

YOUTH FOOTBALL

BYLAWS





For Office Use Only:



Date Created:



Created By:







The purpose of youth sports is to provide an enjoyable experience for each youth participant, while developing character, skills, sportsmanship, and to promote good will among all teams and individuals. Although sports are competitive by nature, our intentions are to place less emphasis on winning and more on promoting lifetime physical activity and health for each participant.

# Overview

The Youth Football leagues are governed by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) & NFL Flags and these rules will apply to the bylaws except as modified herein.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **League**   | **Ages**   | **Weight Restrictions &****Scoring** | **Length of Game**    | **Field Size**   | **Ball Size**   |
| 6U FLAG | 5-6  | No Score Kept  | 1st Half – 20:00 (Running Clock)***Halftime – 5:00***2nd Half – 20:00 (Running Clock) | Standard HS PlayingField30 yards x 70 yards | Equivalent Wilson K2  |
| 8U FLAG | 7-8  | Touchdown: 6 points 2. PAT (point after touchdown) 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (10-yard line) • A 1 point extra point is pass only; 2 point extra point can be a run or pass  | 1st Half – 20:00 (Running Clock) ***Halftime – 5:00*** 2nd Half – 20:00 (Running Clock)  | Standard HS PlayingField30 yards x 70 yards | Equivalent Wilson K2  |
| 10U FLAG | 9-10  | Touchdown: 6 points 2. PAT (point after touchdown) 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (10-yard line) • A 1 point extra point is pass only; 2 point extra point can be a run or pass | 1st Half – 20:00 (Running Clock) ***Halftime – 5:00*** 2nd Half – 20:00 (Running Clock)  | Standard HS Playing Field 30 yards x 70 yards  | Equivalent Wilson TDJ  |
| 12U FLAG  | 11-12  | Touchdown: 6 points 2. PAT (point after touchdown) 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (10-yard line) • A 1 point extra point is pass only; 2 point extra point can be a run or pass | 1st Half – 20:00 (Running Clock) ***Halftime – 5:00*** 2nd Half – 20:00 (Running Clock)  | Standard HS PlayingField30 yards x 70 yards | Equivalent Wilson TDY  |
| 8U Tackle | 7-8 | Unlimited | 1st Quarter – 9:002nd Quarter –9:00***Halftime – 5:00***3rd Quarter – 9:004th Quarter – 9:00 | Standard HS PlayingField360ft x 160ft | Equivalent Wilson K2  |
| 10U Tackle  | 9-10  | Unlimited  |  1st Quarter – 9:00 2nd Quarter –9:00  ***Halftime – 5:00*** 3rd Quarter – 9:00  4th Quarter – 9:00  | Standard HS PlayingField360ft x 160ft | Equivalent Wilson TDJ  |
| 12U Tackle  | 11-12  | Unlimited  | 1st Quarter – 9:00 2nd Quarter –9:00  ***Halftime – 5:00*** 3rd Quarter – 9:00  4th Quarter – 9:00  | Standard Playing Field 360ft x 160ft  | Equivalent Wilson TDY  |

# Age Classification

Age determined on October 1 of the current season.

***\*Five year-olds must turn 5 by August 1 of the current season\****

* **6U**
	+ 6 Years Old: 10/1/17 - 9/30/18
* **8U**-
	+ 7 Years Old: 10/1/16 - 9/30/17
	+ 8 Years Old: 10/1/15 - 9/30/16
* **10U**
	+ 9 Years Old: 10/1/14- 9/20/15
	+ 10 Years Old: 10/1/13 - 9/30/14
* **12U**
	+ 11 Years Old: 10/1/12 - 9/30/13
	+ 12 Years Old: 10/1/11 - 9/30/12

# All Play Rule

Every player present and in uniform must play a minimum amount per game. Please see the list below for league specific play requirements. Coaches must abide by below requirements and are strongly encouraged to distribute any remaining playing time equally amongst all players.

1. Every player present and in uniform must play a minimum of five (5) plays per half for a total of ten (10) per game (regular season, playoffs, and bowl games). These plays do not have to be consecutive. A play must meet the following stipulations:
	* The play must be a live-action play in which all players are considered “live” and contact is allowed.
	* The play must have no dead-ball penalty that causes a replay of the down.
	* All players must be involved in active plays with no intent to minimize the action or integrity of the plays in the game.
	* Kickoffs, extra points, onside kicks, and punts do not count toward a player’s five-play per-half minimum.
2. If any player has been benched for medical or disciplinary reasons, the official scorer, the opposing coach, and the official must be notified of the absence.
3. The only players who are exempt from the All Play Rule are:
	* Players with health restrictions that do not allow them to play the minimum amount.
	* Players who become injured during the game and cannot play the minimum amount. *• It is the responsibility of the head coach to ensure that the Parks and Recreation scorekeeper, opposing head coach, and official are notified, prior to each game, of any player that is restricted due to health reasons.*
4. Penalty for failure to comply with the “All Play Rule” will result in the following:
	* **1st occurrence – Head Coach Suspension – One (1) Game**
	* **2nd occurrence – Head Coach Suspension – Two (2) Games**
	* **3rd occurrence – Head Coach Suspension – Suspended for the remainder of season**

# Teams and Rosters

Team rosters must be filed in the recreation office complete with the following information:

1. Team rosters must be completely and accurately filled in (preferably typed) and signed by the athletic director to verify the information is correct.
	* Rosters may be mailed, hand delivered or emailed to Parks and Recreation. It is the responsibility of the athletic director to ensure rosters are received by Parks and Recreation.
	* If a roster is not received by the due date, then the team may not be scheduled in the league.
	* Players may **NOT** be added to the official roster after the official deadline ***Aug 5th***; unless a valid reason and approved by Parks and Recreation. An updated roster must be submitted to Parks and Recreation by 5:00 p.m. on the day requested.
2. Players may only appear on one (1) team roster.
3. Players must reside in the City of Roanoke and play for the zone provider that services the zone in which he or she lives.
	* Athletic directors shall notify Parks and Recreation if a player has been granted a release to another zone provider due to a roster/age group being filled, lack of a team, etc.
4. Zone providers must have 14 – 32 players. Providers having 33 or more players in any age division must split the group and have two (2) teams.
5. Roster changes will not be accepted over the phone and will not be accepted until all the information is complete.
6. Transfer of players during the season is prohibited. Dual participation is not allowed in any City of Roanoke or surrounding area parks and recreation department league. A player must play for the team where his or her name was first listed on a roster.
7. New players cannot be added after the first game.
8. All teams must be sponsored by a recognized zone provider.
9. Any player(s) found to be ineligible will be removed from the team and all games played in by the ineligible player will be forfeited.
10. Any coach listed on the roster must be cleared through the City of Roanoke Background Screening Policy.

# Player Eligibility

1. If a child attending a Roanoke City Public School is suspended from school, he/she will not be eligible to play for or attend his/her team’s game(s) until the suspension is over.
	* Explanation: Suspended children are considered trespassing if they return to any Roanoke City Public School prior to their suspension being over.
2. Every child that participates must have a copy of their original birth certificate on file with their recreation club. If a player’s age is protested, the team/recreation club will have 48 hours to produce an original birth certificate.
	* Penalty: Player(s) is/are ineligible to participate until documentation has been submitted to and verified by Roanoke Parks and Recreation.
3. All participants must live/reside in the City of Roanoke and play for the zone in which he/she lives. - In an effort to ensure each child has the opportunity to play, zone providers/athletic directors may grant a seasonal release to play for another zone provider (both zone providers must agree to the release before it is final). A release may only be granted for the following reasons:
	* + The zone provider does not have enough age-eligible participants in a specific age division/league to form a team.
		+ All of the teams in the child’s age division are full or have reached the maximum roster size.
		+ The zone provider and parents/guardians of the child mutually agree it is in the best interest of the child to be granted a release.
4. Any overseas-born child must include a signed letter from a parent or guardian that is notarized when the child’s birth certificate is not available.
5. Older players of a division may play up one division with parental consent.
	* Example: In the Flag division, a 6 year-old may play in the 8U division with parental consent, but a 5 year-old may not.
6. Commission of fraud by the player, coach, or zone provider using an assumed name, falsifying a birth certificate or roster, or giving false information to an official or Roanoke Parks and Recreation will result in a suspension for the party that falsified information for up to five (5) years and disqualification of the team for one (1) full season.

# Dual Participation

1. Dual participation in travel, school, and/or area recreational leagues is allowed but is strongly discouraged by the Department. All teams with dual participants must disclose to the Department the name, jersey number, and amount of dual participants on the team.

# Coaches

1. All coaches (head and assistants) must be cleared through the City of Roanoke’s Background Screening Policy and have his or her approved coaches badge on in order to sit on the bench. Coaches should show their badge to the scorekeepers and officials prior to each game.
	* Penalty for failure to comply: • 1st occurrence – warning
		+ 2nd occurrence – ejection from the game
2. Head coaches must be at least 21 years old.
	* If the head coach cannot be present, the team must be supervised by an approved adult at least 21 years of age if the assistant coach is not 21 years of age.
3. A maximum of five (5) coaches are permitted on the sideline, during games, at any given time.
4. Only approved city of Roanoke Parks & Recreation coaches can:
	* Be on the sidelines (inside the white line or fence) and field during the game.
		+ Coaches must wear approved badges, at all times, during games to be allowed on the

Field

* + Be on the field at halftime (in the huddle).
	+ Determine plays to be run and execution of plays. - Call a timeout.
1. Coaches are responsible for the actions of their fans and are obligated to control them. Coaches shown to incite fans will be subject to suspension.
	* Coaches needing assistance from site personnel or officials to control their fans must notify Parks and Recreation.
2. Only one coach will be the representative and speak with/question an official’s call. - Penalty for failure to comply:

• 1st occurrence – official will report warning to coach and scorekeeper • 2nd occurrence – consequence dealt will be at the discretion of the officials.

1. Coaches must remain in the designated coach’s area. - Penalty for failure to comply:

• 1st occurrence – official will report warning to coach and scorekeeper • 2nd occurrence – consequence dealt will be at the discretion of the officials.

# Equipment

1. Uniform and Equipment
	* Each player must wear an approved helmet and facemask, visible colored mouthpiece, shoulder pads, football pants (with complete pads), athletics supporter, and team jersey with a number (on the front and back).
	* Jerseys must be tucked in at all times.
	* Each player will be assigned matching numbered jerseys. At no time are these jerseys to be worn by another player.
		+ Any jersey number change must be reported to Parks and Recreation and listed on the participation sheet that is turned in to the Parks and Recreation scorekeeper prior to each game.
	* The number should be at least four (4) inches high.
		+ Teams must have matching jerseys with the number on the front and back by their 2nd scheduled game of the season.
	* Players may only wear the numbered uniform that has been assigned to them. Players will be ineligible to play in a game until they have their assigned team uniform to compete in unless otherwise communicated to the scorekeeper, opposing team, and officials.
2. Shoes
	* Cleats must be rubber-soled or rubber-cleated shoes only. Metal cleats are prohibited.
3. Illegal Equipment – Per NFHS

No player shall participate while wearing illegal equipment. This applies to any equipment, which in the opinion of the official is dangerous, confusing, or inappropriate. Illegal equipment shall include, but is not limited to:

* + Hard and unyielding items (guards, cast, braces, etc.) on the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, or upper arm unless padded with closed cell, slow recovery foam padding no less than half-inch thick. - Knee braces worn over the pants
	+ Tinted eye shield
	+ Jewelry
		- Religious and medical alert jewelry are not considered jewelry. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical alert medal must be taped and made visible
	+ Communication devices (i.e. walkie-talkies, cameras, etc.)

# Practice

Individual or team practice/training sessions are **not** permissible before July 21. There will be no practices held on Sundays.

1. Players must undergo at least one week of practice without pads before they are permitted to practice with pads. The week of practice without pads will begin after they register/their week of practice.
	* EX: If practices begin on 7/25, the players who began on 7/25 may wear pads beginning 8/1. However, if a player starts late and does not begin practice until 8/1, that player will not be permitted to wear pads until 8/8 even though other players have started wearing pads.
2. Practice sessions before school starts
	* Four (4) sessions per week, limit two (2) hours per session, one (1) session per day
3. Practice session after school starts (all leagues):
	* Three (3) sessions per week, limit 1.5 hours per session, one (1) session per day - No more than one (1) practice within 24 hours.
		+ Exemption: Friday/Saturday practices
	* Any coach caught violating these rules will result in the following penalties:
		+ 1st occurrence – written warning from Parks and Recreation
		+ 2nd occurrence – one (1) game suspension

# General Play

1. Game Length – 8U,10U, & 12U Tackle

- 8U 10U & 12U League will play four, nine-minute quarters with a running clock. The clock stops only for penalties, time outs, incomplete pass, and injuries. The clock stops for all violations during the last two minutes of each quarter for all leagues

1. Playing Field
	* Standard high school playing field will be used for 8U 10U & 12U (360 by 160 feet).
	* Fencing will line/mark the sideline and team area from the spectators’ area of all game fields.

 • The area between the field sideline and the fencing will be considered a restricted area For players and approved coaches/non-players only. Any team spectator in this restricted area will result in the following:

* + - * + 1st occurrence – Team and spectator will be given a warning
				+ 2nd occurrence – There will be a 15-yard penalty enforced against the spectator’s team.
	+ Coaches/non-players and players are required to stay between the 30 yard lines.
	+ down marker, yard markers and chains shall be placed on the home sideline.
		- * It is the responsibility of the home team head coach to supply three (3) adults (must be 18+) to work both the down marker and chains.
			* Chain crew members are not permitted to coach or taunt.

o Penalty for failure of the chain crew to comply with standards will result in a fifteen (15) yard unsportsmanlike penalty.

1. Scoring – 10U & 12U only.
	* Touchdown – Six (6) points
	* Field Goal – Three (3) points
	* Safety – Two (2) points
	* Point after Touchdown (PAT)
		+ - Kick – Two (2) points
			- Pass/Run – One (1) point
2. Coin Toss
	* The winner of the coin toss shall have first choice of options for the first half or to defer and have first choice for the second half. The loser shall have the first choice of options for the half the winner of the toss did not select. The options for each half shall be:
		+ - To choose whether his/her team will kick or receive.
			- To choose the goal his/her will defend.
			- The team not having the first choice of options for a half shall exercise the remaining option.
3. Game Play
	* Kicking (XFL Kickoff)
		+ - Kickoffs – 40 yard line
			- The Kickers kicks on the 40.
			- Kickoff team is on the 30 while the receiving team is on the 25. Ball is not in play until the fielder has complete possession.
			- Neither receiving nor kicking team is to move until the fielder is in control of the football. If the ball rolls in the end zone that is touchback the play is dead and the ball will be placed on the 25yard line
			- Following a Safety – 20-yard line.
			- Onside kicks - No live-kick onside kicks are allowed. Instead, a team may elect to "onside kick" by having one 4th and 20 play from their own 40-yard line. If that team converts the play, they retain possession and clock runs like a regular down. If that team does not, the opposing team takes control (turnover on downs). In the 4th quarter only the trailing team can attempt this "onside kick"
			- No rushing on the punter allowed. Play is live as soon as punter kicks the ball.

* + Field Goals
		- * Missed field goals are notreturnable by the defense. The ball will be dead upon hitting the ground.
			* 10U
				+ Ball will be moved in, 10 yards from the spot. o No rushing or contact made by the defense. o The only live players are the snapper, holder, and kicker.
				+ The offense shall have Ten (10) seconds to attempt a kick from the time the ball is snapped. The defense must take knee during all field goal attempts and make no attempt to block the kick. Fake kicks are not permitted.

 • 12U

o Ball will be spotted on the line of scrimmage as per VHSL regulations. All players are considered live. The offense shall have Five (5) seconds to attempt kick.

* + Point after Touchdown (PAT)

 • Kicking attempt 10U, 12U – The ball will be placed on the goal line.

o 10U – The offensive team shall have 10 seconds from the time the ball is snapped to

attempt a kick. If a kicking attempt has not taken place within 10 seconds, the play shall be ruled dead. No rushing or contact is to be made by the defensive team on kicking attempts. Fake kicks are not permitted. o 12U – All players are live per NFHS regulations. If a kicking attempt has not taken, place within 5 seconds the play shall be ruled dead.

* + - * Pass/Run Attempt: Ball will be placed three (3) yards from the goal line. o Intercepted passes or fumbles from the offense are **not** returnable by the defense
			* Overtime – 10U, 12U o Flip a coin to determine possession. o Maximum of two (2) alternating possessions from the 10-yard line (4 downs) for each team.

One time-out for each team per possession (4 downs). o If tied after two (2) overtime attempts (per team), the game will remain a tie.

Do not flip field use one end zone for both teams.

* + Mercy/24 Point Rule – 10U, 12U
		- * If a team is ahead by 24 points or more in the first half, the team that is ahead will kickoff from their opponents’ ten (10) yard line. This is mandatory in the first half.
			* In the second half, the trailing team has the option of having the ball kicked-off from their ten (10) yard line or taking the ball on their ten (10) yard line.
			* If the team that is trailing does not score, the team that is ahead will take possession of the ball on their five (5) yard line.
			* The clock will run continuously during the third quarter and the first part of the fourth quarter unless a team or official calls a time-out.
			* When a team becomes less than 24 points behind, the clock will return to normal.
	+ Creeping Linebacker Defined – 10U, 12U
		- * Linebacker may not walk/creep towards line of scrimmage prior to snap.
			* Linebacker must be in set position prior to snap. No enticing the snap.
			* Linebacker must start play two (2) yards behind the defensive line.
			* After the ball is snapped the linebacker may go into the backfield to make a tackle. (i.e., reading the ball)
			* 12U – A creeping linebacker is not allowed if a team is up by two touchdowns or more.

1. 10U, 12U League specific Rules
	* No rushing of the punter, Play is live as soon as punter kicks the ball.
	* Coaches must notify officials that the team’s intentions are to punt the ball on fourth down. The defense cannot rush the punter until an attempt has been made.
	* A maximum of six (6) defensive linemen can be used outside of the 20-yard lines with no blitzing or “creeping” linebacker. Penalty is 5 yards.
	* Thirty-five (35) second play-clock will be in effect.
	* A player is to never line up over center on long snaps.
	* You may have a nose guard in the red zone for goal line defense.
	* Onside kicks - No live-kick onside kicks are allowed. Instead, a team may elect to "onside kick" by having one 4th and 20 play from their own 40-yard line. If that team converts the play, they retain possession and clock runs like a regular down. If that team does not, the opposing team takes control (turnover on downs). In the 4th quarter only the trailing team can attempt this "onside kick"

6. Playoff Seeding Factors – 10U & 12U - Best regular season record.

- Tiebreakers will be determined by which team won the final regular season game played between the two teams that are tied. - Coin toss.

**Flag Specific Rules**

1. Game

* + 1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. The visiting team calls the toss. One coach may assist players in the toss.
		2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense.
		3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 10-yard line and has five (5) downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has five (5) downs to score a touchdown.
			- 1. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, on 4 downs, and elect to “punt” on the 5th down, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 10-yard line. If the offensive teams goes for it on their 5th down and does not cross midfield, the opposing team will start its possession from the spot.
				2. If the offense fails to score, after crossing midfield, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 10-yard line.

iv. Offensive teams MUST declare their intent to punt or snap the ball prior to the expiration of the 30-second Play Clock.

b. Equipment

* + 1. City of Roanoke Parks and Recreation Department will provide flags to be used on game days. Flags are to be turned back in at the conclusion of each game.
		2. All Players MUST wear mouth guards. iii. Wilson K2 footballs will be provided by the City of Roanoke Parks and Recreation Department.
		3. Players may wear close-toed shoes or cleats. Cleats must be rubber or plastic, cleats with exposed metal are never allowed and must be removed.
		4. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads and knee pads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
		5. Players must remove all jewelry, hats and do-rags. Winter beanies are allowed.
		6. Players may wear soft shell helmets but they must be secured at ALL times while on the playing field.
		7. Players’ jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants if they hand below the belt line.
		8. We recommend players wear shorts or pants that do not have pockets. Shorts or pants with belt loops or pockets must be taped. Games will not be delayed for a player to tape up pockets.

1. Flag belts cannot be the same color as shorts or pants. c.

Field

i. The field dimensions are 70 yards by 30 yards which includes two 10-yard end zones, and a midfield line-to-gain. No-Run Zones precede each goal line by 5 yards.

* + 1. No-Run Zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the No-Run Zones, teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
		2. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds. d. Timing
		3. Regular Season Games are played with two continuous 20 minute halves. The clock stops only for timeouts, injuries, and the Officials discretion.
		4. Halftime is five (5) minutes.
		5. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. iv. Each team has two 30-second timeouts per game. These timeouts do not rollover.
		6. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
		7. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.

 e. Scoring

i. Neither the 6U nor 8U Leagues will keep score. f. Coaches

* 1. Coaches are expected to adhere to the City of Roanoke Parks and Recreation Department philosophies, coaching guidelines, and code of conduct.
	2. Up to five (5) coaches are allowed per team on the sidelines. Only two (2) of those five are allowed in the huddle when their team is on the field. g. Live Ball/Dead Ball
		1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
		2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.

1. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.

* + 1. A player who gains possession of the ball in the air is considered in bounds as long as the first foot or other body part contacts the ground in the field of play.
		2. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
		3. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
		4. Any official can whistle the play dead.
		5. Play is ruled “dead” when:

1. The ball hits the ground. The ball will be placed at the point in which possession is lost.

* + - * 1. If the ball hits the ground as a result of a bad snap, the ball is then placed where the ball hit the ground.
				2. The ball-carrier’s flag is pulled.
				3. The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.
				4. A touchdown is scored.
				5. The ball-carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground.
				6. The ball-carrier’s flag falls out.
				7. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of only one or no flags.
				8. The 7-second pass clock expires.
				9. Inadvertent whistle
				10. Ball-carrier leaves their feet other than jump cuts, spinning or to avoid a downed player on the field of play.

i. **NOTE**: There are no fumbles. The ball becomes a dead ball. (If the ball is fumbled forwards then it will be spotted where the ball carrier lost possession.

viii. If inadvertent whistle occurs the offense has two options:

* + - * 1. Take the ball where the whistle blew and the down is consumed
				2. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage

a. If it occurs on the last play of the half or game, the offense will be awarded on untimed down and given those two options.

ix. A team is allowed to use a timeout to question an official’s rule interpretation. If the official’s ruling is correct, the team will be charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the timeout will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.

* + 1. Running
		2. The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled, **not** the location of the ball when the flag is pulled.
		3. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball unless rushed by a defender. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
		4. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offensive may use multiple handoffs.

1. “Center Sneak” plays are not allowed. The QB is not allowed to handoff to the center of the first handoff of the play.

* + 1. Absolutely NO pitches or laterals of any kind.
		2. No-Run Zones are located 5 yards before each end zone and are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE.
		3. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
		4. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind, or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush. viii. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.

ix. Spinning/Jump Cuts are allowed, put players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.

1. Players spinning out of control will be called for flag guarding.

x. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced. xi. No blocking or “screening” is allowed at any time. xii. Offensive players in close proximity of the ball-carrier may run with the play but may not block or screen defensive players or assist the ball-carrier in any way.

xiii. Flag obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player’s hips and free form obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

1. Passing

i. All passes must be thrown with one hand from behind the line of scrimmage.

* + - * 1. Passes behind the line of scrimmage are legal.
				2. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. These passes must go beyond the line of scrimmage.
		1. Shovel passes are allowed.
		2. The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock”. If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the

line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second clock, rule is no longer in effect.

1. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.

1. Receiving
	* 1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
		2. Only one player is allowed to motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted toward the line of scrimmage.
		3. A player must have at least one foot or other body part in bound, contacting the ground first.
		4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
		5. Interceptions are returnable.

1. Rushing the Passer
	* 1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Players who are rushing the quarterback must wait a minimum of three (3) seconds before they can rush the quarterback. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.
		2. Once the ball is handed off, the five-yard rule and three-second rule are no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
		3. Once a QB is rushed, they are then allowed to rush the football. iv. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line five yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.

1. A legal rush is:

Any rush from a point from a point 5-yards from the line of scrimmage.

A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback **or** if the quarterback does not hand the ball off and three (3) seconds have passed.

2. A penalty may be called if:

The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or the three-second rule – illegal rush = 5yards from the line of scrimmage and first down.

Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides = 5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down.

3. Special Circumstances

* + - 1. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the sevensecond clock in effect.
			2. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play • Players rushing the QB may attempt to block a pass; however, contact to the QB, unless ruled incidental by the official, would result in a roughing the passer penalty.
		1. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap.
		2. A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball will be spotted where the flag is pulled.

1. If a safety occurs, the opposing team will take possession at the 10 yard line. l.

 Flag Pulling

* + 1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
		2. It is illegal to dive, tackle, hold, or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags. It will be at the Officials discretion if incidental contact has occurred.
		3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier’s possession at any time.
		4. If a player’s flag inadvertently falls off during a play while that player has possession, the player is down immediately and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag is pulled.
		5. If a player who has one or no flags in their belt takes possession of the ball, the play is dead at that spot on the field.
		6. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
		7. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender’s access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm, or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

1. Formations

i. Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The QB may lineup “under center” but otherwise must be off the line of scrimmage.

* + - * 1. Teams may shift formations prior to the snap as long as they are set for at least one (1) second before the ball is snapped.
				2. One player at a time may go in motion at least one (1) yard behind the line of scrimmage.
		1. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
		2. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

1. A direct snap may also take place if the QB chooses to set up under center.

# Unsportsmanlike Conduct

1. No player, coach, or non-player shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner towards officials and Parks and Recreation personnel before, during, or after a contest. Examples include but not limited to:
	* Baiting or taunting acts which provoke ill will.
	* Using profanity, insulting, or vulgar language or gestures.
	* Kicking the ball, other than during a legal kick.
	* Refusing to comply with an official or Parks and Recreation personnel requests.
	* Disrespectfully addressing a player, official, or Parks and Recreation personnel
2. Illegal Contact
	* Examples include but not limited to:
		+ Fighting
		+ Intentional contact with an official or Parks and Recreation personnel.
		+ Charge into or throw an opponent to the ground after he/she is obviously out of the play, or after the ball is clearly dead either in or out of bounds.
		+ Strike an opponent with his/her fist, locked hands, forearm or elbow, nor kick or knee him/her.
		+ Make any other contact with a n opponent which is deemed unnecessary and which incites roughness o Penalty – 15 yards and disqualification and the disqualified person must leave the game site.
3. Penalties – Players, Coaches, Non-Players
	* 15 yards (disqualification if official or Parks and Recreation staff deems the violation worthy of automatic ejection).
	* Two (2) unsportsmanlike penalties by one individual results in a disqualification and the disqualified person must leave the game site.
4. Penalties – Spectators, Parents, etc.
	* Disqualification for the remainder of the current football season.

# Game Etiquette

1. Players waiting to play a later game should not do anything to distract other players that are currently playing in a game and should also remain clear of the playing field while another game is in progress.
2. Parks and Recreation personnel are in charge of the RCPS facilities while in use and are responsible for maintaining a safe and orderly atmosphere, as well as report any misconduct.
	* Parks and Recreation personnel have the authority to remove any and all person(s) from the building.
3. Sportsmanship
	* There shall be no excessive on field team celebrations (i.e. players and coaches leaving the bench, etc.) following a touchdown, score, or conclusion of a game. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the following:
		+ 1st occurrence – 15-yard penalty.
		+ 2nd occurrence – 15-yard penalty and loss of one (1) timeout.

o If the violation occurs at the end of a game, the penalty shall be noted by staff and enforced during the kickoff of the next game.

* + At the conclusion of each game both teams (players and coaches) must meet at midfield and shake hands. Failure to comply with this rule may result in disciplinary actions taken by Parks and Recreation.
1. Complaints regarding players, teams, coaches, field conditions, officials, etc. should be channeled through the zone provider’s athletic director.

# Coach, Player, Spectator Ejection

1. Any coach or player ejected from a game will not be allowed to coach/play or attend his/her team’s next game.
2. Any coach or player ejected from a game for fighting will result in an automatic two (2) game suspension.
	* Fighting can occur before, during, or after any game and can happen during live and dead ball situations.
	* Fighting is an intentional attempt to make any contact with an opponent or teammate outside of the normal course of play. This includes but is not limited to using the fist, hands, arms, legs,

and/or feet to attempt to strike, punch, kick, or push, regardless of whether contact is made.

* + Fighting is also any attempt to instigate a fight by committing an unsportsmanlike act that causes a person to retaliate by fighting.
	+ If a player, coach, or spectator leaves the bench area and displays intent to interact with or start an altercation, it will be considered fighting.
	+ Approved coaches (head or assistant) may leave the bench area to assist in a situation where a fight may have or already has broken out to prevent the situation from escalating. However, they must return to the bench area promptly and not violate any of the above items.
1. Any player ejected from two (2) games in one (1) season must sit out the rest of the season.
	* This person will not be permitted to attend any Roanoke Parks and Recreation youth football games.
2. Any coach ejected from two (2) games in one (1) season will not be allowed to coach the remainder of the season and will face a one (1) year ban from all youth sports.
3. Any player or coach that is ejected from a game must immediately leave the facility and is not allowed to attend games during their suspension. Failure to leave the facility immediately will result in officials forfeiting his/her team’s current game and his/her suspension will be for the remainder of the season.
4. Roanoke Parks and Recreation holds the right to alter suspensions based on the severity of the action.
5. Any spectator that portrays negative sportsmanship or inappropriate actions will be ejected from the game. Any spectator ejected will be banned from attending any Parks and Recreation games for the rest of the season.

# Inclement Weather

1. In the event of rain, coaches and parents may call the Game Cancellation Hotline at 540-853-1196 and information will be given as to the status of the games that day/night. The hotline will be updated by 4:00 p.m. on weekdays or 7:30 a.m. on weekends.
2. After 4:00 p.m., playability of the field will be determined by the umpires at the field. The decision of the umpire will be final. If the first game of the night is canceled due to weather, the second game of the night will also be canceled.
3. Make-up schedules will be posted on the athletics portion of Parks and Recreation’s website

(playroanoke.com) within three (3) business days of the originally scheduled gams and will generally be rescheduled to the end of the league schedule.

1. Lightning Policy
	* Anytime lightning is visible, then all players, coaches, fans and umpires should **take shelter immediately!**
	* Flash (Bang) Method – Count seconds between lightning flash and thunder and divide by 5 – this gives the distance of lightning in miles. If count is 30 seconds or less **take shelter immediately!**
	* The Umpire and Site Supervisor should instruct all players, coaches and fans that danger is present and they should seek shelter immediately. Safe places for shelter would be fully enclosed metal vehicles with windows up, enclosed buildings or the low ground. Seek cover in clumps of bushes. Unsafe shelter areas include all nearby outdoor metallic objects like flag poles, fences, high mast light poles, metal bleachers, etc. AVOID water, AVOID open fields, AVOID using the telephone.
	* If you feel your hair standing on end or hear “crackling noises” you are in lightning’s electric field. Immediately remove metal objects (including baseball cap), place your feet together, duck your head and crouch down with hands on knees.
	* If anyone is struck by lightning **CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY**. People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to handle. Apply CPR immediately if you are qualified to do so.
	* Wait at least **30 minutes** after the last lightning flash before resuming activities.

# Make-Up Games

The Head Coach and/or Athletic Director must give Parks and Recreation a minimum 72-hour notice prior to a cancellation/reschedule notice. Any request under 72 hours will not be rescheduled

1. Games will be postponed when Roanoke City Public Schools are closed. When schools are closed on Friday, games may still be played on Saturday, weather permitting.
2. Coaches should call the Game Cancellation Hotline Number at 540-853-1196 for game cancellation information (in the event of inclement weather). This information will be updated daily by 4:00 pm.
3. Make-up schedules will be emailed and posted online within three (3) business days of the original scheduled games and will generally be placed at the end of the league schedule.

- If games must be re-scheduled in a short amount of time, the coach will receive a phone call from the Athletics Office.

# Protests

Complaints regarding players, teams, coaches, field conditions, officials, etc. should be channeled through the zone provider’s athletic director.

1. Protest of NFHS rules are not permitted.
2. Protest of Roanoke Parks and Recreation local rules are not permitted.
	* If rules are not being properly interpreted, please contact Parks and Recreation staff as soon as possible.
3. Protest of up to three (3) players’ eligibility is permitted per protest. Eligibility includes non-rostered players, age, city residency, and/or other factors which may affect a player’s eligibility.
4. How to protest:
	* The athletic director shall submit a protest in writing (typed or emailed) within 48 hours of the game completion to the parks and recreation department.
	* The $50.00 filing fee, which will be returned if the protest is upheld by the Youth Athletics Review Board, should accompany the following information:
		+ Date
		+ Time
		+ Location
		+ Names of officials, scorekeepers, teams, and coaches
		+ Justification of protest (any knowledge why the child may be ineligible)
	* The zone provider being protested must provide Parks and Recreation with all necessary documents within 48 hours of being notified.
	* Birth certificates submitted to Parks and Recreation must be an original copy with a seal. Any copy other than the original will not be accepted.
5. Penalties:
	* Player(s) is/are ineligible to participate until all documentation has been submitted to and verified by Parks and Recreation.
	* If a player or players are found to be ineligible, all games participated in by the illegal participant(s) will be forfeited in the official Parks and Recreation standings.

# Concussion Management

1. No athlete shall return to play or practice on the same day of a concussion.
2. A parent or guardian should have any athlete suspected of having a concussion evaluated by an appropriate healthcare professional that day.
3. Any athlete with a concussion must have medical clearance (in writing) from an authorized and licensed healthcare professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.

- Written clearance should be turned into/filed with Parks and Recreation and the zone provider’s athletic director prior to returning to any practice or game.

1. After written clearance, it is suggested that the zone provider monitor the situation closely for the return of any signs or symptoms related to concussions.

For further details, please see the “NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion” at **www.nfhs.org**