

**Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture,
Parks and Recreation**

Youth Flag Football League Rules and Regulations

Last Updated: Aug. 2022

Table of Contents

General Informationpg. 2

League Objective pg. 2

League Managementpg. 2

Divisions/Eligibility Requirementspg. 3

Duty of the Coach pg. 4

Conduct and Disciplinary Actions pg. 6

League Rulespg. 8

League Standings and Tournamentpg. 17

Weather Policy and Rescheduling pg. 17

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Administration: Orange County DEAPR – Recreation Division
302 West Tryon Street
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Mailing Address: PO Box 8181
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Telephone: 919.245.2660

Inclement Weather: 919.245.2669

Website: <http://www.orangecountync.gov/departments/deapr/>

League Staff: Kevin Bradsher 919.245.2672 kbradsher@orangecountync.gov
Zachary Ramassini 919.245.2670 zramassini@orangecountync.gov

Facilities Central Recreation Center (CRC)
302 West Tryon Street
Hillsborough, NC

Efland-Cheeks Community Park (ECCP)
117 Richmond Road
Mebane, NC

I. LEAGUE OBJECTIVE:

The Orange County Youth Flag Football League is a recreational youth flag football league that encourages good sportsmanship, teamwork, physical fitness, discipline as well as enhancing the basic fundamentals of the sport. We are dedicated to providing a fun and safe environment that will ensure a positive and educational experience for everyone.

II. LEAGUE MANAGEMENT:

The governing body shall be vested in the Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation – Recreation Division.

III. DIVISIONS/ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

Registration

Each player must be registered with Orange County DEAPR – Recreation Division and approved by the league coordinator as to all qualifications prior to he/she will be eligible for the ratings/draft.

Divisions

The League will be comprised of several age divisions. Age (as of August 1, 2018)

- A. Five-seven years old. **(5-7 Division)**
- B. Eight-eleven years old. **(8-11 Division)**

IV. DUTY OF THE COACH:

Coach Eligibility

All volunteers requesting to participate as a head coach/assistant coach are required to complete the following process through the Orange County DEAPR – Recreation Division.

- Complete an Orange County Recreation Volunteer Application.
- Complete a background check through Orange County Recreation.
- Attend a mandatory coach's meeting/clinic.
- Attend a mandatory ratings/draft for the division (head coaches only)

Ensure Player Eligibility

It is the duty of each coach to ensure all participants on his/her team have registered for the league and are eligible to participate in practices/games.

Instruction

The coach shall be responsible to instruct each of his/her players during games/practices based on each individual's skill and playing ability. Less skilled players may at times need more instruction and explanation than more skilled players.

Schedules/Communication

The coach shall be responsible to contact all players notifying them of scheduled practices and games, and when practices or games are cancelled by Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation – Recreation Division. All coaches will receive game and practice schedules that are to be distributed to all players.

Coaches are not permitted to alter or change game/practice times without approval of the Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation – Recreation Division.

Maintain Control

The coach is responsible for controlling his/her players during all practices/games to ensure that a player's behavior adheres to all rules and regulations and objectives of the league.

V. PLAYER DRAFT

All eligible players will be assigned to teams through a ratings and draft process. The draft process is as follows:

Objective

The objective of Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation – Recreation Division draft/ratings procedure for athletic leagues is to ensure that each parent, participant, and coach are given the opportunity to participate in a fun, enjoyable, and fair athletic league.

Attendance

All participants must register prior to the assessment to participate in the league. It is mandatory that all coaches and participants attend their designated draft day and time. Players that do not attend a draft will not be assigned onto teams until such time as they complete their assessment commitment. A coach (or team representative) who does not attend the draft/ratings will be assigned a team by Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation Personnel.

Participant Responsibilities

1. To attend the mandatory scheduled ratings for your league's division or age group.
2. To participate in the ratings skills and/or drills. (Participants should be dressed in the appropriate attire to athletically participate, i.e. sneakers, shorts or sweats and shirt.)
Following a participant's assessment he/she is permitted to leave. A call from your selected coach or DEAPR personnel shall be made no later than two days prior to the start of practices
3. At the time the coaches contact their players they will be notified of practice times and locations.

Coach Responsibilities

1. To attend the mandatory schedule rating and draft day/time for the age division/league that you have volunteered to coach.
2. To fairly assess each participant in your coaching age/division attending the ratings/draft using the DEAPR draft/ratings sheet.
3. Select each player to your roster using the DEAPR draft/ratings procedure.
4. Contact each player you have selected onto your team to notify them of your practice schedule and location.

Open draft

The purpose of the open draft is to permit all volunteer coaches to select members of their team using an average ratings scoring system, which has been agreed upon by the DEAPR staff. This system is in place to best fairly distribute each player on a team. However, this does not guarantee each team will complete the season with identical records. Team records are impacted by many factors, including player attendance at practices and games.

Assessment Process

1. All players must attend their scheduled assessment time.
2. Participants that arrive early must wait until their scheduled assessment time.
3. Drills as a single file when group is under 20 participants.
 - a. Participants will run a 40 yard dash.
 - b. Participants will throw a football as far as they can from the beginning line.
 - c. Participants will run a five yard fly route to the cones and turn around to catch the ball.
4. Following “drills” players will participate in a 5-v-5 scrimmage for the time remaining in the assessment period.
5. Following each player’s scrimmage (s)he may leave the assessment. The player will be contacted by his/her coach no later than two days prior to the start of practices.

Team Size

Teams shall be made up of no more than 10 players.

Rosters

Rosters are set as of the first team practice.

Teams that have players drop may request a replacement player, if available. The League Administrator and not the head and/or assistant coach from the team will select replacement players. Knowingly permitting a player to participate in a game without having registered for the program shall result in ejection for the remainder of the league/activity season.

VI. CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:

(IN ACCORDANCE WITH ALL OTHER DEAPR-RECREATION PROGRAMS)

All participants, coaches, officials and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a manner in line with the goals and objectives of the Youth Flag Football League. Any individual found to be in violation of any rule and regulation shall be sanctioned according to the below explained chart for Penalties and Sanctions.

In addition to the rules explained in the Penalties and Sanctions, any participant, coach, or spectator that is ejected by an official is automatically suspended for the remainder of the current day’s games, and subsequent following game in addition to ejection from the facility.

All penalties and sanctions levied by an official or Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks, and Recreation staff are determined on a case-by-case basis and are final. **No protest will be permitted.**

**DEAPR – RECREATION DIVISION PENALTIES AND SANCTIONS
FOR COACHES AND LEAGUE OFFICIALS**

INFRACTION	DIRECTED TOWARDS	PENALTY/SANCTION(S)
Use of alcohol or drugs	During game, practice or other league or team event where players are present	1 st offense-Suspension for the remainder of the season.
Knowingly requiring or allowing a player to play while having a serious injury creating unsafe playing conditions. (Failure to notify staff at occurrence of injury.)	During game, practice or other league or team event where players are present.	1 st offense-Two game suspensions and a meeting with league staff. 2 nd offense-Suspension for the remainder of the season.
Foul or abusive language.	A player, coach, official or spectator	1 st offense-Ejection from current game and one game suspension. 2 nd offense-Two-game suspension and meeting with league staff.
Threatening/derogatory gesture or language.	A player, coach, official or spectator	1 st offense-Ejection from current game and two-game suspension. 2 nd offense-Suspension for remainder of season.
Knowingly permitting a player to participate in a game without having registered for the program.	League and league administrators	Ejection for the remainder of the league/activity season.
Striking or bodily assault resulting in contact and /or injury to	A player, coach, official or spectator	Lifetime suspension for all Orange County Recreation and Parks youth sports.

**DEAPR – RECREATION DIVISION PENALTIES AND/OR SANCTIONS
FOR PARTICIPANTS, PARENTS, LEGAL GUARDIANS AND SPECTATORS**

INFRACTIONS	DIRECTED TOWARDS	PENALTY/SANCTION(S)
Use of Alcohol or drugs	Within any County facility during the game, practice or other league or team event where players are present	1 st offense-Ejection from facility 2 nd offense-Two-week suspension 3 rd offense-Suspension for the remainder of the season.
Interference with the conduct of the game	Resulting in stoppage of play	1 st offense-Ejection from facility 2 nd offense-Two-week suspension 3 rd offense-Suspension for the remainder of the season.
Foul or abusive language	A player, coach, official or spectator	Ejection from facility park and a mandatory meeting with league administrators.
Threatening/Derogatory gesture and/or language	A player, coach, official or spectator	Ejection from the facility or park, a one-week suspension from DEAPR facilities and parks and mandatory meeting with league administrators.
Striking in any threatening fashion	A player, coach, official or spectator	1 st offense-Ejection from the facility or park, a one-year suspension (from the date of occurrence). 2 nd offense- Lifetime suspension from all OCRPD Youth Sports

Additional Conduct Rules

Communicating with Officials

Coaches are not allowed to communicate to officials on any matter while the game is in play. Coaches must take an official time-out to discuss any matter with an official in a quiet professional manner. Coaches must control any discussion or comments to officials, from their bench or players, at all times.

Violations will draw a warning from the officials. Subsequent violations will warrant a technical foul and or expulsion from the field.

Mandatory Cordial Handshake

Opposing players and coaches will exchange a cordial mandatory, congratulatory handshake after each game.

VII. LEAGUE RULES:

The NFL Flag Football rules shall govern all rules and regulations within the Orange County Youth Flag Football League unless otherwise stated.

DEAPR – Recreation will furnish footballs, flags, and cones for all games and practices. Coaches may bring their own balls provided they are used for practice purposes only. Coaches should inform all team members not to bring their own balls to any game or practice.

A. Playing Time

1. **Mandatory Playing Time** – A minimum number of 20 minutes per game. It is the coaches' responsibility to see that everyone plays at least 10 minutes in each half.
2. **Exceptions** – Exceptions to the mandatory playing rule will be made in the case of the following:
 - a. A player becomes ill or injured.
 - b. A player arrives for a game after the completion of 10 minutes of play.
3. **Discipline** – If a coach requests to discipline a player for the length of or any duration during a game the coach must submit a letter in writing to the League Administrator explaining the reason for the disciplinary action and subsequent suspension.
4. **Violations** – Failure to adhere to any portion of the playing time rule will result in a mandatory one-game suspension for a coach to be served during his/her team's next

B. Player Equipment

1. **Required Dress** – All players are required to wear the official team jersey provided by DEAPR - Recreation during league games. In addition, all players are required to wear shorts or sweatpants, sneakers, or rubber bottom cleats.
2. **Restricted Dress** – The officials shall not permit any team member to wear equipment or apparel which in his/her judgment is dangerous, confusing to other players, or inappropriate. Examples of such clothing include but are not limited to:
 - a. Jewelry such as watches, bracelets, and earrings.
 - b. Belts.
 - c. Pants or shorts with belt loops
 - d. Pants or shorts with exposed draw strings
 - e. Pants or shorts with pockets

C. Game Ball

1. **Ball Sizes** – The standards for all divisions shall be as follows:

<u>Division</u>	<u>Football Size</u>
5- 7 year olds	Pee-wee
8- 11year olds	Junior

D. Rules of the Game

1. **Game**
 - a. At the start of each game, captains from both teams shall meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball. The visiting team shall call the toss.
 - b. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Teams may not choose to defer to the second half.
 - c. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three (3) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, they have three (3) plays to score a touchdown.
 - d. If the offense fails to score or cross midfield, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.
 - e. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
 - f. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.

2. **Field**

- a. The field dimensions vary with locations but generally are 30 yards by 70 yards with two 10-yard end zones, and a midfield line-to-gain. No-Run Zones precede each line-to-gain by 5 yards. Field size may vary for each league.
- b. No-Run Zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the No-Run Zones (a 5 yard imaginary zone before midfield and before the end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
- c. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
- d. Each offensive squad approaches only two No-Run Zones in each drive (one zone 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one zone 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).

3. **Rosters**

- a. Teams consist of a maximum of ten players. Game is played 5v5.
- b. Teams must start a game with a minimum of five players. In the event of an injury, a team with insufficient substitute players may play with four players on the field, but no fewer than four.

4. **Game Timing and Overtime**

- a. Games are played on a 40 minute continuous clock with two twenty minute halves. The clock stops only for timeouts.
- b. Halftime is one minute long.
- c. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of game penalty is enforced.
- d. Each team has three 60-second timeouts per half.
- e. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- f. In the event of an injury the clock will stop and restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
- g. There will be no overtime play during the regular season games. After 40 minutes of play if both teams are tied, the game will end in a tie.
 - i. In tournament or playoff situations, an overtime (OT) period will be used to determine a winner. OT format is as follows:
 - a) A coin flip will determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first.
 - 1) If a second round of overtime must be played, the team that lost the coin toss will get to choose offense or defense for the start of the second round of overtime. This process continues with teams alternating who gets to choose to be on offense or defense to start out during every round of overtime.
 - 2) The referee will determine which end of the field the overtime will take place on.
 - b) Each team will take turns getting one (1) play from the defense's 5-yard line for one point or the defense's 10-yard line for two points. Whether to go for one or two points is up to the offensive team. Whether or not the team that

begins on offense converts, the team that started on defense gets a chance on offense to win or tie by converting a one- or two-point play of their own.

- 1) Example: Team A starts on offense and chooses to go for one point from the 5-yardline and is successful. Team B is then on offense and can choose to either go for one point from the 5-yard line to tie and force a second round of overtime or to go for two points from the 10-yard line for the win.
- 2) If the second team on offense in an overtime round fails to beat or match the team that went first, the team that went first wins.
- c) Both teams must “go for two” from the 10-yard line starting with the third round of overtime.
- d) The final points earned by the winning team in the final overtime will be added onto the winning team’s total score. The losing team will not receive any additional points.
 - 1) Example: End of regulation time, score is 14-14. Team A scores one point and Team B score two points. Team B wins with a final score of 16-14. Points are only added to total score from final round of overtime.
- e) All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
- f) There are no timeouts.

5. Scoring

- a. Touchdown: 6 points.
- b. PAT (Point after Touchdown) 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (10-yard line)
 - ii. Note: 1 point PAT is pass only, 2 point PAT can be run or pass.
 - iii. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-point conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2 point (from the 10 yard line). Any change once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged time out. Decision cannot be changed after a penalty. Interceptions on conversions cannot be returned.
- c. Safety: 2 points
 - i. A Safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in the end zone.
- d. Mercy Rule – If a team is 28 or more points ahead by the half, or any time after the half the losing team automatically gets possession from the 5 yard line. Normal regulations are in place, however if the losing team turns the ball over either on downs or by interception, they will retain possession at the opponent’s 5 yard line. An interception may be returned by the winning team but no PAT will be allowed. This will continue until the score difference is less than 28 points.

6. Coaches

- a. Coaches are typically volunteer parents or family members helping the players learn and enjoy the game. Parents are encouraged to support the coach at all times.

- b. One coach per team is allowed on the field to direct players. Offensive coach can stay on field but must stay at least ten (10) yards behind the line of scrimmage; defensive coach must go to sideline prior to start of play.
- c. Coaches are expected to adhere to Orange County DEAPR-Recreation sportsmanship philosophies, coaching guidelines and codes of conduct.
- d. Only three coaches per team are allowed on the sideline during the game. Only the head coach can talk to referee or ask for rules clarification.

7. **Live Ball/Dead Ball**

- a. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
- b. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.
 - i. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
 - ii. The football neutral zone is an area in which no member of either team may be, other than the person holding the ball. The neutral zone only exists in dead ball situations for example when play is not ongoing. The neutral zone can be described as the length of the football from one tip to the other when it is spotted.
- c. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
- d. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
- e. Substitutions are not made on all dead balls only on change of possession or in case of an injury to a player.
- f. Any official can whistle the play dead.
- g. Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - i. The ball hits the ground.
 - ii. The ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
 - iii. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - iv. A touchdown, PAT, or safety is scored.
 - v. The ball carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground.
 - vi. The ball carrier’s flag falls out.
 - vii. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
 - viii. The 7-second pass clock expires
 - ix. An inadvertent whistle.

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet were at the time of the fumble.

- h. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
 - i. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew and the down is consumed.
 - ii. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
- i. A team is allowed to use a time out to question an official’s rule interpretation. If the official’s ruling is correct, the team will be charged a time out. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the time out will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced.

Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.

8. **Running**

- a. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the player's front foot.
- b. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback does have the ability to scramble in the back field, but cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. The quarterback is the offensive player that receives the snap.
- c. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
 - i. "Center Sneak" play is no longer allowed. The QB is not allowed to handoff to the center on the first handoff of the play.
- d. Absolutely no laterals of any kind.
- e. "No-Run Zones," located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if you have already reached the run zone marked lines. (Reminder: Each offensive squad approaches only two No-Run Zones in each drive one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).
- f. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- g. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- h. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
- i. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
 - i. Players spinning out of control will be called for flag guarding.
- j. Runners must make every attempt to avoid a collision with another player. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced
- k. No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.
- l. Offensive players without the ball must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball carrier.
- m. Flag Obstruction occurs when jerseys are not tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding. If the ball carrier's flags are out of position and the flags are not on his side, he is down at the spot a defender attempts to pull the flags.

9. **Passing**

- a. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - i. All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage, whether received or not, are illegal forward passes.
 - ii. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage.

- b. Shovel passes are allowed, but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- c. The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock” to pass the football. If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule no longer is in effect.
 - i. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS).

10. Receiving

- a. All players are eligible to receive passes including quarterback, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage.
- b. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
- c. A player must have a least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
- d. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
- e. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
- f. Interceptions are returnable but not on conversions after touchdowns.

11. Rushing the Passer

- a. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- b. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- c. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a Rush Line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
 - i. A legal rush is:
 - a) A rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
 - b) A rush from anywhere on the field after the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
 - c) If a rusher leaves the rush line early and breaks the 7 yard area, they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
 - d) If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage, they may legally rush the quarterback.
 - ii. A penalty may be called if:
 - a) The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass, it’s called an illegal rush. The offense is awarded 5 yards from line of scrimmage and a first down.
 - b) Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped will be called offside. The offense is awarded 5 yards from line of scrimmage and a first down.

- c) Any defensive player, not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off it's called an illegal rush. The offense is awarded 5 yards from line of scrimmage and a first down.
 - iii. Special circumstances:
 - a) Teams are not required to rush the quarterback.
 - b) Teams are not required to identify their rusher before they play, however, if they do send a rusher, the rusher must verify that they are in the correct position 7 yards from the ball.
 - c) If rusher leaves the 7-yard line before the snap, he/she may immediately drop to act as defender with no offside penalty enforced
 - d. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, no contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.
 - e. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. If the "path or line" is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense's responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher's path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher's responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.
 - f. A sack occurs if the quarterback's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterback's feet are when flag is pulled.
 - i. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

12. Flag Pulling

- a. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- b. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold, or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
- c. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
- d. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
- e. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
- f. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

13. Formations

- a. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage and up to four players. The quarterback must off the line of scrimmage.
 - i. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
 - ii. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
- b. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.

- c. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
- d. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

14. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- a. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee’s discretion. No appeals will be considered.
 - i. 1st offense-Ejection from current game and one game suspension.
 - ii. 2nd offense-Two-game suspension and meeting with league staff.
- b. Players, Coaches or Fans may not physically or verbally abuse players, coaches, parents, or officials.
- c. Ball carriers must make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
- d. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
- e. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship, as well:
 - i. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
 - ii. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
 - iii. Compliment all players, not just one child or team.
- f. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly:
 - i. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in the end zone area.
 - ii. Stay in the end zone area, not between fields
 - iii. Dispose of ALL trash in designated trash cans.
- g. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:
 - i. Defense + 10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
 - ii. Offense - 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

15. Penalties

- a. The referee will call all penalties.
- b. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- c. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted (spot fouls).
- d. Only the head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question calls.
- e. Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
- f. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
- g. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
- h. Defensive Spot Fouls

Defensive Pass Interference	Automatic first down
Holding	Automatic first down
Stripping	+10 yards and automatic first down

i. Offensive Spot Fouls

Screening, blocking, or running with the ball	-10 yards and loss of down
Charging	-10 yards and loss of down
Flag guarding	-10 yards and loss of down

j. Defensive penalties

Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards and automatic first down
Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yards and automatic first down
Offside	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal rush (<i>starting from inside 7-yard marker</i>)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull (<i>before the receiver has the ball</i>)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Taunting	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down

k. Offensive Penalties

Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards and loss of down
Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct	-10 yards and loss of down
Offside/false start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal forward pass (<i>any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage</i>)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Delay of game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Impeding the rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

16. Terminology

- a. Boundary Lines – outer perimeter lines around the field. They include sidelines, and back of the end zone lines.
- b. Line Of Scrimmage – (LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.
- c. Line-To-Gain – the line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
- d. Rush Line – imaginary line running across width of field 7 yards (into the defensive side) from the LOS.
- e) Offense – the squad with possession of the ball.
- e. Defense – the squad opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.
- f. Passer – the offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.
- g. Rusher – the defensive player assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him/her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or by blocking the pass.
- h. Downs (1-2-3) – the offensive squad has three attempts or “downs” to advance the ball. They must cross the line to gain to get another set of downs or to score.
- i. Live Ball – refers to the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regard to penalties, live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
- j. Dead Ball – refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.
- k. Whistle – sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for a timeout, half time, or the end of the game.
- l. Inadvertent Whistle – official’s whistle that is performed in error.

- m. Charging – the movement of the ball carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head, making contact with the defender with a shoulder, forearm, or the chest.
- n. Flag Guarding – an act by the ball carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball carrier’s flags by stiff arm, lowering elbow or head, or by blocking access to the runner’s flags with a hand or arm.
- o. Shovel Pass – a legal pass attempted beyond the line of scrimmage by throwing the ball underhand or pushing it towards a receiver in a shot put type manner.
- p. Lateral – a backwards or sideways toss of the ball by the ball carrier.
- q. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – a rude, confrontational, or offensive behavior or language.

VIII. LEAGUE STANDING AND TOURNAMENT

A single-elimination tournament will be played at the end of the season. Tournament games will be played under the same rules as regular league play with the following exception: There will be no ties at the end of game regulation period in the tournament.

For the purpose of tournament seeding, league standings will be determined as follows:

- a. Division record
- b. Head-to-head record
- c. Total points allowed (within Division)
- d. Coin-toss

IX. WEATHER POLICY AND RESCHEDULING

All coaches/parents should call the weather hotline for cancellation information 919.245.2669. Cancellations for games or practices that occur on weekdays will be posted at 4:00 p.m. Cancellations for games or practices that occur on weekends will be posted at 6:30 a.m.

In the event of cancellation coaches will receive an e-mail notice by 4:00 p.m. on weekdays and 6:30 a.m. on weekends. For coaches that do not have an e-mail address, a cell phone can be substituted.

The Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation – Recreation Division will reschedule games when there is availability in scheduling. Cancelled practices may not be rescheduled.