

2022 Lakeville North Flag Football Playing Rules

Section 1 – Organization and Philosophy

- 1.1 **Mission.** The mission of LAKEVILLE NORTH FLAG FOOTBALL (LNFF) is to teach and encourage good sportsmanship and fair play through the promotion and support of football for the young people of our community.
- 1.2 **Commitment.** LNFF is fundamentally committed to the development of character and sportsmanship and believes that an athletic contest is an educational experience.
- 1.3 **Coaches Guidelines.** Under the guidelines of the LNFF, the coaches (who so generously give of their talents and time) are to instill in their players the elements of fairness, teamwork, self-control, courtesy and respect for the rules of the game as well as the other participants and officials in the sport.

Section 2 – The Goal of Lakeville North Football

- 2.1 Provide a positive, fun-filled experience.
- 2.2 Teach the participants the skills, rules, strategy and discipline of football while encouraging good sportsmanship, self-confidence, and teamwork.
- 2.3 Promote healthy and safe physical activity for all participants.
- 2.4 Build character by offering a team experience, regardless of individual ability, stressing skill development and a positive attitude regardless of winning and losing.
- 2.5 Provide equal playing time for all participants as much as possible. (Exceptions to this may include chronic missed practice time and disrespect for the game, officials or team).

Section 3 - Coaches, Players and Spectators Conduct

- 3.1 **General Behavior.** Cheering and positive encouragement of players, coaches and referees embodies the spirit of athletics and LNFF. All coaches, players and spectators are prohibited from abusive shouting or the use of obscenities to denigrate any player, coach, referee or fan. Any conduct that is in direct conflict of good sportsmanship by players, coaches and fans can result in ejection from the game and sporting area.
- 3.2 **Abuse.** Physical or verbal abuse by any coach, player or fan is cause for dismissal from the LNFF program, games, practices and facilities.
- 3.3 **Tobacco and Alcohol.** There is a No Smoking and No Alcohol Policy at the football fields. Coaches and spectators who are intoxicated will be asked to leave. Violation of these rules will result in eviction from the field and review by LNFF.
- 3.4 **Referees.** No coach, player or fan will disrespectfully argue a decision of a referee. Discussing and trying to understand a referee's decision is allowed as long as it is done in a respectful, calm and civil manner by Coaches Only. Coaches, players and fans are not to

chastise, give hints, help or provide instruction to the referees.

3.5 **Clean-Up.** All coaches, players and spectators should ensure that the game/practice fields and surrounding areas are free of debris and left in an orderly fashion when the game/practice is complete.

3.6 **Injuries.** All players and spectators must report any injuries immediately to the coach. It is the coach's responsibility to report these injuries to the level director(s). The possibility of injury requires that a responsible adult be present at all games and practices. If parents are unable to be present at a game or practice, it is their responsibility to find an adult to watch their child. This is not a duty of the coach. Players are not to be dropped off unsupervised.

Section 4 - Eligibility

4.1 Players must be going into Kindergarten, First, or Second grade at the time of sign-ups.

4.2 No player shall switch to another team after the first game of the season. The league director(s) must approve switches prior to the start of the season.

Section 5 - Practice

5.1 2-3 practices per week are allowed until the games begin. Once games begin, teams are limited to two practices per week but discretion is left to the Level Director.

Section 6 - Equipment

6.1 All players must wear a mouthguard. Players are not allowed to play if they do not have a mouthguard.

6.2 Each player will have two flags that are attached to a belt.

6.3 Shirts and jackets must be tucked under the belt (i.e. the belt must be visible).

6.4 If a ball carrier inadvertently loses a flag, they are considered down when touched by a defensive player.

Section 7 - Playing Time/ Player Rotation

7.1 Every player who attends a game will start on either offense or defense.

7.2 Over the course of the season, each player should have approximately the same amount of playing time and each player should be encouraged to play all of the positions.

7.3 Provide equal playing time for all participants as much as possible. (Exceptions to this may include chronic missed practice time, disrespect for the game, officials or team).

7.4 **Player/Parent Choice.** Each player and/or their parent can choose to NOT play a particular position during the season. For players who do not want to run the ball or play quarterback, it is up to the player and/or parent to discuss these positions with their coach to determine the offensive and defensive positions suitable for the player.

7.5 **Ball Distribution.** Coaches will rotate as many kids as possible through the backfield positions during the season to distribute the ball to a wide number of players. Every player should have the opportunity to run and catch the ball during the game.

7.6 **Exceptions.** If a coach has any specific reason for not abiding by these rotation guidelines, the coach needs to notify the level director(s) of the reason. Exceptions must be approved by the level director(s) before the game in question (if possible) or the coach needs to notify the level director(s) immediately after the game.

Section 8 - Game Scoring

8.1 **No score will be kept during the games.** The object of LNFF is to teach football and good sportsmanship. Should the situation arise that a score is lop-sided, or a team is ahead by more than three touchdowns, the winning coach SHOULD make every effort to not continue scoring. Efforts may include low yardage plays, giving everyone that is eligible a chance to carry the ball and pulling out key players.

8.2 There are no league standings kept and there are no playoffs at the end of the season.

8.3 PAT's will be attempted after each touchdown. The ball will be placed on the 5-yard line.

8.4 LNFF wants to promote scoring in this league and rules written reflect this approach.

Section 9 - Game Length

9.1 **Game Length.** Games are two 25 minute halves using a continually running clock. The clock will only be stopped for the following reasons:

- i. an official's timeout is called
- ii. an injury
- iii. a team timeout is called

9.2 **Halftime.** There is a five (5) minute halftime break. The team that started the game on defense will get the ball to start the second half of the game

9.3 **Maximum Game Length.** Games will be limited to maximum playing time of one hour.

9.4 **Time Between Plays.** Time between plays should not exceed 30 seconds. Each team must be taught to huddle quickly after each play. It is recommended the coaches display the offensive play in the huddle so the kids understand their roles.

9.5 **Time Outs.** Each team is allowed to call one (1) time out per half. First half time outs do not carry over to the second half.

Section 10 - Field Size

10.1 **Field Dimensions.** The dimensions of the playing field will be approximately 30 yards wide and 50 yards long (5 yard end zones, 40 yards, 1st down line at mid-field). Play will start on the 5-yard line.

10.2 **End Zones.** The end zones shall be five yards deep and the width of the playing field.

10.3 **Cones - Field Markings.** Cones should be placed at midfield and on the goal line and marking the back of the end zones.

Section 11 - Number of Players

11.1 **Equality.** The offensive and defensive teams must have an equal number of players on the field.

11.2 **Maximum Players.** The maximum number of players allowed on the field on the offensive or defensive teams is six (6). There will be 1 QB, 1 Center and 4 RB's/WR's/TE's

11.3 **Minimum Players.** The minimum number of players per team is five (5). There will be 1 QB, 1 Center and 3 RB's/WR's

11.4 **Roster.** Team size is a maximum of 12 players.

Section 12 - Referees

12.1 **Referees.** Each team will be responsible to provide one person to referee each game if possible

Section 13 - Rules of the Game

13.1 **Coin Toss.** Before each game, the referees will flip a coin. The winner of the coin toss can choose to start on offense or defense.

13.2 **"Kickoff"** Each team will start on offense one half. The team which kicks off in the first half will receive the ball in the second half.

Section 14 - Offense

14.1 **Cadence.** Must be at least one sound (and) one second of being set before ball is snapped

14.2 **Offensive Plays.** All rules are described below -

14.2.1 **Running.**

- i. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. If one foot precedes the other, the forward foot marks the spot
- ii. The quarterback can directly run with the ball
- iii. Direct handoffs, pitches and laterals behind the line of scrimmage (LOS) are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs, pitches and/or laterals behind the LOS. No laterals are permitted beyond the LOS
- iv. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage
- v. Once the ball has been handed off from the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush
- vi. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping is considered flag guarding
- vii. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull
- viii. 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
- ix. Flag Obstruction - The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding

14.2.2 Passing.

- i. All passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage
- ii. The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within seven seconds of the snap, 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 pass-clock rule no longer is in effect even though that player may pass. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the pass clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. It is NOT a safety
- iii. "Safeties" are treated as a loss of down and the ball is placed back at the goal line.

14.2.3 Receiving.

- i. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line)
- ii. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel or away from the line of scrimmage, and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage
- iii. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception and neither foot can touch down out of bounds prior to or at time of catch
- iv. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense
- v. Interceptions change the possession of the ball where the intercepting players flag is pulled. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line

14.3 Interceptions are returnable

14.4 At the beginning of the game or half, after a touchdown and/or after a change of possession, the ball will be placed at the goal line.

14.5 The offense has four downs to produce a first down by crossing the midfield yard line:

14.6 First downs are achieved by crossing the marked yard line, regardless of starting position on the field

14.7 Each team has 30 seconds to put the ball into play

14.8 Play is stopped when a defensive player pulls the ball carrier's flag off his belt

14.9 Ball carriers may not use their hands or arms to keep defensive players from capturing their flag.

14.10 Following a touchdown, the ball will be placed on the 3 yard line and the offensive team will run a play for the extra point.

14.11 All ball carriers must always have their flags visible to the defense

14.12 No blocking is allowed

Section 15 - Defense

15.1 The defense is allowed in any alignment with exception that all players must be 2 yards off the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball

15.2 No blitzing is allowed. A blitz is defined as a player moving toward the line of scrimmage prior to the ball being snapped and/ or crossing the line of scrimmage while the QB is attempting to throw the ball (7 seconds)

15.3 A defensive player can cross the line of scrimmage once a hand off has taken place

15.5 Defensive players may not grab or hold the ball carrier during their attempt to capture the flag

15.6 Defensive players may not grab or hold blockers

15.8 Interceptions are live balls and may be returned. If the interception does not result in a touchdown the ball will placed where the defensive team was stopped (when and where their flag was pulled).