



2025 CCYL Flag Football Rules

Fees

The cost to participate in this league is in two parts:

1. League Fee - Checks made payable to the Chicago Catholic Youth League. Send fee to CCYL.
2. Officiating Fees - Each school pays one of the officials cash per game due at the start of the game. The entire amount will be paid by a team who forfeits.

Archdiocese of Chicago Handbook for Athletics & *Play Like A Champion Today*

The league will abide by the mission, philosophies, and guidelines set forth in the handbook as well the philosophies of the *Play Like a Champion Today* program for coaches, officials, parents, and fans.

Team Contact

School Athletic Director will serve as only contact with the CCYL.

Roster

Each team must submit a complete ROSTER. Additions may be made up to the first game of the season. Students play at their, their families, and schools at their own risk.

Eligibility

Each team shall be composed of ONLY players who attend the grade school for whom they play. The league is primarily designed for 7th and 8th grade boys – in case of a player shortage, 6th grade boys will be allowed to play on a team. Anyone younger than 6th grade is **not** to play due to size discrepancies in the participants.

Fifteen (15) year olds are ineligible, unless they turn fifteen after September 6, 2025.

Number of Players

Nine (9) players from each team are allowed on the field at a time. You must begin play with at least seven (7) players.

You must have three linemen (Center, Right and Left Guard). *Everyone is eligible to catch a pass.*

You must have at least a minimum of five (5) players on the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball.

Equipment

- A youth size football (sometimes referred to as intermediate size) will be used.
- All players **MUST** wear mouth guards at all times. There will be a five-yard penalty for each infraction whistled before the play starts and a fifteen-yard penalty for each infraction whistled after the play starts. The second mouth guard penalty in the same game on the same team will result in the ejection of that player.
- All team members must wear flag belts that contain at least **three** flags, one on each of the player's sides. No snaps, clips, or pins are allowed to hold the flags to the belts.
- The flags must be different from the color of the shorts or pants worn by the player.
- Any tied flags or manipulation of the flags or belts with the intended purpose of cheating will result in that player being ejected.
- We have equipment stored in the park district building closet (northeast room). First teams should retrieve the equipment 15-30 minutes before the first game and keep all equipment on the west side of the field when not in use. Last teams must collect and store the equipment.
- All players must wear break away belt with 3 flags with each flag 15" length (minimum)

Jerseys

All team members should have jerseys of the same color with numbers on them. Players can have any number.

Illegal Equipment

Shoulder pads, padded football pants, hip guards, forearm pads, hand pads, elbow pads and cleats with metal spikes are not allowed.

Field

The field will be eighty yards long and **forty** yards wide. A first down will be achieved by reaching the nearest first down marker. First down markers will be twenty yards apart.

Time

There will be two 25 minute running halves. The clock will stop on every dead ball during the last *two minutes* of each half *on dead balls*, for official time-outs and during team time-outs. Each team has two time-outs per half. Time-outs do not carry over from the first half into the second. **Officials will notify a two minute warning each half.**

Overtime

Each team will receive four downs from which to score from their opponent's ten-yard line. After the first team's attempt, their opponent will also receive four downs from which to score. The ball may be advanced by the defense on an interception. If the defense scores, it will result in six points. If not, then the defense will start at the opponent's ten-yard line.

Game Cancellation Process

When field conditions are compromised due to weather, Sheridan Park will request all games be canceled and rescheduled if possible.

1. If field conditions are poor the day before the game, Sheridan Park will notify the league commissioner that games should be canceled. If notification is received before 6:00pm an email will be sent to all CCYL contacts by 6:00p. If notification is received after 6:00p then both an email and a cell phone call will be made to CCYL contacts. Please be sure to check your emails throughout the day the day before your games.

2. If severe rain occurs during the night before game days games may be canceled early morning. Assume any cancellation notifications will go out by 7:00am. The league commissioner will email and call league contacts' cell phones to notify them of the cancellations.

3. The league commissioner will contact all teams involved to reschedule games as quickly as possible. Sundays are preferred but weekday afternoons may be considered if Sundays become difficult.

Forfeits

A ten-minute forfeit rule will be enforced. A fine will apply to the team that forfeits. Two forfeits without notification of the appearance of the coach shall result in disqualification from the league and the playoffs.

Huddles/ Play Clock - Shall be limited to 30 seconds and can result in penalty if exceeded.

Line of Scrimmage

At least five offensive players must be on the line of scrimmage. The defense must line up 1/2 yd. or more back from the tip of the football. A defensive player cannot line up straight across from the center.

The Snap

Offensive linemen are **eligible**. Direct snaps to backs are permitted. Offsides or encroachment shall be a five-yard penalty and a repeat of the down. Players may shift but must be set when the ball is snapped. Only one player may be in motion when the ball is snapped. Center sneaks are **ILLEGAL**.

Blocking

1. A legitimate block consists of hands open below the shoulders and above the abdomen on the opposing player. Anything else is considered illegal!
2. No blocks are allowed beyond 5 yards past the line of scrimmage. Past this point, players may only set screens with their bodies; again, no contact is allowed.
3. On kick-offs and punt returns screening only is allowed (no blocking).
4. Illegal blocks consist of crab blocks (hands on the ground), blocks from behind, below the waist, to the head, with the forearms, crossed arms, or with any part of the body except the flat hand block.
5. No open hand blocking is allowed on kickoffs and punts – screens only!
6. An illegal block shall result in a fifteen-yard penalty.
7. If a defender runs into a blocker he will get called for unnecessary roughness resulting in a 5 yd. penalty and an automatic first down. Bull rushing is illegal on both offense and defense.
8. When rushing the passer, the pass rusher must go for either the flag or only the ball – any contact with the body of the quarterback, most notably the hand or the shoulder, will result in a penalty.

Running

1. A ball carrier may spin to evade a defensive player
2. Ball carriers cannot jump unless they are doing so to avoid injury or to throw the football.
3. Stiff arms are illegal and will result in a fifteen-yard penalty.
4. **Tackling or holding the runner is illegal.** Tackling the runner will result in a fifteen-yard penalty and warning. If the player was en route to a touchdown, the official may elect to place the ball on the 1-yard line. A second infraction by the same team will result in the suspension of that player from the game. Any further infractions by that team will result in a loss of that game and expulsion from the league.
5. On a clear breakaway, if the last man who is able to reach the ball carrier holds him, the ball will be placed on the 1-yard line. If there is a defensive hold on the ball carrier and no breakaway, it shall result in a fifteen-yard penalty.
6. **No flag guarding.** Any attempt by the ball carrier to impede a defensive player from grabbing his flag (i.e. swinging the free hand below the waist in an unorthodox running style) whether intentional or not is a penalty. The ball will be whistled dead at the point of the infraction and a fifteen-yard penalty will be assessed.
7. **Tied flags** will result in a fifteen-yard penalty and a loss of down. If the official determines that the flag was tied intentionally in order to prevent it from being pulled off, the player will be ejected from the game and there will be a change of possession at the original line of scrimmage.
8. Defenders **may not** push a ball carrier out of bounds but he may go for the flag of the ball carrier near the sidelines.
9. Defenders **may** leave their feet in an attempt to go for the ball carrier's flag as long as they don't tackle or impede the progress of the runner.

Loss of Flag

1. Any player who loses a flag before a play starts is an ineligible ball carrier or receiver for that play, *unless they put their flag back on before the play starts*. If a ball is thrown to this receiver, it is an incomplete pass and loss of down.
2. A player running with the ball whose flag falls off will be ruled down at the point where the flag falls off.
3. If a player's flag comes off during play before he receives the ball, the ball will be ruled dead at the point *where the ball is received*.
4. It is 10 yd. penalty to intentionally remove someone's flag before a play starts.

Dead Ball

1. A fumble, which strikes the ground, is dead at the point of the fumble.
2. A ball that is snapped from scrimmage that hits the ground before getting to the intended receiver is declared dead at the point where it touches the ground. The down counts and the ball are put in play at the point where it is downed.
3. A kick or punt that touches any part of the receiver's body is a dead ball and is spotted at the point where it hits the ground.
4. A ball carrier will be ruled down when his flag is pulled, he goes out of bounds or when his knee or the ball touches the ground.

Kick Off

1. A place kick from the thirty-yard line will start the game, each half and each possession following a touchdown or extra point attempt. **After a safety the team will kickoff from their 20-yard line.**
2. There must be a minimum of five players on the line for any receiving team.
3. On-side kicks are not permitted.
4. Kickoffs into the end zone, which are not returned, or kickoffs that go through the end zone shall be placed on the **twenty-yard line.**
5. ***A kickoff that bounces off the receiving team and does not touch the ground, can be recovered by the kicking team as long as the ball does not touch the ground.***
6. ***A ball kicked out of bounds will then be placed at the 40 yard line.***

Punts

1. Punts must be announced to the official, who will then notify the opposing team and players.
2. Centers may use a long snap or may walk the ball back to the kicker.
3. After the announcement, the team must punt. Punters have the option of standing at the line of scrimmage or backing up on the punt. Kicking team players may not release until the ball is kicked and it crosses the line of scrimmage.
4. A team does not have to announce a punt on the first, second or third downs, but the punt must be announced on the fourth down.
5. The defense may not rush on a punt. There must be five people from defense on the line.
6. Long-snapping is encouraged – a team will not be penalized if the ball touches the ground.
7. **A punter only receives one attempt to punt the ball**
8. **A punt that bounces off the receiving team and does not touch the ground can be recovered by the kicking team, as long as the ball does not touch the ground.**

For kicks and punts:

Kicked balls may be picked up by the return team from the ground and returned. If touched by kicking team the ball is dead and the receiving team assumes their possession. Point of emphasis: No picks set down field or away from the ball by offensive team. 10-yard penalty for illegal picks.

Field Goal

If a team elects to try a field goal, they must announce their intentions to the opposing team. The ball may be snapped through the legs or carried to the holder. Drop kick field goals are also allowed. The ball must be kicked from the point of the holder's reception. A field goal may be attempted on any down, but if it is attempted prior to fourth down and the kick is missed, possession of the ball will go to the defense. If an attempt outside the twenty-yard line is missed, the ball will be placed at the line of scrimmage. If an attempt inside the twenty-yard line is missed, the ball will be brought out to the twenty-yard line. Three points are awarded for a successful kick. The defense may not rush on a field goal.

Kicking Extra Points

The ball will be placed on the three-yard line. The opposing team may stand at the line with their arms over their heads and jump to block the kick. No pyramids or use of another player to add extra leaping ability is allowed. Two points are awarded for a successful kick. Only legal kicking blocks will be allowed. A teammate's toe may not be used. The ball must be kicked from the point where it is received

from the snap. The defense may not rush on a kicked extra point attempt. Long-snapping is encouraged.

Passing and Running Extra Points.

If a team elects to run or pass the ball for the extra point, the ball will be placed at the five-yard line. If the run/pass is successful, one point will be awarded.

Interception Returns

On an interception return, no contact blocking is allowed by the team with the possession of the ball, similar to a kickoff or punt.

Penalties

Major penalties are fifteen yards and minor penalties are five yards.

Protests

An official's judgment on a call is **final**.

Code of Conduct

1. Inter-squad prayer will be led by the head coaches at mid-field prior to each game.
2. Each coach must have total control over ALL players, assistant coaches and spectators AT ALL TIMES, whether they are on or off the field. Coaches should report all unsportsmanlike behavior to the officials and the commissioner.
3. Coaches will lead handshakes immediately after the game.
4. The behavior of all parties connected with a given school will be monitored by the officials and the commissioner.
5. If there is a question or dispute during a game, the head coaches and team captains may consult with the officials. No other persons shall be allowed to enter the discussion.
6. Referees and coaches shall not engage in any behavior that would be deemed inappropriate (i.e. smoking, drinking, using profanity, etc.) during any game, practice OR when any youth are present. They should act as role models for all the youth that they encounter.
7. Any person who does not abide by these rules is subject to expulsion from the game, then the league. Further infractions by persons from the same team could result in permanent expulsion from the league. Suspensions and expulsions are determined by the CCYL.
8. The conduct of any fan or coach that is detrimental to the smooth running of the game will result in a warning to the team of which that person is affiliated. The second instance will result in a 15 yard penalty.
9. Officials must be approachable but do not pester the officials over judgment calls.
10. Unsportsmanlike conduct by a Coach - Will be treated similar to a Technical in basketball
 - The head official will first warn the coach
 - If the coach continues to behave in an unsportsmanlike manner or resumes later in the game the head official will assess a 15 yd. penalty.
 - If the coach continues to behave in an unsportsmanlike manner or resumes later in the game the head official will eject the coach from the game.

- The team can suffer a point loss in the standings
- In addition to the ejection, the team will suffer a game loss in the standings and the coach will not be permitted to coach or attend the next game.
- If no **registered** coach is available to assume duties of the ejected coach then the game will be forfeited
- In more serious circumstances the CCYL directors may be consulted with to determine if the suspension should go beyond one game or possibly include a full-season suspension or suspension from coaching in the future seasons.
- **Inappropriate behavior by coaches will NOT be tolerated and if the league is alerted by an official of a coach's poor behavior a punishment to the coach or team WILL follow.**

Prohibited Acts

There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct by players, coaches, spectators or others subject to the rules of the league. The following acts are unacceptable:

1. The use of abusive or insulting language - First Offense-player or will leave game for remainder of that possession series, or the next possession series if the infraction occurred on the last play. If language conduct is more severe the official may eject players from the game. The second Offense-player will be ejected and suspended for the next game.
2. Use of unfair play.
3. Managers, coaches or others on the field of play at any time without permission, or interference (of any nature) with the progress of the game.
4. Players interfering with a player or play while the ball is in play.
5. The use of "hide out" plays, which place a player near the sideline with the intent to deceive (i.e. going to the bench or coming off the bench late).
6. Any use of an ineligible or suspended player.
7. The use of an ineligible or suspended player will result in the forfeiture of each game in which the player participated.
8. The deliberate removal of a flag from a player who does not have the ball when the intention is to disrupt the flow of the game.

The penalty for the use of prohibited acts is fifteen yards. If usage of the act is flagrant, the offender shall be disqualified.

Suspension from the Game

Players involved in the following deliberate or flagrant activities may be suspended from the game at the discretion of the referee and/or commissioner:

1. Using fists, kicking or kneeling
2. Using locked hands, crossed arms, elbows or any other part of the forearm or hand except according to the rules.
3. Tackling the ball carrier.
4. Roughing the kicker or holder of the kick.
5. Any other deliberate or flagrant act.

General Coaching notes

- Do not coach your players to knock a player down. The player will likely get called for unnecessary roughness and removed from the game. Further suspension can occur.
- Do not run plays to hurt other players.

Game Day Field Duties

First teams on Schedule:

- Each team must have at least one representative arrive 30 minutes or more before game time to set up
- Go to the park district closet and retrieve the equipment including yard markers, down marker scoreboard and goal posts
- Keep all equipment not in use on the west side of the field near the scoreboard making retrieving when needed and collection at the end of the day easier
- Set the pylons marking the goal line, end zone and yard markers, if necessary.

Last Teams on the schedule:

- Collect all equipment away in the shed following the last game and make sure the field is clean.

All Teams: Clean up all trash from the sideline after each game.

Scorecard Duties

There will be one scorecard per game by the head official. The official(s) will then email the league commissioners by Monday the final scores from the games.

- Secure half time score and final score signatures from each team and official.
- Email score into league rep within 24 hours. If applicable, note any rule disputes that occurred during the game.

Standings Point System

Win = 3 (regulation and OT)

Loss = 0 (regulation and OT)

Unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on any coach = remove 1 point (see details on P. 7)

Play-offs

Top four teams go to the playoffs. 1st place vs. 4th place, 2nd place vs. 3rd place will play each other then winners play one another for championship. Seating ties are determined by:

1. Record
2. Head to Head
3. Points allowed

If there is a points tie then:

1st: Compare head to head record

2nd: Overtime losses

3rd: Points allowed against other teams involved in the tie. Works in a 3 way tie.

IHSA Rules shall govern anything not specifically covered by these rules.