss	Coin Toss	Team listed 1st on game schedule	1st team listed on game schedule	1st team listed on game schedule
Players on Field	8	8	8	8	8	8
Minimum Play Rule	Participants must play a minimum of four consecutive minutes each half.	Participants must play a minimum of four consecutive minutes each half.	Participants must play a minimum of four consecutive minutes each half.	Participants must play a minimum of four consecutive minutes each half.	Participants must play a minimum of four consecutive minutes each half.	Participants must play a minimum of four consecutive minutes each half.
Substitution Rule	Every four minutes. Once all participants have played a minimum of four consecutive minutes it will be free substitution.	Every four minutes. Once all participants have played a minimum of four consecutive minutes it will be free substitution.	Every four minutes. Once all participants have played a minimum of four consecutive minutes it will be free substitution.	Every four minutes. Once all participants have played a minimum of four consecutive minutes it will be free substitution.	Every four minutes. Once all participants have played a minimum of four consecutive minutes it will be free substitution.	Every four minutes. Once all participants have played a minimum of four consecutive minutes it will be free substitution.
Officials	2	2	2	One Youth Sports Staff	One Youth Sports Staff	One Youth Sports Staff
Coaches on playing field	No coaches allowed	No coaches allowed	No coaches allowed	One Coach 1st/3rd quarter Entire Season	One per team Entire Game	Two per team Entire Season
Standings	No	No	No	No	No	No
Time Outs	Four total (Two in each half) 30 seconds. Time outs do not carry over between halves or into overtime.	Four total (Two in each half) 30 seconds. Time outs do not carry over between halves or into overtime.	Four total (Two in each half) 30 seconds. Time outs do not carry over between halves or into overtime.	One per half at coaches discretion	One per half at coaches discretion	One per half at coaches discretion
Coaches on Sidelines	Two, must be fingerprinted and cleared. One coach can roam from 20 yard line to 20 yard line, one must stay in coaches box	Two, must be fingerprinted and cleared. One coach can roam from 20 yard line to 20 yard line, one must stay in coaches box	Two, must be fingerprinted and cleared. One coach can roam from 20 yard line to 20 yard line, one must stay in coaches box	One, must be fingerprinted and cleared. Must stay in coaches box	One, must be fingerprinted and cleared. Must stay in coaches box	One, must be fingerprinted and cleared. Must stay in coaches box
Score	Score will be kept	Score will be kept	Score will be kept	No score will be kept	No score will be kept	No score will be kept
Length of Games	Four Eight minute quarters with running clock. Last two minutes of 4th is regulation clock	Four Eight minute quarters with running clock. Last two minutes of 4th is regulation clock	Four Eight minute quarters with running clock. Last two minutes of 4th is regulation clock	Four - Eight minute quarters with running clock	Two 16 minute halves with running clock	Two 12 minute halves with running clock
Half Time	Two minutes	Two minutes	Two minutes	Two minutes	Two minutes	Two minutes
Ball Size	Youth Size Football (8)	Junior Size (7) Football	Junior Size (7) Football	Rookie/Pee Wee Size (6) Football	Rookie/Pee Wee Size (6) Football	Smart Start Football
Sportsmanship Rule	Scoreboard will be zeroed at a 24 point difference. Trailing team will be awarded ball at their own 35 yard line in lieu of a kickoff. Running clock is used if leading by 24 points in 4th quarter	Scoreboard will be zeroed at a 24 point difference. Trailing team will be awarded ball at their own 35 yard line in lieu of a kickoff. Running clock is used if leading by 24 points in 4th quarter	Scoreboard will be zeroed at a 24 point difference. Trailing team will be awarded ball at their own 35 yard line in lieu of a kickoff. Running clock is used if leading by 24 points in 4th quarter	N/A	N/A	N/A