

NMYAFL



NFL FLAG LEAGUE & PLAYING RULES

AMENDED FEBRUARY 2026

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[NMYAFL Updated NFL Flag League Rules 2026](#)

1. General Rules

- 1.1. The game should be played between 2 teams of 5 players each. Five players are required to avoid a forfeit.
- 1.2. The game shall be played under the supervision of 1 to 2 officials.
- 1.3. Each team is allowed (3) coaches on the sideline including the coach on the field for 6U and 8U divisions.
- 1.4. One Coach from Each team will be allowed on the field during play for 6U and 8U age groups.
- 1.5. A speaking captain must be selected to make all decisions and shall be the only one who addresses the officials.
- 1.6. Team representatives, including players, substitutes, replaced players, coaches, trainers, and other persons affiliated with the team are subject to the rules of the game, and shall be governed by decisions of officials assigned to the game.
2. Defensive coach on the field must be 10 yards behind the deepest defensive player.
3. Coach must declare a punt or a play at time of the play not after the 40 second play clock.
4. (6U Division Only) Penalty for offside will be assessed if the player that goes offside catches the ball.
5. Interception during gameplay is 6 points. Interception during extra points is 2 points if returned for a touchdown.
6. (6u division only) When the offense is lined up inside the 4-yard line the defense can line up 2 yards off the ball instead of 5 yards.
7. Penalty that requires loss of down, on the last play of a drive will be a change of possession.
8. Visiting team will provide the chain gang. The home team will provide the NFL Flag game ball which was given to the team by YAFL. Official size for each division.
9. Mini size (Red) - 8.5" long for 6U COED or Girls Flag Age Group
10. Pee wee (Blue) - 9.75" long for 8U COED or 8U and 10U Girls Flag Age Groups ONLY
11. Junior (Brown) - 10.5" long 10U, 12U and 14U COED Flag Age Groups
12. Timing- 48-minute continuous clock. Two 24-minute halves. 2-minute halftime.
13. NFHS improperly equipped rule states that players will be removed from the game for at least one down, unless the improper equipment is directly attributable to a foul by the opponent.
14. Flag coaches are required to have a roster readily available with photos of kids for roster and age verification, if an illegal player comes into question.
15. Players may wear sunglasses but must be secured at all times while on the field.
16. Flag roster size- Minimum of 8 and max of 12.
17. *YAFL Rules will serve as the official rules when they differ from NFL Flag rules.
18. Once QB is in position all coaching must stop by the coach on the field
19. 25 yard wide and 70 yard long field 10 yard endzone. 5 yard mark at endzone and 10 yard mark at endzone for 2 point conversion.
20. Offensive players are not allowed to run with or after the ball carrier.
21. Ball must go past the line of scrimmage and have a receiver in the area, to avoid an intentional grounding penalty.
22. Up to 3 players may rush the QB. The rushers must identify themselves by raising a hand before the snap lined up 7 yards from the LOS.

23. Offensive or confrontational language by athletes will receive an immediate unsportsmanlike penalty up to and including ejection from the game.

24. Game and Player Equipment (Legal)

24.1. Legal Equipment

- 24.1.1. Jerseys – Home Team Players will wear the lighter color Jersey and Visiting Team Players will wear the dark color jerseys.
- 24.1.2. Pants / Shorts - Each player must wear pants or shorts without pockets, belt(s), belt loop(s), or exposed drawstrings. The pants or shorts must be a different color than the flags (No Green or Yellow). Shorts must be a solid color with no stripes down the sides.
- 24.1.3. Flag belt - Must use NFL Flags issued by YAFL. Each player must wear a one-piece belt at the waistline with two flags permanently attached, one flag on each side. Players are responsible for making sure flags are on the side prior to snap. Could result in replacement of player per new NFHS improperly equipped rule.
- 24.1.4. Mouthpiece - Each player must wear a mouthpiece the entire time the ball is in play. Could result in replacement of player per new NFHS improperly equipped rule.
- 24.1.5. Gloves - Players may wear gloves which must consist of a soft, pliable and nonabrasive material
- 24.1.6. Headwear – Players are not permitted to wear bandanas. Players may wear knit stocking caps, or elastic headbands. Hats may not have a bill.
- 24.1.7. Shoes – Shoes with cleats must be made of soft pliable plastic or rubber. No exposed metal cleats are permitted. (See illegal player equipment)

24.2. Illegal Equipment

- 24.2.1. A player wearing illegal equipment shall not be permitted to play. This applies to any equipment, which, in the opinion of the Referee, is dangerous or confusing. Types of equipment or substances which shall always be declared illegal include:
 - 24.2.2. Headgear containing any hard, unyielding, or stiff material, including billed hats.
 - 24.2.3. Jewelry is not allowed to be worn during game play.
 - 24.2.4. Pads or braces worn above the waist.
 - 24.2.5. Shoes with metal and ceramic cleats. Any team found wearing illegal equipment will be penalized 15 yards, and the second warning results in a forfeit.
 - 24.2.6. Shirts or jerseys, which do not remain, tucked in. Any hood on a coat, sweatshirt, or shirt, which does not remain tucked in.
 - 24.2.7. Pants or shorts with any belt(s), belt loop(s), pocket(s) or exposed drawstring(s).
 - 24.2.8. Leg and knee braces made of hard, unyielding material, unless covered on both sides and all edges overlapped, and any other hard substance is covered with at least 1/2 inch of closed cell slow recovery rubber or other material of similar thickness and physical properties.

24.3. An official time out shall be declared to permit prompt repair of equipment, which becomes illegal or defective through use (except for illegal shoes).

25. Practice Times and Restrictions

25.1. The first week practice restrictions are as follows:

- 25.1.1. (8) Hours of practice are allowed the first week.
- 25.1.2. Each practice of the first week must be no longer than 2 hours in length

25.2. The second week practice through the championships restrictions are as follows:

- 25.2.1. (4) hours of practice each week are allowed.
- 25.2.2. Each practice must be no longer than 2 hours in length
- 25.2.3. (3) days of practice max.
- 25.2.4. Coach may elect to add 2 additional hours of practice during the playoffs and championship weeks.

26. Playing Time

- 26.1. The NMYAFL 6 play rule per half is in effect for all NFL Flag Leagues

27. Starting the Game

- 27.1. Each team will use its own ball during offensive possessions.
- 27.1.1.1. 6U Division will use the Red Mini ball
 - 27.1.1.2. 8U Division will use the Blue Pee Wee ball
 - 27.1.1.3. 10U COED Division will use the Brown Junior ball
 - 27.1.1.4. 10U Girls Division will use the Blue Pee Wee ball
 - 27.1.1.5. 12U Division will use the Brown Junior ball
 - 27.1.1.6. 14U Division will use the Brown Junior ball

28. NFHS and Special Rules

- 28.1. For levels 8U and below, one coach is allowed on the field for the offensive team.

29. Team Financial Solicitations and Management

- 29.1. Solicitations
- 29.1.1. The League does not wish to cause hardship or embarrassment to any parent/guardian or player. The League also does not want to keep any individual from participating in the League as a result of unnecessary expenses such as colored helmets, game jerseys, wind breakers, socks, water bottles, helmet decals, special practice jerseys, etc. As such, except as provided herein—The MAXIMUM contribution a team is permitted to request is **\$20.00 per flag participant** and \$35.00 per cheer participant total value per child in any combination of cash, services and/or products for any Fall Season. Parents should contact NMYAFL if they are required to contribute in excess of this amount. A head coach and/or his or her staff may ask players and/or parents of players to volunteer to help raise additional funds for his or her team. Asking for additional funds above and beyond the maximum requested contribution is to be done strictly on a volunteer basis, and at no time shall it be a requirement to raise additional funds to be able to participate on any team.
 - 29.1.2. Notwithstanding the above, the League authorizes individual pictures (in addition to the Mandatory League pictures), treats, banquet expenses, and trophies, but such contributions shall be considered voluntary. No child may be excluded from any gifts the team decides to purchase. Reason and care are to be used in determining size, cost, and extravagance of such awards.
 - 29.1.3. Team fundraising is defined as solicitation of funds or engaging in profit making activities to obtain funding or benefits for all members of your team including coaches. Team fundraising may begin once the head coach is awarded/approved (by the BOD) a team and a roster of at least 16 athletes and or more. If an athlete is removed from the roster and participated in team fundraising activities, if she or he is placed on another team roster, it will be the responsibility of the head coach on the departing team to evenly disburse the correct amount of fundraising dollars collected by the team to the departing athlete who participated in such activities. Any head coach found in violation of said rule may be investigated by the CSC and disciplinary action will be taken. All fundraising activities must have strict adult supervision to provide for the safety of all players and cheerleaders. Helmet drives are strictly prohibited. Helmet drives are defined as having players, cheerleaders or parents use any helmet, container or like device to ask for donations in vehicular traffic, sidewalks, shopping center parking lots, or any similar area. No fundraising is allowed that would cast a poor image on NMYAFL. The League will determine if such fundraising is in poor taste and will be the final judge. Advertising for car washes or other fundraising activity in the median of any street is strictly prohibited. Fundraising which promotes alcohol, tobacco, gaming, firearms, political endorsements, controversial products or services will not be permitted. APS promotes similar language, and use of names and logos requires sensitivity to the issues.

29.1.4. Soliciting for team sponsorship is defined as a head coach soliciting local businesses, colleagues, friends, family, etc. for sponsorship money for his/her team. A head coach may begin soliciting sponsors after he/she has been awarded their team by the CSC. A head coach may utilize his/her staff (assistant coaches, team managers, team moms, team dads) in assisting him/her in soliciting sponsorship. At no time shall any player/cheerleader participate or be present while the head coach or his/her staff is soliciting for sponsors. Including any player/cheerleader that is a child of the head coach or his/her staff. NMYAFL has no direct or indirect affiliation or involvement with its head coaches or his/her staff when it comes to soliciting sponsors. NMYAFL does recommend its coaches to use the utmost respect and honesty when it comes to matters of soliciting for sponsors so as not to cast a poor image on themselves, their team or NMYAFL.

Team Financial Management.

- 7.2.7 Each team shall have a separate checking account for the team with the team's name on the account. The account shall be used for all team purchases for both football and cheerleading, but the Head Cheer coach has the option of opening a separate account. Two signatures shall be required on the checking account, and one signature shall be the head coach, and the other signature shall be a parent or guardian of a team member who shall not be related by marriage or family to the head coach.
- 7.2.8 All financial records shall be available for inspection at any time by any team parent upon request. Senior and/or Varsity teams must close their checking accounts and equally distribute all remaining funds to the team. In cases where the Senior/Varsity Head Coach intends to continue coaching, the account may remain open with the minimum amount required by the bank.
- 7.2.9 Bank statements and receipts must be made available within 48 hours upon request.
- 7.2.10 Financial statements must be made available to the parents of your team upon request. Financial statements will show all money raised and money paid out when and to whom. Due care will be exercised. Coaches, failure to voluntarily provide your financial statement is subject to immediate suspension by CSC.

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