



Capital District Pop Warner Federation  
Flag Football  
www.cdpw.org



The purpose of this section is to establish rules for the Flag Division of play. Commissioners/administrators shall follow the Commissioner/Administrators Game Guide where applicable.

REMINDER - THIS IS AN INSTRUCTIONAL, NON\_COMPETATIVE LEVEL OF PLAY.

1. The rules set forth in the current year Pop Warner Little Scholars Official Rule Book will be enforced.
2. Additional rules herein shall also apply. Should two rules conflict, the stricter rule shall apply.
3. Practice shall begin no earlier than August 1 of each year.

#### ELIGIBLE PLAYERS

1. The Flag Division is made up of 5, 6, and 7 year old boys and girls. Age is as of July 31<sup>st</sup>. There are no height or weight restrictions on players.
2. The same forms that apply to tackle also apply to Flag (ie: Registration card, medical/physical, and participant contract).
3. Associations with more than one Flag team will take all reasonable steps to make up teams with an equal amount of 5, 6, and 7 year olds.

#### FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

##### Rule 1: Players

1. A game is played between two teams consisting of eight (8) players each.
2. Each team roster shall have a maximum of 24 players, and a minimum of 10 players. A forfeit will result when the minimum is not met, and no game/scrimmage will occur.
3. There is no alphabetical rule in setting rosters in Flag Football as set forth in Commissioner/Administrator's Game Guide.
4. Only players appearing on the official team roster form are to be counted as players. The roster is completed before the first game of the season, verified by the league in a process called "certification".
5. The offensive team must have five (5) players on the line and three (3) in the backfield. The defensive team may have a maximum of four (4) linemen, with no player lined over center. All other players must be 4 yards off line of scrimmage. All players may rush on the snap of the ball.
6. Mandatory Play Rule: Each player present for a given game is required to play at least 10 plays. The one (1) hour limit will not result in a violation of the MPR. However, in the event a player fails to meet the required number of plays, said player must make any shortage of plays in the following week.
7. A team will have 30 seconds to put the ball in play after the ready signal.

##### Rule 2: Playing Fields

1. The playing field is to be an 80 yard field – 80x40. No goal posts are required.
2. Four twenty-yard markers shall be marked to show first down marker (zone markers).
3. A down marker will be used to indicate the number of the down.
4. Corner flags with flexible staffs will be placed at the four sections of the end zones and the sidelines. Soft pylons may be used if flags are unavailable.

##### Rule 3: Equipment

1. **Game Ball:** same as the Mitey Mites and Junior Pee wee.
2. **Flags:**
  - a. Each player must wear a belt (quick release) with three (3) flags – flags will hang from each side and rear of
  - b. Flags will be 14-20 inches long and a minimum of 2 inches wide.



- c. The belt must be tight to prevent being turned around during the de-flagging.
  - d. The home team will wear light flags and the visitors will wear dark flags. Home team supplies the flags.
  - e. The securing of flags to the body, waist or belt, other than provided above, is illegal.
  - f. Jerseys cannot be worn over flags.
  - g. If a player's flag is inadvertently lost, he is ineligible to handle the ball.
3. **Game Uniforms:**
- a. All team members must wear the same color jersey.
  - b. All jerseys will be numbered, front and back.
  - c. Any type of pants may be worn provided said pants have no front or side pockets.
  - d. Jerseys will be tucked in at all times.
  - e. Sneakers are the preferred shoe; however, non-detachable, rubber-cleated shoes are allowed. No other footwear is acceptable.
4. **Eye glasses:** Eye glasses, when worn, shall be of athletically-approved construction with non-shattering glass (safety glass).
5. **Mouth Guards:** Mouth guards are required, no keeper strap is necessary.
6. **Athletic Supporters/Cup:** An athletic supporter & cup is highly recommended.

#### Rule 4: Prohibited Equipment

1. Spiked or street shoes.
2. Padding of any kind, including hard surface padding such as shoulder pads, hip pads and helmets.
3. Hard metal or any other hard substance on a player's clothing or person.
4. Anything that conceals the flag.
5. Slick or sticky substances such as grease or glue.
6. Any equipment, in the opinion of the referee, that will endanger or confuse players.

#### Rule 5: Referees

There will be at least two (2) referees. One coach from the home team and one from the visiting team will serve as the game referees and should work together.

#### Rule 6: The rules of the game

1. **Players:** The free substitution rule is always in effect and a player may enter the game any time the ball is dead.
2. **Team Coaches:** One coach for each team will be permitted on the field.
3. **Time:** The game will consist of two 20-minute halves, allowing for three (3) time-outs per half, and ten (10) minutes between halves.
4. At the start of game, halftime and following all scores the ball is spotted at **midfield**.
5. **Downs:**
  - a. Each team will have four consecutive downs to advance the ball into the next zone or to score a touchdown.
  - b. Once a team enters into the next zone, it is a first down and a new series of downs begins.
  - c. A team failing to move the ball into the next zone will lose possession. The opposing team takes over at the point where the ball is declared dead and begins its series of first down and zone to go.
  - d. The forward part of the ball touching any line will be the determining factor in measuring for the first down.
  - e. When the offensive team is within the last zone and has a first down, it'll be first down and goal to go.
  - f. At the conclusion of each down, the referee will place the ball in the center of the field (equal distance from sidelines – not on a hash mark).



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6. **De-flagging:**
  - a. There shall be no tackling of the ball carrier, passer, or kicker.
  - b. The player carrying or having possession of the ball is down when the flag is removed from his waist (de-flagging). The defensive player shall hold the flag above his head and stand still.
  - c. The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier to remove his flag. An accidental touch of the body or shoulder while reaching for the flag shall not be considered a violation; however, touching of the head or face shall be considered a violation.
  - d. A defensive player may not run over, push, or pull a blocker away from him. He may push him sideways if he gets past him, but he cannot push the blocker down.
  - e. A defensive player must go for the passer's flag. He cannot touch the passer's arm.
7. **Blocking:**
  - a. A blocker must be on his feet at all times while blocking. All linemen, except the center, must not assume the three-point stance or otherwise spring from a coiled or crouching start. Instead, they must simply stand at the line of scrimmage and await the snap. The center, though crouching, if he is to block, must first stand straight up.
  - b. Cross body and roll blocking are not permitted.
  - c. A blocker can use his/her hands within his/her shoulders.
  - d. A defensive player cannot block or push a ball carrier out-of-bounds.
  - e. Butting, elbowing or knee blocking is not permitted.
  - f. There will be no two-on-one blocking for the ball carrier beyond the line of scrimmage.
  - g. Blocking a player from behind is not permitted (clipping).
  - h. There will be no interlocking blocking.
  - i. A defensive player will be restricted in the use of his hands to the blocker's body and shoulders.
8. **Ball Carrier:**
  - a. The ball carrier cannot use his hands or arms to protect his flags. The defensive player must have the opportunity to remove the ball carrier's flag.
  - b. The ball carrier cannot lower his head to drive or run into a defensive player.
  - c. Stiff-arming by the ball carrier is illegal.
  - d. The ball carrier cannot spin or hurdle to prevent a defensive player from removing his flags.
  - e. He may run in any direction until the ball is declared dead.
9. **Center:**
  - a. The center must snap the ball between his legs.
  - b. He must have both feet on the scrimmage line with no part of his body beyond the forward point of the ball.
  - c. He may adjust the long part of the ball at right angles to the scrimmage line for one time only.
10. **Passing:**
  - a. All backfield men are eligible passers.
  - b. Passing will be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage only.
  - c. A lateral pass is a pass thrown parallel to the line of scrimmage or back toward the passer's own goal line. A lateral pass is not considered a forward pass.
  - d. A forward pass is thrown from behind the line of scrimmage toward the defensive team's goal line.
11. **Receiving:**
  - a. All players are eligible to receive forward passes.
  - b. A receiver may catch a ball even if he steps out of bounds or out of the end zone as long as he comes down with one foot in bounds.
  - c. Two or more receivers may touch the ball in succession resulting in a completed pass.
  - d. If an offensive and a defensive player catch a pass simultaneously, the ball is declared dead at the spot of the catch and the passing team is awarded possession.
  - e. An offensive player cannot be out of bounds and return in bounds to catch a pass. This will be ruled an incomplete pass.
12. **Dead Ball:**

All balls touching the ground are immediately dead. For example, the ball is declared dead at the following times:

  - a. When the ball carrier touches the ground with his body, other than hands and feet.
  - b. When the ball carrier's flag has been pulled.
  - c. If a pass receiver or ball carrier has a missing flag (ball is dead on that spot).
  - d. Following a touchdown or safety.
  - e. When the ball goes out of bounds for any reason.
  - f. If the center snap hits the ground before reaching a backfield man.



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- g. When the ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble. THERE ARE NO FUMBLE RECOVERIES IN POP WARNER FLAG FOOTBALL.
- h. If a lateral pass touches the ground (ball is declared dead at that point). If a lateral pass goes out of bounds, the ball is ruled dead at the point it crosses the boundary line.
- i. If a forward pass strikes the ground or is caught at the same time by an opposing player(s).

**Rule 7: Injured Player**

Once removed from a game because of injury, a player must sit out at least one down, and may not re-enter the game without the approval of attending medical personnel.

**Rule 8: Practices**

**Practice cannot begin until August 1. Prior to the beginning of school, practices are limited to four (4) days per week, not to exceed 2 hours duration. While school is in session, practices are limited to three (3) days per week, not to exceed 1 ½ hours each practice.**

**Rule 9: Schedules**

- 1. CDPW has a six (6) game schedule per season.
- 2. Scheduling starting times for the games shall be as follows:

Saturday	1 <sup>st</sup> Game	10:15 AM
(1 or 2 Games)	2 <sup>nd</sup> game	11:30 AM
Saturday	1 <sup>st</sup> game	9:00 AM
(3 Games)	2 <sup>nd</sup> game	10:15 AM
	3 <sup>rd</sup> game	11:30AM

- 3. Teams should be there one half (1/2) before game.
- 4. Maximum allowed time per game shall be one (1) hour.

**Rule 10: Scoring, Tie Games and Tournament Play-Does not apply to CDPW**

**Rule 11: Penalties Follow National Rule Book**

**Rule 12: Protests**

- 1. Only protests involving rules' interpretations or the eligibility of a player shall be considered – never the Judgement of an official in calling a play.
- 2. Protests are decided at the local level in accordance with the administrative procedures of the league.

For all other questions, please contact the CDPW Federation Flag Director.