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I. PURPOSE OF THE YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL PROGRAM

We believe that through good leadership our program will ensure successful experiences for all participants. It should encompass all of the benefits listed below:

1. Participation should develop and keep a healthy mind in a healthy body. Certain physical results are considered desirable and can be attained, subject to the differences in individual ability. These are: speed, strength, endurance, coordination, flexibility and agility.
2. Self-reliance and emotional stability can be developed through athletics.
 - A. Making decisions and accepting responsibilities.
 - B. Developing and exercising leadership.
3. Social growth is enhanced by athletics.
 - A. Appreciating what other people are really like.
 - B. Learning to get along with people - a living laboratory of democracy in action.
 - C. Learning to cooperate—"Team Work".
 - D. Learning to compete— self-discipline, emotional balance.
 - E. Making new friends.
 - F. Learning respect for rights of others.
4. Sportsmanship is an immediate and long-range goal.
 - A. Being responsible to law (rules) and order.
 - B. Observing fairness and custom.
 - C. Treating others with consideration.
 - D. Recognizing and applauding fine play and sportsmanlike acts of opponents.
5. There are other goals and values:
 - A. To develop initiative, willingness to try new things
 - B. To encourage intelligent use of leisure.
 - C. To have a fun and satisfying experience.
 - D. To participate in a wide variety of activities.
 - E. To obtain recognition, respect in the community.
 - F. To promote mental alertness.

Together, these will help make our children become better all-around citizens.

II. BILL OF RIGHTS FOR YOUNG ATHLETES

1. Right of the opportunity to participate in sports regardless of ability level.
2. Right to participate at a level that is compatible with each child's developmental level.
3. Right to have qualified adult leadership.
4. Right to participate in safe and healthy environments.
5. Right of each child to share in the leadership and decision making of the sport in which he/she is participating.
6. Right to play as a child and not as an adult.
7. Right to proper preparation for participation in the sport.
8. Right to an equal opportunity to strive for success.
9. Right to be treated with dignity by all involved.
10. Right to have fun through sport.¹

¹ Youth Sports Guide for Coach and Parents AAHPER Publication, 1201 16th St., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036

III. ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER COACH

The Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs Department (PRNA) would like to thank you for accepting the responsibility of coaching one of our youth football teams. No program can be a success without good leadership.

The hours will be long and you are serving without pay, but your job is most important. You will be building the moral fiber, mental health, and physical strength of young boys and girls who will be the citizens of tomorrow.

These athletes are at a most impressionable age and the training you give them, good or bad, will have a lasting effect on their young lives.

For some, playing on your team may be their only contact with organized sports. We know you will want them to remember it as a pleasurable and meaningful experience.

Without your help, this program would not be possible. For the players, parents, and the Tallahassee PRNA, THANKS!

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER COACH

Background Check

All head coaches and primary assistant coaches must complete a National Background Screening Consent/Release Form. Coaches must be cleared before coaching any Tallahassee PRNA program, this includes practices. Any team assistants or team parents are encouraged to complete a Tallahassee PRNA Volunteer Information Sheet.

Parents Meeting

All coaches must have a preseason meeting with team parents to discuss the purpose and scope of the program, code of conduct, rules and regulations, and other necessary information.

Player Supervision

In order to insure the safety of all players, Tallahassee PRNA is asking each coach to stay with their players after practices and games until all players have been picked up. If the same parent(s) are consistently late, please let your park supervisor know. The park supervisor will talk to the parent(s) regarding the issue. If the issue continues, a player may be dismissed from the league. Under no circumstance shall a coach leave a player unattended.

Parent/Spectator Control

A team is responsible for its parents and spectators. Officials may penalize a team for the behavior of its parents and spectators. Please read through the Code of Conduct and the definition and penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Reporting Injuries

During games, park supervisors are responsible for filling out the Accident Report Form for any injury that requires medical attention, or for any injury that may potentially require medical attention. During warm-ups or practices, coaches are responsible for filling out the Accident Report Form. A copy of the report should be turned into Tallahassee PRNA within 24 hours.

V. CODE OF CONDUCT

THIS COPY IS FOR YOUR REFERENCE – SIGNED COPY SUBMITTED

Tallahassee PRNA directs many youth athletic recreational programs. We are committed to creating opportunities and experiences that will foster the development of positive moral and ethical values, and we strive to promote good sportsmanship among all participants. As a volunteer coach, I hereby pledge to live up to the following code of conduct:

1. I will abstain from using any tobacco or alcohol products in or around the playing field, or the sports complex in which the field is located. I will also refrain from participating in any practice or game activity when it is apparent that I have consumed alcohol prior to arriving. ____ Initials
2. I will refrain from using abusive or profane language in or around the playing field or the sports complex in which the field is located. ____ Initials
3. I will refrain from permitting a player to participate in a practice or game when in doubt as to the player's health or physical condition, and I will abide by a doctor's decision in all matters relating to a player's health or physical condition. ____ Initials
4. I will provide equal opportunities for all players regardless of race, color, ethnicity, religion, age, or otherwise qualified characteristic. ____ Initials
5. I will refrain from accepting any gift, gratuity, or favor that might influence my judgment. I will refrain from offering any gift, gratuity, or favor with the intent of obtaining special privileges, and will not exploit any relationship with a player for personal gain or other advantage. ____ Initials
6. I will strive to promote good mental and physical health in all aspects of participation and refrain from any type of verbal or physical abuse of any players. I will make any criticism "constructive" in nature and reserve it for private moments. ____ Initials
7. I will consistently display and demand good sportsmanship in practice and in games, including but not limited to accepting decisions of the officials in a professional manner; refraining from criticizing opposing coaches, players, and spectators; refraining from "running up the score" and congratulating opposing teams following a game. ____ Initials
8. I will conduct myself in accordance with all rules, regulations, and determinations of the particular league or program in which I am volunteering. ____ Initials
9. I will hold a pre-season parents' meeting, and maintain open communication with parents relating to all aspects of participation, including conduct of both spectators and players. ____ Initials
10. I will consistently act in the best interest of all players and the particular program in which I am volunteering, so as to provide a positive experience for all players and to promote a positive image of the program. ____ Initials

Coach Signature

Date

Park

League (Age)

Team

VI. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

We want to emphasize the importance of conducting yourselves properly in dealing with medical emergencies at your facilities. Realizing we are not empowered or trained to "treat" victims, we still have the responsibility to render front line aid and supervise the situation. This may involve discussing the situation with the victim, coach, or parent, or to call in the Ambulance Service. Listed below are some guidelines to follow, which should always be coupled with good common sense.

In the event of an accident or emergency:

1. Try to determine the extent of the injury. If in doubt as to the seriousness of the accident, do not move the patient. Keep him comfortable and reassured and call an ambulance. If the situation calls for it, apply ice or keep the patient warm and comfortable.
2. Front line care of an accident would include use of ice, stoppage of bleeding, restoring breathing, and treatment for shock, heat exhaustion or stroke.
3. Be sure victim is as comfortable as possible. If it's cold, cover them. If it's hot, loosen equipment, etc. **USE GOOD COMMON SENSE!**
4. Call for additional support. Use other adults to secure necessary materials and never leave the patient alone with other players.
5. If an ambulance is called, be sure you have someone to direct it to the site. Assist paramedics in any way you can.
6. Always prepare an accident report that will be turned in to the supervisor who will then get the information to the Parks and Recreation Dept.
7. Be sure you have access to a phone within a short period of time.
8. Submit a follow up report of the injured person. Call to find out the extent of the injury and how he is doing.

Above all, supervisors and coaches are to take charge during these incidents and must coordinate aid rendered.

Please advise all your coaches of the importance of being sure all aspects of an accident are handled properly and expeditiously.

VII. INCLEMENT WEATHER & LIGHTNING SAFETY

Tallahassee PRNA currently uses the AccuWeather SkyGuard System. This system provides staff with lightning advisories and warnings via text or email message based on a given park or facility location. Full-time athletic supervisors will receive an email and/or text with information regarding a potential storm. The athletic supervisors will alert park supervisors of one of two messages received: **Lightning Advisory** and **Lightning Warning**. During games onsite park supervisors will inform their coaches of any advisories or warnings. This system will be used to determine whether play should be suspended and able to resume activity.

Lightning Advisory = Lightning conditions exist within 15 miles of the park or facility location. Play may continue until a warning is received.

Lightning Warning = Lightning conditions exist within 8 miles of the park or facility location. All players, coaches and officials must clear the playing field. Anyone onsite at the park or facility location is encouraged to seek appropriate shelter. Play will resume when the warning expires.

During practices or when a park supervisor is not onsite, coaches will be responsible for determining whether play should be suspended. Please be aware of weather conditions. Use common sense and good judgment, and make safety a priority! Lack of rainfall is not an adequate indicator for suspending play.

If you see it (lightning), flee it! If you hear it (thunder), clear it!

Ultimately, players, coaches and spectators are responsible for their safety. If participants feel they are in danger from inclement weather or impending lightning, they have the right to leave the park or facility location in order to seek shelter, without fear of repercussion or penalty.

VIII. MEDICAL ISSUES/CARE

Heat Related Emergencies

Heat related emergencies usually result from loss of fluids and electrolytes (salts) from heavy sweating. As a person continues to lose fluids through sweat, the blood volume is decreased. Blood flow to the skin increases, reducing blood flow to the vital organs. The circulatory system is affected; therefore the person goes into mild shock. If treated immediately, heat cramps and heat exhaustion can usually be reversed with prompt care.

Heat Cramps – Loss of fluids and electrolytes can begin to produce painful spasms of skeletal muscles, generally in the legs and abdomen. Skin is moist. Body temperature is usually normal.

Treatment – Have person drink cool water and rest in a cool place.

Heat Exhaustion – Cool, moist, pale, clammy or ashen, headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, exhaustion.

Treatment –Have person drink cool water and rest in a cool place.

Heat Stroke – Red, hot, dry. Body temperature continues to climb. Person may vomit and begin to show changes in level of consciousness. Sweating may stop because body fluid levels are low. When sweating stops, the body cannot cool itself effectively and body temperature rapidly rises. Soon the brain and other vital organs, such as the heart and kidneys begin to fail. Convulsions, coma and death will result. TREATMENT ON NEXT PAGE

Treatment for Heat Stroke

- ❖ Check ABC's
- ❖ Call 911
- ❖ Remove person from the hot environment.
- ❖ Have the person lie down in a cool or shady area. Elevate the legs slightly.
- ❖ Loosen or remove clothing
- ❖ Apply cool, wet towels or sheets or cold packs to the body.
- ❖ Fan the person to help increase evaporation.
- ❖ If you only have ice or cold packs, place them on the person's wrists and ankles, in each armpit, and in the groin to cool the large blood vessels.
- ❖ Give small amounts of water to a fully conscious person.
- ❖ Do not apply rubbing (isopropyl) alcohol. The alcohol may cause poisoning through the skin or through inhalation.
- ❖ Monitor vital signs.

Concussions

After recent discussion of concussions, our program has adopted recommendations each coach will follow for the season. The following guidelines were established by the CDC.

1. Every coach will receive "A Fact Sheet for Coaches" provided by the CDC at the beginning of the season at a coaches meeting. We will also explain signs and symptoms a coach will look for at the coaches meeting.
2. Every coach will also receive a couple copies of "A Fact Sheet for Parents" that will be distributed to a parent of a child that shows signs and symptoms of a concussion.
3. Review the four steps in an action plan with each coach if they suspect a child has a concussion:
 - a. Remove athlete from play.
 - b. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the seriousness of the injury yourself.
 - c. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion.
 - d. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until an appropriate health care professional says they are symptom-free and it OK to return to play. A player must bring a written clearance to the main office before the player can start back playing. League supervisor will notify the coach when a player is cleared to play.

IX. PREVENTING PROBLEMS

Develop Policies and Procedures: *Clearly defined organizational policies and procedures help clarify the rights and responsibilities of parents and how they should behave within the confines of the youth sports environment. Without boundaries and guidelines for behavior it is difficult to hold individuals accountable for their actions later. Often, parents are out of control because no one has ever told them they are not supposed to be out of control!*

Communication: Communication is the key to so many things a youth sports administrator is responsible for and dealing with parents is no exception! Policies and procedures will have no effect unless all involved, including the parents, are made aware of them and understand them. This is where communicating with the parents is vital. Parents must be acknowledged for the important role they play.

Parent Meeting: A parents' meeting is a vital tool in developing a positive youth sports experience for children. It allows the coach to get to know the parents he/she will be dealing with during the season. A healthy two-way communication process should be encouraged and initiated at the parent meeting. Time should be left at the end of the meeting for questions from parents.

Topics to be discussed at this meeting should include:

- Structure of the league – who should parents contact with concerns or questions.
- Philosophy of the league – equal play, skill development, FUN, etc.
- Program specifics – rules, location, times, etc.
- Season specifics – duration, special events, etc.
- Equipment specifics – what is needed, what is optional, etc.
- Transportation guidelines
- Health & safety guidelines – inclement weather policies, etc.
- How parents can get involved
- The rights & responsibilities of the youth sports parent
- Parent's Code of Ethics

Get to Know the Parents Informally: The administrators and coaches of each team should make a point of getting to know the parents of the children. The coach should be aware that all families are different and the motives for children being involved in sports will vary. It may be useful for the coach to have the parents complete a simple questionnaire, asking them specifically what they want their child to get out of the youth sports experience. This questionnaire can be completed at the time of registration and then given to each coach.

By informing each parent know of the organizational philosophy many problems may be prevented in the future. Also, if the parents feel comfortable, it is more likely that youth sports administrators will have an open, constructive relationship with them. Coaches may make the effort to contact each of his/her players' parents on an individual basis or simply spend time talking to each parent at the orientation meeting. What is important is that during and after practices and games the coaches and administrators acknowledge the parents as a valued part of the youth sports experience. If ignored or shown any disrespect, parents feel less secure and are less likely to be supportive.

X. RULES & REGULATIONS

General Information

1. League

To make a league, each park location must have at least four (4) teams. Less than four (4) teams will necessitate combining parks and possibly playing at a central location or alternate parks.

2. Number of Players per Team

Each team will have a maximum of sixteen (16) players.

3. Number of Coaches per Team

Each team will have two (2) coaches, a Head Coach and an Assistant Coach, if possible.

Rookie and Pee Wee Divisions **ONLY**: Coaches will be allowed on the field.

4. Player Eligibility

ROOKIE: 4 – 6 year olds

PEE WEE: 7 – 8 year olds

JUNIOR: 9 – 10 year olds

INTERMEDIATE: 11 – 13 year olds

SENIOR: 14 – 17 year olds

September 1 of the current year is the age determining date; for example, a child turning 9 years of age before September 1 is not eligible to play in Pee Wee and must play in Junior. A child may always play up one division, but may not play down.

5. Team Pictures/Trophies

Tallahassee PRNA cannot endorse or take responsibility for team activities beyond what is established as standard procedure in conducting this program. For parents choosing to participate in activities such as photography sessions, etc., these activities are based on personal choice and the parent is ultimately responsible. If parents choose to undertake additional activities, asking for mandatory donations from team members is prohibited. All donations must be voluntary and cannot affect a participant's rights to any benefits afforded to other participants.

XI. UNIFORMS & EQUIPMENT

Each player shall be furnished with a shirt and a flag belt. Coaches will be furnished with a duffle bag, two practice balls, flag bets, kickoff tees (Junior and Intermediate only), and team shirts. All uniforms and/or equipment not provided by Tallahassee PRNA must be approved by a park supervisor.

6. Balls

Rookie & Pee Wee – Pee Wee size (Voit CF5, Tachikara SF2R)

Junior - Junior Size (Mikasa F5006, Baden F100, or Voit CF6S)

Intermediate – Youth Size (Mikasa F5007, Baden F200, or Voit CF7S)

Senior - Youth Size (Mikasa F5007, Baden F200, or Voit CF7S)

7. Belts

If a flag belt does not fit a player, the park supervisor may request another belt for the player.

8. Shirts

Team shirts must be worn at all times and cannot be altered in any way. All shirts must be tucked into the pants. **Please Note:** *If, in the judgment of an official, a shirt that is out of the pants prevents a defensive player from pulling the flag belt, the ball carrier is down and a three (3) yard penalty will result.*

9. Shorts

A player's shorts may not be the same color as the flags on the flag belt. Players' shorts must also not have pockets or belt loops. **Please Note:** *Any child that has shorts with pockets or belt loops will not be allowed to participate.*

10. Shoes

Players must wear shoes at all times. No metal or screw-on cleats allowed.

11. Hats

Hats or other head garments may not be worn during play.

XII. FORMAT OF THE GAME

1. Playing Field

All divisions, except for Senior, will play on a field measuring thirty (30) yards by sixty (60) yards with yardage lines every fifteen (15) yards. There shall be end lines that extend eight (8) yards beyond the goal line.

The Senior league will play on a field measuring forty (40) yards by eighty (80) yards with yardage lines every twenty (20) yards.

2. Length of Playing Time

The length of a quarter shall be ten (10) minutes. There will be one (1) minute between quarters and five (5) minutes between halves. The clock shall not stop except for injury and thirty (30) second timeouts. However, in the 2nd and 4th quarters, the clock shall be stopped in the last two minutes under the following scenarios:

- a standard timeout
- an injury timeout
- an incomplete pass, or
- the ball carrier (offensive or defensive) goes out of bounds.

3. Timeouts

Each team is granted two (2) timeouts per half. Each time out shall be a maximum of thirty (30) seconds. Play that has been stopped because of injury does not constitute a time out.

4. Huddles

There will be a twenty-five (25) second maximum in huddle. The huddle starts when the referee marks the ball ready for play. If longer, a delay of game is called.

5. Scoring

Touchdown = Six (6) points

Extra Point = See below

Safety = Two (2) points

6. Extra Point

- 1 point will be awarded if attempt is made from the two (2) yard line.
- 2 points will be awarded if the attempt is made from the five (5) yard line.
- If the defensive team intercepts the pass and runs it back, 2 points will be awarded.

7. Safety

A safety is when a defensive player pulls the flag belt of an offensive player behind that offensive player's own goal line. Two points are awarded to the team on defense, and the ball is put into play at the kick-off mark with the team scoring the points receiving the ball as in regular football. A place kick or punt may be used.

8. Choice of Goals

A coin toss will determine whether a team is receiving the ball to begin the game or deferring to the second half. Teams will change directions after the 1st half.

9. Offense & Defense

Seven (7) players from each team participate at any one time.

Offense

A team may have one to six players on the line. No player on the line of scrimmage may simulate action prior to the snap.

Defense

There is no limit to the number of players that may be on the line of scrimmage. However, defensive linemen must be three (3) yards behind the line of scrimmage and cannot rush until the ball has been snapped.

10. Player Participation Rule

All players must play in every game, and all players should be treated equally, regardless of ability. To ensure this occurs, the player participation rule will be **mandatory**.

Coaches may only designate seven (7) players for offense each quarter. Those players cannot play defense in the same quarter unless they have been designated to play both ways. If a team has less than 14 players, the coach must identify which players will play both ways per quarter. This must be done per quarter. All players must have an opportunity to play both ways before a player may be used again.

In regards to playing time, the coach may use his own judgment if a player is late without a good reason or has completely missed scheduled practices/games. A coach should always check with the parents first to determine the circumstances surrounding late arrival(s) or missed practices/games.

11. Formations

Only regular football formations may be used.

12. Kick-Offs

- Rookie & Pee Wee - Start possession on the 15 yard line.
- Junior & Intermediate – Kick from the 15 yard line and the opposing team will stand behind the 30 yard line (mid-field line).
- Senior - Kick from the 20 yard line and the opposing team will stand behind the 40 yard line (mid-field line).

The ball is put into play by a place kick from the kick-off line (marked by an X). The receiving team will have its linemen at the mid-field line. Neither team may advance until the ball has been kicked. If the ball touches the ground after coming into contact with any player of the receiving team, the ball is considered dead.

If the ball goes out of bounds on the 1st kick off, a three (3) yard penalty will be assessed on the 2nd kick-off attempt. In the event a kick-off goes out of bounds the second time, the receiving team will put the ball in play at the mid-field line – NO OPTION.

13. Neutral Zone & Line of Scrimmage

A neutral zone of three (3) yards will be observed; however, if the line of scrimmage is less than three (3) yards from the defense's goal line or first down line, this rule does not apply and the neutral zone will be the goal line or first down line.

14. First Downs

A first down is gained when a team crosses the next closest forward yard line. The field will be marked off at fifteen (15) yard intervals, with the exception the Senior division. The Senior division fields will be marked off at 20 yard intervals. A team will have a series of four (4) consecutive downs in which to advance the ball to or across the next first down line. If a team loses yardage, they must still cross the original yard line established before obtaining a first down.

15. Passes

All players are eligible to receive passes. Any defensive player may intercept a pass. An incomplete forward pass is returned to the line of scrimmage even though it may have been preceded by a successful lateral pass. A forward pass may be thrown from any point behind the line of scrimmage. A player may not pass the ball to himself. On an incomplete lateral pass, the ball is dead at the point it hits the ground. A team may throw as many forward passes as desired, as long as each pass is thrown from behind the line of scrimmage. A pass may not cross the line of scrimmage and be thrown back over the line and thrown forward again.

A completed pass is when a receiver comes down with the ball with at least one foot down in bounds (like college football).

16. Downed Ball

A ball carrier is considered down and the ball dead when an opposing player secures possession of the ball carrier's flag belt. The defensive player should stand as close to the point of possession of the flag belt as possible. In the event of a flag belt dropping without being

pulled, the runner is not down until the defender has touched the ball carrier with one hand anywhere.

17. Dead Ball

An incomplete sideward or backward pass is a dead ball. The same applies to a pass or snap from the center which is fumbled. In both cases, a loss of down is the result. The rule for fumbles applies. The ball is dead where it first hits the player or possession is lost.

18. Fumble

Fumbles are declared dead the instant the ball hits the ground and goes to the team who fumbles.

In the case of forward fumbles, the ball is placed where the player fumbled. If fumbled backward, the ball is placed where it hits.

19. Punting

Fourth down punts must be declared and the defense cannot rush. Quick kicks are illegal and will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

Rookie & Pee Wee Leagues ONLY: Coaches may opt to place the ball two (2) lines from the line of scrimmage or if across mid-field on the extra point line instead of punting procedures.

20. Center

The center must snap the ball between the legs. Once the center hikes the ball he or she cannot be given the ball back from the quarterback by just touching the quarterback's hand. Once the center has crossed the line of scrimmage they may receive a pass from the quarterback.

21. Quarterback

The quarterback may hand-off the ball to the side or behind them, but not in front of them to the center. He or she may throw to anyone including the center once the center has crossed the scrimmage line.

22. Inadvertent Whistle

If the whistle blows inadvertently before the ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage, the down is replayed. If the ball carrier is past the line of scrimmage, the offensive team will have the option of accepting the play at the time of the whistle or replaying the down. *If, in the judgment of an official, the ball carrier would have scored had there been no whistle, a touchdown may be awarded.*

23. 17 Point Rule

This rule applies to the Senior Division ONLY. If a team is ahead by 17 or more points at the 2 minute warning in the 4th quarter, the game is considered over.

XIII. PENALTY DEFINITIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

For the purpose of this section:

LOS = Line of Scrimmage **POI** = Point of Infraction

Previous Spot – The spot where the ball was last snapped (LOS) or where ball was last kicked off.

Succeeding Spot – The spot where the ball is next snapped or kicked off.

The basic spot in a loose ball play is the previous spot. The basic spot on a running play is the end of the run. A loose ball play includes all action from the time of the snap until a legally thrown ball is caught, intercepted, or incomplete. A running play includes 1) any run or scramble BEHIND the LOS in which the ball carrier does not throw a pass or pitch, and 2) BEYOND the LOS, any run and /or any action during any part of a run after a catch of a pass, kick, or punt. On kick-off and punts, any action before the catch is part of a loose ball play.

1. Illegal Pass

A forward pass or forward lateral beyond the LOS, or a player passing the ball behind the LOS after the player or ball had previously crossed the LOS.

Penalty: 5 yards, loss of down and play continues

2. Hurdling

Jumping and making contact with a defensive player in a set position. It is not hurdling when a ball carrier jumps over a defensive player on the ground (to prevent injury).

Penalty: 5 yards, same down, and play continues

3. Flag Guarding

Dropping a shoulder toward a defender or using an arm to prevent a defender from detaching a flag belt.

Penalty: 10 yards, same down, and play continues

4. Spinning

A ball carrier that rotates his or her body more than 180 degrees in an attempt to avoid having their flag belt pulled. A ball carrier may spin 180 degrees or less, take at least two running strides (backwards) and continue to spin, providing the second rotation is not more than 180 degrees.

Penalty: 10 yards, same down, and play continues

5. Charging / Ducking Head into Defender

A ball carrier must attempt to avoid contact with a defensive player. Deliberately charging an opponent will not be tolerated and will result in a penalty.

Penalty: 10 yards, same down, and play continues

6. Extending Ball from Body/Diving

A ball carrier may not attempt to gain additional yardage by extending the ball from their body or diving in the vicinity of a defensive player. A ball carrier may attempt to do this in order to gain a first down or break the plane of the goal line. **Exception:** A defensive player can dive to pull a flag belt.

Penalty: 10 yards, same down, and play continues

7. Illegal Screen

Screening is defined as maintaining a position between a defender and the ball carrier. Moving screens are not allowed, screening must be stationary. A player setting a screen, must set his or her screen four (4) yards or approximately (2) running strides from a defender. His or her arms and hands must remain straight down by their sides. No part of their body, except their feet, shall be in contact with the ground throughout the screen. Sticking a knee, hip, foot, elbow, etc. out and making contact is an illegal block. This would also apply to an illegal pick by an offensive player who is not the primary receiver.

Penalty: 10 yards, same down, and play continues

8. Illegal Block

Not only does this apply to the definition of an illegal screen as described below, it would also apply to a stationary block where the “blocker” uses his hands, arms, elbows, hips or any part of the body to make contact with or impede the progress of a defensive player attempting to “down” the ball carrier or rush the quarterback.

Penalty: 10 yards, same down, and play continues

9. Illegal Participation

This violation occurs when an offensive player steps out of bounds or touches the side line/end line during a pass route, returns to the playing field and touches or catches a thrown ball.

Penalty: 10 yards, same down, and play continues

10. Offensive Holding

This violation occurs when an offensive player impedes the progress of a defensive player from making a play on the ball carrier, the quarterback or defending a pass. Grabbing the shirt, shorts, or any part of the body, would be construed offensive holding.

Penalty: 10 yards, same down, and play continues

11. Illegal Procedure

This violation may include an offensive player more than fifteen (15) yards from the ball prior to the snap, excluding the player in motion. A violation occurs when the center does not snap the ball between his legs or when he carries the ball from the line of scrimmage. Another example of illegal procedure occurs when more than one player is in motion.

Penalty: 5 yards, same down, and play continues

12. Illegal Motion

This violation occurs when a player in motion moves in the direction of his opponent's goal prior to the snap of the ball. However, the player in motion may move parallel to the line of scrimmage or in the direction of his own goal before the snap of the ball.

Penalty: 5 yards, same down, and play continues

13. False Start (offense) / Encroachment (defense)

This violation occurs when there is any movement by the offense or defense, excluding a player in motion, before the snap of the ball. Once detected, the official should sound their whistle immediately to kill the play and stop subsequent action that could result in injury.

Penalty: 5 yards, same down, dead ball

14. Off Sides

This violation occurs when a player (offense or defense) lines up with any part of his body extending over the line of scrimmage or the defensive rush line. This is a live ball infraction with play continuing. The defending team has the option of taking the result of the play or penalty from the previous spot. **PLEASE NOTE: Do not confuse this infraction with a false start. Do not sound your whistle once the violation occurs.** Remember to exercise preventative officiating in your attempt to have the player(s) back up prior to the snap of the ball.

Penalty: 5 yards, same down, and play continues

15. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Unsportsmanlike conduct is defined as inappropriate behavior, verbal or other, toward an opposing player, coach or official and may result in ejection from the game. Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to cursing, explicit gestures, throwing equipment, spiking the ball, punching or kicking the bench, etc. This applies to all players and coaches.

If ejected, a coach and/or player must leave the field within one (1) minute or the game will be forfeited. **Please Note:** If a coach and/or player are ejected, they will be suspended for the next game and may be removed for the remainder of the season depending on the severity of the offense.

In addition, any parent or spectator that displays unsportsmanlike conduct toward an opposing player, coach or official will be ejected from the playing area. If the parent or spectator does not comply within one (1) minute, the associated team will forfeit the game. Any player, coach or fan that threatens an official will be subject to suspension for the remainder of the season.

Penalty: 15 yards, succeeding spot (if flagrant, automatic 1st down also)

16. Unnecessary Roughness

An illegal action where a player uses methods beyond what is necessary to “block” or pull the flag of another player.

Offensive Penalty: 15 yards, live ball, loss of down

Defensive Penalty: 15 yards from succeeding spot, live ball, automatic 1st down

17. Pass Interference

Defensive Pass Interference – Making intentional physical contact with an intended receiver after a ball has been thrown and before it has been touched by the receiver, in order to hinder or prevent a catch. The offensive team may accept the result of the play or the penalty.

Penalty: Ball is placed at the spot of interference, first down. If penalty occurs in the end zone, the ball will be placed on the one yard line, first down.

Offensive Pass Interference - This violation occurs when a player on offense interferes with a defensive players attempt to intercept a pass. Offensive pass interference does not apply on a ball that is overthrown or not catchable. However, such action could result in unnecessary roughness against the offense.

Penalty: 15 yards, previous spot, loss of down. **If interference occurs on the 4th down and penalty is accepted, after measurement, the ball belongs to the defense.**

18. Spiking the ball

This violation occurs when a player intentionally spikes the ball after completing a play.

Penalty: 15 yards, same down, and play continues. A warning for unsportsmanlike is issued. If this occurs after a touchdown or a two-point conversion, the 15 yards will be accessed on the kickoff.