



2025 Sampson County Parks and Recreation Flag Football Local Guidelines & Rules

1:00 **DIVISIONS:**

1:01 **Division 1: 10-12 years**

1:02 **Division 2: 7-9 years**

1:03 **Division 3: 4-6 years**

2:00 **AGE REQUIREMENTS:**

2:01 Division 1

Minimum Age – Ten (10) years old.

Maximum Age – Thirteen (13) years old; September 1st aging date.

2:02 Division 2

Minimum Age – Eight (8) years.

Maximum Age – Ten (10) years old September 1st aging date.

2:03 Division 3

Minimum Age – Four (4) years. (September 1st aging date)

Maximum Age – Six (6) years old September 1st aging

3:00 **FIELD SIZE:**

3:01 All Divisions' fields will be (60) yards in length.

3:02 Certain Divisions will play with No-Run Zones.

Division 1: No-Run Zones are marked 5 yards in front of each end zone and 5 yards in each direction from the 30-yard line (mid-field).

Division 2: No-Run Zones are marked 5 yards in front of each end zone.

Division 3: No Zones

4:00 **PRACTICE:**

4:01 Practices will be limited to 1 hour and 15 minutes in length.

4:02 Practices must be over by 8:30 p.m.

4:03 Teams cannot practice more than two (2) times per week.

5:00 **PARTICIPATION RULES:**

5:01 **Division 1 (10-13 Year Olds) Only** - Mouthpieces are mandatory for all players.

5:02 All players must play three (3) scrimmage downs in each half.

5:03 Each game will be **6v6** format.

5:04 Sampson County Recreation Staff have the right to modify rosters at any point as they deem necessary for program benefit.

6:00 GAMES:

6:01 All regular season games will consist of **Two (2) twenty-minute halves.**

6:02 The clock will run continuously and may be stopped only for timeouts, injuries and at the official's discretion.

Division 1 (10–13-year-olds) Only: The Last one (1) Minute of the game the clock will stop for incomplete pass or out of bounds.

6:03 Each team is allowed **Three (3) 30 second time-outs per half.**

6:04 Half-time will consist of a five (5) minute interval; the half time interval may be shortened due to game conditions.

7:00 PLAYING RULES:

7:01 Each offensive possession following a score will begin on the 10-yard line (Marked by a dot on the field). Possessions after a turnover begin at the spot of the ball at the conclusion of the previous play.

7:02 **All jerseys must be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.**

7:03 Each offensive drive will consist of four (4) downs to cross the line to gain unless possession of the ball is lost. The line to gain is midfield for a first down. If the offense successfully makes a first down, they will be awarded a fresh set of four (4) downs. Teams may elect to punt on 4th down ball will be placed on the opposite 10-yard line.

7:04 **Division 1&2 Only Each team must attempt one (1) pass per series.** A pass may be thrown from anywhere on the field, behind the line of scrimmage. All players are eligible to receive a pass. The rule doesn't apply if the offensive team scores or commits a turnover in fewer than three (3) plays. **5 Yard Penalty if there is no pass attempt after a minimum of 3 plays attempted.**

7:05a **All Divisions:** While in the No-Run Zones teams must attempt at least one pass play which can count toward their one pass per series requirement. **(5 Yard Penalty)** If this occurs the team will still be required to throw a forward pass.

7:06 The "center sneak" is **ILLEGAL** and shall not be allowed. (5 Yard, Loss of Down)

7:07 The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.

- 7:08 Play is ruled “dead” when:
- a) The ball hits the ground (Unless center to QB exchange). There are no fumbles in flag football.
 - b) The ball carrier’s flag is pulled or falls off.
 - c) The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - d) Either team scores.
 - e) Any part of the ball carrier’s body other than his feet or hands hits the ground.

7:09 Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

8:00 OFFENSE

8:01 Division 1

- a) The quarterback can run with the ball past the line of scrimmage.

Division 2&3

- a) The quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage. If the quarterback advances the ball past the line of scrimmage, the play will be blown dead with the ball being placed at the line of scrimmage and the down is consumed.
- b) Intentional or deliberate holding of the ball by the QB will be blown dead at the discretion of the referee after 3 warnings to the QB to throw the ball. Penalty 5 yards and loss of down. The official can elect to add time onto the clock if necessary.

8:02 Offense 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 quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.

8:03 Direct handoffs are permitted only behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.

8:04 Spinning and lateral movements are allowed, but runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding however, runners may leave their feet if it is done to avoid collision with another player.

8:05 All passes must be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage and thrown forward.

8:06 Airborne receivers must successfully get one foot down in bounds to complete a catch.

8:07 Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. **Blocking must have no contact and should mimic a screen in basketball.** All blocking should be at or behind the line of scrimmage. Downfield blocking and running with the ball carrier (screening) will not be allowed. Any block where a player leaves their feet is illegal.

8:08 Touchdown is 6 points. Extra Points one (1) point for a run, two (2) points for a pass. (The Clock will continue to run. (Extra Points can be attempted with no time left on the clock.

9:00 **DEFENSE**

9:01 Division 1

- a) All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback, and rushing the quarterback is not required. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- b) Once the ball has been handed off the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.

Division 2&3

- a) All defensive players must be three (3) yards off the line of scrimmage. There is no rushing of the quarterback.
- c) Once the ball leaves the quarterback hands all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.

10:00 **PENALTIES:**

10:01 All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.

10:02 Only the head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question judgment calls.

10:03 Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

10:04 Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than the distance to the goal.

10:05 Intentional tackling, striking, kicking, or kneeling a player will result in a penalty multiple incidents can lead to an immediate ejection from the game and the offending team will be charged with an unnecessary roughness penalty.

10:06 Penalties

False Start/Offside	5 yards
Screening, Blocking or Running with the Ball Carrier	5 yards
Stripping	5 yards
Charging	5 yards
Failure to Attempt a Pass	5 yards
Flag Guarding	5 yards & Loss of Down
Holding (Offensive/Defensive)	5 yards & Automatic First Down (if defensive penalty)
Pass Interference (Offensive/Defensive)	10 yards & Automatic First Down (if defensive penalty)
Unnecessary Roughness (Offensive/Defensive)	10 yards & Automatic First Down (if defensive penalty)

11:00 **COACHES:**

11:01 All Divisions

- a) One coach will be allowed on the field with his/her team for the purpose of helping to set up his/her offense or defense. Once the team breaks from the huddle, the coach must leave the immediate area, 10 yds. from the closest player.
- b) One coach must always remain on the sideline with the team.
- c) On-field coaches will be allowed no more than thirty (30) seconds in the huddle with the 30 seconds starting once the official spots the ball.
- d) If the coach delays the game by not leaving the immediate playing area at the conclusion of the time-out, the officials may deny the coach the opportunity to come onto the field for the remainder of the game.

11:02 Only 3 coaches/trainer/manager may be allowed on the sideline (including playing field). All other persons must stay behind the restraining fence. Head coach will be responsible for keeping unauthorized persons out of marked bench area.

Penalty: Ten (10) yards

11:03 Coaches may request time-outs from the sideline.

11:04 Coaches and players must stay within the designated bench area.

12:00 SPORTSMANSHIP:

11:01 No alcoholic beverages are allowed on school or recreation property. This includes athletic fields. This is a **STATE LAW**. If necessary, proper legal action will be taken to enforce this rule. **NO TOBACCO PRODUCTS - SMOKING, CHEWING, DIPPING, VAPING, ETC... ARE ALLOWED ON THE PRACTICE OR PLAYING FIELD.**

11:02 A coach, player, or spectator with the presence of alcohol on their breath will be asked to leave the recreation area.

11:03 Unsportsmanlike conduct **WILL NOT** be tolerated before, during, or after a game or practice. Any coach, player, volunteer, or spectator who is ejected/removed from a practice or game will be **suspended**. Suspension length will vary depending upon the severity of the infraction. Persons guilty of a second offense causing their ejection/removal within the recreation year shall be suspended for the remainder of the recreational year.

11:04 Any coach or player or spectator who is ejected from a game will be suspended **for the remainder of that game and the next scheduled game**. The suspension could be longer depending upon the severity of the infraction. Persons guilty of a second offense causing their ejection during the same calendar year shall be suspended for minimum of 365 days or longer depending on the infraction.

13:00 POSTPONED GAMES/INCLEMENT WEATHER

12:01 In case of inclement weather, coaches and parents can call the following number. Inclement weather decisions will not be made until after 3PM.



Sampson County Parks and Recreation 910-299-0924

If games or practices are cancelled, the Recreation Department will contact the coaches and they are then responsible for notifying their players.

- 12:02 Prior to the start of the game, the field supervisor or Recreation Department staff on duty will have sole authority to postpone or play the game.