



Flag Football Manual

General Information

All participants are responsible for the information contained in this manual.

Elastic Clause: The League Manager shall have complete charge of the Youth Flag Football League. Any and all situations not specifically covered by these rules shall be acted upon by the League Manager, and all actions by the League Manager will be FINAL.

If there are any further questions or ideas regarding the Youth Flag Football League, please contact the league manager.

Amendments

1. This manual or any section thereof, may be amended by the Town of Wellington Parks and Recreation through evaluation by, and with the feedback from, coaches, referees, etcetera, as deemed necessary.
2. If you have questions, ideas, or need information on the Youth Flag Football League, please call our office at (970) 568-7410 Monday through Thursday 7:30 AM – 5:00 PM and Friday 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM.



Purpose

The purpose of the league run by Wellington Parks and Recreation is to provide kids with the opportunity for learning and fun in a safe environment. Friendly competition and sportsmanship will be emphasized. Our main goal is for all participants (players, coaches, parents, etc.) to have fun while building athletics, team, and social skills.

1. Field, Players, and Equipment

- a. The Field:
 - i. Size: Sixty (60) yards (goal to goal) x forty (40) yards wide, ten (10) yard end zones. The playing field will be divided into four equal zones.
- b. The Players:
 - i. No team may play without a certified coach present on the playing field.
 - ii. All ages play 5v5. If the opposing team has fewer than five players, they may borrow players from the other team to make the sides equal.
 - iii. Each player will have equal playing time if they attend practices.
 - iv. Each player must start at least half of the games.
 - v. Each player will play both offense and defense.
 - vi. Any number of substitutions may enter the game for either team when the ball is dead.
 - vii. Players must be on the Parks and Recreation official roster and may not participate if they have not registered for the sport through the Parks and Recreation department/website.
- c. The Equipment:
 - i. The ball is a pee-wee size ball for 7U and 9U and junior size for 12U, provided by Wellington Parks and Recreation.
 - ii. All participants wear official flag belts provided by Wellington Parks and Recreation. Flags are worn on the sides and in a manner that keeps it clear of any obstructions. **Shirts must be tucked in and not hanging over the flags.** Officials may whistle a ball carrier down immediately for deliberately placing flags in a non-legal position. If it is found that players have tied their flags, the ball will be immediately turned over to the opposing team, ten (10) yards from the end zone of the team who committed the infraction.



iii. Player's attire

1. Athletic shoes (no metal spikes).
2. Protective mouthpieces are optional but highly recommended.
3. Jewelry is not allowed. Exceptions will be made for medical ID bracelets and religious medals which must be taped and approved by the referee or official.
 - a. Taping over any other jewelry is not permitted.
4. Sunglasses are not allowed unless they are prescription.
5. Each player is required to wear a Wellington Parks and Recreation blue and white reversible jersey (overtop of any other clothing) to participate in games. White will be the home team and blue will be the away team.
6. Headwear must be soft and without any hard brims (**no helmets/ball caps**, etc.)

iv. **Hoods on coats or other apparel must be tucked in and not hang out.**

- v. Pads and safety equipment or attire deemed by the official to be unsafe are illegal.

2. **The Game**

a. Timing:

- i. The game consists of two halves, each twenty (25) minutes in length. Half time shall be five (5) minutes in length.
- ii. Each team is allowed two (2) time-outs per half. Each time-out will be one (1) minute in length.
- iii. Time runs continuously for each half except for legal time outs or on field injuries. If no official is present, the home team shall designate a non-coach to be the official timekeeper. Approximately two (2) minutes before the end of each half, the official timekeeper calls out a two-minute warning.
- iv. Game clock starts when one of the following occurs:
 1. Ball is hiked to start the game.
 2. Ball is hiked following a time-out.
 3. Ball is hiked following an on-field injury.
 4. At the direction of the official after any stoppage of time.
 5. If time for any period expires during a down, play shall continue until the end of the down.



b. Scoring:

- i. A touchdown counts as six (6) points. A touchdown shall be scored when, in an upright position, the ball carriers feet break the plane of the goal line.
- ii. A point after the touchdown attempt (PAT) is awarded after a touchdown is scored. The defensive team cannot score on a PAT attempt. The PAT attempt shall consist of one (1) offensive play from the following options.
 1. Five-yard (5) line for a 1-point conversion (pass only).
 2. Twelve-yard (12) line for a 2-point conversion (run or pass).
- iii. Safety counts as two (2) points.
 1. A safety is scored when the ball legally in possession of a player becomes dead behind their own goal line, provided the impetus which sent the ball into the end zone was given by a member of their own team. Points are awarded to the opposing team, and the team awarded points receives the ball on their ten (10) yard line.
- iv. If at any point a team is up by twenty-eight (28) points or more, the score will no longer be kept but play will continue until the regular time is over.
 1. If the team up by twenty-eight (28) points scores again, no extra point attempts will be awarded. The opposing team is awarded the ball after the touchdown.

****The Town does not keep score, but officials do for game purposes.**

c. Start of the game:

- i. A coin toss will determine which team will have their choice of starting with the ball or deferring to start the second half with the ball. The team who did not win the coin toss chooses the direction. The home (white jersey) team captain shall call the coin toss.
- ii. Teams start with the ball on their own five (5) yard line.

d. Touchback:

- i. An interception downed in the end zone comes out to the five (5) yard line.



e. Regular Play:

- i. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its five (5) yard line and has 4 downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has 4 downs to score a touchdown.
- ii. If the offense declares a punt on 4th down, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its own five (5) yard line.
 1. If the offensive team decides to attempt the 4th down try, and fails, the opposing team will take over at the spot of the ball.
- iii. Bean Bag markers will be utilized to mark the line of scrimmage and a seven (7) yard encroachment zone. (Marked by an official).
- iv. Teams shall trade end zones defended after halftime break.
- v. Quarterback is defined as a player, different from the snapper, receiving the ball from the player snapping the ball.
- vi. Only five players per team are allowed on the field during a play.

f. Blocking:

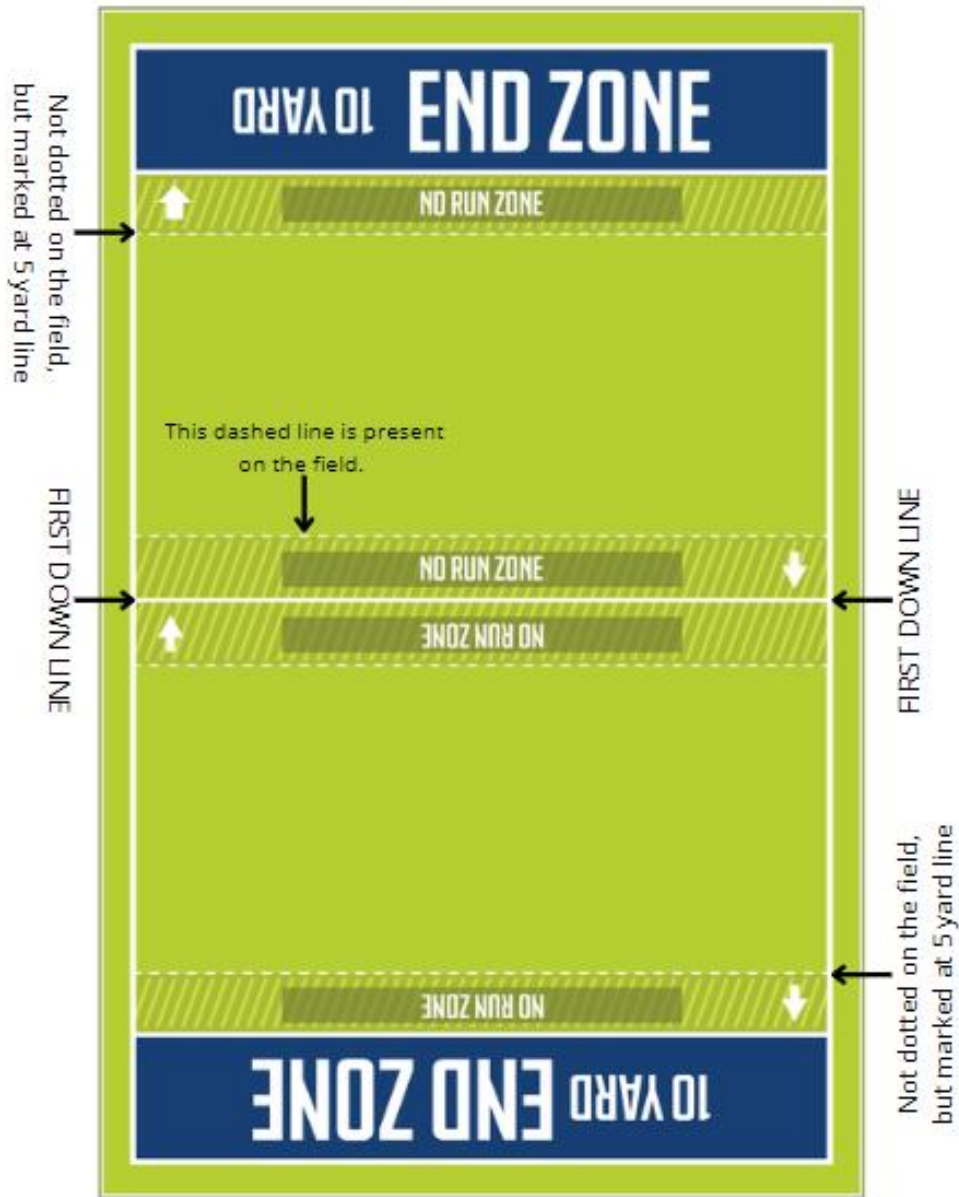
- i. All blocking is screen blocking and must take place without contact. Screening principles in basketball will apply to screen blocking. No moving screen blocks are allowed.
- ii. **Downfield blocking is illegal.** Any offensive player who continues running AND impedes the progress of a defensive player who is attempting to pull the ball carrier's flag will be called for illegal blocking.

g. No Running Zones: In the no run zone, the center must give a direct snap to the quarterback, and there must be a direct pass beyond the line of scrimmage to advance the ball.

- i. "No Running Zones," located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power running situations.
- ii. All plays from within the no running zone must be a direct pass to advance the ball. No direct hand-offs, pitches, lateral or backward passes are allowed in the no running zone.

**Please refer to the diagram below

Flag Football



- Blitz behind 7 yard line
- Once you pass the first down line you can run



h. Running:

- i. The quarterback cannot run the ball.
- ii. Direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- iii. Only one (1) pitch, lateral or backward pass is allowed behind the line of scrimmage. Note: any pitch, lateral or backward pass that hits the ground will be spotted where it hits the ground.
- iv. Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- v. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot dive with the football or hurdle (jump over) opposing players.
- vi. The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
- vii. For a snapper (center) to receive a handoff, they must turn one hundred-eighty (180) degrees and face their own end zone before the quarterback can hand them the ball.
- viii. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage, provided the hand-off occurred outside the "no running zone".

i. Passing/Receiving:

- i. All players are eligible to receive passes including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage.
- ii. Shovel passes (direct pass in front of the quarterback) are allowed.
- iii. Forward passes do not have to cross the line of scrimmage.

j. Dead Balls:

- i. Balls must be snapped between the legs, not off to the side, to start the play.
- ii. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- iii. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 1. Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 2. Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 3. Touchdown or safety is scored.
 4. Ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
 5. Ball carrier's flag falls off.
 6. Ball hits the ground on a fumble.
 - a. Note: There are no fumbles (players cannot recover the ball if dropped); when a ball hits the ground on a fumble, the ball is spotted where it hits the ground.



- k. Interceptions:
 - i. The defensive team, following an interception may make a return.
 - ii. An interception during an attempted extra point is a dead ball.
- l. Rushing the Quarterback:
 - i. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven (7) yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any players who cross the rush line before the ball is snapped is considered offsides.
 - ii. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
 - iii. Once the ball is handed off, the seven (7) yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven (7) yards from the line of scrimmage.
- m. Sportsmanship / Roughing:
 - i. If the field supervisor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, and the player will be ejected from the game. Foul play will not be tolerated.
- n. Penalties:
 - i. Defense:
 - 1. Offside – five (5) yards and automatic 1st down.
 - 2. Interference – ten (10) yards, automatic 1st down.
 - 3. Illegal contact (holding, blocking, contact on the ball carrier, etc.) – ten (10) yards, automatic 1st down.
 - 4. Illegal flag pull (before receiver has the ball) – ten (10) yards from the spot of the foul, automatic 1st down.
 - 5. Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside seven (7) yard marker) – five (5) yards, automatic 1st down.



ii. Offense:

1. Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) – five (5) yards, loss of down.
2. Illegal forward pass (forward pass attempted beyond the line of scrimmage) – five (5) yards, loss of down.
3. Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off / away defender) – ten (10) yards, loss of down.
4. Delay of game – five (5) yards, loss of down (clock stops until next snap in 2nd half)
5. Flag guarding – ten (10) yards from spot of the foul and loss of down, this includes tying the flag.
6. Illegal screen block – ten (10) yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down.
7. Illegal Pitch – (more than 1 pitch, lateral or backward pass per play) – five (5) yards, loss of down.

o. Other Regulations:

- i. Referees determine incidental contact which may result from normal run of play.
 - ii. Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
 - iii. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
 - iv. Remember: Each time the ball is spotted a team has thirty (30) seconds to snap the ball.
- p. Coaching: Coaches are encouraged to call plays from the sideline when possible. One (1) coach is allowed on the field to assist players with plays.



Communicable Disease Rule (Blood Rule)

Teams are responsible for supplying their own clothing and first aid supplies.

1. Whenever a player suffers a laceration or wound where bleeding or oozing occurs, the game will be stopped immediately.
2. The player will be removed from the game until the bleeding has stopped and the wound is adequately covered.
3. If a legal substitute is available, he/she will replace the injured player and play will continue.
4. If no substitute is available, the game clock will be stopped for up to five (5) minutes to enable the injured player to dress his/her wound.
5. The player may re-enter the game only with the official's approval. This means bleeding must be stopped and/or wound covered.
6. Any article of clothing that is saturated with blood must be removed and replaced.

Sports Code of Conduct

The Sports Code of Conduct applies to all sports organized by the Town of Wellington Parks and Recreation Department, whether taking place on Town-owned property, or on any other property that the Town has arranged to use.

Definitions:

Town: The Town of Wellington

Coach: The person designated as a team's spokesman. This person may be either a player or non-player.

Field of Play: The part of a court, field, ring or other sports venue that is considered within the boundaries of regulation play of a particular sport.

Site Supervisor: A Town employee in charge of the operation and staff of a scheduled sports game, match, or event, as well as this Code of Conduct.

Coordinator: The Town's Recreation Coordinator or other person as appointed by the Town of Wellington Parks and Recreation Department.

League Manager: The Town's Recreation Manager or other person as appointed by the Town of Wellington Parks and Recreation Department.

Official: A person who the Town has arranged to be present at a sports venue for the purpose of administering the rules of the game, match, or event, as well as this Code of Conduct.

Parent: The legal guardian or other family member responsible for a child who is under the age of eighteen (18) and is participating in a sport sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Participant: Any coach, player, parent, spectator, official or any other person involved in any way with any sport sponsored by the Town of Wellington Parks and Recreation Department.



Participation: Any involvement in a Town of Wellington Parks and Recreation Department sport, including spectating, officiating, playing, coaching, volunteering, or attending a sporting event.

Player: A person who physically participates in a sport or is on the roster of the team or group participating in the sport.

Probation: A period of time during which a person who has previously violated the Sport Code of Conduct may have no further violations.

Parks and Recreation Department: The Town of Wellington Parks and Recreation Department.

Sport: Any Parks and Recreation Department organized activity or event that is listed under the category of “sports” in the most recent catalog of offerings or a new yet to be advertised activity that is run by a recreation staff member who is specifically designated by organizational chart as a member of the sports team.

Spectator: A person who watches a sport for entertainment with no physical involvement.

Sportsmanship: Conduct, such as fairness, respect for one’s opponent and officials, and graciousness in winning or losing, that are appropriate to one participating in a sport.

Sports Venue: An area improved with fencing, buildings, bleachers, goals, turf or other landscaping, lines or other markings or any other facilities intended for use by players, officials, spectators or anyone else participating in a sport. Examples of sports venues include but are not limited to fields, courts, tracks, gymnasiums, field houses, arenas, pools, ice rinks and bowling alleys.

Suspension: Loss of the privilege to participate in any manner in a Parks and Recreation Department sport.

Unsportsmanlike: Exhibiting poor behavior through negative, disruptive or inappropriate actions.

Prohibited Acts:

1. Physically attacking any other participant or any Town staff person. This includes but is not limited to striking, shoving, kicking or otherwise touching or subjecting another person to physical contact in a threatening or alarming manner.
2. Refusing to abide by an official’s decision and/or contest such decision in an unsportsmanlike manner.
3. Using racial slurs, ethnic slurs, sexual slurs, obscene, threatening, or challenging language or gestures.
4. Harassing, insulting, taunting, or unsportsmanlike demonstrations of dissent in any form.
5. Using unnecessary roughness in the play of a game against an opposing player.
6. Throwing or cause to be deposited any object onto the field of play.
7. Violating the Town of Wellington’s open container ordinance, or other state or local alcohol or drug laws, while at a sports venue, or enter the field of play while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.



8. Smoking in/on any sports venue, or while coming off or going on the field of play, or while on the field of play, whether indoors or outdoors.
9. Display other unsportsmanlike conduct before or after games or events, or while at a sports venue during a scheduled activity, game, match or event.

Enforcement:

1. The minimum penalty for smoking is a warning, and the maximum penalty is ejection from the game, or prosecution according to facility policies.
2. Minimum Penalties: Ejection from the current sports activity or event and suspension from the next scheduled game, activity, or event. Any participant who is ejected must leave the sports venue immediately. This means going far enough away, that he or she cannot be seen or heard by any participant within the sports venue. Minimum penalties may be imposed onsite by an official or field supervisor.
3. Medium Penalties: Suspension for up to the remainder of the scheduled season of up to one year, and one or more years on probation. After review of the alleged violation by Parks and Recreation Department staff, medium penalties may be imposed if (1) another infraction has occurred by the individual resulting in a penalty within the past calendar year; (2) the individual violated more than one section of this Code during the current incident; and/or (3) in the judgment of staff, the severity of the infraction justifies penalty beyond the minimum but not to the maximum level. Medium penalties may be imposed in addition to minimum penalties.
4. Maximum Penalties: Suspension for one to five years. Maximum penalties may be imposed if, after review of the alleged violation by Parks and Recreation Department staff, it is determined that the severity of the violation justifies the maximum penalty, based on negative impact to the program, other participants, spectators, and/or staff. Maximum penalties may be imposed in addition to minimum and/or medium penalties.
5. Any behavior that is also a violation of law may result in criminal charges.
6. Any participant who engages in three or more of the prohibited acts described above during any twelve-month period shall be suspended for up to five years, followed by two years of probation.
7. Any participant who engages in a prohibited act while on probation shall be suspended for one to five years.



Appeals

Appeals of any enforcement decision may be made by submitting a written statement of appeal to the Parks and Recreation Manager within fifteen (15) calendar days of the issuance of the decision to be appealed. If an enforcement decision is not appealed within fifteen days of issuance, it is considered final.

The statement of appeal must include a description of the decision in question and related events, and the basis for the appeal. The appealing party may provide any additional information he or she believes is relevant in support of the appeal.

The Parks and Recreation Manager will conduct such an investigation as he or she determines to be appropriate, given the basis of the appeal and the related facts, and may conduct an informal hearing on the matter at his or her discretion. In the alternative, the Recreation Manager may convene an Appeals Board made up of Town staff who have no personal involvement in the decision being appealed, and such board shall conduct an appropriate investigation.

The Parks and Recreation Manager or Appeals Board, if one is convened, shall issue a written decision on the appeal within thirty (30) days from the filing of the appeal. The written decision shall include an explanation of the basis for the conclusion reached.



Miscellaneous:

- Parents and spectators are encouraged to retrieve balls that go out of play to restart the game quickly.
- All players have a right to play every game and an equal amount of time if they have attended regular practices.
- Playing Conditions: Field Supervisor will determine if games will or will not be played. Game will be called when there is a safety concern.
- Opposing coaches and players should shake hands after each game.
- The Recreation Staff will make every effort to reschedule missed games. Make up games may not be played at the same time or days as regularly scheduled games.
- Participation awards, when given, shall be given to ALL players.
- Parents, coaches, non-playing players, and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters.
- All coaches and officials are volunteers and as such are not employees of the Town of Wellington.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be allowed or used in the parks during games or practices.
- **All domesticated animals, except Service Animals as defined under the American with Disabilities Act, are prohibited within 100 feet of all Wellington Parks and Recreation sporting event as well as prohibited on diamond fields.**
- Foul language will not be tolerated by fans, participants, or coaches. All adults need to remember they are role models and need to be positive in their words and actions.
- A parent or fan that is loud, obnoxious, or disrupts the event will be asked to leave the premises and will be expected to comply immediately.
- Elastic Clause: The League Manager shall have complete charge of the Youth Sports League. All situations not specifically covered by these rules shall be acted upon by the League Director and all actions by the League Director are final.
- The League Manager reserves the right to change or amend any of the rules or regulations contained in this manual. Any questions concerning Youth Sports should be directed to:

Wellington Parks and Recreation
8700 3rd Street,
Wellington, CO 80549
(970) 568-7410

recreation@wellingtoncolorado.gov

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