

North Tonawanda

2020 Flag Football Rules

Divisions:

3rd – 5th Grade Boys

6th – 8th Grade Boys

5th – 8th Grade Girls



Website:

<https://www.ntyouthcenter.com/football>

Twitter: @NTYouthCenter

Facebook: North Tonawanda Youth Center

Email: mbernas@northtonawanda.org

I. **Mission Statement**

The main objectives of the North Tonawanda Parks & Recreation Youth Flag Football League are based upon providing a positive and fun atmosphere for youth athletes to learn and improve on the fundamentals of football in a competitive environment that emphasizes teamwork and sportsmanship.

This will be accomplished by:

- Maximizing playing time by limiting team sizes.
- Coaching with positive reinforcement and an emphasis on building confidence.
- Teaching the fundamentals of football in a fun and positive manner.
- Encouraging competitiveness without sacrificing sportsmanship or teamwork.
- Providing a socially safe and sanitary play experience

II. **Sportsmanship**

1. Good sportsmanship applies to all players, coaches, umpires and spectators. Everyone is expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship.
2. Smoking, drinking, and the use of illegal drugs is prohibited within the vicinity of the fields. The Recreation Department may take further action against the offender if warranted, such as a suspension.
3. The use of abusive language will NOT be tolerated from the players, coaches or spectators. Immediate ejection from the playing area will result from such actions. The Recreation Department may take further action against the offender if warranted.
4. Coaches utilizing strategies that are not in the best interest of the development of the league participants may be released from the coaching position by the Recreation Department.

III. **General Format, and Rules** (Rule changes denoted in red)

- A. The NT Youth, Parks and Recreation will notify coaches and parents of rainouts. The Recreation Department will reschedule postponed games if possible. Updates will be provided on our website <https://www.ntyouthcenter.com/football>, Facebook page, (<https://www.facebook.com/NTYouthCenter/>) Twitter accounts (@NTYouthCenter), and, via email and text blasts..
- B. All games will start at the designated times. Game time is start time.
- C. We will use a Flag Football format
- D. 5 on 5 play

- E. If a team is short-handed, game format will be decreased to 4 on 4 to ensure a fair game.
- F. Team rosters will be comprised of 7-8 players.
- G. No offensive or defensive line play.
- H. Blocking is not allowed - players on the offensive team are not allowed to block for teammates once the ball is into the hands of a child player.
 - a. If players block, regardless of intent, it is a penalty.
 - b. Offensive players should freeze after their teammate has the ball.
 - c. Teams have the option of running hand-offs and utilizing reverses and trick-plays, however, blocking on these plays is not allowed.
- I. "No Run Zone"- Any area 10 yards before each end zone designated by appropriate markers.
 - a. Teams will not be permitted to execute run plays within 10 yards of the end zone.
 - b. This prevents teams from easily scoring on power run plays.
- J. Hand-offs are not allowed while in the no-run zone.
- K. No players will be rushing the quarterback.
 - a. The QB only has 10 seconds to get rid of the ball.
 - b. A referee will keep track of the time, and count the time out loud for the QB and players to hear.
 - c. If the QB does not get rid of the ball in 10 seconds, it will be a loss of down.
- L. Games will be comprised of four, 8-minute quarters for regulation.
- M. The games will utilize a running clock except during:
 - a. All dead balls during the final minute of each quarter.
 - b. Temporary stoppages on "punts," for teams to switch sides. Once teams are in the huddle, the clock will start again.
- N. The change to quarters will allow for additional water and breathing breaks along the sideline.
- O. Breaks between the 1st and 3rd quarters will be 90 seconds, and half-time break will be 3 minutes.
- P. 35-second play clock will begin at the completion of each play, starting at the time the ball is returned to the Quarterback.
- Q. Each team has up to 4 downs (unless there is a penalty that states otherwise) to cross the mid-field marker. Once the offensive team has crossed mid-field, the team has up to 4 downs to score (unless there is a penalty that states otherwise).
- R. There are no punts. If a team chooses on fourth down to "punt" the defensive team will receive the ball and start possession on their own 10-yard line.
- S. Overtime rules, similar to college football overtime rules, are in effect.
- T. There are no fumbles. Once the ball hits the ground, it is considered a dead ball.
- U. Players are down once one flag is pulled. If a player physically tackles another player, a penalty will be assessed.
- V. The end of the play will be signified by the whistle of the referee.

IV. **Rosters and playing time:**

- A. Teams are finalized at the start of the season. Once a player plays on one team, they may not quit to play on another team. Only the supervisor can make changes if they deem it is

necessary. Requests of team placement with coaches or players are not guaranteed unless it is to be with a family member.

- B. If a team has 4 players or less at game time the shorthanded team will forfeit the game.
- C. Playing time should be equal for all players, to the best of their coach's abilities. If a player is believed to have played an unequal amount of time, the referee or supervisor reserves the right to equalize the playing time if necessary.

V. Penalties

A. OFFENSE

- a. Delay of Game- When a team fails to snap the ball prior within the 35 second play clock.
Result: 5 yard penalty.
- b. False Start- An offensive player is not set at the snap of the ball.
Result: 5 yard penalty.
- c. Pass Interference: An offensive player pushes or illegally contacts a defender in attempt to gain an advantage to catch the ball
Result: 10 yard penalty and loss of down.

B. DEFENSE

- a. Delay of Game- Any blatant attempt to stall an offense from getting a play off.
Result: Automatic first down awarded to the offense.
- b. Offsides: Crossing the line of scrimmage before the play is initiated.
Result: 5 yard penalty
- c. Pass Interference: Hindering an offensive player from catching the ball by making illegal contact.
Result: Ball placed at the place of the foul; automatic first down
- d. Unsportsmanlike Penalty- When a player demonstrates unsportsmanlike behavior which includes, but is not limited to: foul language, taunting, fighting, excessive force (tackling, shoving), or any other behavior deemed inappropriate. Any player receiving two unsportsmanlike penalties within the same game will be removed from the game and suspended for the next scheduled game.

VI. Sanitation and Social Distancing

- A. Masks/Face coverings must be worn by players and staff at all times except when in specially designated areas along the sidelines.
- B. Socially distanced X's will be painted on the ground. Players are encouraged to bring folding/lawn chairs to place on their X.
- C. When players are sitting on the sidelines, they will be required to sit in their chair.
 - a. While n their chairs, when socially distanced, players do not have to wear their masks.
 - b. Each team will have their own space at each end of the sideline. A distance of 15 to 20 feet will separate the 2 teams
- D. Each team will have their own football to use throughout the game. It will be sanitized by the coach after each drive/ before their team is on offense again.
- E. Footballs will be limited at the field, to reduce players urges on the sidelines to play catch with one another during the game.

- F. An all-time quarterback (rec staff member) will still be utilized throughout each game. After each change in possession, the quarterback must sanitize his/her hands, before touching the new football.
- G. Teams will have flags assigned to their players that will be used by those players only throughout the season. These flags will still be collected by the coaches and laundered accordingly for distribution the following week.
- H. Hand sanitizer stations will be set up on each sideline for players to use.
- I. Only offensive players and referees can return the ball to the line of scrimmage. Defensive players will touch the ball sometimes when deflecting a pass or intercepting a ball, but this will help to limit how often the ball is touched by the opposing team.
- J. Referees will sanitize their hands often throughout the game.
- K. High-fives, fist bumps, hugs, spitting, etc. are, unfortunately, prohibited. If players do so, rec workers will remind the players not to do so immediately, and potentially break up what they are doing. (Improper mask usage, such as not covering the nose, will also be corrected immediately.)
- L. After each break, players will sanitize their hands before re-entering the field.
- M. Players will be encouraged to wear football gloves to reduce direct touching of footballs to skin.
 - a. Gloves will be sprayed down each inning with equipment sanitizing spray.
 - b. This spray will not damage the gloves or hinder their efficacy.

VII. Additional precautions:

- A. Spectators:
 - a. We ask that spectators be limited to 2 people per player.
 - b. A line will be painted around the field to indicate how close spectators can sit to the sidelines. This is to prevent spectators from gathering close to the field or standing along the length of the sidelines throughout the game.
 - c. Spectators should use their best judgement and not congregate in large crowds.
 - d. Spectators are encouraged to spread out and sit atop the “hill” surrounding the field at Felton Field.

Key Contact Information

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