



2014-15  
Sampson County Parks and Recreation

**Flag Football  
Local Guidelines and Rules**

**1:00 DIVISION:**

1:01 **Mighty Blockers:** Ages 4-6 years

**2:00 AGE REQUIREMENTS:**

2:01 **Minimum Age** – Four (4) years old – players must reach their fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) on or before August 1<sup>st</sup>.

2:02 **Maximum Age** – Six (6) years old – players cannot reach their seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) birthday on or before October 16<sup>th</sup> of the **current school year.**

**3:00 FIELD SIZE / TEAM SIZE:**

3:01 The playing field will be forty (40) length x twenty (20) yards in width with 5 yard end zones.

3:02 Both teams (offense and defense) will have five (5) players on the field.

3:03 There will be a minimum of (8) players and a maximum of (12) on each team roster.

**4:00 SEASON GAMES:**

4:01 **Weight Limit:** There is no weight requirement for this program.

4:02 All regular season games shall consist of two (2) twenty five minute halves. The clock will be stopped for time outs only!

4:03 Each team will be allowed five (5) downs to make a touchdown or first down (MID-FIELD) unless possession of the ball is lost.

4:04 ALL PLAYERS ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A PASS. A pass or multiple passes may be thrown from anywhere on the field, behind or in front of the line of scrimmage. If a pass is thrown beyond the line of scrimmage and is incomplete, the ball is put in play from the point the passer released the ball. EACH TEAM MUST ATTEMPT ONE (1) PASS PER SERIES. The **PENALTY** for not attempting one (1) pass per series is as follows: ten (10) yards from the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) down line of scrimmage plus loss of possession.

**NOTE:** This rule does not apply if a team scores a touchdown by a pass on fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) down or the following stated situations:

- A team scores a touchdown in under five (5) plays
- A team gets a first (1<sup>st</sup>) down in fewer than five (5) plays
- A team commits a turnover in fewer than five (5) plays

4:05 The ball-carrier may not use a stiff-arm against a defender.  
**PENALTY:** FIVE (5) YARDS.

4:06 A kicked or punted ball that strikes the ground after being touched by a player is dead.

4:07 On-side kicks are not legal.

4:08 A player who catches any kick may pass the ball at any time.

4:09 A ball-carrier may not be restrained by holding at any time.  
**PENALTY:** FIVE (5) YARDS.

4:10 If a ball-carrier loses his flag, the ball becomes dead and the play is ended.

4:11 There are no fumbles - the ball is dead when it touches the ground (except in a scrimmage kick formation).

4:12 One coach will be allowed on the field with his/her team. Once the team breaks from the huddle, the coach must leave the immediate area and must not direct the players or approach the officials.  
**PENALTY:** FIRST OFFENSE, TEN (10) YARDS; SECOND OFFENSE, REMOVAL FROM THE GAME AS AN ON-FIELD COACH.

4:13 On-field coaches will be allowed no more than thirty (30) seconds in the huddle.  
**PENALTY:** FIVE (5) YARDS.

4:14 The thirty (30) second allotment begins once the official spots the ball.

**NOTE:** One coach must remain on the sideline with the team at all times.

- 4:15 Kick-off will be a place-kick from mid-field-twenty (20) yard line. A kick out-of-bounds will be kicked over. After two (2) unsuccessful kicks, the ball will be put in play at the receiving teams five (5) yard line.
- 4:16 Players must have their wrist and hand in contact with their own body while blocking. Blocking must be above the waistline.
- 4:17 Any block where a player leaves their feet is illegal.
- 4:18 Downfield blocking will not be allowed. At no time will blocking take place other than at the line of scrimmage, or behind the line of scrimmage when on offense.
- 4:19 Tackling, striking, kicking, or kneeling a player will result in immediate ejection from the game. If a player tackles a ball-carrier, the offensive team will be rewarded with a first (1st) down at the one (1) yard line of the defense. **NOTE:** Tackling is the intentional act of knocking a player off his feet, to the ground, or out-of-bounds.  
**PENALTY: TEN YARDS FROM THE POINT OF INFRACTION.**
- 4:20 When punting, the defensive team may not rush the punter; the offensive team may not leave the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. Offensive team must notify the official that they are punting. If the punter drops the snap, the punter can pick the ball up and kick it away. The receiving team cannot rush the punter. When a team notifies the official that they are punting, it means they are giving up possession of the ball. Regardless of the direction of the punt, (whether it crosses the neutral zone or not, the kicking team cannot regain possession of the punted ball. NO FAKE PUNTS.
- 4:21 The defense must be three (3) yards off the line of scrimmage. **NO RUSHING ALLOWED.** Exception: Once the ball has been handed off or passed the defense may proceed to deflag the ball carrier.
- 4:22 The "center sneak" is illegal and shall not be allowed.
- 4:23 A first (1st) down will be awarded when the offensive team advances to the mid-field line (20 yard line).

## **5:00 EQUIPMENT:**

- 5:01 A minimum of eight (8) players will be equipped for each team.
- 5:02 The head coach of each team will issue equipment to his team and will be responsible to the Recreation Department for all equipment. The head coach will also be responsible to see that all uniforms and equipment are turned in clean and are in good condition at the end of the playing season. Parents will be required to fill out a registration card before their child will receive equipment.
- 5:03 The Recreation Department will properly store all equipment in the off-season.

5:04 All equipment will be purchased by the Recreation Department. No coach or parent has the authority to obligate the team or Recreation Department financially without the consent of the parties involved; otherwise the expenditure will become the responsibility of the individual.

5:05 Individual equipment shall consist of a belt with 2 detachable flags and a T-shirt (which the player will keep). Each player will furnish their own pants, socks and shoes, which must be **tennis shoes or rubber molded cleats**. **Screw-in, metal, or steel cleats are not allowed.**

*NOTE: Failure to wear proper equipment will result in a **TEN (10) YARD PENALTY** charged to the head coach.*

5:06 Mouthpieces are mandatory.

5:07 All equipment worn by players must conform to local or official football rules.

#### **6:00 PARTICIPATION RULES:**

6:01 All players must play one (1) scrimmage down in each half.

**PENALTY:** *HEAD COACH WILL BE SUSPENDED FOR THE NEXT GAME PLAYED BY THE TEAM.*

6:02 Each team is allowed three (3) time-outs per half.

6:03 Half-time will be five (5) minutes long.

6:04 Each team will be permitted a ten (10) minute warm-up period before each game.

6:05 Both teams (offense and defense) will have five (5) players on the field.

**PENALTY:** *FIVE (5) YARDS IF THE DEFENSE HAS MORE THAN FIVE (5) PLAYERS ON THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.*

6:06 If an injury occurs and an open wound exists, the following regulations apply:

- a) The player must leave the game for at least one (1) play.
- b) Bleeding must be stopped and the wound covered before the player can return to the game.
- c) If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform, it must be changed before the player can return to the game.

**7:00 PRACTICE:**

- 7:01 Coaches are expected to closely observe their players at all times to be certain that the players do not become overly fatigued.
- 7:02 Coaches shall refrain from using exercises that may be harmful to the players physical welfare, such as **duck walks, full deep knee bends, and turning or twisting neck bridges.**
- 7:03 Practices will be limited to 1 hour and 15 minutes in length.
- 7:04 Practices must be over by 8:30 p.m.
- 7:05 Teams cannot practice more than three times per week.
- 7:06 If the Recreation Department is notified that a coach is in violation of the policy, the coach will be notified and the violation will be investigated by Department personnel.  
**PENALTY FOR VIOLATION: ONE (1) GAME SUSPENSION OF THE HEAD COACH.**

**8:00 COMPLAINTS / INELIGIBLE PLAYERS:**

- 8:01 Requests for determining the eligibility of a player (proper age, registered and on the roster) can be made at any point during the season by head coaches. When requesting the inquiry, coaches must give the players known name, jersey number and team for which he/she participated. Teams will forfeit all games in which an ineligible player (improper age, not registered on the roster) participates.
- 8:02 If no opening exists in their home district, then the player will be permitted to register in the next closest district with an opening. There will be no team penalties.

**9:00 POSTPONED GAMES/INCLEMENT WEATHER**

- 9:01 In case of inclement weather, coaches and parents should call the following number for a decision as to whether or not the game will be played:

County Parks and Recreation 299-0924

*If no cancellation is listed, teams must report to the field and wait for the officials or field supervisors decision.*

- 9:02 Prior to the start of the game, the field supervisor or Recreation Department staff on duty will have sole authority to postpone or play the game. After the game begins, the officiating crew chief will have the sole authority to postpone or play the game.

9:03 Each area of the county is different when it comes to inclement weather. It may be raining where you are but at your field it may not be. **ALWAYS** make sure.

9:04 Make-up games will be scheduled by the Recreation Department.

**10:00 ROSTERS AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:**

10:01 School districts are used as a guideline for determining where a player will register. Players should sign-up in the community nearest to their home. This information will be announced in the schools, on the radio, and in the newspaper.

*If no opening exists in their home district, then the player will be permitted to register in the next closest district with an opening.*

10:02 All returning players must play for the same team in the same community they played for the previous year and will remain with that team throughout their eligibility.

10:03 All new players must participate in an approved drafting procedure handled by the Recreation Department

10:04 Any player who practices with a particular team will not be allowed to play for any other team during that season. Exceptions must be approved by the Recreation Department.

10:05 No player will be allowed to play on more than one (1) team within the program.

10:06 No player will be allowed to participate in a game or practice without a signed registration form and a birth certificate card submitted for review by the Recreation Department

**11:00 COACHES / CONDUCT:**

11:01 **ALL PERSONS, VOLUNTEERS, COACHES, TRAINERS/MANAGERS OR TEAM PARENTS WHO PROVIDE REGULAR SERVICE TO THE LEAGUE/AND HAVE REPETITIVE ACCESS TO, OR CONTACT WITH, PLAYERS OR TEAMS MUST COMPLETE A VOLUNTEER APPLICATION AND HAVE A BACKGROUND CHECK COMPLETED ON HIM OR HER . THIS PROCESS IS TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO THE START OF PRACTICES OR GAMES**

11:02 All head and assistant coaches must attend an orientation and rules clinic in order to coach within a Recreation Department sponsored program. Exceptions must be approved by the Recreation Department.

- 11:03 All coaches must understand and agree to carry out the duties, responsibilities, and policies as established by the Recreation Department.
- 11:04 Only THREE (3) coaches/trainer/manager may sit on the bench with the players. All other persons must stay behind the restraining fence. Head coach will be responsible for keeping unauthorized persons out of marked bench area.  
**PENALTY: TEN (10) YARDS.**
- 11:05 Coaches may request time-outs.
- 11:06 ONLY one (1) coach will be allowed on the field.
- 11:07 Coaches and players must stay within the designated bench area. The bench area will be from the 10-yard line to the 10-yard line on the 40-yard field. Unauthorized persons will not be allowed in the bench area.
- 11:08 Coaches must set good examples of sportsmanship. Do not tolerate poor conduct in practice or in a game.
- 11:09 Each coach should have a set of team rules that he/she expects the players and parents to follow. These rules should cover items such as practice schedule, attendance policy, disciplinary actions, providing refreshments, whom to call in case of rain, etc. Coaches must use discretion and good judgment if they feel it is necessary to suspend a player for violation of team policy.

**12:00 SPORTSMANSHIP:**

- 12:01 No alcoholic beverages are allowed on school or recreation property. This includes athletic fields. This is a **STATE LAW**. If necessary, proper legal action will be taken to enforce this rule. **NO TOBACCO PRODUCTS - SMOKING, CHEWING, DIPPING, ETC.ARE ALLOWED ON THE PRACTICE OR PLAYING FIELD.**
- 12:02 A coach, player, or spectator with the presence of alcohol on their breath will be asked to leave the recreation area.
- 12:03 Any coach who is ejected from a game will be suspended for (6) months. The suspension could be longer depending upon the severity of the infraction.
- 12:04 If a coach is ejected from a game it will be handled by Recreation Department personnel.
- 12:05 Fighting and/or unsportsmanlike conduct **WILL NOT** be tolerated before, during, or after the game. No player shall at anytime lay a hand on, push, shove, or strike, or threaten to strike or intimidate another player, official, or staff person. A player who

exhibits this type of behavior shall be ejected and suspended from play for a minimum of two (2) games, and upon review of the incident he/she may be suspended from further participation in Sampson County Parks and Recreation Programs. Persons guilty of a second offense involving fighting/or unsportsmanlike conduct during the same season shall be suspended for the remainder of the season.

**13:00 POST SEASON PLAY:**

13:01 There is no post season play for this program

## **PLAYING TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

### **SECTION I. FLAG FOOTBALL, FLAG BELT, DE-FLAGGING**

- Article 1 Flag football is played in a manner similar to either regular tackle football or touch football, with the exception of the method of stopping the advance of the ball-carrier. This is accomplished by "de-flagging", i.e., the capture by a defensive player of one of the two flags which are worn on the ball-carrier's belt.
- Article 2 The flag belt may be either the official belt complete with snap-out sockets, or an ordinary leather or web belt to which the snap-out sockets have been attached by means of a leather slip-on device.
- Article 3 The flag is a 2" x 16" plastic strip attached to the flag belt by means of a ball and socket snap-out device.
- Article 4 The flag must be cleanly taken from the ball-carrier. If, attempting to take the flag, the defensive player holds the ball-carrier until the flag can be removed; this is a foul with a penalty of five (5) yards from spot of violation.
- Article 5 If the defensive player unnecessarily knocks the ball-carrier down (tackle) in attempting to capture the flag, it is a foul. The defender may be ejected and the offense is awarded a first down at the defensive team's one (1) yard line.
- Article 6 A down shall be ended and the ball declared dead when the flag is cleanly removed from the ball-carrier's belt. The de-flagger should immediately hold the flag above his head at the spot where the capture occurred.
- Article 7 Should the ball-carrier lose a flag, the ball is returned to that spot.
- Article 8 A defensive player may intercept any pass providing his two (2) flags are attached to his belt. If the player doesn't have both flags, the play is dead where the ball was intercepted.

### **SECTION II. BALL-CARRIER MANEUVERS**

- Article 1 In protecting his flags, the ball-carrier must adhere to the following rules:
- The ball-carrier may not use a stiff-arm on the defensive player. This is a five (5) yard penalty from spot of the foul.

- The ball-carrier must give the defense a fair chance to take the flag. Any attempt by the ball-carrier to knock the hands of the defense away from the flag is a foul and shall draw a five (5) yard penalty from the spot of the foul.
- The ball-carrier must keep his hands and arms above the flag to avoid penalty.

In scoring, the ball-carrier must have both flags attached to belt when crossing the goal line.

Article 2 HURDLING - While trying to advance the ball, the ball-carrier must "KEEP HIS FEET". Attempts to avoid an opponent by jumping or diving over or into him shall be a violation. The penalty is five (5) yards from the spot of the foul.

### **SECTION III. BLOCKING**

Article 1 Blocking shall be done by use of the arms and body without the use of the hands. The blocking must be construed to be checking (screening) with the body in an upright position. No part of the blocker's body, except his feet, shall be in contact with the ground throughout the block. There shall be no "rolling blocks".

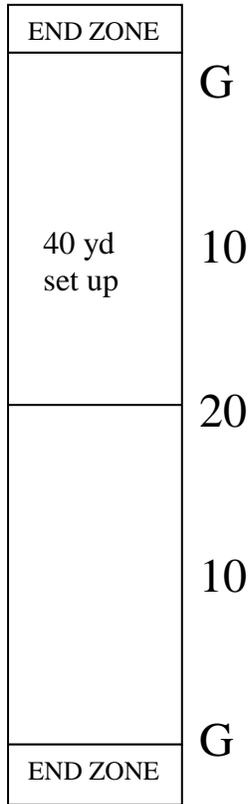
Article 2 Defensive players are restricted in the use of their hands to the torso and shoulders of offensive blockers.

Article 3 Hands shall remain down and blocking shall consist of shoulder or brush blocking. Line blocker may use the arm pit tactic. Illegal blocking will result in a five (5) yard penalty. Butting or the use of the point of the elbow shall result in a five (5) yard penalty.

Article 4 Blocking or pushing a ball-carrier out-of-bounds to stop his progress is a foul with an automatic first (1st) down at the one (1) yard line. The player is ejected. **THE BALL CARRIERS PROGRESS CAN BE STOPPED ONLY BY DE-FLAGGING HIM.**

Article 5 Knee blocking or tripping used in slowing down a ball-carrier for the purpose of capturing his flags shall be a foul with a ten (10) yard penalty.

NOTE: If a defensive player is guilty of any of the above stated penalties on 5th down, the offensive team has the option to replay the down and take the penalty from the point of the foul or decline the penalty.



\*5 yd End Zones

**40 yard field**