



By-Laws and Rulebook Spring 2020

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CATCH & GO FLAG FOOTBALL BY-LAWS AND RULEBOOK

I. LEAGUE RULES

- A. The rules contained herein are to be enforced by all Catch & Go Flag Football representatives.
- B. The season will be determined by the Catch & Go Flag Football board.
- C. Rule changes will be made by board members. If a rule is amended, all coaches will be notified of the change. Rule changes can only take place prior to and after the season. **NO CHANGES WILL BE MADE DURING THE SEASON!**

II. CODE/RULES OF CONDUCT

A. *CODE OF CONDUCT*

All board members, coaches, team members, parents, officials, and staff members will abide by a Code of Conduct established by Catch & Go Flag Football Policies, which includes the provisions contained in these policies. If any of these policies and/or rules is broken, the Catch & Go Flag Football board members shall have the authority to impose sanctions on said individuals or teams. Some but not all points in the Code of Conduct include:

1. Not criticizing players in front of spectators.
2. Accept the decision of the game officials on the field as being fair and called to the best ability of said officials.
3. Not criticizing an opposing team, its players, coaches or fans with words or gestures.
4. All team representatives shall be responsible for the conduct of team fans and spectators. Any fan who becomes a nuisance and out of control will be asked to leave the facilities. Failure to do so may result in your team forfeiting the game.
5. Not use abusive or profane language at any time.
6. Not recommend or distribute any medication, controlled or over the counter, except as specifically prescribed by participant's physician.

7. Not permit an ineligible player to participate in any Catch & Go Flag Football games. Participation by an ineligible player will result in forfeiting games in season play, and if found during end of season playoffs/tournament, the entire team will be forfeited from the entire event.
8. Not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
9. Abstain from the possession and drinking of alcoholic beverages and/or the use and possession of any tobacco products and illegal substances on both the game and practice fields.
10. Remove from a game or practice any participant, when even slightly in doubt about his/her health, whether or not as a result of an injury, until competent medical advice is available. Any player who receives ANY head injury MUST be cleared by a doctor or EMT before returning to play.

B. *RULES OF CONDUCT*

1. Board Members, Field Supervisors, Referees, or any other officials that work for Catch & Go Flag Football will provide incident reports to the Executive Board on any of the infractions listed below. These following guidelines pertain to anyone in attendance at a Catch & Go Flag Football event:
 - Ejection from Game = Minimum 1 game suspension
 - Unsportsmanlike Conduct = Possible 1 game suspension
 - Profanity = 1 game suspension
 - Threatening an Official = Season suspension
 - Hitting an Official = Indefinite suspension (no less than 1 year)
 - Drinking/Public Intoxication = Season suspension
 - Fighting (on/off field) = Indefinite suspension (no less than 1 year)
 - Second Offense #1, #2, and #3 = Season suspension
 - Playing an Ineligible Player = Loss of game(s) in which player participated and possible action against the coach, team, and association.

- Participation of an Ineligible Coach = Loss of game(s) in which coach participated and possible action against the coach, team, and association.
2. The Executive Board, after review of incident reports, will carry out the above penalties and suspension.
 3. In the event that a team fails to respect the game Officials' authority or decisions, game Officials have been instructed to call a forfeit in favor of the opposing team after one (1) warning has been given.
 4. If an Official ejects a coach or spectator from a game, that person will be asked to leave the field area. If a person refuses to leave, the game will be forfeited (opposing team wins), and the police will be notified.
 5. Any player, coach, or team associated with a person caught and proven guilty of cheating or misrepresenting any record will be suspended indefinitely.
 6. Any type of fighting will result in immediate expulsion from the league for the rest of the season. Any other behavior such as cursing, disrespect to game Officials, or any other action deemed inappropriate by game Officials or league officials will not be tolerated. Any of these behaviors can result in the following: ejection from the game, suspension for the rest of the season, and expulsion from all Catch & Go Flag Football events (i.e. league, camp/clinics, and tournament).

III. **BOARD MEMBERS**

Board Members are responsible for developing league rules/by-laws and making sure that the rules/by-laws are being followed.

- A. The following positions are recognized by Catch & Go Flag Football:
 1. President
 2. Vice President
 3. Secretary / Treasurer
 4. Equipment Manager
 5. Uniform Coordinator

6. Director of Coaching
 7. Director of Cheerleading
 8. Information Technology
- B. Board members must be a minimum of 21 years of age.
- C. Responsibilities include:
1. Having emergency contact information for all participants at all league functions, games and practices.
 2. Ensuring the certified roster is accurate and up to date in the league database. He/she shall work with American Youth Football (AYF) and the National Football League (NFL) prior to the first game to ensure that all rosters are in order and accurate.
 3. Documenting any player/coach injuries occurring during league functions, games and practices.
 4. Ensuring all league taxes, income, donations and expenses are documented and/or filed for the renewal of tax exempt 501(c)(3) status.
 5. Ensuring all league documentation is in order.
 6. Providing training for board members, coaches, and volunteers.

IV. **COACHES/VOLUNTEERS**

Coaches/Volunteers do not make the policies of Catch & Go Flag Football but are there to carry them out.

- A. Head Coach
1. The Head Coach must be a minimum of 21 years of age.
 2. The Head Coach is responsible for:
 - a. His/her team's players/cheerleaders, assistant coaches and volunteers.
 - b. Determining the assignments of assistant coaches and volunteers.

- c. The actions of assistant coaches, players, cheerleaders, team parents/spectators and volunteers at team functions (i.e. practices, games and team parties).
- d. The safety and actions of all players/cheerleaders.
- e. Organizing all practices during the season.
- f. Maintaining its team sidelines to include parent/spectator control and cleaning up after games.

B. Assistant Coach/Volunteer:

- 1. Assistant Coaches must be a minimum of 18 years of age.
- 2. Volunteers must be a minimum of 16 years of age.
- 3. Assistant Coach/Volunteer is responsible for:
 - a. Assisting Head Coach with practices.
 - b. During the games, Assistant Coaches/Volunteers must make players/cheerleaders stay out of unauthorized areas of the game fields.

V. **BACKGROUND CHECKS**

- A. All board members, coaches, referees, and volunteers must submit a signed Coach and Volunteer Form.
- B. All board members, coaches, officials, and volunteers will be required to undergo a criminal history check.
- C. Board members are responsible for conducting criminal history checks and establishing qualifying/disqualifying standards.

VI. DIVISIONS OF PLAY

Catch & Go Flag Football uses the divisions outlined below:

- A. 5 – 6 Division
- B. 7 – 8 Division
- C. 9 – 11 Division
- D. 12 – 14 Division

Note: All divisions are based on the player's age. Qualifying Date of Birth begins on September 1st of the year prior to the season starting.

VII. LEAGUE REGISTRATION

- A. No player/cheerleader may practice with a team until he/she has officially registered with Catch & Go Flag Football.
- B. To participate, all players/cheerleaders/parents/legal guardians must fill out the necessary forms to include:
 - 1. Player/cheer registration form, including signed waivers from the parents or legal guardian stating that the child has their permission to participate in any and all Catch & Go Flag Football games and events.
 - 2. Provide an original or copy of his/her birth certificate.
 - 3. Pay all required registration fees.

Note: Registrations can be completed online or during a walk-up registration day.

VIII. TEAMS

- A. A team shall have a maximum of three (3) coaches/volunteers, of which one (1) must be a head coach and two (2) may be an assistant coach or volunteer approved by the board.
- B. Required starting team size should be a minimum of seven (5) players and a maximum of ten (10) players. A maximum of eleven (11) players may be allowed depending on the ratio between players/teams. No more than eleven (11) players will be allowed on a team.
- C. Catch & Go Flag Football requires that all players play during a game, but it is up to the coach to determine playing time.
- D. The team may consist of any player that meets the requirements for the division for which the team is in.
- E. Cheer squads will consist of five (5) to seven (10) cheerleaders, depending on the amount of registrations for that season. All attempts will be made to have cheer squads in all league divisions (5-6, 7-8, 9-11, and 12-14). Cheerleaders may move up or down a division based on the needs of the cheer squads.

IX. ADDS AND DROPS

- A. Mandatory drops - any player must be dropped from the team, who:
 - 1. Is found to have signed up as a result of parental pressure or tells a coach/volunteer he/she does not really want to participate.
 - 2. Attempts to intimidate fellow participants by word or physical deeds.
 - 3. Is an extreme disciplinary problem.
- B. Voluntary drops - Any player/cheerleader may be dropped and/or will be considered voluntarily dropped when:
 - 1. He/she requests to be dropped.
 - 2. He/she no longer shows up to practices and/or games.
- C. If any team drops more than three (3) players/cheerleaders, throughout the course of a season, it will be reviewed by the board to ensure coaches/volunteers are running their teams according to the values set forth in these policies.

X. TEAM BOOK/ROSTERS

- A.** Prior to the season, the board will provide each team with its Certified Regular Season Roster and Team Book. The roster will be complete with all players/ cheerleaders, coaches and volunteers. The team book will be complete with a checklist, parent code of conduct form, medical questionnaires, emergency contact information, and league insurance forms.
- B.** No player can be added to any certified roster.
- C.** Once a player becomes certified for an age division, that player will not be permitted to transfer to another division or team within the same division, unless authorized by the board.

XI. CERTIFICATION

- A.** Certification is a process by which all players are verified to be of the proper age to participate within any given division.
- B.** All registration fees must be paid in full prior to any player being certified.
- C.** Certifications will take place prior to the beginning of the season.
- D.** For each player to be certified, they must provide the league with the necessary paperwork to complete registration, and an original or copy of the participant's birth certificate.

XII. PRACTICES

- A.** Practice locations/times will be determined by the head coaches.
- B.** Prior to the season, practices will be held a minimum of two (2) days per week and maximum of three (3) days per week.
- C.** After Week 1 of the season, practices will be held a minimum of one (1) day per week and maximum of two (2) days per week.
- D.** Practices may not be longer than two (2) hours per day.

- E.** In the event the Head Coach cannot attend a practice, he/she must:
1. Make arrangements with one of the other league approved coaches/volunteers on the team to carry out practice.
 2. Advise the other coaches/volunteers of the practice plan and/or what areas to work (i.e. drills, offense, defense, conditioning, etc.).
- F.** The Head Coach is responsible for advising all assistant coaches, volunteers, parents/guardians and players of the practice dates, times and locations by email, telephone and/or in person.
- G. WARM WEATHER PRECAUTIONS**
1. Teams are to guard against serious heat related problems and must provide water for all participants at all times.
 2. Coaches must:
 - a. Give players water breaks every twenty (20) minutes.
 - b. Watch for signs of heat exhaustion or fatigue.
 - c. NOT allow energy drinks (i.e. Monster, Red Bull, etc.) to be consumed by players at any time.
 - d. Make available, Ice and water, at all times.

XIII. GAME SCHEDULES

- A. Game schedules will be developed by the board and handed out prior to the season.
- B. All schedule changes need to be approved by the board and changed prior to the season.

XIV. GAME/EVENT DAY

- A. The Head Coach is responsible for game day football activity.
- B. The each team is responsible for supplying an official issued Catch & Go football.
- C. All coaches and volunteers are expected to participate and assist with game/event day duties.
- D. Each field is to be set up by the home team involved in the first game of the day and cleaned up by the home team involved in the last game of the day.

E. Pre-game checklist

1. 5 minutes prior to the start of each game, both teams will meet at the center of the playing field for inspection of required equipment (i.e. NFL FLAG jersey/flags, cleats with no metal spikes, mouthpiece, and league issued shorts) and rosters. Each child should be lined up in the order of the team's certified roster (alphabetical order). The Referees and Head Coaches will conduct the inspection.
2. Coaches will provide referees with certified rosters at game time.
ONLY LEAGUE APPROVED COACHES/PLAYERS ARE ALLOWED ON THE FIELD/SIDELINE!!!
3. If a player does not have the required equipment, that player may not play in the game until said player has fixed the equipment issue and has presented himself/herself to the opposing team's Head Coach.

WEATHER CANCELLATIONS

We will make every attempt to make the call on weather cancellations by 7:00 a.m. on game days. All weather updates will be listed on the front page of our website and Head Coaches will be notified. There may be times where cancellations will be made at the field prior to, or during games at the Referee's, Field Supervisor's and/or Board Member's discretion.

XV. POST-SEASON

- A.** All teams will be eligible for post-season play.

- B.** Tie-breakers within the division pools for seeding purposes will be determined as follows:
 1. Win-Loss record
 2. Head-to-head record
 3. Win-Loss record within the conference (if applicable)
 4. Coin toss – Board members will conduct coin toss at the end of the season

XVI. GAME

- A.** A coin flip prior to the start of the game will determine which team has the initial possession. The team that loses the coin toss has the choice of which side of the field to defend. The team that loses the coin toss will also have possession at the start of second half.
- B.** The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three (3) Plays to cross midfield.
- C.** Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
- D.** If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- E.** All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offensive's 5-yard line.

XVII. PLAYERS

- A.** Teams must field a minimum of five (5) players at all times. Teams consist of 7 – 10 players.

XVIII. TIMING/OVERTIME

- A.** Games are played to 40 minutes with a running clock (20-minute halves).
- B.** Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is enforced.

- C. Each team has two 60-second time outs per game (stops clock).
- D. Each game will have a 5-minute half time.
- E. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, teams move directly into overtime. A coin toss will determine possession. The winner of the coin toss will choose to either start on offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss will choose the side of the field where overtime will be played.
- F. Overtime is an extra point shootout. Each team will have 3 plays to score; either going for a one or two-point conversion. Example: if team 1 scores a two-point conversion, then team 2 must score a 2-point conversion. One point is scored from the 5-yard line and two points are scored from the 12-yard line (two-point conversion). If an interception occurs, the ball can be advanced in overtime.

XIX. SCORING

- A. Touchdown: 6 points
- B. Extra Point: 1 point (played from 5-yard line)/ 2 points (played from 12-yard line)
- C. Safety: 2 points

XX. HIKING

- A. The first person to receive the snap from the center becomes the quarterback.
- B. NO CENTER SNEAKS OF ANY KIND!**
- C. Ball is dead where it hits the ground on a bad snap.
- D. The ball must be snapped between the legs and not off to one side to start play.

XXI. RUNNING

- A. The quarterback cannot run with the ball.

- B.** Direct handoffs and underhand pitches behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs/underhand pitches.

- C.** All underhand pitches must be backwards. Absolutely **NO** lateral pitches or passes.

- D.** *No-Run-Zones*, located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage power running situations. If the offense is running a play in the *No-Run-Zone* and is penalized, the offense is still considered to be in the *No-Run-Zone*, regardless of where the ball is. **There are only two (2) No-Run-Zones in each direction of the field.**

- E.** The player who takes the handoff/underhand pitch can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

1. **NO HOOK AND LADDER!**

- F.** Once the ball has been handed off or pitched, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

- G.** No pitching beyond the line of scrimmage

- H.** Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull. While running with the ball, players must always maintain one foot on the ground. No diving, leaping, or jumping because it is considered flag guarding. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball.

- I.** Offensive players must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. **No running with the ball carrier.**

- J.** The ball becomes dead where the ball is when the flag is pulled, or the player goes out of bounds. For line to gain and goal lines, the ball must cross the line.

- K.** If the ball carrier's flag or belt falls off untouched by a defender, the ball carrier is down at the spot the flag and/or belt hits the ground.

- L.** **Any player that starts a play without a flag is an ineligible player.**

- M. Flag Obstruction-All jerseys must be tucked in before the play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructing flags will be considered flag guarding.
- N. If an offensive player's flag is pulled in the end zone, it is considered a *Safety*, and two (2) points will be allotted to the defensive team. The defensive team will then take possession of the ball on their 50yard line.

XXII. RECEIVING

- A. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off/pitched behind the line of scrimmage).
- B. **Any player that starts a play without a flag is an ineligible player.**
- C. As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage. No motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
- D. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception. In case of simultaneous possession by both offensive and defensive players, possession is awarded to the offensive player.

XXIII. PASSING

- A. All passes must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- B. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage and it cannot be underhanded toss.
- C. The quarterback has a seven-second pass clock for 5/6 and 7/8 division. 9/11 and 12/14 division have a five second pass clock. If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play is dead, and there is a loss of down.

- D. Exceptions:**
1. Once the ball is handed off/pitched, the five-second rule is no longer in effect. Interceptions can be advanced, except for an extra point (during regular play).
- E. Intentional grounding is not a penalty.**

XXIV. DEAD BALLS

- A.** Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- B.** Play is ruled “dead” when:
1. the ball hits the ground
 2. the ball carrier’s flag is pulled
 3. the ball carrier steps out of bounds
 4. there is a touchdown, extra point or safety is scored
 5. the ball carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground
 6. the ball carrier’s flag falls out

7. there is an interception on an extra point attempt (only during regular play)
8. the receiver catches the ball while in possession of one flag
9. 7 second clock expires (5/6 and 7/8 Divisions)
10. 5 second clock expires (9/11 and 12/14 Divisions)

C. Fumbles: The ball is dead and spotted where the ball hits the ground. (*)
If the ball is fumbled in the air. The defense may advance the ball if its recovered and the ball has not hit the ground. (offense may advance as well). **Must be clear fumble, no intentional fumbles or laterals!**

D. Inadvertent Whistle: In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the team with possession of the ball has options:

1. Take the ball where it was when the whistle was blown.
2. Replay the down from the line of scrimmage.

XXV. RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

- A. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. **The rusher is allowed a direct line to the quarterback as long as he rushes from either side of the field and not straight up the middle. The rusher must be lined up one step (2 feet) to either side of the center.**
- B. **The offense must avoid interfering with the rusher.** Any number of players can rush the Quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.

- C. Once the ball is handed off/pitched, the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage. ***Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed!***
- D. There is **NO** rushing the Quarterback in the 5-6 division.

XXVI. **SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING**

- A. Acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, and the player will be **ejected** from the game. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
- B. Trash talking is illegal. Referees have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to Referees, opposing players, teams or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the Referee may give one warning. If it continues, the coach(s), player(s) or spectator(s) will be ejected from the game.

XXVII. **PENALTIES**

- A. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage unless otherwise noted.
- B. Only the head coaches may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.** C.
Games cannot end on an accepted penalty.
- D.
Note: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.
- E.

NO COACHES ARE ALLOWED ON THE FIELD FOR THE (9 – 11) AND (12 – 14) AGE DIVISION

Defense:

Offside	5 yards (from line of scrimmage)
Pass Interference	15 yard penalty (from the line of scrimmage) replay the down. Possible first down if mid-field is crossed, due to penalized yardage.
Illegal Press (Illegal hold, tackle, etc.)	10 yards (from line of scrimmage) No-press allowed at line!
Illegal Flag Pull (Before the receiver has ball)	5 yards (from line of scrimmage).
Illegal Rushing (Starting to rush from inside 7-yard marker)	5 yards (from line of scrimmage).
Stripping the Ball	Spot foul and 10 yards from spot and replay the down.
Unsportsmanlike Conduct (roughing the passer, unnecessary Roughness, taunting, etc.) <i>*Applies to players, coaches, and spectators</i>	10 yards & automatic first down! (possible ejection).
Too Many Players on the Field:	5 yards (from line of scrimmage) (in huddle or on field to start play)
Illegal tackling:	10 yards from the end of the play.

Offense:

Run in no run zone	5 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down.
Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.)	5 yards (from line of scrimmage)
Illegal forward pass (pass received behind the line of scrimmage)	5 yards & loss of down! (from line of scrimmage)

Pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)	10 yards & replay down (from line of scrimmage)
Flag guarding (obstruction of flags)	5 yards (spot foul)
Blocking (screening, blocking or running with the ball carrier)	5 yards (spot foul)
Delay of Game (more than 30 seconds to snap ball)	5 yards & clock stops at the referee discretion! (from line of scrimmage)
Unsportsmanlike Conduct (Unnecessary Roughness, taunting, etc.) <i>*Applies to players, coaches, and spectators</i>	10 yard & penalty is enforced from where play was blown dead (possible ejection)
Seven-second pass clock	Play is dead and loss of down
Too Many Players on the Field (huddle or on field to start play)	5 yards (from line of scrimmage) (in huddle or on field to start play)

XXVIII.

ATTIRE

- A. All players must have both flags to begin play!
- B. Cleats are allowed, no metal spikes. All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- C. Official NFL Flag jerseys must be worn and tucked in during play. Official set of the newest flags issued by the NFL, and Catch & Go Flag Football league shorts, must be worn.
- D. **NO ALTERATIONS MADE TO UNIFORMS (NO NAMES ALLOWED ON UNIFORMS)**
- E. Flags must be worn on each side of the player's hips.
- F. Inspections will be made prior to the start of all games.
- G. No Coaches on sidelines without a lanyard.
- H. Coach on Field or QB's get ball marker.

