

Nittany

Youth

Flag Football

Rulebook

Adult Code of Conduct

ADULT CODE OF CONDUCT

- F1:** In order to uphold the goals of Nittany Youth and ensure that all participants have the benefit of a safe and fun learning environment, all parents, guardians and other adults and attendees of Nittany Youth events, including but not limited to practices, competitions, and banquets, must behave accordingly in a respectful, courteous and sportsmanlike manner at all times.
- F2:** Any adult who is using alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or appears intoxicated at a Nittany Youth event, and/or who is flagrantly rude, attempts to intimidate, verbally abuse, heckles, taunts, ridicules, boos, throws objects and/or uses vulgarity or profane language/gestures with an official, coach, volunteer, staff member, participant or other event attendee, will receive a verbal warning and/or be asked to leave a Nittany Youth event. The member organization may also provide a written warning to the individual regarding the misbehavior. The adult's children may also be removed from the event. Any adult who commits one of the above stated offenses a second time, will be banned from any and all Nittany Youth events for a period of one year from the date of the second offense, and their children may also be removed from the program(s) for that time period.
- F3:** Any adult who physically assaults an official, coach, volunteer, staff member or participant or threatens grave bodily harm may be banned from any and all Nittany Youth events for one year from the date of the offense, and their children may also be removed from any and all Nittany Youth programs for that same period of time. After the ban has expired, if the individual commits another offense of the adult code of conduct, the individual will be permanently banned from any and all Nittany Youth events and the individual's children may also be permanently removed from any and all Nittany Youth programs.

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

All coaches and football participants will abide by a Code of Conduct, which includes the following provisions. If any of these rules are broken, the League shall have the authority to impose a penalty. Coaches shall:

- F1:** Not smoke and/or use smokeless tobacco on the field.
- F2:** Not criticize players/participants in front of spectators, but reserve constructive criticism for later, in private, or in the presence of team/squad members if others might benefit.
- F3:** Accept decisions of the game officials and judges on the field and in competitions as being fair and called to the best ability of said officials.
- F4:** Not criticize an opposing team, its players, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or by gesture.
- F5:** Emphasize that good athletes strive to be good students and that both are physically and mentally alert.
- F6:** Strive to make every football and spirit activity serve as a training ground for life, and a basis for good mental and physical health.
- F7:** Emphasize that winning is the result of good "teamwork."
- F8:** Not engage in excessive sideline coaching and shall not leave the bench area to shout instructions from the sidelines.
- F9:** Together with team officials, be jointly responsible for the conduct and control of team fans and spectators. Any fan who becomes a nuisance and out of control will be asked to leave.

- F10:** Not use abusive or profane language at any time.
- F11:** Not "pile it on" or encourage their team to get a commanding lead and raise the score as high as it can. In these instances, every effort shall be made to let all players play.
- F12:** Not receive any payment, in cash or kind, for services as a coach in Nittany Youth Football/Spirit. This includes any coach, expert, consultant or choreographer, regardless of his/her roster status.
- F13:** Not permit or encourage "sweating down" tactics in order for a player to make the team weight.
- F14:** Not recommend or distribute any medication, controlled or over the counter, except as specifically prescribed by participant's physician.
- F15:** Not permit an ineligible player or spirit participant to participate in a game.
- F16:** Not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
- F17:** Abstain from the possession and drinking of alcoholic beverages and the possession or use of any illegal substance on both the game and practice fields.
- F18:** Remove from a game or practice any participant when even slightly in doubt about his/her health, whether or not as a result of injury, until competent medical advice is available.
- F19:** Control their fans. Remember, as a team coach you're responsible for your team, and fan reaction will usually be in step with your reaction.
- F20:** Uphold all rules and regulations of Nittany Youth Football and Cheer League.

PART I - THE NITTANY YOUTH STRUCTURE

DEFINITIONS

F1-LEAGUE:

The term "League" has two definitions, each separate and distinct as applicable:

- A. It is a legal term to define a type of League/Conference, **or**
- B. It is a grouping of teams of the same ages and weights (playing division) into a "league" for scheduling purposes.

A League consists of a minimum of three (3) teams playing in the same Age/Weight division.

F2-ASSOCIATION:

Associations are organizations that sponsor and administer one or more teams. They raise money, buy equipment, recruit coaches, secure fields, etc.

Associations are characterized by specific geographical coverage. In cities, they often adopt commonly understood neighborhood names. In the suburbs, they usually take the town name. In rural areas, an association name may embrace an entire county (or a substantial part of it). An association's recruiting area is approved by its League and is normally consistent with its geographical name.

F3-TEAM:

A team is the universal, basic unit of organization. At minimum, a team consists of a group of participants organized under the direction of a coaching staff in a given Age/Weight division.

F4-DIVISION:

Division has several meanings, the most common of which refers to the following Age/Weight classifications: Flag (FG). The basic ages and weights for the division of play is listed below.

F5-ELIGIBILITY:

A player is eligible if they meet the criteria under the Age/Weight Divisions, has been physically cleared to play and has parental/guardian permission to play. Flag players are ineligible if they compete in another flag football program (unless as part of school curriculum).

INTRODUCTION TO THE RULES

- F1:** The rules contained herein ARE REQUIRED to be enforced by each league, conference and federation in Nittany Youth Football and Cheer League.
- F2:** FOR ALL PURPOSES, THE NITTANY YOUTH PLAYING SEASON SHALL BE DEFINED AS AUGUST 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, OR THE LAST GAME/COMPETITION, WHICH EVER COMES FIRST. All Leagues, administrative personnel, coaches, players and spirit participants are subject to disciplinary action for violations of Nittany Youth rules and regulations at any time during a stated playing season.
- F3:** NO RULES WILL BE ADDED AFTER MAY 1st UNLESS IT IS A SAFETY ISSUE.

PART II - NITTANY YOUTH REGULATIONS

ARTICLE 1: POWERS/AUTHORITY OF THE ASSOCIATIONS

- F1:** Each Associations has, among its powers, the obligation and authority to enforce these rules. In addition, it has the right to make its rules more stringent than those appearing in this book. Examples would be: increasing Mandatory Play, from the minimum of 10 or 12 plays (depending on division) to any higher number; or establishing a 2-year instead of a basic 3-year spread.
- F2:** An Association may not make rules less strict - that is, it cannot increase maximum weight, abolish Mandatory Play, etc.
- F3:** Associations participating in play-offs will follow all NYFCL Rules as printed in this book.

ARTICLE 2: BOUNDARIES

- F1:** An Association is responsible for the establishment of its own boundaries. However, it shall not infringe upon the territorial rights or boundaries of another chartered Association.
- F2:** Associations must establish boundaries. Boundaries will be set by a defined, readily recognizable format, i.e. town limits, school districts, streets, etc.

ARTICLE 3: DUAL MEMBERSHIP

An Association holding a Nittany Youth charter may enter any one of its teams into membership in any other youth football program (i.e. American Youth Football).

ARTICLE 4: WAIVERS OF RULES/CHARTER COMMITTEE

The Charter Committee for Nittany Youth shall consist of the Executive Board. They are responsible for reviewing, granting, suspending or revoking the privileges and conditions of the local association's charter.

- F1:** Waivers regarding players wishing to play outside their Association's boundaries, shall only be granted upon a written application executed and verified by the President of the Association, attesting that the waiver sought is based upon good cause and can be shown to be in the best interest of Nittany Youth players and spirit participants assuring their safety.
- F2:** All waivers expire annually on December 31 every year.
- F3:** Only waivers which, serve in the best interest of Nittany Youth Football will be given consideration.

ARTICLE 5: COACHES REQUIREMENTS

A team's coaching staff is in complete charge of the team whenever it is together on the practice or playing field, traveling as a group to and from practice sessions and games, or together for any team function, such as a banquet. The coaching staff is under the direction of the Head Coach all other coaches are Assistant Coaches. The following applies to all coaches:

- F1:** A Head Coach must be at least 21 years of age. A rostered adult representative (21 years or older) must be present for practices, games and functions.
- F2:** An Assistant Coach must be at least 18 years of age and a high school graduate. A football team may have a maximum of four (4) assistant coaches, plus a maximum of one (1) Coach-Trainee, (1) Equipment Manager, (1) Trainer, (1) Team Parent and (1) Administrator.
- F3:** Teams are permitted to carry a Coach-Trainee, who must be a minimum of 16 years of age.
- F4:** The Head Coach will determine the assignments of the Assistant Coaches.
- F5:** In the absence of a specialized, trained person affiliated with the team/squad in the medical area (physician, paramedic, specially trained volunteer), one of the coaches must be the holder of a current Red Cross Certificate in Community CPR and First Aid, or the P.R.E.P.A.R.E. Course by the National Center for Sport Safety (www.sportssafety.org) or their equivalent.
- F6:** Coaches are to be selected by methods approved by each Associations rules.
- F7:** Once approved for coaching, a coach is automatically terminated at the close of each season. To coach the following year, the same Association approval is required. Any violation of the rules committed by a coach during the season, even though the hearing is not held until after the close of the season, is still under the jurisdiction of the sponsoring association.
- F8:** Coaches do not make team or Association policy, rather, they carry it out. However, on the playing and practice fields, the coaching staff is in complete charge and shall not be interfered with except in cases of rules violations and any other conduct deemed by higher authority to be contrary to the welfare of youth.
- F9:** The Head Football Coach has final responsibility for his/her actions, those of his/her assistant coaches, players, staff and parents.

F10: Each Association shall establish its own rules regarding the placing of coaches with sons, daughters or siblings within its own boundaries.

ARTICLE 6: REGISTRATION

A candidate cannot begin practice with a team until he/she has "signed up." To register, the candidate must sign a standard, locally-supplied form approved by the League. The sign-up fee, if any, may be collected at this time. All coach trainees and teen demonstrators under the age of 18 must be registered/certified in the same manner as all other minors participating in Nittany Youth Football and Cheer League. All candidates must furnish the following:

F1-PARENTAL CONSENT:

A written statement from either a parent or legal guardian, stating that the child has his or her permission to participate. The Association may supply a standard form for this.

F2-MEDICAL EXAMINATION:

Each Association is responsible for ensuring that every participant has evidence of a current physical examination from any Licensed State Examiner; (i.e. Medical Doctor, Registered Physician Assistant, Registered Nurse Practitioner, etc.) to determine that the candidate is physically fit and there are no observable conditions, which would contra-indicate their participation in football. Note: If regular school medical examination was performed and the results are releasable to parents, a copy of such a report may be used in lieu of a new examination. It shall be at the discretion of each Association to determine what constitutes "current".

SPECIAL NOTE: A person with a loss of limb may participate provided that the individual has a signed statement of approval from an examining physician and that the use of the limb is no more dangerous to players than the corresponding human limb, and does not place an opponent at a disadvantage.

F3-PROOF OF AGE:

A certified copy of the birth certificate on file bearing the seal of the issuing office of the state of birth is the best guarantee of reliability of claimed date of birth and is form of proof most recommended. Passports are also reliable. Military ID cards are acceptable. Certified wallet-size certificates issued by a state or commonwealth are acceptable. Any other alleged "proof of birth date," including photo copies of "originals," are to be accepted only upon the willingness of the team administration to have its schedule forfeited should fraudulent application later be determined.

ARTICLE 7: FORMATION OF TEAMS AND SQUADS

Tryouts of any kind within Nittany Youth are prohibited. Tryouts are defined as any means used to ascertain the ability of a participant where this information is used to place a participant on a team, including assessments, evaluations, or any other method used whereas at the end of such evaluation a child would be excluded from participation. Participants may participate in the above scenario at the discretion of each Association provided every child is placed on a team and no one is excluded. Placement of players shall be at the discretion of each Association, in accordance with their policies, provided those policies are not in conflict with the Nittany Youth policies.

Not more than 30 players shall be assigned to a football team at the start of pre-conditioning on August 1 or the later starting date of the association, whichever comes first.

ARTICLE 8: MANDATORY CUTS

Any participant must be cut who:

F1: Is found to have signed up as a result of parental pressure or tells team management he/she does not really want to participate.

F2: Refuses or cannot furnish the 3 required items-Parental Consent, Medical Examination, and Proof of Age.

- F3:** Attempts to intimidate fellow participants in practice by word and/or physical deed. No refunding of fees shall be required.
- F4:** Is an extreme discipline problem (and then, only with the concurrence of the Association).

ARTICLE 9: VOLUNTARY CUTS

A participant shall be considered a voluntary or "self-cut" participant when he/she simply no longer shows up at practices or games of his/ her own free will.

While voluntary cuts are not charged to any team for the purpose of these regulations, a coaching staff may attempt to disguise its cutting pattern by arranging practices in such a way as to discourage participants of lesser ability into quitting on their own. While these practices are not common, they have been known to occur and are considered intentional avoidance of the rules and regulations and are, therefore, punishable as a result of a hearing.

If a team loses 20% or more of its assigned participants prior to certification, it is mandatory that the Association investigate the causes for the participants voluntarily leaving the team, and take whatever appropriate action may be needed. The results of this investigation shall be reported to the League and the League shall have final authority as to whether appropriate actions were taken.

ARTICLE 10: CERTIFICATION

- F1:** Certification is that process whereby the team or association will file with the League of which it is a member, a complete roster of players for the regular season schedule.
- F2:** A certified copy of each roster will be forwarded by the Association to NYFCL by the announced deadline. This is a certified roster in that the Association has accepted the information at a pre-season session with its teams based upon information submitted, and the teams are restricted to these participants for the balance of the season.
- F3:** This will be accomplished on the official Nittany Youth roster form.
- F4:** Certification must be completed prior to the opening game of the regular League schedule. The procedures for accomplishing certification are discussed hereafter. To be certified onto a team a participant shall qualify under the following:
- A. Eligibility according to residence shall be decided by the League when the candidate resides in an area other than that area authorized for the Association by the League.
 - B. Each Association shall attempt to assign a first-time participant to the lowest age and weight division for which he/she is qualified.
 - C. Once certified for a particular age/weight division, a participant shall not be permitted to recertify to a lower division of play without the written approval of the NYFCL Board.
 - D. Ages shall be verified by birth certificate as specified in Article 6, F3.
 - E. Associations will require a new picture of a football player at least every two (2) calendar years.

ARTICLE 11: RETENTION OF ELIGIBILITY

Once certified, a participant must meet the following requirements to retain eligibility:

- F1:** Transfer policy in case of change of residence will be decided by the League.
- F2:** Retain parental consent.

F3: Maintain sound physical condition.

ARTICLE 12: DROPS AND ADDS

F1: A team may add participants to its certified roster as long as said roster was certified below the maximum number permitted, or to replace those originally certified and no longer on the team or squad for any valid reason.

ARTICLE 13: NO ALL-STARS

All Star teams or squads are prohibited in Nittany Youth. Nittany Youth rosters are valid from August 1 to December 31 of the current year. Any coach or participant found to compete in an NYFCL inter-league game(s) with All Star participants from different rosters of regular season teams will forfeit future eligibility for all Nittany Youth programs. Participation in events outside of Nittany Youth Football inter-league play shall be exempt from this rule.

ARTICLE 14: AWARDS

F1: In compliance with the "team" concept and in view of the ages of Nittany Youth participants, no participant will be singled out as "best lineman," "best offensive back," "most valuable player/spirit participant," etc., for the presentation of a special award. Such adulation should be given to an athlete after his Nittany Youth days, if he/she justly deserves it by performance at the High School level. Individual awards may be presented, but must be given to all team or squad members.

F2-SPECIAL NOTE FOR PLAYERS: Awards for individual performances displayed on the helmets (i.e. stars, hatchets, footballs, ect.) shall be at the discretion of each Association.

ARTICLE 15: PRACTICE

F1-DEFINITION: To prevent possible bending of the rules and as a protection for children, practices are defined as a gathering of players or spirit participants, without minimum number, in the presence of at least one (1) coach, where one or more of the following activities take place:

- A. Chalk talk/skull session
- B. Viewing of fundamentals film
- C. Group conditioning
- D. Individual skills sessions (QB, receiving, blocking, tackling, kicking, etc.)
- E. Group skills sessions
- F. Dummies and other inanimate contact
- G. Play run through without pads (shorts & T-shirt)
- H. Play run through with equipment, but without contact
- I. Intra-squad scrimmages with full pads and equipment

As can be seen, a so-called "party" at a coach's home, where films are shown, or where football teams are talked about, can be deemed a practice session, as can a "party" at a parent's home where one or more coaches are present. Use of a football field is not required to satisfy the definition of a "practice session." Each Association is directed to establish a policy with respect to home videos and/or films of games and the viewing thereof. Nittany

Youth strongly recommends Associations discourage "parties/practice sessions" at coaches homes. All practice sessions must include a minimum of 2 coaches in attendance during the entire session.

F2: Pre-season practice shall not begin until August 1 (or later). The actual date will be determined in accordance with climate and other factors determined by the Association in establishing a common starting date for all teams within its jurisdiction.

F3: All practices must be attended by one person holding a Red Cross Community CPR and First Aid Certificate, or its equivalent, if not by an EMT or volunteer physician (such as a parent of one of the participants).

F4-BEFORE LABOR DAY: No team may schedule more than 10 hours of practice per week before Labor Day. A week is defined as seven (7) consecutive calendar days. Not more than 2-1/2 hours of practice may be scheduled on any one day.

F5-AFTER LABOR DAY: Practices after Labor Day weekend are limited to 6 hours per week. A week is defined as seven (7) consecutive calendar days. Practices after Labor Day weekend are not to exceed 2 hours per day.

F6-BREAKS: Break time is not counted against the ten (10) or six (6) hours per week or 2-1/2 or 2 hours of allowed practice time.

F7-CONTROLLED INTER-SQUAD SCRIMMAGE: After the first week of practice (10 hours) for conditioning, and after the second week of practice (10 hours) in pads in which contact has occurred, teams may engage in joint practice sessions with other team(s) in what are called controlled inter-squad scrimmages. So as to avoid any misinterpretation, 20 hours of practice is required before inter-squad scrimmages may occur.

F8: Any player added after a team has formed and/or after the season has started, must be subject to the same 20 hours of conditioning as mentioned in F7 of this article.

F9: The following exercises and drills are banned from all practices and pre-game warm-ups; leg lifts and bull in the ring. Leg lifts with knees bent are acceptable.

ARTICLE 16: CAMPS

F1: No Nittany Youth organization or personnel associated within, shall require or mandate that a Nittany Youth football team, in whole or in part, with or without coach(s) attend a football camp. There shall be no exceptions. However, a Nittany Youth affiliated football team, in whole or in part MAY attend a camp if they so choose, provided the following conditions are met:

B. A Coach or other team affiliated personnel does not make it MANDATORY.

C. The camp provides as part of its services an accident insurance plan for camp participants.

F2: A camp which does not provide as part of its services, an accident insurance plan for the camp participants shall not be endorsed or sponsored by Nittany Youth, or by any Association or team.

ARTICLE 17: IMPORTANT POINT-MEDICAL

The home team or hosting organization has the responsibility to provide medical coverage at each game or competition. In the absence of a physician and or ambulance on the site, the minimum safety requirement will be the presence of one individual associated with the home team/host organization who is currently EMT qualified or is currently certified in Red Cross Community First Aid and Safety, the P.R. E. P.A.R.E. Course by the National Center for Sport Safety (www.sportssafety.org), or their equivalent.

Work together with your local EMTs to establish an emergency plan that fits your specific area and needs. Your emergency plan should include, but not be limited to, the following:

A. Introduce or identify trainer/health care provider to visiting coach;

B. Home team/host organization review emergency plan with visiting team;

- C. Designated duties for coaching staff and or athletes;
- D. "How to call EMS" next to phone;
- E. Specific directions to your facility for emergency medical service (EMS);
- F. Emergency numbers;
- G. Injury report forms;
- H. Treatment authorization card;
- I. List of administrators that the coach is required to contact.

Practice your emergency plan early in the season, and repeat often throughout the season. A similar plan should be in place for teams traveling to away games.

All teams are recommended to have a staff member carry the entire team's medical release forms and emergency numbers for all players and spirit participants in case in an emergency their parent(s) or guardian must be reached. Having the family physician's number opposite the participant's name is also recommended.

ARTICLE 18: CHARGING ADMISSION

No mandatory admission shall be charged to participating players, spirit squads, or coaching staff members of a team playing in any Nittany Youth game, whether it be a regular season game, post-season game, post-season bowl game, League playoff game. Donations may be solicited at the gate.

ARTICLE 19: PROTESTS

F1: Only protests involving the eligibility of a player shall be considered.

F2: Protests are decided in accordance with the administrative procedures of the League.

F3: Teams and Associations have the responsibility to communicate protests as soon as they are known to exist. Lack of prompt notification may result in denial of the protest.

ARTICLE 20: MANDATORY BACKGROUND CHECKS

F1: As a condition of service to a Nittany Youth league, all Coaches, Board of Directors' members and any other persons or volunteer workers who have repetitive access to or contact with players, must complete and submit an official "Nittany Youth Volunteer Application" to their respective Association. Annual background checks must be completed prior to the applicant assuming his/her duties for the current season, and should be submitted to the Association President prior to the start of the current season. Refusal to submit a fully completed "Nittany Youth Volunteer Application" annually must result in the immediate dismissal of the individual or denial of participation for the applicant.

F2: Each Association shall require and be responsible for enforcing the submission by all association personnel to the Association President a fully completed official "Nittany Youth Volunteer Application," prior to the applicant assuming his/her duties for the current season. The Volunteer Application must include signed permission from the applicant allowing the Association to perform the necessary background check. The official "Nittany Youth Volunteer Application" shall only be modified in order to comply with local, state, provincial or national laws. Each League shall also require and be responsible for enforcing that an Officer of said Association complete the background check on every volunteer. All volunteer applications must be maintained by the Association for a duration of the season.

F3: No Association shall permit any person to participate in any manner, whose background check reveals a conviction for, or guilty plea to, any crime involving or against a minor. In addition, other charges and convictions may be an indication of an unfit volunteer, and therefore an Association may prohibit any individual from participating as a volunteer if the Association deems the individual unfit to work with minors, as long as the Association applies the same criteria uniformly for all individuals seeking to volunteer.

F4: Each Association must require that all volunteers undergo a background check screening which at minimum includes a check of the records for the state in which the volunteer resides. Beginning in 2005, if an Association

utilizes only a state sex offender registry check, that Association must also perform a national database or a Federal background check search, such as those offered by rapsheets.com, the National Center for Safety Initiatives, or the FBI, unless prohibited by law. If a local organization becomes aware of information, by any means whatsoever, that an individual, including, but not limited to, volunteers, players and hired workers, has been convicted of or pled guilty to any crime involving or against a minor, the league must immediately contact the applicable government agency to the accuracy of the information. Upon confirmation of a conviction for, or guilty plea to, a crime against or involving a minor, the league must prohibit the individual from participating in any manner.

Due to the fact that Nittany Youth has no direct operational control over the selection of volunteers, each Association shall be required to indemnify and hold harmless Nittany Youth against all legal actions based upon allegations arising from a failure to enforce all or part of this regulation. Failure to comply with all or part of this regulation may result in the suspension or revocation of the association charter, the removal of the association and/or its volunteers, ineligibility for participation in play, and as well as significant legal liability.

PART III-ENFORCEMENT POLICY

POLICE POWERS/HEARINGS & APPEALS

All Associations chartered under Nittany Youth may be called upon from time to time to do the following:

- A. Resolve disputes between member organizations and individuals.
- B. Take action to enforce Nittany Youth rules and regulations.
- C. Discipline both adult and juvenile members.

NOTE: NITTANY YOUTH DOES NOT HANDLE APPEALS. Each Association is advised to set up its own tribunal to handle matters in a timely fashion at the local level. WARNING: Failure to do so could result in being taken to court.

MINIMUM MANDATED PENALTIES

Minimum mandated penalties for specific offenses are required to assure that punishment for the most serious infractions will occur on a uniform basis.

F1-ADULT OFFENSES:

- A. **RUN-UP SCORE:** A finding of "guilty" shall result in Probation at a minimum; Suspension if the conduct is found to have been intentional; and Dismissal in the case of a repetitive pattern (malice).
- B. **ENDANGERMENT OF JUVENILES:** Suspension for one (1) year, to permanent suspension upon repeated offense.
- C. **TEACHING PROHIBITED OFFENSIVE & DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES:** Suspension for one (1) year, to permanent suspension upon repeated offense.
- D. **FIGHTING:** Suspension for one (1) year, to permanent suspension upon repeated offense.
- E. **CHEATING:** Suspension for one (1) year; permanent suspension upon second offense.
- F. **THREATS:** Suspension for one (1) year; permanent suspension upon second offense.
- G. **GAMBLING ON GAME OUTCOME:** Suspension for one (1) year.
- H. **LACK OF COOPERATION/ OBSTRUCTION:** Suspension until compliance is achieved.
- I. **VIOLATION OF MANDATORY PLAY RULE:** First violation: Suspension (may be reduced to probation); Second violation: Dismissal if original suspension still in effect, probation revoked and original suspension reinstated.
- J. **FALSIFICATION OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION:** Suspension for one year, to permanent suspension for repeat offense. This would include, but not be limited to, parental consent, medical examination and proof of age.

Upon suspension of any penalty provided herein, an accused shall be placed on probation, among the general conditions of which shall be: (1) that the accused be and remain of good behavior and that he strictly enforce all rules

and regulations of Nittany Youth; and (2) if in violation of the Mandatory Play Rule, that the accused prepare and submit to his Association his written plan to supervise implementation of the Mandatory Play Rule (MPR).

In addition, a player denied his required number of plays, will start the next game and receive double the number of mandatory plays in that game. The failure of a convicted coach to comply with this provision will be deemed a second violation.

F2-JUVENILE OFFENSES:

Fighting, intimidation, or disrespect for authority shall be cause for ejection from a game/competition. Any player or participant ejected from any game/competition for cause shall be ineligible for participation in their next game/competition. A second ejection during the same season shall be cause for removal from the team for the balance of that season.

F3-TEAM AND ASSOCIATION OFFENSES

- A. FAILURE TO KEEP FAITH WITH JUVENILES & PARENTS is defined as any deliberate practice of a team or association, which placed the health, welfare and safety of juveniles in jeopardy, or exploits or treats them in such a manner that the juvenile becomes a "tool" of the team.

To file this charge, the violation must result from team or association policy, and not be an aberration of one individual. This implies that the practice is carried out by order of, or with the knowledge of, the officership, and no steps are taken to end it.

MINIMUM PENALTY: Probation of the Association coupled with permanent suspension of its president and all others who participated in the practice. Upon a second offense, suspension of the Association until all officers are removed.

- B. FIGHTING/RIOTING/INCITEMENT TO RIOT: Game related: forfeiture of the game for first offense; forfeiture of the season for second offense within the same season. Scrimmage-related: at the discretion of the Association.

PART IV- FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

ARTICLE 1 : DIVISION OF PLAY

There are no height or weight restrictions on players in the flag division. Ages are 5, 6 and 7.

ARTICLE 4: FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

RULE 1: PLAYERS

- F1:** A game is played between two teams consisting of eight (8) players each.
- F2:** Only players appearing on the official team roster form are to be counted as players. The Roster is completed before the first game of the season and verified by the league in a process called "certification."
- F3:** The offensive team must have five (5) players on the line and three (3) in the backfield. The defensive team may choose any formation.
- F4:** Mandatory Play Rule: All players will play a minimum of 10 plays. Should any player not obtain their mandatory plays in a game, the coach will be required to play that player their mandatory plays plus any missed plays from the prior game at the next scheduled game. Failure to abide by this will result in a formal complaint to the NYFCL Board.
- F5:** A team will have 30 seconds to put the ball in play after the ready signal.

RULE 2: PLAYING FIELDS

F1: The field shall be rectangular with lines and zones and shall conform to either of the two designs mentioned below.

- A. 100-yard field: This field measures one hundred and twenty yards in length, divided into 5 zones of twenty yards each between two end zones of ten yards each. It is 53 1/3 yards wide.
- B. 80-yard field: This field measures one hundred yards in length, divided into 4 zones of twenty yards each between two end zones of ten yards each. It is 40 yards wide.
- C. Goal Posts are unnecessary as points after TD (conversion) are made only by passing or running and there are no field goals kicked.
- D. A conversion line will be marked 3 yards from the goal line and at an equal distance from each sideline.
- E. A kickoff area will be marked (usually by an "X") as follows:
 - 1. 100-yard field: from the 40 yard line.
 - 2. 80-yard field: from the 30 yard line (middle of second zone and equal distance from the sidelines).

F2: The following field equipment will be used:

- A. A Down Marker will be used to indicate the number of the down.
- B. A Zone Marker will be used to indicate the distance to go for a first down (placed at the forward zone line).
- C. Corner Flags with flexible staffs will be placed at the four sections of the end zones and the sidelines. Soft pylons may be used if flags are unavailable.

RULE 3: EQUIPMENT

F1-GAMEBALL

Each association will determine which ball will be used during its games.

F2-FLAGS

- A. Each player must wear a belt with the number of flags designated as "standard" by the league, which will be 3 flags.
- B. The flags will be attached to a belt and extend or hang from each side of the player's body. The third will hang from the rear of the player's body.
- C. Flags will be 14-20 inches long and a minimum of 2 inches wide.
- D. The belt must be tight to prevent being turned around during a de-flagging.
- E. Jerseys cannot be worn over flags.
- F. If a player's flag is inadvertently lost, he is ineligible to handle the ball.
- G. Flags are to be of contrasting colors, different from game uniform. Definitions of uniform shall be game pants and/or jersey.

NOTE: The flags will be attached to a belt made for that purpose. Such a belt has equal resistance at the point of attachment of flags, thereby ensuring an equal effort necessary to de-flag a player.

F3-GAME UNIFORMS

- A. All team members must wear the same color jersey.
- B. All jerseys will be numbered, front and back.
- C. Any type of long pants may be worn provided said pants have no front or side pockets. Shorts are not allowed.
- D. Jerseys will be tucked in at all times.
- E. Sneakers are the preferred shoe; however, non-detachable, rubber-cleated shoes are allowed. No other footwear is acceptable.

F4-EYE GLASSES

Eye glasses, when worn, shall be of athletically approved construction with non-shattering glass (safety glass).

F5-MOUTHGUARDS

Mouthguards are required. No keeper strap is necessary.

RULE 4: PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT

- F1:** Spiked or street shoes.
- F2:** Padding of any kind, including hard surface padding such as shoulder pads, hip pads, and helmets.
- F3:** Hard metal or any other hard substance on a player's clothing or person.
- F4:** Anything that conceals the flags.
- F5:** Slick or sticky substances such as grease or glue.
- F6:** Any equipment, in the opinion of the referee, that will endanger or confuse players.

RULE 5: REFEREES

- F1:** There will be at least two (2) referees. One referee shall be supplied from each team.
- F2:** The league may assign more than two referees for a game.
- F3:** Each game official will carry a handkerchief and drop it whenever an infraction occurs.

RULE 6: THE RULES OF THE GAME

F1-PLAYERS

The free substitution rule is always in effect and a player may enter the game any time the ball is dead.

F2-TEAM CAPTAINS

Each team will have at least one captain on the field at all times during the game.

F3-TEAM COACHES:

Two coaches from each team will be permitted on the field.

F4-TIME

There will be:

- A. Two 25-minute halves.
- B. Ten (10) minutes between halves.
- C. The clock shall run continuously for both halves of the game.

F5-BALL PLACEMENT

Each half will start with a ball placement.

- A. The 100-yard field placement will be at the 40-yard line.
- B. The 80-yard field placement will be at the 30-yard line. (Although this yard line is not diagrammed, the kickoff line will be marked with an appropriate symbol, usually an "X".)

F6-PUNTING

On 4th down the offensive team may elect to "punt" the ball. This shall consist of moving the ball 40 yards or halfway to the goal line whichever is less. A change of possession will occur once the ball has been moved.

F7-DOWNS (First down and zone to go)

- A. Each team will have four consecutive downs to advance the ball into the next zone or to score a touchdown.
- B. Once a team enters into the next zone, it is a first down and a new series of downs begins.
- C. A team failing to move the ball into the next zone will lose possession. The opposing team takes over at the point where the ball is declared dead and begins its series of first down and zone to go.
- D. The forward part of the ball touching any line will be the determining factor in measuring for a first down.
- E. When the offensive team is within the last zone and has a first down, it will be first down and goal to go.

- F. At the conclusion of each down, the referee will place the ball in the center of the field (equal distance from sidelines-not on a hash mark).

F8-DE-FLAGGING

- A. There shall be no tackling of the ball carrier, passer, or kicker.
- B. The player carrying or having possession of the ball is down when the flag is removed from his waist (de-flagging). The defensive player shall hold the flag above his head and stand still.
- C. The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier to remove his flag. An accidental touch of the body or shoulder while reaching for the flag shall not be considered a violation, however, touching of the head or face shall be considered a violation.
- D. A defensive player may not run over, push, or pull a blocker away from him. He may push him sideways if he gets past him, but he cannot push the blocker down.
- E. A defensive player must go for the passer's flag. He cannot touch the passer's arm.
- F. Defensive players shall not be penalized for diving while trying to de-flag a player. This should not be taught.

F9-BLOCKING

- A. A blocker must be on his feet at all times while blocking. All linemen, except the center, must not assume the three-point stance or otherwise spring from a coiled or crouching start. Instead, they must simply stand at the line of scrimmage and await the snap. The center, though crouching, if he is to block, must first stand straight up.
- B. Cross body and roll blocking are not permitted.
- C. A blocker cannot use his hands.
- D. Blocking shall be done with the arms and body in the form of shoulder and brush blocking only.
- E. A defensive player cannot block or push a ball carrier out-of-bounds.
- F. Butting, elbowing or knee blocking is not permitted.
- G. There will be no two-on-one blocking for the ball carrier beyond the line of scrimmage.
- H. Blocking a player from behind is not permitted (clipping).
- I. There will be no interlocking blocking.
- J. A defensive player will be restricted in the use of his hands to the blocker's body and shoulders.
- K. Defensive players must adhere to the following:
 - a. Defensive must give the center sufficient time to snap the ball and return to a standing position before approaching.
 - b. Defensive players may not line up across from or hit the center.
 - c. Defensive players must line up a minimum of 1 yard off of the line of scrimmage.
- L. Defensive players may not shove the ball carrier out of bounds as a means of ending the play. Defensive players must always go for the flags of the ball carrier.

F10-BALLCARRIER

- A. The ball carrier cannot use his hands or arms to protect his flags. The defensive player must have the opportunity to remove the ball carrier's flags.
- B. The ball carrier cannot lower his head to drive or run into a defensive player.
- A. Stiff-arming by the ball carrier is illegal.
- B. He may run in any direction until the ball is declared dead.

F11-CENTER

- A. The center must snap the ball between his legs.
- B. He must have both feet on the scrimmage line with no part of his body beyond the forward point of the ball.
- C. He may adjust the long part of the ball at right angles to the scrimmage line for one time only.

F12-PASSING

- A. All backfield men are eligible passers.
- B. Passing will be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage only.
- C. A lateral pass is a pass thrown parallel to the line of scrimmage or back toward the passer's own goal line. A lateral pass is not considered a forward pass.
- D. A forward pass is a pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage toward the defensive team's goal line.

F13-RECEIVING

- A. All players are eligible to receive forward passes.
- B. A receiver may catch a ball even if he steps out-of-bounds or out of the end zone as long as he comes down with one foot in bounds.
- C. Two or more receivers may touch a ball in succession resulting in a completed pass.
- D. If an offensive and defensive player catch a pass simultaneously, the ball is declared dead at the spot of the catch and the passing team is awarded possession.
- E. An offensive player cannot be out-of-bounds and return in-bounds to catch a pass. This will be ruled an incomplete pass.

F14-DEAD BALL

All balls touching the ground are immediately dead. For example, the ball is declared dead at the following times:

- A. When the ball carrier touches the ground with his body, other than hands or feet.
- B. When a ball carriers flag has been pulled
- C. If a pass receiver or ball carrier has a missing flag (ball is dead at that spot).
- D. Following a touchdown, safety or touchback.
- E. When the ball goes out-of-bounds for any reason.
- F. If the center snap hits the ground before reaching a backfield man.
- G. When the ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble or muffed ball. **THERE ARE NO FUMBLE RECOVERIES IN NYFCL!**
- H. If a lateral pass touches the ground (ball is declared dead at that point). If a lateral pass goes out-of-bounds, the ball is ruled dead at the point it crosses the boundary line.
- I. If a forward pass strikes the ground or is caught at the same time by an opposing player(s).
- J. There shall be no "mulligans" or "do-overs", etc. If a fumble occurs the ball will be placed at the spot of the fumble not at the original line of scrimmage.

RULE 7: SCORING VALUES

No score shall be kept for Flag Games.

RULE 8: INJURED PLAYERS

Once removed from a game because of injury, a player must sit out at least one down, and may not re-enter the game without the approval of attending medical personnel.

RULE 9: PRACTICES

F1: Practice cannot begin until August 1.

F2: Practices are limited to three days per week, not to exceed 1-1/2 hours each practice, while school is in session, and when school is not in session, practices are limited to four days per week, not to exceed 2 hours duration.

RULE 10: SCHEDULES

F1: Maximum number of flag games per season shall be as follows:

Pre-Season	Regular Season	Tournament
0	8	Yes*

*Whatever number needed in the tournament program is allowed.

RULE 11: PENALTIES

Since two football field sizes can be used, penalties are adjusted accordingly. The 100-yard field will be assessed the standard fifteen (15) and five (5) yard penalties. The 80-yard field will be assessed ten (10) and five (5) yard penalties. With this in mind, references to penalties will be given as (15-10) and (5-5) in the following listings.

F1-LINE OF SCRIMMAGE-Centering

- A. Offside, defensive or offensive (5-5)
- B. Illegal snap (5-5)
- C. Failure to observe 40-second snap rule (5-5)
- D. Illegal motion-more than one backfield man in motion (5-5)
- E. Illegal formation, offense (5-5)

F2-PASSING

- A. If an illegal forward pass is thrown and intercepted, the play will continue until the ball is declared dead. The intercepting team has the option of possession from that spot or accepting the penalty (5-5).
- B. Passer crosses the line of scrimmage- (5-5) and loss of down.
- C. Intentional grounding- (5-5) and loss of down.
- D. Offensive pass interference- (15-10) from line of scrimmage and loss of down.
- E. Defensive pass interference-first down from spot of infraction for the offensive team.

F3-DELAY OF GAME

- A. Continuing to play after the ball is dead- (5-5) from spot where the ball is dead.
- B. Recovering a fumble or falling on the ball (5-5).
- C. Unnecessary delay of game for any reason (5-5).

F4-FLAGWEARING AND DE-FLAGGING

- A. Tackling (15-10).
- B. Wearing the flags illegally (5-5).
- C. Ball carrier using his hands to prevent a defensive player from de-flagging- (15-10).
- D. Holding, pushing, or hitting the ball carrier while de-flagging- (15-10).
- C. Wearing one flag (5-5).

F5-ILLEGAL HAND-OFF

- A. If the ball is handed forward beyond the scrimmage line- (5-5) and loss of down.
- B. Handing or snapping a ball to a lineman (5-5).

F6-ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTIONS

- A. More than eight (8) men of the field (5-5).
- B. Substitution(s) while the ball is in play or before it is declared dead (5-5).
- C. Disqualified player entering game (15-10).

F7-BLOCKING

- A. Leaving feet to block (15-10).
- B. Cross body blocking or roll blocking (15-10).
- C. Illegal use of hands by blocker (15-10).
- D. Holding a defensive player (15- 10).
- E. Defensive player blocking or pushing the ball carrier out of bounds (15-10).
- F. Butting, elbowing or knee blocking (15-10).
- G. Defensive player using hands illegally (5-5).
- H. More than two blockers for the ball carrier (on one defensive player) beyond the line of scrimmage (5-5).
- I. Clipping (15-10).
- J. Interlock Blocking- (15-10) from spot of foul.

F10-BALL CARRIER

- A. Stiff arming- (15-10) from spot of foul.

- B. Lowering head to drive or run into defensive player (15-10).
- C. Use of head (15-10).
- D. Use of hands or arms to protect flags (15-10).

F11-UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS

- A. Offensive and Defensive (15-10).
- B. Disqualification of guilty player or players if repeated.

F12-UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- A. Fighting (15-10)- offenders ejected from game.
- B. Defensive player pulling offensive player's flag to make him ineligible foreplay (15-10).
- C. Insulting and abusive language (15-10).
- D. Interference with progress of the game by coaches or any other team personnel (15-10).
- E. Illegal play (15-10).
- F. Team leaving field before game is completed (15-10). Failure to return- Forfeit. Win for team remaining on the field.
- G. Failure of either team to control their players and/or fans during a game shall result in a penalty (15-10).

RULE 12: PROTESTS

- F1:** Only protests involving rules' interpretations or the eligibility of a player shall be considered - never the judgment of an official in calling a play.
- F2:** Protests are decided at the local level in accordance with the administrative procedures of the league.

RULE 13: RULES MEETING

One coach from each team shall be required to attend a rules meeting where the interpretation of the rule book will be given. Failure to have a representative attend will result in disciplinary action.