



# **YOUTH INDOOR FLAG FOOTBALL**

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES AND RULEBOOK Ages 7-12**

**9568 S. UNIVERSITY BLVD  
HIGHLANDS RANCH, CO 80126**

**[www.hrcaonline.org](http://www.hrcaonline.org)**

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Patrick Gojan, Sports Programs Supervisor – [Patrick.Gojan@hrcaonline.org](mailto:Patrick.Gojan@hrcaonline.org) or (303) 471-8869  
Brooke Ballard, Sports Coordinator- [Brooke.Ballard@hrcaonline.org](mailto:Brooke.Ballard@hrcaonline.org) or (303) 471-8838  
Jacob Armbrust, Sports Programmer – [Jacob.armbrust@hrcaonline.org](mailto:Jacob.armbrust@hrcaonline.org) or (303) 471-7039

## (I) GAME PLAY

- 1.) A coin toss called by the away team will determine first possession.
- 2.) The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the other team takes over on offense at their 5-yard line.
- 3.) If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- 4.) All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- 5.) There is no blocking, kick-offs, or tackling allowed in the HRCA Youth Indoor Flag Football League.

## (II) PLAYERS/GAME SCHEDULES

- 1.) Format will be five (5) players versus five (5) players.
- 2.) Teams must field a minimum of five (5) players at all times.
- 3.) **All players must receive equal playing time.** If a player is being penalized with game time loss the coach MUST contact the players' parents BEFORE THE GAME DATE. The official scorekeeper and opposing coach must be contacted on GAME DATE before the game begins. Failure to notify the opposing coach and scorekeepers table may result in a forfeiture of that game.
- 4.) Reasons for limiting the playing time of a player include the following:
  - a. No show and no call for missing practices or games.
  - b. Behavior problems at practices or games.
  - c. Player is sick, injured or coming off an injury.
- 5.) Game schedules will be emailed to coaches and posted online at <http://teamsideline.com/sites/hrcaonline/schedules>.

## (III) COACH, SPECTATOR AND PLAYER CONDUCT

- 1.) Coaches are responsible to see that their team's players and parents understand the rules and expected parent and player conduct.
  - a. It is the coach's responsibility to control their players and spectators before, during and after games. No spectators are allowed on the field or team bench during play. Teams may be penalized for violation.
  - b. The Head Coach may be on the field during the game **for the 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade divisions only**. 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade must coach from the bench.
    - i. Only up to two (2) coaches are allowed on the bench at any given time.
  - c. Coaches are responsible for the enforcement of ejected player's suspensions. Suspended coaches and spectators are not allowed to watch games for the duration of their suspension. Coaches and spectators who violate this rule may be suspended for an unspecified duration.
  - d. Coaches, spectators, and players are expected to support league officials and understand that officiating is not an easy task. Officials are guaranteed to make errors just as everyone else does in the course of a game.
  - e. Coaches, spectators, and players are expected to follow the facility guidelines. No food or drink is permitted on the turf area. Players may ONLY have closed capped drinks.

**Zero Tolerance Statement:** HRCA has a zero-tolerance policy for coach, player and spectator misconduct. All coaches, players, and spectators are expected to support league staff and officials by demonstrating good sportsmanship at all times. Positive communication is expected from all spectators and coaches. Verbal and physical abuse will not be tolerated. Any infractions of this policy may be grounds for a determined suspension period or expulsion from future HRCA league participation. Any actions or behavior that results in a violation of the Code of Conduct policy may result in an immediate suspension from any active program or leagues you are playing in with no refund and any future HRCA program or league within one year from the date of your suspension.

### **(III) TIMING/OVERTIME**

- 1.) Games consist of 2 (two) – 20 (twenty) minute running halves. There will be a 3 (three) – minute halftime.
  - a. Clock will stop in the last 2 (two) minutes on deadball if the score is within 8 (eight) points.
- 2.) If the score is tied at the end of regulation, teams move directly into overtime. Overtime will consist of each team running 4 plays from 12-yard line going in. No first downs. If first team scores, extra point attempt will be run. Second team can attempt to tie or win. If after 4 plays both teams fail to score or score is tied, game ends in tie.
  - a. For playoffs, games cannot end in a tie. The following will be followed for playoff scenarios:
    - i. First overtime consists of each team running 4 plays from the 12-yard line. No first downs. If first team scores, extra point attempt will be run. Second team can attempt to tie or win.
    - ii. Second overtime consists of same format as first overtime. If neither team scores, whichever team advanced the farthest is determined the winner.
- 3.) Each time the ball is spotted a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before delay-of-game penalty is enforced. Delay-of-game penalty will result in the loss of down.
- 4.) Each team has two 60-second time outs per half.
- 5.) Officials/League Supervisor can stop the clock at their discretion.

### **(IV) SCORING**

- Touchdown: 6 Points
- Extra Point: 1 Point (Played from the 5-yard line)  
2 Points (Played from the 12 “10” -yard line)
- Safety: 2 Points

### **(V) RUNNING**

- 1.) The quarterback cannot run with the ball after receiving the direct snap from the center. (No quarterback sneaks allowed).
- 2.) Hand-offs, pitches, and laterals (multiple) are allowed behind the line of scrimmage.
- 3.) “NO-RUN ZONES” are located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on both sides of mid-field. The offensive team must PASS if the ball is spotted inside a “No-Run Zones.”
  - a. EXAMPLE 1: If an offensive team is at their own 10 yd line and a play develops, whether it is a run or a pass, they do not need to stop at the “No-Running-Zone” at midfield or before the end zone if flags are not

pulled. A team could score a touchdown from their own 10 yd line, by running the length of the field if flags are not pulled.

- b. EXAMPLE 2: Once a team secures a first down at mid-field, the mid-field “No-Running-Zone” does not apply for the rest of that team’s possession until they reach the zone before the end zone.

\*\*When the offensive team is in a No-Run-Zone, passes must be forward, and the forward pass must be caught beyond the line of scrimmage. In the no-run zone, plays with laterals and pitches to players behind the line of scrimmage will not be considered running plays until the player with the ball proceeds beyond the line of scrimmage without completing a forward pass attempt.\*\*

- 4.) The player who takes the handoff or pitch can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- 5.) Once the ball has been handed off or pitched, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- 6.) Spinning is allowed by the ball carrier. NO diving and NO hurdling by either the offense or defense. Players can leave their feet to catch a pass or make an interception.
  - a. EXAMPLE: No diving into End Zone and no diving or jumping to pull the opposing flags off.
- 7.) The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s front foot is when the flag is pulled out, not where the ball is located.

#### **(VI) RECEIVING**

- 1.) All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or pitched behind the line of scrimmage.)
- 2.) Shovel passes are allowed and can be made behind or beyond the line of scrimmage as long as the passer has not crossed the line of scrimmage.
- 3.) The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within seven seconds, play is dead, and loss of down. Once the ball is handed off or pitched, the seven-second rule is no longer in effect.
- 4.) Interceptions are the only change of possession that does not start play over at the 5-yard line. Once intercepted the player may advance until his/her flag is pulled. That team will then start their drive from that spot.
- 5.) Only one forward pass is allowed per down.
- 6.) In the No-Run-Zone forward passes must be completed past the line of scrimmage.
- 7.) In the instance of simultaneous possession by both offense and defense, possession will be awarded to the offensive player.

#### **(VII) DEAD BALL**

- 1.) The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to the side, to start play. NO center sneaks allowed.
- 2.) Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
  - a. The ball carrier’s flag is pulled
    - i. If ball carrier’s flag falls off in the course of play without being pulled, the ball will still be **LIVE** and player must be tagged.
  - b. The ball carrier steps out of bounds
  - c. A touchdown or safety is scored

d. The ball carrier's knee hits the ground

NOTE: There are NO fumbles. The ball is spotted where the front foot of the ballcarrier was at the time of losing the ball.

- If the ball is fumbled in the end zone by the offense, the play results in a safety; the defense is awarded 2 points and possession of the ball at their own 5-yard line. This excludes a muffed snap in the endzone- The result of this play will be spotted at the one-yard line and loss of down.
- 3.) In the case of an inadvertent whistle the offense has the choice of the two following options:
- a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed; or
  - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage

### **(VIII) RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK**

- 1.) 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 defensive players may rush the quarterback. Players rushing the quarterback may leave their feet to deflect the ball but cannot contact the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- 2.) Once the ball is handed off or pitched, the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go beyond the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the official, will designate the seven yards from the line of scrimmage.
- 3.) If a player jumps in front of the seven-yard marker before the ball is snapped and they want to rush, they can "Reset the Rush" by stepping back behind the seven-yard mark and then proceed to rush forward.

### **(IX) BLOCKING**

- 1.) Blocking is any purposeful attempt by an offensive player to impede a defensive player from pulling the flag of the ball carrier. Blocking of ANY KIND is illegal in our league with the SOLE EXCEPTION of the center/runningback shadow blocking to protect the quarterback. This includes screen blocking, run blocking and ESPECIALLY blocking downfield. Once a player catches a pass all other players may not run in between the ball-carrier and the defense, or a Downfield Blocking penalty will be called from the spot of the foul.
- 2.) Shadow Blocking is ILLEGAL in our league with the exception of the center/runningback protecting the QB from the rush. In order to shadow block arms must be pinned to the blocker's body (arms across the chest or flat to the side) and they may only mirror the rusher's movement and cannot engage physically with them in any way.

### **(XI) SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING**

- 1.) If the league supervisor or official witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, intentionally running another player into the boards, or any other unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, and the player may be ejected from the game. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
- 2.) Trash talking will not be allowed. Officials and League Supervisors have the right to determine offensive language. Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators. If trash talking occurs, the

official will give one warning. If it continues, the player, players, coach, or spectator will be ejected from the game.

## (XII) PENALTIES

1.) The Official will call the penalties.

### a. DEFENSIVE PENALTIES

- i. Off-sides – 5 yards and replay the down from previous spot
- ii. Interference – automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down from spot of foul – choice of penalty or result of play.
- iii. Illegal Contact (holding, blocking, etc) – 5 yards from spot of foul – choice of penalty or result of play.
- iv. Illegal Flag Pull (before player has the ball) – 5 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down from spot of foul – choice of penalty or result of play.
- v. Illegal Rushing (Starting the rush inside the 7-yard marker, contact with the quarterback) – 5 yards from line of scrimmage - choice of penalty or result of play.
- vi. Stripping (Purposely trying to steal the ball or cause a fumble while offense has clear possession) – 5 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down from spot of foul – choice of penalty or result of play.
- vii. Roughing-Pushing a player out of bounds is illegal and will result in a 5-yard penalty from the spot of the foul.
- viii. Roughing the Passer – 5 yards from the previous spot and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down – choice of penalty or result of play.
- ix. Tackling – 5 yards from the spot of the foul and an automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down – choice of penalty or result of play. The player is subject to ejection based upon the discretion of the officials. Refer to section XI for further explanation.

### b. OFFENSIVE PENALTIES

- i. Illegal Motion (more than one person moving, false start, offsides, etc.) – 5 yards from previous spot and replay the down
- ii. Illegal Forward Pass (pass thrown once player is beyond the line of scrimmage) – 5 yards from previous spot and loss of down
- iii. Offensive Pass Interference (illegal pick play, pushing off defender, etc) – 5 yards from previous spot and replay the down
- iv. Flag Guarding – 5 yards from spot of foul and loss of down
- v. Delay of Game – 5 yards from previous spot and replay the down
- vi. Offensive blocking – 5 yards from previous spot and replay the down
- vii. Downfield Blocking – 5 yards from spot of the foul
- viii. Impeding the Rusher – 5 yards from the spot of foul and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down – choice of penalty or result of play.
- ix. Diving into the End Zone – 5 yards (no touchdown) from spot and loss of down
- x. Illegal run in no run zone results in replacing ball and loss of down

### c. OTHER PENALTIES

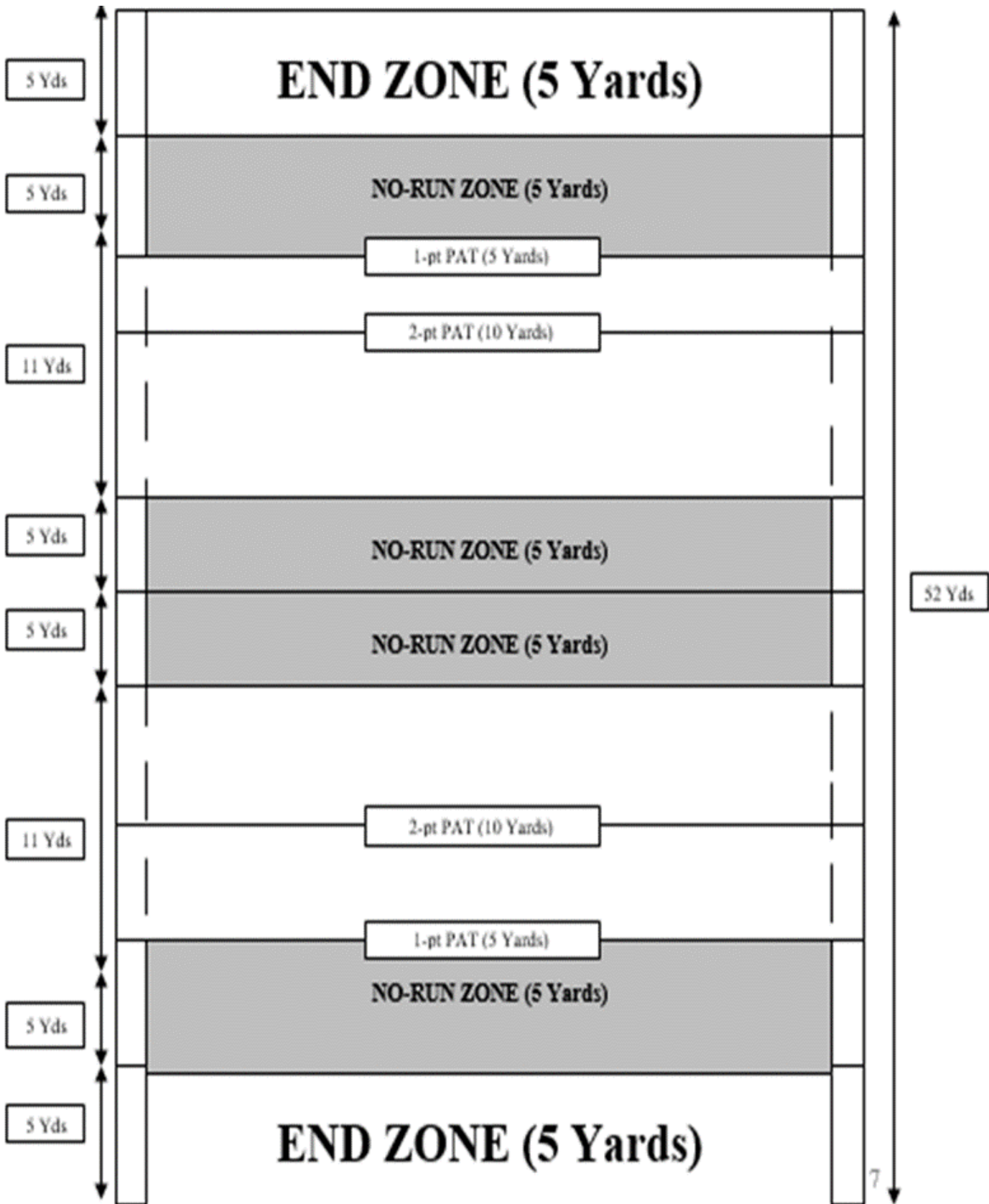
- i. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yards from previous spot and loss of down. Any player/coach/spectator who receives multiple

penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct will be ejected from the game and subject to suspension from the league.

- 2.) Officials determine incidental contact that may result from the normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- 3.) Only the approved head coach may ask the official questions about the rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- 4.) Games cannot end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.

### **(XIII) ATTIRE**

- 1.) All teams must wear uniform shirts (same color; same jersey style). Jerseys that meet these criteria are provided by the HRCA Sports Department and are included in your registration fees. Dark, solid-colored shorts without pockets are strongly recommended for safety reasons. No red or yellow shorts as they will match the flag colors. At the start of each play, all players must have shirts tucked into pants, or shirts must terminate one inch above the flag football belt line.
- 2.) Mouth guards are REQUIRED. It has been decided in the safety of players that mouth guards are a must.
- 3.) Approved head gear such as a rugby style or concussion type helmet is allowed. (No hard plastics)
- 4.) Athletic shoes/tennis shoes will be the recommended footwear. Cleats don't really function as they're designed on our indoor turf field.
- 5.) Junior sized footballs will be used for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade, Pee Wee sized footballs will be used for the 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> age group. Official Youth size for 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>.
- 6.) Jewelry is not allowed in any form except for a religious medallion taped to the chest or a medical alert bracelet.



Westridge Recreation Center Turf Field Dimensions - Youth Flag Football