



parks · recreation · cultural services

## ADULT SPORTS

# ADULT FLAG FOOTBALL RULEBOOK

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This rulebook is a guide to procedures, rules and responsibilities for playing and officiating for the City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services (PRCS) - Adult Flag Football Program. All programs offered by Adult Sports are strictly for recreational purposes and intended for the enjoyment of the sport with fellow participants. Safety, fair play and sportsmanship are our primary concerns.

This rulebook was developed to establish a uniform and comprehensive flag football program for every player and official. Please read this rulebook, and direct your questions to the staff at the Sports Office. We follow the guidelines of NIRSA Flag & Touch football, with the exception of the following rules. For more information on the rules of flag football, visit:

[www.nirsa.org](http://www.nirsa.org)

## THE PROGRAM

### PROGRAM GOAL

This program is intended as a recreational activity and its purpose is the enjoyment of the sport with fellow participants. The goals and objectives of all of our adult sports programs are to foster, develop, promote and regulate amateur adult sports in Colorado Springs. Safety, fair play and sportsmanship are the primary concerns. Please keep in mind that fair play and a recreational atmosphere are the results of good sportsmanship.

### WARNING STATEMENT TO PARTICIPANTS, TEAMS & SPECTATORS

Although participation in supervised athletics is normally very safe, all athletic activities carry some risk of injury. While it is impossible to entirely eliminate every risk, participants can and do have the responsibility to help reduce the potential for serious injury. Players must obey all safety rules, report all physical problems to their coaches follow a proper conditioning program and inspect their own equipment daily. By registering for this sport, you acknowledge that you have read and understand this warning. Those who do not wish to accept the risks described in this warning should not register or participate.

### SAFETY

#### Blood on Uniforms

Team representatives and referees will remove a player from the game when blood is evident and flowing. The player will not be allowed to return to the game until the blood flow has stopped and has been cleaned up. Contaminated clothing and apparel must be replaced or removed before the player can return to the game.

Officials shall allow a "reasonable" amount of time for these requests to be completed. If a player(s) is unable to meet these demands, the player(s) must be removed from the game. As noted earlier, teams may continue the game with fewer players.

## JEWELRY

For the protection and safety of all participants, wearing jewelry is PROHIBITED and players will be asked to remove it. If the article can not be removed, it must be taped. All items that the official believes to present a danger to the player or other participants must be completely covered with tape.

### NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- Wearing hard splints or other types of potentially dangerous protection on the arms or the hands will be PROHIBITED, regardless of the amount of padding.
- Wearing a soft bandage to cover a wound or to protect an injury shall be PERMITTED.
- Wearing an air filled cast on the lower extremities or a protective knee brace is PERMITTED, provided there are no exposed metal or hard, abrasive parts. Padding is required to cover any exposed areas.
- Headgear is interpreted to mean no hats. A sweatband of soft pliable material or a bandanna is PERMITTED.
- It is not the responsibility of the officials or the site supervisors to provide tape or padding. The teams and/or players must provide first-aid equipment. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that their players are properly equipped and ready to play, and that all jewelry is removed.

## INSURANCE/INJURIES

The City of Colorado Springs carries no insurance on players, coaches or game officials. Participants are responsible for all charges resulting from medical emergencies.

In the event of an injury on the field, the site supervisor will assist by calling medical help upon request of the team representative. The player or team representative is required to inform the site supervisor of all injuries and complete an accident report form (provided by the site supervisor), even if the injuries do not require medical attention.

**NOTE:** All injuries must be reported within 24 hours.

The City does not supply first aid materials; teams are responsible for providing their own first aid equipment (*tape, bandages, ice, etc.*) and transportation to medical facilities. Teams are encouraged to keep a list of insurance numbers for team members in case of an emergency.

## INFORMATION RELEASE POLICY

PRCS will not release names, numbers, or addresses of players, coaches or officials. Information provided to the Sports Office is used strictly for administrative purposes and will not be released to any outside sources.

## LIGHTNING SAFETY TIPS

Your safety is our highest priority. Lightning is dangerous because it is random and unpredictable. Safety precautions and an evacuation plan should be made in advance. Be prepared to act quickly. Please read, learn and teach others the following lightning safety tips.

When you first hear thunder, begin to plan your lightning defense. Can you get to a car or building quickly? Can you get 100 yards away from all metal objects? Lightning often precedes rain, so don't wait for the rain to start before suspending activities. Typically, the distance from Strike A to Strike B to Strike C can be .5 to 2.5 miles. You must clear the area if lightning is within six (6) miles of your location. Flash to bang at 30 seconds = 6 miles. Activities should remain suspended for 20-30 minutes after the last thunder is heard.

**IF OUTDOORS...** Avoid water. Avoid all metal objects including electric wires, fences, golf clubs, machinery, motors, power tools, etc. Unsafe places include golf carts, tents, open-sided rain shelters, small boats, or underneath isolated trees. Avoid high ground and open spaces. When possible, find shelter in a building or in a fully enclosed metal vehicle with the windows completely shut. If lightning strikes nearby, you should:

- a. Avoid direct contact with other people.
- b. Remove all metal objects from your person.
- c. Crouch down, with feet together and hands on knees.

**IF INDOORS...** Avoid water. Stay away from open doors and windows. Hang up the telephone and take off headsets; lightning can strike electric and phone lines and induce shocks. Turn off and stay away from appliances, computers, power tools, TV sets, etc. Remain inside until the storm has passed.

If lightning strikes a person, immediately administer first aid procedures, if you are qualified to do so. An injured person does not carry an electrical charge and can be handled safely. Call **911** immediately.

## PROTESTS

Protests are not accepted within the structure of the PRCS sports programs. We believe protests are counter-productive.

Although protests are not allowed, written comments about rules, umpires, player eligibility, ejections from a game, or specific situations are encouraged. These comments will be reviewed and evaluated to help improve the program and may have an impact on future programming. Player eligibility must be challenged during the game.



# RULES GOVERNING THE TEAM

## LEAGUES AND LEVELS OF PLAY

At all competitive levels, there will be sub-levels of competition referred to as: Blue, White and Red. These sub-levels further separate teams within each level of competition - Blue is the highest level, White refers to a midlevel and Red is the lowest level.

**NOTE:** It is important to read and understand the “Definitions of Levels of Competition” to determine your team’s appropriate category. Teams are encouraged to register at the appropriate skill level. Teams that dominate a league may be moved up a division or removed from the league without a refund.

**Recreation: (Blue)** Teams/players have solid fundamental skills and knowledge. Teams may demonstrate offensive and defensive strategies, but not on a consistent basis. Individuals are competitive and work well as a team.

**Recreation: (White)** Teams/players consist of a wide range of ages and playing experiences. Teams are not equally balanced with skilled and knowledgeable players. Generally one or two players on the team excel.

**Recreation: (Red)** Team is made up of average skilled players. Individuals are average or below average in size, speed and agility. The team is a newly formed from co-workers, club members and/or friends coming together for the enjoyment of the sport. Players do not demonstrate consistency or continuity in offensive or defensive strategies.

## PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- Players must be 18 years old or turn 18 years old during the current calendar year.
- Players may play on only one team per division/level/category. Players are allowed to play on more than one team, provided it is within a different division/level/category. Players may not be on 2 rosters in the same league/division.
- In the case of player ejection, the suspension will apply only to that team from which the player is ejected.
- **Player must have been on the roster before final regular season game to be eligible to play in bracket play.**

**\*NOTE:** Women may **NOT** play in a Men’s league, and Men may **NOT** play in a Women’s league.

Each player shall have the opportunity to participate on the team that is consistent with the player’s gender identity. If requested, gender identity may be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, type written statements by the player, relatives, friends, and/or health-care professionals confirming consistent and uniform assertion of the gender identity and any other evidence that the gender identity is sincerely held, as part of the player’s core identity; provided, however, gender identity shall not be asserted for any improper purpose.

## TEAM CAPTAINS

Each team manager or coach shall designate to the referee the team captain(s). If more than one player is designated, a “speaking” captain must be selected to make all decisions. A captain’s first choice (of any option) shall be irrevocable.

## “FREE AGENT” PLAYERS

PRCS will assist those individuals not associated with a team by providing team representatives with a list of “Free Agent” players as well as attempting to form teams from a “Free Agent” players list. To be placed on the list, call the Sports Office at (719) 385-5981 with the following information: **Name, address, phone numbers (day/home) and the level of competition you are seeking.** Anyone listed on the Free Agent list with the Sports Office may play in any game without needing to be on the roster officially, if the team picks up that player for more than that week then they need to add that player to the roster with the Sports Office.

## TEAM ROSTERS/ADDITIONS & CHANGES

Rosters are limited to 15 players for 8-on-8 leagues, 10 players for 5-on-5 leagues and 8 players for 4-on-4 leagues. Rosters must be submitted to the Sports Office two weeks prior to the team’s first league game. The roster must include the names and phone numbers of all players. Failure to submit an accurate roster prior to the first league game will result in forfeiture of the first game, with all fines and penalties imposed.

If a team wishes to have a larger roster than 15(8 on 8), 10(5 on 5) and 8(4 on 4) it must submit a written justification to the Sports Office. You may not carry the additional players on the roster until your request has been approved by the Sports Office.

Roster changes are allowed throughout the season; however, once the team roster has been submitted (prior to the first game), all changes must be requested via the *Roster Change Form*. Forms are available at game sites and must be returned to the Sports Office, 1315 E. Pikes Peak Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80909. **Forms faxed to (719) 385-6013 will also be accepted.**

Once the roster has been submitted, all additions must be done via the roster change form, available at the Sports Office, 1315 E. Pikes Peak Ave., and each additional player will be charged a \$5 fee. Teams may mail, fax or deliver their roster additions to the Sports Office.

**No roster additions are allowed after last regular season game has started play. No additions to the roster will be allowed for bracket play.**

## ROSTER CHALLENGES

Any team may request a **roster challenge** of another team based on **FACT, SUSPICION or BELIEF** that another team is utilizing **ILLEGAL PLAYERS**. In the event of a challenge, all players from both teams must present a picture ID to the scorekeeper, umpires, and site supervisor. Roster challenges must be made **during** the game. A non-refundable fee of **\$20** will be required to submit a roster challenge, cash only. A Roster Challenge involves both teams' rosters being verified.

- If the official team rosters are on site, the site supervisor will check each player's identification and confirm/verify eligibility using the official team roster. Players who show identification and are listed on the official team roster can continue to play. Players who fail to show identification will not be permitted to play until identification is produced.
- If the official team rosters are not on site, the site supervisor will check each player's identification, and record the names of **ALL** players, even those who do not have identification. Confirmation/verification of eligibility will occur the next business day. Players who show identification can continue to play. Players who fail to show identification will not be permitted to play until identification is produced. The game will continue to be played.
- **Illegal players will constitute a forfeit.** If a team does not have at least two eligible players, at least 1 male and 1 female for coed, after the challenge, that team will forfeit the game. If neither team can legally continue (*i.e., produce two players with identification*), the umpire will declare a double forfeit.

## GENERAL RULES

### AWARDS

Teams that finish in the top of their league will be recognized. Player or team violations during head-to-head play will affect the team's opportunity for an award.

### GAME CANCELLATIONS

In case of inclement weather resulting in facility closures, check the Colorado Springs Sports Office Facebook page and call (719) 385-5981 after 8am on Sundays or after 3pm on weekdays and select #3 for up-to-date information. Current information is also available on <http://www.coloradosprings.gov/adultsports>. If cancellations are not posted, teams will be required to report at their scheduled game times.

### RESCHEDULED/MAKE-UP GAMES

The site supervisor will inform the team representative of a rescheduled/make-up game.

### DISQUALIFIED AND/OR EJECTED PLAYERS

- A player may be ejected for repeatedly committing fouls in an attempt to delay the game.
- In addition to the yardage penalty, a player may be ejected for committing flagrant fouls.
- Players involved in a fight will be ejected from the game and will be suspended for at least one year from participation in ALL Adult PR&CS sports programs.
- The ejected player(s) may remain at the contest area at the discretion of the official or the site supervisor, unless inappropriate behavior continues after the ejection.
- A disqualified or ejected player, depending upon his demeanor and attitude, may be asked to leave the playing area.
- An ejected player(s) may not coach in the game in which he/she has been ejected or while serving the suspension.
- Disqualified or ejected players will sit out during their team's next two scheduled and played games, in addition to the game from which they were disqualified or ejected.
- During the two-game suspension the ejected player may act only as a silent spectator.
- After the two-game suspension, the ejected player(s) must check in with the site supervisor before participating.
- A **\$25** fine will be imposed for each player ejected from a game. The player will remain suspended until the fine is paid. The fine does not negate the two game suspensions. Team reps are responsible for making sure this is taken care of.
- Further penalties may be imposed on players and teams depending on the severity of the conduct.
- Teams attempting to use disqualified or ejected players will forfeit the game and be subject to additional penalties from Adult Sports and/or league director.

**NOTE:** Every year players are ejected and/or suspended for the year for unsportsmanlike conduct on the field. Arguing with the officials' calls will not be tolerated. Our program goals are the pursuit of recreation and fair play; obscene public displays will not be tolerated.

### FORFEITURES

Teams will be charged **\$20**, plus the official's fee for any games they have to forfeit. Teams will forfeit a game when:

- They don't meet the minimum number of players to start a game or finish a game.
- They attempt to use illegal players
- **See minimums for 8-on-8, 5-on-5 and 4-on-4**

### UNFAIR TACTICS

If, in the opinion of the referee, a team is displaying unsportsmanlike tactics and/or conduct that are detrimental to the players and game, the referee has the authority to end the game at any time, regardless of the score.



## PROFANITY

Use of profanity is unsportsmanlike and will not be tolerated. Players that use profanity toward themselves, opponents, teammates, spectators and/or game officials will be assessed a 10-yard penalty. If the conduct is excessive, taunting or threatening, the player/players will be ejected. Language ejections are at the discretion of the officials.

## LEAGUE STANDINGS

League standings can be found on [www.coloradosprings.gov/adultsports](http://www.coloradosprings.gov/adultsports). They are updated weekly. You can also ask your site supervisor for updated information. If position rounds are being used, then the win/loss records will be included in the teams overall standings. To declare a winner via tiebreakers all ties must be able to be broken on equal grounds. For example, in a three team tie where Team A played Team B twice and Team C twice but Team B only played Team C once, we cannot break the tie by head to head play.

**NOTE:** In bracket schedule leagues, bracket determines final standings.

- Step 1: Win/loss records.
- Step 2: Head-to-head play between tied teams.  
Head-to-head score differential between tied teams (*Example, Team #1 won by 3 in the first meeting, Team #2 won by 4 in the second meeting, Team #2 wins head-to-head via head-to-head score differential for the season.*)
- Step 3: Any forfeits, ejections or violations of the Players Code of Conduct count toward determining higher placement. Teams or players with violations that occurred during the season may forfeit the opportunity for rewards. Remaining tied teams will move on to the next step.
- Step 4: Fewest points scored against in games played amongst tied teams.
- Step 5: Fewest points scored against in all games played.
- Step 6: Greatest point differential in all games played. (*Example: Team #1 has scored a total of 110 points and allowed 95 the differential is a +15. Team #2 has scored 105 points and allowed 95 the differential is a +10, therefore Team #1 wins or takes higher spot in standings.*)
- Step 7: Most points scored in all games played.
- Step 8: Staff recommendations of team's conduct during season.
- Step 9: Coin flip, if the winner can not be determined by the previous steps.

## TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES & PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

### TEAM CAPTAIN'S RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the team representative, players, coach and/or manager of each team to know, understand and abide by the rules and regulations of flag football as they are carried out by the officials and site supervisors. All participants are subject to the rules of the game, and shall be governed by the decisions of the officials assigned to the game. A referee's decisions and judgments are final. Arguing will invoke additional, costly penalties. Players are cautioned to control their emotions.

**Point of Emphasis:** As a team representative AND/OR game official, you possess a 'sense' and feeling for the game and for the 'atmosphere' of the game. If you 'sense' that a situation may occur between player(s), you have the responsibility to:

- Remove those players from the game from a period of time to 'cool' down.
- Advise ALL (teams/players) that continued displays of emotion and unsportsmanlike conduct shall result in ejections/forfeits/banishments from the league for players and/or teams.

### PLAYERS CODE OF CONDUCT

- No team member shall lay a hand upon, shove, strike or verbally threaten or abuse an official, player, spectator, or staff person. Anyone who strikes at another will be banned from further participation in ALL adult sports programs for one year.
- No team member shall refuse to abide by an official's decision.
- No team member shall make obscene gestures or objectionable demonstrations of dissent at an official's decision
- No team member shall be guilty of using unnecessarily rough tactics against an opponent.
- No team member shall appear in the contest area acting in a way, which he/she appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- No team member shall possess or consume alcoholic beverage while the team or player is participating in the game.
- No team member shall use tobacco on the playing surface, in the team area or inside any PR&CS facility/site.
- Only the designated team representative may discuss, in a polite manner, calls or rules with the official(s). Only clarifications will be discussed. Complaints regarding judgment calls will result in an ejection.
- No player will intentionally attempt to defy the rules or procedures outlined in this rulebook.
- Spectators, who, in the opinion of the official or site supervisor, are detrimental to the goals of the program, will be expelled from the contest area. The team, for which the spectator is associated, will be penalized if there are any further problems. Grounds for such action include, but are not limited to: obscene language or gestures, inciting players to fight, alcoholic beverages in the stands, and extreme verbal abuse against the official(s).

## • PR&CS CODE OF CONDUCT



The full PR&CS Code of Conduct can be viewed using the QR Code above or at [www.coloradosprings.gov/prscodeofconduct](http://www.coloradosprings.gov/prscodeofconduct)

### ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

- Colorado Springs City Code, 18-5-411: It shall be unlawful for any person to bring into, possess or drink in any facility or park, alcoholic liquor or beer.
- Participants and spectators are not allowed to bring alcoholic beverages into any facility/site.
- No player or coach shall appear at the contest area under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

If a player(s) is found to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, the following penalties may be enforced:

- As a minimum, the player will be immediately suspended from further play.
- The maximum penalty is suspension of the player and/or the team from further league play as determined by the League Director.

### BLOOD ON UNIFORMS

Team representatives and umpires shall remove a player from the game when blood is evident and flowing. The player will not be allowed to return to the game until the blood flow has stopped and has been cleaned up. Contaminated clothing and apparel must be replaced or removed before the player can return to the game.

Officials shall allow a reasonable amount of time for these requests to be completed. If a player is unable to meet these requests, then he/she must be removed from the game. As noted earlier, teams may continue the game with fewer players.

## THE GAME: 8-ON-8 RULES

### PRE-GAME

Three minutes before the start of the game, the referee will designate which captain shall call the coin toss, and then toss the coin in the presence of the captains. The captain winning the toss has the option to choose:

- Offense or Defense
- Goal to defend
- Defer the options to the second half, other team accepts the remaining options to choose from

Teams are to begin the game with a maximum of eight (8) players; however, a MINIMUM of five (5) players may start and finish. If a team cannot field at least five players before or during the game it will FORFEIT. At game time, any team not ready to play (*either with or without the minimum number of players*) will forfeit.

### ADVANCING THE BALL

The game and new possession after scores or half time begins with the team on offense starting from its own 20-yard line. The team in possession of the ball shall have four (4) consecutive attempts to advance the ball to the next zone line-to gain (every 20 yards on the field of play). There are no kick-offs. Should the team not advance to the next zone in four downs; the ball is turned over to the opponent to begin its offensive series where the ball was last "downed." Or after the third down, the offensive team may choose to punt (kick) to the opposing team. \*See rules on scrimmage kicks.

### PLAYING TIME

Playing time shall consist of two (2) twenty-minute running clock halves with a three (3) minute half time. A stop clock is implemented in the last two (2) minutes of the second half. If one team is ahead by 18 points at the two-minute mark of the second half, the game will be terminated.

During the final two minutes of the second half, the clock stops for:

- Incomplete pass: clock starts at snap
- Out-of-bounds: clock starts at snap
- Score: touchdown or safety: clock starts at snap
- Team time-out: clock starts at snap

- Penalty: depending upon previous play
- Referee's time-out: starts at referee's discretion
- Touch back: clock starts at snap
- First down: clock starts depending on previous play.
- Fair catch: clock starts at snap

## TIME-OUTS

Each team is entitled to three (3) time-outs during each half. A charged time-out shall not exceed one (1) minute. Teams may call successive time outs. Time-outs do not carry-over into the next half or into any overtime periods. If the game goes into overtime, each team will receive one time-out per overtime.

## LEGAL FORWARD PASS

During a scrimmage down, and before a team possession has changed, a forward pass may be thrown, provided the ball, when it leaves the passer's hand, is on the offensive side of the line of scrimmage. All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass.

**NOTE:** Only one forward pass can be thrown per down. A forward pass is a thrown ball that goes forward that may or may not cross the line of scrimmage. Teams may throw the ball forward behind the line of scrimmage. This does constitute ONE FORWARD PASS PER DOWN. The ONE FORWARD PASS PER DOWN refers to all forward passes in, behind or beyond the line of scrimmage.

## ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS

A forward pass is illegal if:

- The passer's feet, both, are beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The ball is thrown after a team possession has changed during the down.
- The ball is thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds intentionally to save loss of yardage.
- There is more than one forward pass per down.
- The passer catches his untouched forward pass.

## BACKWARD PASS OR FUMBLE

- A ball in-flight may be caught or intercepted and advanced by ANY player inbounds.
- A backward pass shall NOT be batted forward by the passing team.
- A backward pass or fumble is dead at the spot it goes out-of-bounds, touches the ground or the goal line. The ball belongs to the team last in possession, unless lost on downs.
- A player may not throw an untouched backward pass to himself.

## SCRIMMAGE KICKS (8-ON-8 ONLY)

Team A captain may declare a punt on any down.

In a fourth down situation prior to play:

- Referee will ask Team A captain if they will punt.
- Referee will announce decision to Team A & B players and game officials.
- After such announcement the ball MUST be punted.

Exceptions:

- 1) If a time out is called by either team;
- 2) the period ends, or
- 3) a foul occurs any time prior to or during the down after the decision to kick has been made. In the event of exception #3, the kicking team may repeat the down. The referee must repeat the questions to Team A's captain and announce the decision to all.

Quick Kicks are Illegal.

## FORMATIONS FOR A SCRIMMAGE KICK

Neither team may advance beyond the neutral zone until the ball is kicked.

- Kicker should be at least five yards behind the line of scrimmage.
- Kicker may take a direct snap from center.
- If after the snap and before the kick, the ball touches the ground, play shall continue. The ball will be picked up and kicked.

## BLOCKING OF A PUNT

Once the ball is punted, any receiver may block the kick, but only from their side of the scrimmage line.

To block a punt, receiving players:

- Must be on their side of the scrimmage line.
- May jump straight up to block or deflect punt.
- **May Not** jump on or be elevated by another team mate to gain an advantage in height to block or deflect punt.



### **If the Punt is Blocked**

- If a blocked punt hits the ground, the ball becomes dead at that spot.
- If the punt is blocked and caught by either team behind the kicking team's scrimmage line before it hits the ground, it may be advanced.

### **Advancing a Punt**

- When a scrimmage kick crosses the neutral zone and touches a player from EITHER team, then hits the ground, the ball is dead and belongs to the receiving team.
- When a scrimmage kick crosses the neutral zone and is caught in the AIR by the receiving team, it can be advanced.
- When a scrimmage kick crosses the neutral zone and hits the ground untouched by players it can be returned by the receiving team only.
- If the punted ball touches anything while it is in or behind the receiving team's goal line (*plane*) it can be downed by the receiving team as a touchback or may be returned out of the end zone.

## **SNAPPING THE FOOTBALL**

- The snapper will bring the ball from the huddle to the scrimmage line in first down snaps/spots. **To assist with the speed and timing of games, offensive players MUST retrieve the ball after a down and return it to the huddle or line of scrimmage.**  
Penalty: Delay of Game, 5 yards
- The snapper shall have his feet behind his scrimmage line.
- The snapper, after assuming position for the snap and adjusting the ball, **may not** move or change the position of the ball in a manner simulating the beginning of the play.
- The snapper shall pass the ball back from its position on the ground with a quick and continuous motion of the hand(s).
- The ball must be snapped within 25 seconds after ball is declared ready for play.
- The player who receives the snap must be at least two or more yards behind the offensive line of scrimmage.

### **TEAMS MAY NOT TAKE A DIRECT SNAP**

Due to the nature of the game, a direct snap gives the offense an advantage in short yardage situations and are illegal.

## **SERIES OF DOWNS AND ZONE LINE-TO-GAIN (8-ON-8 ONLY)**

A team in possession of the ball shall have four (4) consecutive downs to advance to the next zone. The zone line-to-gain in any series shall be the zone in advance of the ball. A new series of downs shall be awarded when a team moves the ball into the next zone. The zone line-to-gain does not change due to loss of yardage or penalty.

## **STANCE**

Players may only use a 2-point stance; 3 and 4-point stances ARE NOT ALLOWED.

## **HANDING THE BALL**

Any player may hand the ball forward or backward at any time, except when he intentionally throws out-of-bounds to conserve time or avoid being de-flagged.

PENALTY: 5 yards

## **FLAG REMOVAL "DEFLAGGING"**

Offensive players must have possession of the ball before they can be legally de-flagged. A flag removed inadvertently (*not removed by grabbing or pulling*) does not cause the play to stop; play should continue as if the flag had not been removed. In all situations, where a play is in progress and a ball carrier loses his flags, either accidentally or inadvertently, the de-flagging reverts to a ONE-HAND TOUCH of the ball carrier between the shoulders and knees.

## **CAPTURE**

When the flag belt is clearly removed from the ball carrier, the down shall end and the ball declared dead. A player who removes the flag belt from the ball carrier should immediately hold the flag belt above his head to assist the officials in locating the spot where the capture occurred. If a flag inadvertently falls to the ground, a ONE-HAND touch between the shoulders and knees constitutes capture.

## **FLAG GUARDING**

Ball carriers shall not protect their flags (*flag guard*) by using their hands, arms or the ball to deny the opponent from pulling or removing the flag belt.

Examples of flag guarding:

- Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt.
- Placing the ball over the flag belt.
- Lowering the shoulders in a manner that places the arm(s) over the flag belt.

- Ball carries (*runners*) are NOT allowed to dive into the end zone or across first down lines to avoid being deflagged.

PENALTY: 10 yards

## ILLEGAL OR UNFAIR ACTS

A player shall not:

- Hold, grasp or obstruct the forward progress of a runner in the act of removing the flag belt or making a legal tag.
- Tackle the runner by grasping or encircling with the hand(s) or arm(s) and taking the opponent toward the ground as in tackle football.
- Use excessive contact against an opponent in any situation (blocking or deflagging).
- Strip or attempt to strip the ball from the runner.
- Dive to deflag the runner.
- Hurdle any other players.
- Dive, push or run into an opponent.
- Use excessive force as in bull rushing (offensive or defensive).

PENALTY: 10 yards

## THE BLOCKING RULES

### Initial Point of Attack

- Use of the hands and/or forearms to block is LEGAL.
- The blockers may only use their hands and/or forearms to block.
- The blocker must maintain contact without holding or grasping.  
PENALTY: Holding, 10 yards
- The blocker MAY NOT block behind the back.  
PENALTY: Block in the back, 10 yards  
*The blocker should not be penalized if the opponent spins at the point of contact.*
- The blocker MAY NOT chop block.  
PENALTY: Chop Block, 15 yards. Player is ejected; team fines and player suspensions apply.
- The blocker MAY NOT blindside block.  
PENALTY: Blind-Side block, 15 yards. Player is ejected; team fines and player suspensions apply.
- No Shoulder Blocks or Blocks to the face and/or neck.  
PENALTY: 10 yards personal foul, at the spot of the foul. Repeated offenses by players may result in a player ejection. Team fines and player suspensions apply.
- Interlocked blocking is prohibited.  
PENALTY: 10 yards from the spot of the block.

**NOTE:** Blocking is an added element to the game of Flag Football. Do not attempt to injure or hurt another player. Any act(s) deemed malicious or with intent to injure will be punished by the officials. The judgment of the officials is considered final.

## MODIFIED BLOCKING TECHNIQUES/OFFENSIVE CONTACT

- Blockers may move laterally or backwards to maintain contact with opponent.
- Blockers **may not** move forward to drive opponents off or displace them from an established base.
- Blockers may move in the same direction and path of an opponent to maintain screening action.
- Blockers actions are to **guide or occupy an opponent** (*i.e., screen*) and not drive them off their base.
- Blockers **may not** take a position so close to a moving opponent that the opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing directions.

## MODIFIED BLOCKING TECHNIQUES/DEFENSIVE CONTACT

- The opponent(s) of the blocker(s) must go around and not drive through or run over blockers at the initial point of attack/contact.
- The opponent(s) of the blocker(s) **may not** use a “swim stroke” to break the contact of a blocker.
- The opponent(s) of the blocker(s) is allowed to spin to move around blocker.
- The opponent(s) are to move around blockers using open space, finesse and quickness.

PENALTY: 10 yards from the spot of the foul.

## DOWN FIELD BLOCKING FUNDAMENTALS (BLUE DIVISION ONLY)

Blocking downfield is permitted. An open hand, straight arm block, within the framework of the blocker’s body/torso, is the ideal block to avoid unnecessary rough play. No grabbing of jersey allowed. You may not flip an elbow to block. **NO** contact allowed above shoulders or below waist. You may **NOT** leave your feet to block. **NO** two on one blocking permitted. Blocking downfield is permitted on screen plays, run plays, and pass plays.

PENALTY: Personal foul 10 yards

### 3 YARD PRESS COVERAGE (BLUE DIVISION ONLY)

- Defenders may press a receiver but only within 3 yards of the line of scrimmage. Pressing the receiver can be done with an open hand to the framework of the receiver's body/torso. NO grabbing of the jersey is allowed. NO contact above the shoulders or below the waist is permitted. Defenders who press a receiver more than 3 yards beyond the line of scrimmage will be penalized. You may NEVER use this technique on a receiver in the area of the head.
- NO 2 on 1 press coverage is allowed.

PENALTY: 10 yards from the spot of the foul.

### SCORING

Each team shall be allowed the opportunity to advance the ball across the opponent's goal line by running or passing.

Points will be awarded as follows:

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Safety: 2 points
- Forfeited game: 12 points per half for a total of 24 points in the game for a 24-0 official score.
- Sudden Death (*tie game*): 1 point
- A "Try" (*see below*) that is intercepted and returned to the end zone is awarded 3 points.
- At the two-minute mark of the second half, any team that is 18 points ahead will be declared the winner and the game will end.

**A Try is worth 1, 2 or 3 points** depending upon where the ball is marked. The referee shall ask the team captain of the scoring team where to mark the ball for the try attempt, i.e., at the 3, 10 or 20 yard line and where they would like the ball placed on or between the inbounds lines (hash marks). Enforcement of a penalty does not change the value of the try.

- **Try from 3 yard line: 1 point**
- **Try from 10 yard line: 2 points**
- **Try from 20 yard line: 3 points**

Once Team A captain makes the choice, he may only change his decision if a time-out is taken by either team. The decision can not be changed once either team commits a foul.

*\*NOTE on Try attempt: If Team B intercepts a pass or fumble (loose ball that does not touch the ground) during the Try and returns it for a touchdown, Team B scores 3 points.*

### OVERTIME PROCEDURES

- A coin toss between captains will decide who will choose offense/defense or direction. The loser will choose from the remaining options.
- During overtime, play will not switch ends of the field unless additional overtime periods are necessary. If additional overtime periods are needed, teams will alternate the first choice.
- Each team will have four (4) downs to score from the 20-yard line, unless moved by a penalty.
- A team that scores will have the opportunity to go for 1 or 2 points. (PAT).
- If the team awarded the ball first scores, the opponent still has a chance to win the game.
- The opponent (*unless moved by penalty*) will also start on the 20-yard line.
- If during the overtime period, the defense intercepts a pass or there is a fumble (*loose ball that does not touch the ground*) and the ball is returned for a touchdown:
  - They win if the opponent has not scored – OR
  - If the interception occurred during a Try, they score 3 points and start on offense from the 20-yard line.
- If the game is still tied after two (2) overtime rotations, teams must go for two points on the PAT. Team also has the option to go for 3 points on the PAT at this point.
- If Team B scores 6 points and Team A does not score, Team B will NOT be provided the opportunity for a PAT.
- Each team is entitled to only one time-out during each over time period.
- NO first downs will be awarded except in the case of a penalty.

### SUMMARY OF PENALTIES

**Minor Penalty:** loss of 5 yards

- Delay of game
- Illegal substitution
- False start
- Illegal act by the snapper
- Encroachment
- Less than four players on offensive line at snap
- Illegal shift
- Illegal pass – spot foul plus loss of down if by Team A
- Illegal handing ball forward
- Intentional Grounding
- Article of clothing covering portion of player's flag

**Major Penalty:** loss of 10 yards

- Holding
- Illegal block(Block in the back, shoulder block, interlocking block)
- Delaying start of either half
- Unsportsmanlike player and/or coach conduct
- Offensive pass-interference (the down counts)
- Illegal use of hands
- Pushing the ball carrier/assisting the runner
- Illegal participation
- Illegal forward pass by offense or defense (if by offense, down counts)
- Roughing the passer or center (automatic first down)

### 15 Yard Personal Foul Penalties

- Chop Block(Also Player Ejection)
- Blind Side Block(Also Player Ejection)
- Striking, Kicking, Kneeing(Also Player Ejection)
- Striking head
- Fighting (players ejected)
- Impeding runner, spot of foul, with 10 yards added
- Defensive pass-interference, 10 yards from the previous spot, automatic first down

## THE GAME: 4-ON-4 AND 5-ON-5 RULES

### PRE-GAME

Three minutes before the start of the game, the referee will designate which captain shall call the coin toss, and then toss the coin in the presence of the captains. The captain winning the toss has the option to choose:

- Offense or Defense
- Goal to defend
- Defer the options to the second half, other team accepts the remaining options to choose from

Game Time is FORFEIT TIME. Guaranteed schedule blocks in scenarios where fields may be behind are the only exception, where teams will be given reasonable time to get to their next games at the discretion of PRCS Staff.

Minimum 3 players to start a game(5 on 5) and 2 players to start a game(4 on 4). May only have up to 5 players on the field at any one time(5 on 5) and 4 players on the field at any one time(4 on 4).

### OFFENSE

#### POSSESSION

The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has three plays to cross mid-field. Once a team crosses mid-field they have three plays to score. If the offensive team fails to cross mid-field, the ball changes possession. If the offense does not score, the ball changes possession. All drives start from the 5-yard line with the exception of an interception.

#### BLOCKING

No blocking is allowed. No intentional contact is allowed.

#### RUNNING

The quarterback may not run unless the ball has been thrown back, handed or pitched to him or her in the backfield.

Teams may handoff (unlimited), pitch, or throw back in the backfield. UNLIMITED laterals or throwbacks behind the line of scrimmage are allowed for the player to remain eligible to pass.

Pitching (backwards/laterally) is allowed downfield (unlimited). Handoffs are allowed forward or backwards when behind the line of scrimmage, and only backwards beyond the line of scrimmage. A handoff DOES NOT count as a lateral/throwback. A forward pass DOES NOT have to cross the line of scrimmage to be a legal play.

If the ball is placed on the "Back" of ANY player, the player MUST run the ball (no give and go to the QB on the back)

No run zones are located 5 yards before mid-field and 5-yards before the end zone. You may not run the ball in the no run zone (5-yards before the first down and end zone), only forward passes are allowed to advance the ball past the line of scrimmage. Laterals and handoffs are still allowed.

Ball is spotted where the ball is at the time of the flag pull. The ball must break the plane of the midfield or goal line to be considered a first down or touchdown.

Players may NOT block down field in any form.

#### PASSING

The quarterback has 5 seconds to pass the ball if there is no rush. If the ball is not thrown, then the play is dead. After the ball is ruled dead it is returned to the line of scrimmage.

Once the ball is handed off or pitched backwards the 5 second count stops. If the defensive team rushes, then there is no 5 second count.

There is no arm in motion, if the ball is in hand when the quarterback's flag is pulled then it will be ruled a sack.

Interceptions may be returned.

The rusher may not have any contact with the QB (no hitting the QB arm or knocking the ball out of the QB hand).

If ANY part of the players body is behind the line of scrimmage it is a legal pass.

#### RECEIVING

All players are eligible to receive a pass, including the quarterback, if the ball has been pitched or handed off in the backfield. Players must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.

#### DEFENSE

##### RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

Players that blitz/rush the quarterback must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. The 7 yards will be measured off by a referee.

Players that are not 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped may not enter into the backfield until there is a change of possession.

The blitzer/rusher is allowed a direct lane to the line of scrimmage as long as he or she rushes from either side of the center or outside the bunch formation. The offense must avoid interfering with the rusher if he or she has established a lane. Officials will announce LANE or NO LANE for rushers/blitzers prior to the snap. This is a judgement call/decision based on the spacing between the players in the offensive formation. A space of 6" or greater in length between two players constitutes a lane at the officials discretion.

The rush of a blitzer has to be immediately after the snap, quick and straight towards the point where the quarterback receives the snap in order to retain the right of way. If a blitzer is rushing late, slowly, aiming at another spot, changing direction during the rush or just does not rush the quarterback, the player loses the right of way but still can participate as any other defensive player.

## PASS COVERAGE

Contacting receivers is not allowed

Pass interference normally occurs above the waist; entangled feet are not considered pass interference. Incidental contact is not considered pass interference.

A player may "find" their opponent by reaching out and placing a hand on them as long as touching does not delay, impede, twist, or turn their opponent. This is not considered pass interference.

A player may use their arms or hands to intentionally obstruct the receiver's view (face guarding) of the ball without turning their own head to play the ball as long as noteworthy contact is not made with the receiver.

If defensive pass interference occurs in the end zone the ball will be placed on the one-yard line, automatic first down.

Interceptions may be returned. Interceptions in the end zone that are not returned to the field of play will result in a touchback and the ball will be spotted on the 5-yard line.

Contact away from the direction of the pass is not considered pass interference but may be considered illegal contact.

Whether a pass is catchable or uncatchable has no bearing on pass interference. The benefit of the doubt is given to the receiver. Examples of pass interference include:

- Shoving or pushing off to create separation.
- Playing through the back.
- Hook and turn: grabbing the torso and turning an opponent before the pass arrives.
- Arm bars, hooking, restricting, grabbing wrists, or turning a receiver.
- Blocking downfield before the ball has been touched, commonly seen through "pick plays".

## PLAYING TIME

Game clock is 25 minutes long. Two 12 minute halves and 1-minute halftime.

Each team has two 30 second timeouts PER GAME. If a time out is called after a TD the clock will not run until the change of possession and the offense snaps their ball.

The play clock is 25 seconds from the end of the previous play.

## FIRST HALF CLOCK

The clock will run continuously during the 12 minutes of the first half unless a team timeout is used or play is stopped by an official (e.g. deal with an injury, challenge, referee conference, game management purposes, etc.)

The head official will give a verbal two-minute warning (for rule specific changes inside 2 minutes)

The clock will run during point-after-touchdown attempts (PATs) in the first half unless either team opts to use a team timeout.

## SECOND HALF CLOCK

In the second half the clock will run continuously for the first 11 minutes unless a team timeout or an official's time out is used. The one-minute warning will stop the clock in the second half if the score difference is 8 points or less.

The head official will give a verbal two-minute (for rule specific changes) and one-minute warning as close as possible to the actual marks but will not interrupt a live play.

At the one minute warning officials will use a 'stop' clock mechanic for the remainder of the contest.

## TIME-OUTS

Each team has two 30 second timeouts PER GAME. If a time out is called after a TD the clock will not run until the change of possession and the offense snaps their ball.

Time-outs do not carry-over into the next half or into any overtime periods. If the game goes into overtime, each team will receive one time-out per overtime.

## SNAPPING THE FOOTBALL

- The snapper will bring the ball from the huddle to the scrimmage line in first down snaps/spots. **To assist with the speed and timing of games, offensive players MUST retrieve the ball after a down and return it to the huddle or line of scrimmage.**  
Penalty: Delay of Game, 3 yards
- The snapper shall have his feet behind his scrimmage line.

- The snapper, after assuming position for the snap and adjusting the ball, **may not** move or change the position of the ball in a manner simulating the beginning of the play.
- The snapper shall pass the ball back from its position on the ground with a quick and continuous motion of the hand(s).
- The ball must be snapped within 25 seconds after ball is declared ready for play.
- The player who receives the snap must be at least two or more yards behind the offensive line of scrimmage.

#### **TEAMS MAY NOT TAKE A DIRECT SNAP**

Due to the nature of the game, a direct snap gives the offense an advantage in short yardage situations and are illegal.

#### **STANCE**

Players may only use a 2-point stance; 3 and 4-point stances ARE NOT ALLOWED.

#### **FLAG REMOVAL “DEFLAGGING”**

Offensive players must have possession of the ball before they can be legally de-flagged. A flag removed inadvertently (*not removed by grabbing or pulling*) does not cause the play to stop; play should continue as if the flag had not been removed. In all situations, where a play is in progress and a ball carrier loses his flags, either accidentally or inadvertently, the de-flagging reverts to a ONE-HAND TOUCH of the ball carrier between the shoulders and knees.

#### **CAPTURE**

When the flag belt is clearly removed from the ball carrier, the down shall end and the ball declared dead. A player who removes the flag belt from the ball carrier should immediately hold the flag belt above his head to assist the officials in locating the spot where the capture occurred. If a flag inadvertently falls to the ground, a ONE-HAND touch between the shoulders and knees constitutes capture.

#### **FLAG GUARDING**

Ball carriers shall not protect their flags (*flag guard*) by using their hands, arms or the ball to deny the opponent from pulling or removing the flag belt.

Examples of flag guarding:

- Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt.
- Placing the ball over the flag belt.
- Lowering the shoulders in a manner that places the arm(s) over the flag belt.
- Ball carriers (*runners*) are NOT allowed to dive into the end zone or across first down lines to avoid being deflagged.

PENALTY: 5 yards

#### **ILLEGAL OR UNFAIR ACTS**

A player shall not:

- Hold, grasp or obstruct the forward progress of a runner in the act of removing the flag belt or making a legal tag.
- Tackle the runner by grasping or encircling with the hand(s) or arm(s) and taking the opponent toward the ground as in tackle football.
- Use excessive contact against an opponent in any situation (blocking or deflagging).
- Strip or attempt to strip the ball from the runner.
- Dive to deflag the runner.
- Hurdle any other players.
- Dive, push or run into an opponent.
- Use excessive force as in bull rushing (offensive or defensive).

PENALTY: 5 yards

#### **SCORING POINTS**

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Point After Touchdown:
  - (PAT) 1 point from the 5-yard line (no-run zone in effect)
  - 2 points from the 12-yard line, run, pass (outside of no-run zone)
  - Interceptions returned on PAT's are worth 2 points
- Safety: 2 points

#### **POINT AFTER TOUCHDOWN (PAT)**

Following a touchdown, once the scoring team has informed an official of which point conversion choice they want to attempt, the decision cannot be changed unless the scoring team uses a team timeout.

If a penalty occurs during an extra point attempt, the penalty will be assessed but the extra point value remains the same.



Decisions cannot be changed after a penalty. For example, if the offense attempts a 1-point PAT and is penalized five yards for a false start, they cannot change their mind and go for a 2-point PAT. They will still be attempting a 1-point try even if they call a timeout.

Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct, personal fouls, or roughing penalties during a successful touchdown attempt will be assessed at half the distance to the goal during the PAT attempt (e.g., 2-point PAT attempts will be spotted at the 6-yard line, 1-point PAT attempts will be spotted at the 2.5-yard line). All other defensive penalties may be declined by the offense and the score will stand.

Dead ball fouls committed by the offense that do not carry a loss-of-down penalty (false start) may result in penalty yardage assessed and the down replayed.

Fouls by the offense during a successful PAT attempt that carry a loss-of-down penalty (flag guarding, illegal advancement, illegal forward pass, etc.) will result in the PAT being no good.

Fouls committed by the offense in unsuccessful PAT attempts will be declined by the defense and the PAT will be "no good" and will not be replayed.

Fouls by the defense during an unsuccessful PAT attempt will result in a retry after the options are administered.

If the PAT-attempting team throws an interception and then commits a flagrant foul after the interception during the attempted return (physically contains the ball carrier; bear hugs, aggressively holds, tackles, etc. without making a clear, legal attempt to pull the ball carrier's flag, the ball carrier will be awarded two points.

## OVERTIME EXTRA POINT SHOOT-OUT

A coin flip determines first possession, 1 timeout per OT period

Teams will go in reverse order if more than 1 OT is required

Teams can elect to go for 1 or 2 points, 3<sup>rd</sup> OT begins mandatory 2 point attempt.

Winner will be determined once the value of the extra point exceeds the other team's attempt.

## MERCY RULE

If a team is up by 28 points or more during play at any time, the game will be over.

### Defensive Fouls:

Offside	3 yards
Interference	5 yards and first down
Illegal contact (blocking, bump & run, etc.)	5 yards and first down
Hold	5 yards from point of infraction and first down
Illegal flag pull	5 yards and first down
Illegal rush (starting rush within 7-yard mark)	3 yards and first down

### Offensive Fouls:

Illegal motion, false start	3 yards
Illegal forward pass	3 yards
Pass received behind	3 yards
Flag guarding (from point of infraction) and loss of down	5 yards
Delay of game	5 yards and loss of down
Offensive pass interference	5 yards and loss of down

## 4-ON-4 AND 5-ON-5 RULES (COED ADJUSTMENTS)

### THE TEAM

Each team shall field a team of 4 or 5 players, everyone is eligible. At least one player must be a female. Teams may start and finish with three players, one of the three players must be female. If for any reason a team can not field at least three players (ONE MUST BE FEMALE), the team must forfeit.

Teams must always have a female on their team and on the playing field.

### FEMALE PARTICIPATION

- **One play in every 3-set of downs** must significantly involve a female player. To significantly involve a female means:
  - 1) a female is the quarterback and **attempts** to advance the ball past the line of scrimmage, **OR** throws the ball to a receiver who, at the point of reception, is forward of the line of scrimmage;
  - 2) a female is the running back and **attempts** to advance the ball forward of the line of scrimmage;
  - 3) a female is either clearly the **intended** receiver of an incomplete pass, **OR** the resultant receiver.
- If a male on the offense tips a forward pass with any part of his body and a female does **NOT** catch the ball, the play **DOES NOT** significantly involve a female, regardless if she was the intended receiver.
- Failure to involve a female will result in loss of down; the subsequent play must significantly involve a female.
- If the infraction occurs on a third down, the result is a change of possession.
- If a play was required to significantly involve a female and the defense commits a foul resulting in the down having to be replayed, the subsequent play does not need to significantly involve a female.
- If a touchdown is scored after one play, the PAT must significantly involve a female. An infraction of this rule during a PAT attempt will result in 0 points.
- The cycle starts anew with a change of possession.