

CHRC Flag Football

Basic Rules/Gameplay

1. Pre-Game

- a. Jerseys- All team jerseys are reversible. Home team will wear the team color side of their jersey. The away team will wear the 'white' side of their jersey.
- b. Coin toss
 - i. Captains from both teams meet refs at mid-field where the **visiting team** makes the call.
 1. Winner of coin toss has choice of Offense or Defense, Loser has choice of direction.
 - a. Teams change sides at half time, team that started on defense in first half gets the ball in the second half.
 2. Deferring is not an option in either half.
- c. All possessions, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.

2. Gameplay

- a. Games are played in two 20-minute halves.
 - i. Clock only stops for injury, at the ref's discretion or in the last minute of each half.
 1. In the last minute of each half, the clock will stop on out of bound run plays, incomplete passes, change of possessions and scores.
- b. 30-seconds to snap ball from when it is spotted.
 - i. 5 yard penalty for delay of game.
- c. If tied at the end of 40 minutes, game heads to overtime.
 1. Team that won the initial coin toss decides to play offense or defense first, possession at closest first down marker to end zone.
 2. Each team is allowed one possession to score.
 3. Same regulation rules and penalties are in effect.
 4. No timeouts or first downs.
 5. Team that is winning at the end of the overtime period wins the game.
 - a. If teams are tied at the end of the overtime period, the process is repeated twice in which if tied after the 2nd OT, the game will be called as a tie.
- d. Every play begins in the middle of the field (field marked appropriately).

3. Fields

- a. 1st & 2nd Grade teams play on a 60x40 yard field (50 yard playing field with two 10 yard end zones... one first down line at mid-field).

b. 3rd through 8th grade play on a 80x40 yard field (60 yard playing field with two 10 yard end zones... two first down lines 20 yards apart).

c. Ball line and No Running Zone

i. Both sizes of field will have three lines in the middle of the field, running goal line to goal line, parallel to the sidelines.

1. Ball line runs in the middle of the field and indicates where the ball is placed to start every play.

2. Two lines outside the ball line indicate the no-running zone, which is 15 yards wide (i.e., runners must be outside the lines before heading up field).

d. Neutral Zone

i. The neutral zone is a 15 x 5-yard area in which no player can be to begin a play. The no running zone marks the outside of the neutral zone, with the line of scrimmage and the 5-yard cone marker (placed each play by refs) further indicating the area. If ball is marked within 5 yards of the first down line, or goal line, a 2-yard neutral zone will be enforced.

1. No defenders can line up inside the neutral zone, even if the defender is not "rushing" or guarding a potential receiver. All defenders must respect the neutral zone and line up outside of it.

2. Rushers must line up directly behind the neutral zone (5 yards behind the line of scrimmage) and may blitz at the snap. All other defenders can only pursue the ball behind the line of scrimmage once the QB hands the ball off or crosses the line of scrimmage with the ball.

3. Automatic dead ball foul if any player on either side is in the neutral zone.

4. Scoring

a. Touchdown: 6 points

b. Option to go for 1 (from the 5-yard line) or 2 (from the 10 yard line) points.

c. Safety: 2 points

d. Tie goes to the runner- If a defender pulls the ball carrier's flag as he/she passes the first down marker or goal line, the tie will go to the runner.

e. Mercy Rule: If one team is winning by twenty-eight points or more, the losing team gets one offensive series to continue regulation play. If they do not score, the game goes into scrimmage mode playing up to the fifteen-minute mark in the second half if time allows.

1. Scrimmage mode: losing team gets the ball for up to three possessions. Each possession lasts until the team scores or fails to

gain a first down or touchdown. Points do not count toward final score. After three possessions the game is over.

2. **Once the mercy rule has been declared, teams will continue on as mentioned above for no more than 15 minutes, three offensive possessions or the ending game time, whichever comes first.**

5. Coaches

- i. Coaches are allowed on the field to direct players if needed but must be clearly out of the way by the time the play starts.
- ii. Coaches are expected to adhere to NFL Flag and USA Football philosophies, coaching guidelines and codes of conduct.

6. Live ball/Dead ball

- a. Ball is live at the snap of each play and dead at the ref's whistle.
 - i. A snap that hits the ground is permissible but once the ball gets to the quarterback, any fumble after that point is a dead ball and the play is over.
- b. Defense may not mimic the offensive team signals or cadence.
- c. Subs can be made on any dead ball.
 1. Play is "Dead" when:
 - a. Ball hits the ground on a pass or the ball is fumbled after the quarterback receives it from the center.
 - i. Note that a defensive fumble recovery does not result in a change of possession unless ball is NOT recovered by quarterback (or any other offensive player) after ball is snapped.
 - ii. The ball will be spotted where ball is fumbled.
 - b. Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - c. Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - d. TD, PAT or Safety is scored.
 - e. Ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
 - f. Inadvertent whistle occurs.

Player Movement

d. Running

1. The ball is spotted according to location of the ball when the flag is pulled.
2. There is absolutely no running up the middle of the field ("no running zone" marked on the fields), even for handoffs.

- a. Quarterback may advance the ball ONLY after being outside the no running zone.
 - b. Fumblers (where the center has the QB quickly touch the ball and he runs right up the middle) are not allowed.
 3. Handoffs must take place behind the line of scrimmage.
 4. Flag guarding is not allowed in any circumstances.
 5. No diving, jumping, or leaping while running.
 - a. Runners may leave feet in an effort to avoid a collision.
 - b. Spinning is allowed.
 6. All flags must be on top of jerseys before play begins. Any flags below a jersey (even inadvertently) may result in a flag guarding penalty.
 - e. Blocking
 1. **Any blocking done must be screen blocks only (hands down at the side or behind the back).**
 - f. Passing
 1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and beyond the line of scrimmage.
 2. Ball may be thrown after being handed off if that player is still behind the line of scrimmage.
 - g. Receiving
 1. All players are eligible to receive passes.
 2. Player must have at least one foot in-bounds to make a catch.
 3. In the case of a simultaneous catch by both an offensive and defensive player, the catch is awarded to the offense.
 - h. Interceptions
 1. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point where the intercepting player has his flag pulled.
 - a. All interceptions are returnable, including PAT.
 - i. Rushing the Passer
 1. Designated rushers must lineup behind the neutral zone (as described above). All other players are not eligible to rush, unless and until the QB hands the ball off or advances the ball themselves.
 2. **As offensive players are restricted on blocking, defensive players are NOT allowed to use swim moves or spinning.**
7. Flag Pulling
- a. **Tackling, shoving, or tripping is not allowed under any circumstances.**

- b. Legal flag pulling happens when the ball carrier has full-possession of the ball.
 - c. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold on to offensive players clothing or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
 - d. Stripping the ball of any kind is not allowed.
 - e. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during a play, the player is down once touched or tagged by an opposing player.
 - f. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, swatting, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder or intentionally cover the flags with the football jersey.
8. Formations
- a. On offense, there must be a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage.
 - b. Players may not advance forward from positions until the ball is snapped.
 - i. Ball must completely leave center's hands for a play to properly start.
 - 1. Again, Fumblerski's are not allowed.
9. Unsportsmanlike Conduct
- a. Foul play will not be tolerated.
 - b. Offensive or confrontational language is not allowed and will be penalized.
 - i. Players/coaches/parents ejected from game after second warning.
 - c. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
10. Penalties
- a. Refs call all penalties.
 - b. Parents and coaches are encouraged to help participants accept penalties as long as they are correct.
 - c. Penalties will be assessed from line of scrimmage or from the spot of the foul, as specified below.
 - d. Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
 - e. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
 - f. Coaches are expected to help their team understand and adhere by the established rules, as well as helping them understand why penalties have been enforced.

REMEMBER - Refs do not see every aspect of the game. This is a recreational league and our officiating options reflect that. Despite training, our young refs are reluctant to make calls if they know they'll take heat from coaches and parents alike. If there is an issue, respectfully address it with them at appropriate times, but otherwise please respect their calls.

Coaches and parents alike are expected to maintain a positive level of sportsmanship at all times and instill that attitude among their players. "Playing dirty", encouraging such or

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otherwise attempting to “get away with” any negative strategy, gameplay or tactics as a result of referee negligence is not acceptable. If there are blatant, continual faults within a football game, please contact your league administrator.

Penalties and field information below

Spot Fouls

Defensive Pass Interference	Automatic First Down
Holding	+5 yards + Automatic First Down
Stripping of ball	+5 yards + Automatic First Down
** Defensive Unnecessary Roughness (includes tackling and shoving)	+5 yards + Automatic First Down
Illegal Screening or Blocking	-5 yards + Loss of Down
Flag Guarding	-5 yards + Loss of Down
** Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	-5 yards + Loss of Down

Defensive Penalties*(LOS = Line of Scrimmage)*

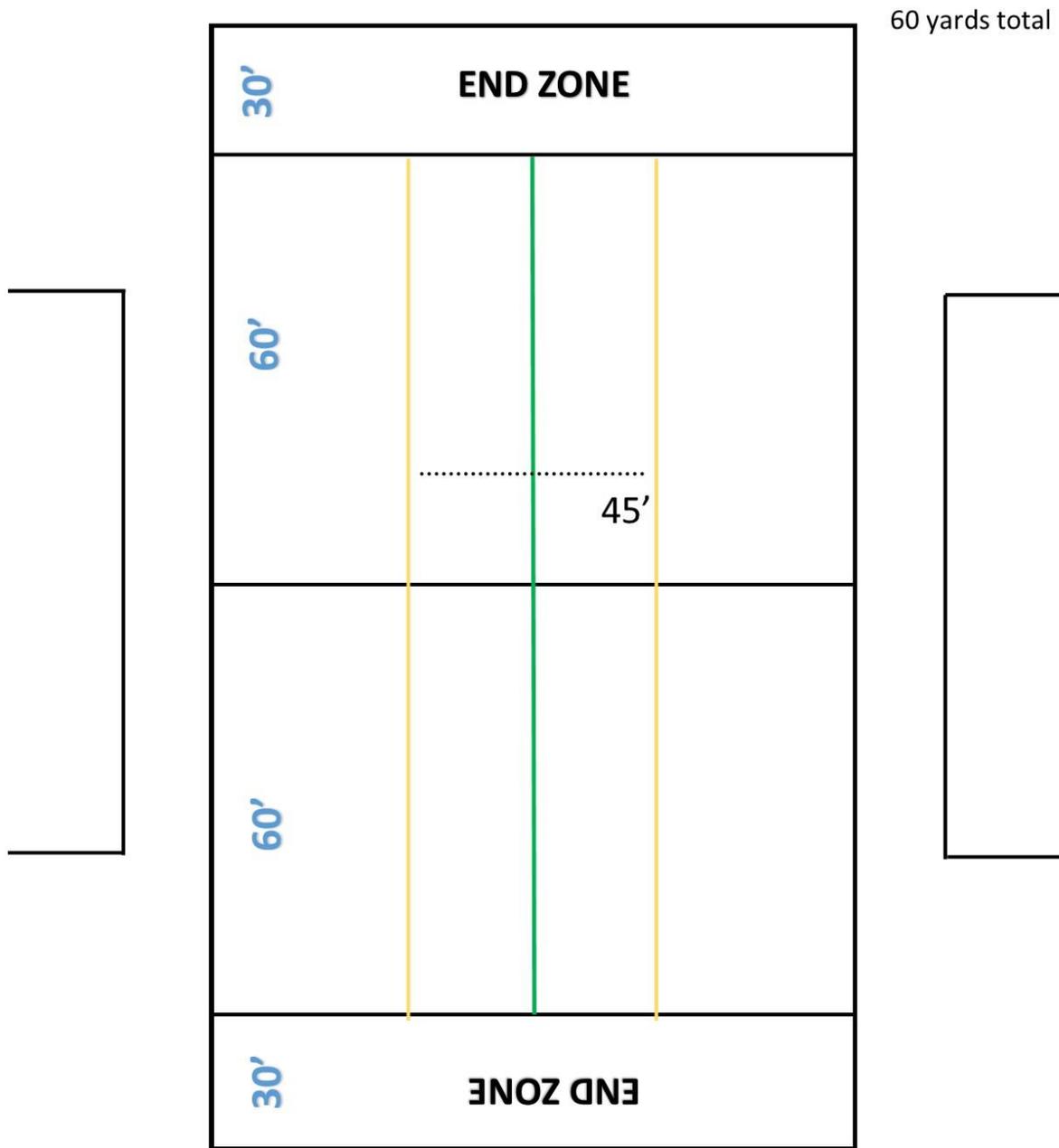
Off sides	+ 5 yards from LOS
Illegal Rush (not from 5 to 7 yards away)	+5 yards from LOS
Roughing the Passer	+5 yards from LOS + Auto First Down
** Taunting	+5 yards from LOS + Auto First Down
Defensive Pass Interference	Auto First Down
Holding	+5 yards from the spot + Auto First Down
** Defensive Unnecessary Roughness (includes tackling and shoving)	+5 yards from the spot + Auto First Down

Offensive Penalties

Offside / False Start	-5 yards from LOS
Illegal Forward Pass (beyond LOS)	-5 yards from LOS
Offensive Pass Interference	-5 yards from LOS
Delay of Game	-5 yards from LOS
Impeding the Rusher/Illegal Screening/Blocking	-5 yards from the spot
Flag Guarding	-5 yards
** Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	-5 yards

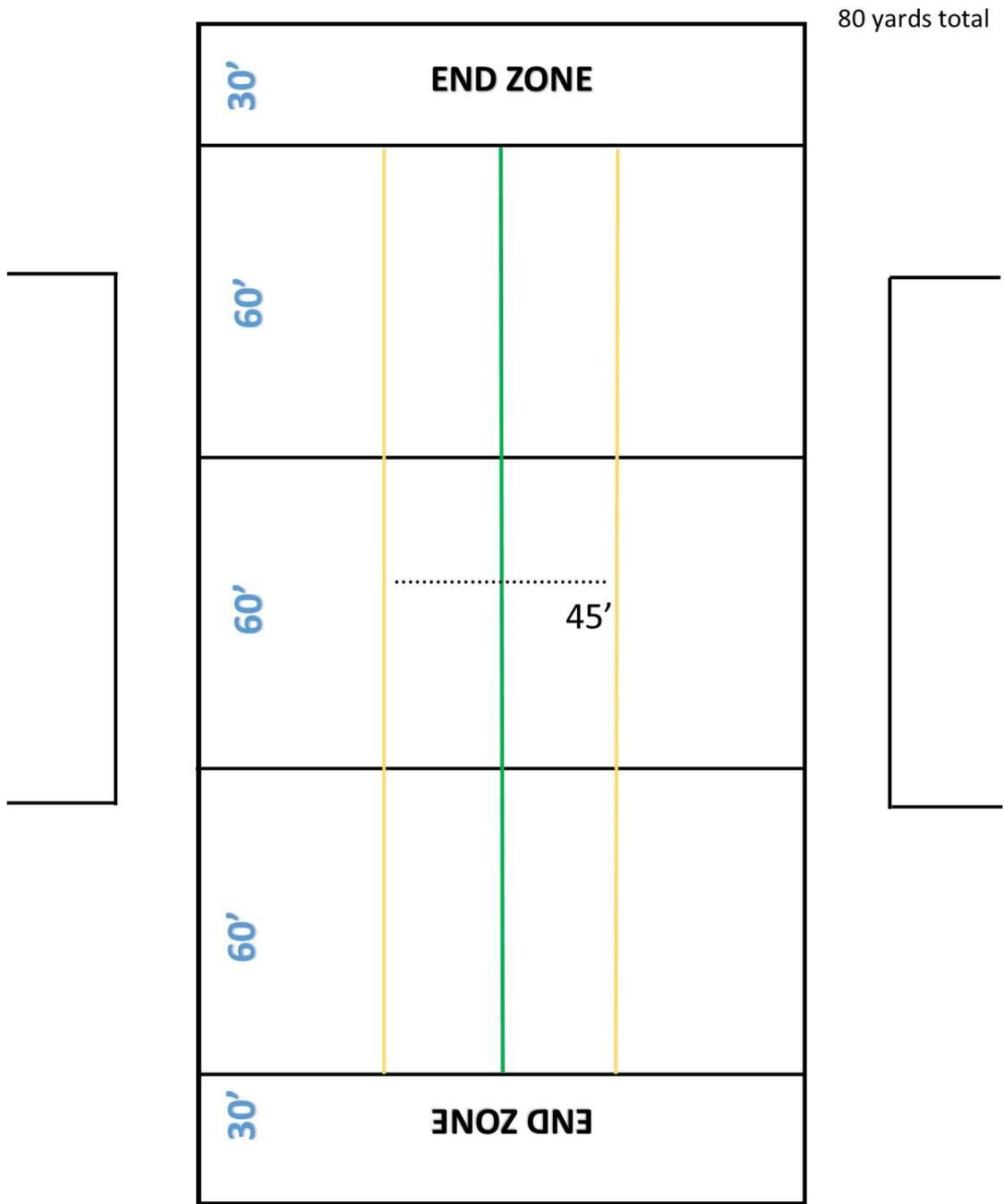
** If a player is called **twice** for any combination of these specified penalties, he/she must sit out the rest of that half. If player is called **three times** for any combination of the same, he/she is ejected from the game.

For simplicity, all penalties are 5 yards in either direction unless 5 or less yards to goal, in which case penalties are half the distance to the goal line.



1st & 2nd Grade Division

Green Line is the Ball Line, space between the yellow lines indicate the No Running Zone



3rd & 4th Grade and Up

Green Line is the Ball Line, space between the yellow lines indicate the No Running Zone