

## **1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> GRADE ONLY**

“No run zones” are REMOVED. Teams may run the ball anywhere on the field.

## **NO RUN ZONES FOR 3<sup>rd</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE**

No-run Zones are located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE. (Reminder: Each offensive team approaches only TWO no-run zones in each drive – one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down and one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).

## **# OF COACHES ALLOWED ON THE FIELD**

- 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade and 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade – 1 coach is allowed on the field per team the entire season for both offense and defense.
- 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade – 1 coach is allowed on the field the first 4 games for both offense and defense. After 4 games, no coaches allowed on the field for both offense and defense.
- 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> – Offense: 1 coach is allowed on the field for the first 4 games... Defense: no coach allowed on the field the entire season.

## **DEFENSE PRE-SNAP ALIGNMENT & RUSHING THE QB**

- 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade – NO rushing the quarterback on defense is allowed; defenders must be 5 yards from the line of scrimmage until after the snap.
  - EXCEPTION: if the line of scrimmage is within 5 yards of the first down or goal line, defenders can play up to the line of scrimmage before and when the snap occurs.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade, 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade, and 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade
  - Defenders can play up to the line of scrimmage before and when the snap occurs.
  - Rushing the quarterback is allowed, BUT the defender must be 7 yards from the line of scrimmage until after the snap, then they may rush the quarterback.
    - The 7-yard marker is established by the official.
    - Maximum of 2 rushers per play.

## **FAKE HAND OFF/PLAY-ACTION PASS & WHICH DEFENDERS CAN RUSH**

You can do a fake hand off/play-action, and the defense may go after the runner, but they CANNOT go after the QB.

The only defender that can rush the QB is a player that is 7 yards off the ball in 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade:

## **QB CANNOT RUN THE BALL**

The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap under center directly, or in shotgun formation.

## **PASSING**

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.

- 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 (LOS).
  - A safety only occurs if runners are called called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, a flag falls out, they step out of bounds, their knee or arm touches the ground, a fumble occurs in the end zone or if a snapped ball lands in or beyond the end zone.
- Once the ball is handed off, pitched or lateraled behind the line of scrimmage, the 7-second rule is no longer in effect, and the player receiving the handoff, pitch, or lateral may throw the ball, with the same passing rules as the QB, forward from behind the line of scrimmage and received beyond/past the line of scrimmage.
- If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the play is dead and treated like an incomplete pass.

## **NO FORWARD PASSES BEHIND THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE**

Forward passes must go beyond the line of scrimmage.

- All passes, except backwards passes, that do not cross the line of scrimmage, whether received or not, are illegal forward passes, unless touched by a defender.
- Shovel passes, or any forward pass by the QB, are allowed but must be forward from behind the line of scrimmage and received beyond/past the line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. The pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage.

Direct handoffs, pitches, and laterals are legal behind the line of scrimmage only.

- If this takes place after the ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage, the play is to be blown dead by the official. The ball shall be placed at the spot where possession was lost, for the succeeding play. (Aka no laterals)
- “Center sneak” play is NOT allowed. The QB may NOT handoff, pitch or lateral the ball first to the center.
- Any player who receives a handoff, backward pass, pitch or lateral can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, or a backward pass, pitch or lateral has occurred, the seven-second passing clock is eliminated and all defensive players are eligible to rush.

## **INTERCEPTIONS**

Interceptions CAN be returned.

In other words, the play is NOT called dead at the point of the interception.

## **SHOTGUN AND UNDER CENTER**

When snapping the ball, it can be in shotgun or under center.

- In shotgun, 1st/2nd and 3rd/4th can have the center turn and pitch the ball back to the QB.
- 5th/6th and 7th/8th centers should learn to hike the ball between their legs.

## **NOT CONVERTING/TURNING THE BALL OVER, & PUNTING**

- The starting team begins on its own 5-yard line and has **FOUR DOWNS** (essentially four plays) to cross midfield for a first down. If the offense fails to advance after three tries, they have two options on fourth down: they can "punt," which means they turn the ball over to the opposing team who starts its drive from its own 5-yard line, or they can go for it. If they go for it and still fail to cross midfield, the opposing team takes over possession from the spot of the ball.
- If the offensive team crosses midfield, they have **THREE DOWNS** to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, after crossing midfield, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.

## **BALL SIZE**

- 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade – pee wee
- 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade – pee wee
- 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade – junior size
- 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade – junior size

The game is played 5 on 5.

Offensive playbook tips - <https://nflflag.com/coaches/flag-football-rules/5-on-5-flag-football-playbook>

## **CHANGES THAT WERE MADE TO THE NFL FLAG RULEBOOK FOR OUR LEAGUE (below)**

For playoffs – all rules remain the same, ignore anything that says “tournament play” in the NFL rulebook.

### **NFL rulebook changes:**

[https://cdn.mediaavalet.com/usca/rcx/DgBtnnoMFUCXWCBQE3YN2w/XMiAtpBTH0er4fUrKeYJIAQ/Original/NFL\\_Flag\\_Rulebook\\_21423.pdf](https://cdn.mediaavalet.com/usca/rcx/DgBtnnoMFUCXWCBQE3YN2w/XMiAtpBTH0er4fUrKeYJIAQ/Original/NFL_Flag_Rulebook_21423.pdf)

- Page 13 - rushing the passer (refer to our rules on page 1 of this doc)

## **XIII. RUSHING THE PASSER**

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Up to two (2) players can rush the quarterback. ~~Defenders may not rush the passer until the ball is snapped. Only one rusher is permitted by rule. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend the line of scrimmage. Defenders may not rush the passer.~~
2. Once the ball is handed off, pitched or lateraled behind the line of scrimmage the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
3. ~~The referee~~ the referee, will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. ~~Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official.~~
  - a. A legal rush is:
    - i. Any rush from a point 7-yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
    - ii. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off, pitched or lateraled by the quarterback.
  - b. A penalty may be called if:
    - i. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff, pitch, lateral or pass – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
    - ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5-yards from line of scrimmage and first down).
    - iii. Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed, pitched, lateraled or handed off – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
    - iv. If the offense draws the rusher(s) to jump the seven-yard marker prior to the snap of the ball, that rusher(s) CANNOT rush during that play. However, any other defender that is seven yards back may rush instead. Jumping the rush is not a penalty until the rusher crosses the line of scrimmage prior to the handoff, pitch, lateral or passed ball.
  - c. Special circumstances:
    - i. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the seven second clock in effect. ~~Teams are required to identify their rushers before the play.~~
4. Players rushing the quarterback 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.
5. 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. The PATH is set pre-snap from the rusher or rushers directly to the QB. PATH does not move once the quarterback moves. If the “path or line” is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense’s responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher’s path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. **If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher’s responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.**
6. A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball will be spotted where possession of the ball is once the flag is pulled.
  - a. A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

**TOURNAMENT PLAY: 8U Division may rush the passer at the snap from 7-yards**



- Page 17 – run zones and coaches on the field (refer to our rules on page 1 of this doc)

## XVIII. 8U, 7U & 6U & GRADE BASED GUIDELINES

These are NFL FLAG recommended and adopted adjustments to the rules that have been proven successful among RCX Grade Based NFL FLAG Leagues and NFL Leagues throughout the country from their direct input to assist with teaching the Game in the younger age groups.

### a. 8U / 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

- 'No Run' zones are eliminated. Teams may run anywhere on the field.
- Defenders may **NOT** rush the passer unless there is a legal handoff executed in the backfield.
- One Coach for each team is permitted on the field pre-snap to help their players, but **MUST** be off the field prior to the snap of the ball.

### b. 7U & 6U / 1<sup>st</sup> Grade and Below

- 'No Run' zones are eliminated. Teams may run the ball anywhere on the field.
- Defenders may **NOT** rush the passer unless there is a legal handoff executed in the backfield.
- One Coach for each team is permitted on the field pre and post snap to help their players, but post snap at a safe distance to plays completion.
- If the ball falls to, or touches the ground during the initial center to quarterback exchange, the play is ruled a 'Do Over' with no loss of down, once per down. On a second consecutive occurrence, the down is consumed.
- Defenders **MUST** line up at least five yards from the line of scrimmage prior to the snap. If the ball is spotted on or inside the 5-yard line, the distance is reduced to three (3) yards.



5/20/2020/2021

