

Acworth Flag Football



Rules & Regulations

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Mission Statement

“To offer adult participants a competitive league for personal health & recreation in a positive environment”

Governing Body and General Rules

All league play will be governed by the Acworth Parks & Recreation Department; Stipulations found in league by-laws. Official National Intramural Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) manual will be governing rules.

I. General Rules

- A. Starting the Game: The ball will be placed on the 14 yard line at the start of each half and the start of each drive after a touchdown.
- B. Putting ball into play: Winner of the coin toss must choose which team will take the ball first or which goal his team will defend. For the second half, the losing captain on the toss has the choice of the two options and his/her opponent granted the other.
- C. Penalties: 5-yard penalties and 10-yard penalties will be enforced.
- D. Gameplay: 7-on-7
- E. Rosters: No team will be allowed more than 17 players on their roster at any time. All eligible players must be added the day before the last regular season game of the season.
- F. Player Transfers: A player may change teams by having the team manager report to the League Coordinator requesting his/her release. A player may be granted release to play with another team; however, he/she must request to be added to the new team's roster pending new team's manager's approval. After he/she is added to the roster, he/she must wait for his/ her new team to play one league game before eligibility.
- G. Playing field: 40 x 80 yard field, divided into fourths (20 yards) to note first downs needed, with 10 yard end zones. Total field length with end zones is 100 yards.
- H. Officials: Two officials will be assigned to each league game. In the event an official is absent, the game may be played with no less than one official.
- I. Equipment:
 - a. Headgear: A headband or soft stocking cap, being of wool or a similar material. The cap may not have a bill of any kind.
 - b. Knee braces: All the hard surfaces are properly covered and with no metal in front of the knee, are considered legal.
 - c. Clothing: All clothing must be tucked in so that flags and belts are visible. Each player's pants, pant trim, or shorts must contrast with the flags. Players must tuck in their shirts in such a manner that the shirt will not interfere with their flags. All pants or shorts must be without exposed pockets, belt loops, or exposed drawstrings.

- d. Footwear: Only tennis shoes and soft rubber cleats are permitted as footgear. No metal-cleated football shoes, golf or track shoes, work or cowboy boots, or bare feet will be allowed.
- e. Jerseys: All teams are required to provide their own jerseys. The home team shall wear same color light jerseys and the visitor's team shall wear same color dark jerseys. Jerseys must be either long enough to remain tucked in or short enough so there is a minimum of 4" from the bottom of the jersey to the waistline.
- f. Gloves: Gloves are allowed providing they contain no metal, no padding, and no abrasive materials. All gloves shall be inspected by an official for legality and safety and approved/disapproved accordingly.
- J. Jewelry:** No jewelry is allowed. NOTE: Wedding rings and religious or medical medals will be allowed if properly covered with tape and declared safe by an official.
- K. Captains:** Only one captain on the field may be designated to talk to the officials and make decisions. The captain's first choice of any option shall be final.
- L. Substitutions:** Unlimited.
- M. Tampering:** Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain advantage, including but not limited to tying, is illegal.
- N. Fumbles:** All fumbles are dead at the spot where it touches the ground. Fumbles caught in the air may be advanced.
 - Exception: A punt before it's touched. Punts that bounce on the ground are eligible to be returned.
- O. Mercy Rule:** If a team is up by more than 37 at the 5-minute mark or after, the game shall end. If a team is 19 or more points ahead at the second half 2-minute mark or after, the game shall end.
- P. Onside Kick:** Only eligible to do in the second half when trailing. The trailing team will have one play from their own 20-yard line. They must reach the 40-yard line to maintain possession. If they fail to reach the 40-yard line, the opposing team will take possession of the ball where the offense was stopped. If the offense advances the ball past the 40-yard line, or scores, the ball will be placed back at the 40-yard line and your score will not count. The onside kick is an untimed down if under the 2 minute warning.
- Q.** All alcoholic beverages, glass bottles, and smoking, including vapes, are forbidden in the park as per the City of Acworth's Parks Ordinance.

Neutral Zone

- A.** The neutral zone is from the forward point of the football, one yard to the defensive scrimmage line and extended to each sideline. It is established when the ball is ready for play. The official will mark the forward point of the football with an orange disc and step forward 1 yard and mark with a gold disc.

III. Scoring

- A. Scoring: Scoring a touchdown is 6 points. PAT's may be advanced by defense for 1 point. (College Rule). No kicks for field goals are allowed.
- B. Point after Attempt (PAT): 3 points running or passing from the 20-yard line, 2 points running or passing from the 10 yard line, 1 point running or passing from the 3 yard line.
- C. Safeties: 2 points, plus the defense gets the ball on their 20-yard line. A penalty committed by the offense in their own end zone will result in a safety.
- D. Tie Games/Overtime: If a game ends in a tie, the referee will call both team captains to the center of the field for a coin toss to decide who will have possession of the ball first as well as which direction the teams will be facing. Each team will be given four downs from the same 10-yard line to score a touchdown. If the first team with the ball scores, the second team will still have four downs to tie the game. Extra points and penalties will remain the same as regulation game time. If the defense intercepts a pass or mid-air fumble and returns it for a touchdown, they win the game. If the game is still tied at the end of the overtime period, it is repeated until a team is declared the winner. Each team is allowed one time-out per overtime period.
- E. No Field Goals

II. Playing Rules - Offense

- A. Snapping the Ball: The quarterback must be at least two (2) yards behind the line of scrimmage.
- B. First Downs: The offense will have four downs to get a first down. If the offense does not advance the ball after four attempts, a turnover will result wherever the ball is placed.
- C. Spinning: allowed. (Not an excuse for running over a defender.)
- D. Eligible receivers: All players are eligible to receive passes.
 - The end receivers may reset their position and must be set for one complete second before the ball is snapped.
- E. Running the ball: A runner must make an effort to avoid the defender. Defender must make an effort to avoid knocking a runner out of bounds. If a player makes contact with another player, it is a personal foul unless done inadvertently in an attempt to pull his/her flag. A runner may not leave his/her feet to gain yardage. The ball is down at the spot where he/she left his/her feet. Penalty: 10 yards or ejection if judged flagrant.
- F. Kickoffs: No kickoffs. Start on 14-yard line with flip of a coin.
- G. Punts:
 - The kicking team or offensive team must have at least four (4) on the line of scrimmage (regular set) and remain motionless until start of play.

- The offensive team is only required to tell when it is punting on fourth down. Both offensive and defensive teams must respect the neutral zone until the ball has been kicked. The punt must come from at least 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage. The punter must, after receiving the snap, kick the ball immediately in a continuous motion.
- Defense may not rush, and offense may not leave line until after ball has been kicked. All players on the line of scrimmage must remain in the same position from the time the ball is snapped until the time the ball is kicked.
- You can let a punt hit the ground, field it, and run with it.
- Fair catch: Receiver of a punt must signal by extending arm overhead and waving. The kicking team must allow punt returner room to catch the ball.
- Ball kicked into end zones: Ball can be run out of the end zone. If the ball is dropped in the end zone, it is a touchback. If a player is de-flagged in the end zone, it is a touchback.

III. Playing Rules - Defense

- A. Flagrant Impeding the Runner: Will be enforced when a defensive player makes an attempt to stop a runner's forward momentum without attempting to de-flag the runner – 10-yard penalty.
- B. Defensive Pass Interference: Any of the following will be considered defensive pass interference and will result in a 10-yard penalty and an automatic first down:
 - If a defensive player has contact with an eligible receiver who is beyond the offensive line of scrimmage.
 - Face guarding (interfering with a receiver's vision of the ball while not playing the ball).
 - If defensive pass interference takes place in the end zone, the ball will be placed on the 1-yard line and an automatic first down awarded.
 - Defensive back holding a receiver or potential receiver.
 - If an eligible receiver is de-flagged prior to touching the ball on a pass.

IV. Penalties

- A. Blocking: The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have their hands and arms at their side or behind the back. Any use of the arms, elbows, or legs to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use arms and hands to break a fall or retain balance. A player must be on their feet before, during, and after a screen blocking. Penalty: Illegal Contact, 10 yards

B. Screen Blocking Fundamentals: A player who screens shall not:

- When a player assumes a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent, make contact with them.
- Take a position so close to a moving opponent that their opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing directions. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take a stationary position. This position will vary and may be one to two normal steps or strides from the opponent.
- After assuming a legal screening position, move to maintain it, unless they move in the same direction and path as their opponent. If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results, they have committed a personal foul. Penalty: Personal foul, 10 yards.

C. Blocking and Interlocked Interference: Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere with the defense by screen blocking but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner. Penalty: Personal foul, 10 yards

D. Use of Hands or Arms by the Defense: Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent. The application of this rule depends entirely on the judgment of the official. A blocker may use arms or hands to break a fall or retain balance. Penalty: Personal foul, 10 yards

E. Tackling:

- An attempt to encircle the body of an opponent with hands or arms, thus impeding his progress. Penalty: 10 yards from the end of the run.
- Tackling or pushing a ball carrier who is running near a sideline for the purpose of knocking him out of bounds. Penalty: 10 yards from the end of the run (possible ejection).

F. Clipping: Running or driving into the back or throwing or dropping the body across the back of the leg or legs of an opponent or pushing an opponent in the back. Penalty: 10 yards and possible ejection.

G. Guarding Flags: The ball carrier shall not protect his flags by blocking with arms or hands, to stop an opponent from pulling or removing flags. Penalty: 10 yards from the spot of the foul.

H. Intentional Grounding: Penalty: 5 yards and loss of down from the spot of the foul.

I. Motion: Any one player in the offensive backfield may be in motion, but not in motion toward the opponent's goal line. Other offensive players must be stationary in their positions without movement. Penalty: 5 yards from line of scrimmage

J. Roughing the Passer: When the defensive players rush the passer, trying to de-flag or block the pass, letting their momentum carry them into the passer. Defensive players may not have any physical contact with the passer. Penalty: 10 yards from the succeeding spot and automatic 1st down.

- K. Hurdling:** An attempt by the ball carrier to jump over a player who is still standing or is on his hands and knees. Penalty: 10 yards from the spot of the foul.
- L. Stiff Arm:** Extended to ward off an opponent. Penalty: 10 yards from the spot of the foul.
- M. Butting or lowering head:** By offensive runner is illegal. Offensive runner may not run over defensive player. The runner must attempt to run around him. Penalty: 10 yard from the spot of the foul.

V. Misconduct

- A.** If an altercation takes place, any player entering the field of play who was not a participant in the previous play will be removed from the game.
- B.** Any flagrant blow to an opponent (intentional or unintentional), will result in ejection from the game and a minimum suspension of one game.
- C.** Any two- (2) flagrant or unsportsmanlike conducts will result in a forfeit.
- D.** Any unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Players will be ejected from the game for such actions.
- E.** Any player who swears will be ejected from the game. Players who are ejected from the game must leave the complex within 2 minutes.

VI. Communicable Disease Rule (Blood Rule)

Procedures to deal with bleeding participants:

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 is 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 a reasonable length of time (3 to 5 minutes) to enable the injured player time to dress his/her wound.
5. The player may re-enter the game only with an official's approval. This means bleeding must be stopped and/or wound covered. Any article of clothing that is saturated with blood must be removed and replaced. Replacement jerseys are not required to have numbers. NOTE: Each team is responsible for supplying its own replacement clothing and first aid supplies. Please come prepared.

VII. League Eligibility

No collegiate or high school football athlete, currently on a team, will be allowed to participate in league play.

- A.** A player must be 16 years of age by the start of the first game.
- B.** When a player's eligibility is in doubt, the league coordinator must be given notice prior to the start of a game in which the questionable player is participating.
- C.** All players must be able to produce picture identification if asked.
- D.** All registration fees must be paid in full at the time of registration. No refunds will be given to teams that drop out of the league.
- E.** A player cannot be a member of 2 teams. Teams may pick up players on another team, **ONLY** if they are short of the full starting lineup and the other team agrees. Teams may not pick up players as subs from another team. Once the playoffs start, teams may only use players that are on their team/roster. In the playoffs, if a team does not have enough players to start the game, they will forfeit their game.
- F.** A player must be on the official team roster the day before the last game to be eligible for the playoffs.
- G.** Any team that forfeits two games during the season risks being removed from the league for the remainder of the season.
 - Any games won prior to removal will become losses and the losing team will be awarded a win.
 - If there are remaining games scheduled, the opposing team will be awarded an automatic win unless the league coordinator is able to reschedule games.
 - The Acworth Parks, Recreation, & Community Resource Department reserves the right to drop any team that forfeits two games during the season without refunding their registration fee.

VIII. Game Timing

- A.** A regulation game shall consist of forty (40) minutes, divided into two (2) halves of twenty (20) minutes. The clock will run continuously until the last 2 minutes of each half in which a regulation clock will be used. The halftime will consist of three (3) minutes. In the event of overtime, there shall be a 1-minute intermission. Each team is allowed two 30 second timeouts per half; clock stops on all timeouts. The spot of the ball shall be put into play within 25 seconds after it is declared ready for play by the official.
- B.** Teams will be given a 10-minute grace period only for the first game of the day. However, if a team has 5 players available, the game will start immediately or as soon as the fifth player arrives. After the 10-minute grace period, the team failing to place the minimum

number of players on the field shall forfeit the game. The first game will not start before the scheduled start time.

C. Daytime weekend games will be scheduled at the discretion of the league coordinator.

D. All league games are to use a regulation size football. Each team will furnish a regulation size football on offense.

IX. Coed Teams

All teams including coed will abide by regular league rules. It will be up to the team's captain and/or the team collectively to determine individual players' playing time as there is no required minimum amount of participation in persons fielded or receiving the ball.

X. Playoffs

a. Standings: Team standings will be determined by win-loss records.

b. Tiebreakers: In the event of a final regular season record tie, the following procedures will be used:

Two Teams Tied

1. Head-to-head record

2. Point Differential

3. Least number of points allowed in the regular season

4. Fewest Forfeits

5. Coin Toss

Three or More Teams Tied

1. Head-to-head record (best winning %)

2. Point Differential

3. Least number of points allowed in the regular season

4. Fewest forfeits

5. Coin Toss

XI. Awards

Per the discretion of the League Coordinator, Awards will be given to the league champions.

Rules are subject to change at the discretion of the League Coordinator. The Acworth Parks, Recreation, & Community Resource Department reserves the right to drop any team that forfeits two games during the season without refunding their registration fee

Code of Conduct

Acworth Parks, Recreation, & Community Resource Department Adult Flag Football League

- I will respect the officials, City of Acworth staff, and spectators. I will respect all of the official's authority before, during, and after the game. If I need clarity on rules or regulations I will ask City of Acworth staff after a game.
- I will refrain from use of profanity, obscene gestures, or rude comments before, during, and after any league game. I understand that if I choose to use profanity, obscene gestures, or rude comments it may result in ejection or expulsion from the league.
- I will encourage sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game.
- I will remember the game is for fun and recreational purposes only.
- I will refrain from confrontational situations with opposing teams and spectators.
- During the game, I will remain in the designated team area two yards from the sideline between the 20-yard markers unless being involved in a substitution or in game play.
- I will abide by all rules indicated in the Acworth Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Adult Flag Football League By-Laws.
- I understand there is zero tolerance on any sort of physical confrontation and any such circumstance will result in expulsion from league.
- I understand that any ejections will result in a two game suspension and if I am ejected again will result in expulsion from the league with no refund and I will be banned from all league games and events henceforth.
- I understand and will abide by the following rules:
 - No weapons of any kind are allowed on any premises of park.
 - No alcohol is permitted on park premises.
 - No drugs or tobacco products are permitted on or near playing field.

I understand the above expectations as a participant. I also understand that it is my responsibility to make sure any guest of mine at an Acworth Adult Flag Football League event understands these expectations. I further understand that any violation can result in me not being able to participate or attend any league events.

Participant Name (printed): _____

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Acworth Parks, Recreation, & Community
Resource Department

Edwin Lacher

City of Acworth, Recreation Coordinator

4361 Cherokee Street

Acworth, GA 30101

Website: www.acworthparksandrecreation.org

Email: elacher@acworth.org

Office: 770-917-1234