**HANOVER AREA YMCA**

**NFL Flag Football RULES**

# GAMEPLAY

* Two 24-minute halves & running clocks (clock only stops during change of possession transition)
* 7 V 7 for all divisions. Each team has one timeout per half.
* Team gets 4 downs to cross mid-field and 4 downs to score a touchdown. On 4th down the team has the option to do the following:
  + Go for it. If the attempt fails, the ball is turned over to the opposing team at that spot.

OR

* + A team can choose to punt which means the other team takes it at the start line on opposite end of field.

# LIVE/DEAD BALL

* The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the coach/official whistles the ball dead.
* Neutral Zone & Line of Scrimmage – no players may enter the neutral prior to snap. All offensive players must start from behind line of scrimmage and cannot be moving prior to snap.
* A player who gains possession in the air is considered inbounds as long as one foot comes in bounds.
* Any official/coach can blow the play dead.
* A play is blown “dead” when:
  + A ball hits the ground
  + If the ball hits the ground because of a bad snap the ball is placed where it hit the ground
  + The ball-carrier flag is pulled o The ball-carrier steps out of bounds o A Touchdown, PAT, Safety is scored o A ball-carrier knee or arm hits the ground o The ball-carriers flag falls off
  + The receiver catches the ball with one or no flags or Inadvertent whistle (If this happens two options are available)  
    o Replay down or down is consumed, and ball is placed where it is at time of whistle.

# FORMATIONS

* Offenses must have a minimum of three players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
* One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage. No motion is allowed toward the line of scrimmage.

# RUNNING

* The ball is spotted where the runner’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball.
* The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
* Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind or to the side of the offensive player but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
* Absolutely NO laterals of any kind.
* **No-run Zones are located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations**. (Grades 4 and up)
* Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
* Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
* **Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball**. Spinning is allowed.
* **No blocking or “screening” is allowed at any time. Once the ball is handed off or caught all offensive players must stay still.**

# PASSING

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

# RECEIVING

* All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
* Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage, and no motion is permitted toward the line of scrimmage
* A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
* In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
* Interceptions MAY be returned. After an interception occurs, the defensive team becomes the offensive team and vice versa. They then must follow the same rules that the offense has and that the defense has.

# RUSHING THE PASSER

* Players rushing the passer and must be a minimum of seven yards straight behind the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.
* Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
* Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then contacting the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.
* **The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way**. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. If the “path or line” is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense’s responsibility to avoid the rusher.
* A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterback’s feet are when flag is pulled. Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.  Quarterbacks can run ONLY if blitzed.

# PENALTIES

* FLAG GAURDING: If a player prevents flag from being pulled. The play is over, and ball starts from where the flag guarding occurred.
* PASS INTERFERENCE: Defender purposely prevents offensive player from receiving the ball. The offensive team gets placement of ball where foul occurred and replay down.

# SPORTSMANSHIP

Sanctions are given to players for rude or consistent misconduct, including actions contrary to good manners or expressing contempt, defamatory or insulting words or gestures, physical attack or intended aggression.