



**YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES**  
**TIPTON RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

**OBJECTIVE:** The Tipton Recreation Flag Football program gives individuals the opportunity to participate in and to understand the terms and workings of a regular football game without severe contact. Deflagging of the ball carrier replaces tackling. The object is to score points by advancing the ball across the opponent's goal line by running and/or passing.

**I. PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS:**

- a. The team roster will consist of up to 14 members per team with 9 players from each team on the field at a time. (4 Lineman and 5 Backfield) for the K-1 & 2-3 grade divisions. There will be no more than 14 on each team with 10 players from each team on the field at a time for 4-6 division. (5 Lineman and 5 backfield)
- b. Coaches are required to allow all players the chance to experience every position throughout the season. The only exception would be by the choice of the child.
- c. There will be free substitution at any time the ball is dead. Players being substituted for must be off the field prior to the next snap.

**II. EQUIPMENT:**

- a. All participants are required to wear a mouthpiece in order to participate that day.
- b. Junior size footballs will be used for the 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade programs. Smaller footballs will be used for the K-1<sup>st</sup> grade division.
- c. Each player on the field will wear a flag belt with 3 flags at the waist, one on each side and one in the back. Teammates must wear the same color flags. All communities participating must have the same style of flags (Tipton Rec. will provide belts for all participants). Belts must be ones with three flags that are sewn in the belt and when one flag is pulled the whole belt falls off.
- d. Team shirts must be tucked in. No article of clothing may cover any portion of a player's flag.
- e. All players must wear shoes. Any flat soled or completely molded cleat shoes are acceptable. Removable cleats, baseball, or track spikes, or any shoes that have steel or metal tips are prohibited. No jewelry will be allowed.

**III. LENGTH OF GAMES AND TIME-OUTS:**

- a. All games will have a one hour time limit and will start exactly at the time scheduled.
- b. Games will consist of two 20 minute halves for all levels of play. The clock will run continuously, only stopping for time-outs and injuries.
- c. Half time will be 3 minutes in length.
- d. Each team will be allowed 2 time outs per half. Time outs will be 1 minute in length – play will resume after one minute – no exceptions.

- e. At the end of each half, there will be a 2 minute warning, and coaches will be told that there are 5 plays left in the half. Point after touchdown (P.A.T.) **DOES NOT** count as one of the plays.

**IV. SCORING:**

- a. Touchdown – 6 points
- b. Point after touchdown – 2 point by pass or run

**V. THE GAME:**

- a. Games will begin with a coin toss. The winner has choice of offense or defense; or choice of goal. Privileges are reversed and goals are exchanged the beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> half.
- b. The ball is put in play at the beginning of each half, after a touchdown, and after a score by placing the ball at the 10 yard line for the offensive team.**
- c. Teams are allowed 4 downs to either score or cross the next zone line (10 yards) to gain another 1<sup>st</sup> down. Failure to do so results in the defense gaining possession of the ball at that spot.
- d. Teams will be allowed 25 seconds to regroup or huddle between plays.
- e. Five play rule period goes into affect at the 2 minute warning of the halves. From this point on the clock will no longer be kept, instead 5 plays will be left in that half or game. The officials will give down, distance and play number on all plays remaining. Teams must continue to make first downs if they want to keep possession, as it is with using the clock. However, if they don't make a first down, the defense has a chance to gain possession and use the remainder of the 5 plays. P.A.T. tries will not count as one of the 5 plays.
- f. Games will end in a tie if at end of regulation the score is as such. No tie breaker will be played.

**VI. PLAYING REGULATIONS:**

- a. Tackling is prohibited. Two warnings per team then a 5 yard penalty.
- b. The ball carrier is down and the ball is dead when either knee touches the ground. When a defensive player pulls the ball carrier's flag, they should stop and hold it above his/her head for the officials to see. (Fake deflagging - 5 yard penalty)
- c. Defensive players will be responsible to hand flags back to the ball carrier or set them down at the spot of deflagging. Every effort should be made to speed up the game. A delay of game penalty may be called when players intentionally violate this requirement.
- d. Any stance is permitted except lineman who must be in a 3 point stance.
- e. The defensive line must be 1 yard off the ball at all times. Referees will count a 5 second rush for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and a 3 second rush for 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> graders (no rush for K-1<sup>st</sup> grade unless quarterback runs past line of scrimmage). Please make sure to count out loud so that all players know when they may begin to rush. **If the quarterback or running back gets outside the tackle box that player is live and the defensive team can rush right away instead of waiting 3 seconds for 4-6 grade division and 5 seconds for 2-3 grade.**

- f. A center snap may touch the ground before it gets to the quarterback and remain playable if the quarterback fields it cleanly off of a bounce or from the ground. However, if the quarterback muffs the ball to the ground it is dead where the ball touches the ground.
- g. A fumbled ball is considered dead at the spot where the ball hits the ground or at the spot where the ball goes out of bounds.
- h. Offsides shall be called if either the offense or the defense passes over the plane of the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped. (Penalty - 5 yards)
- i. All players of both teams are eligible pass receivers. Each player is eligible, even if he steps out of bounds or out of the end zone, as long as he catches the ball in bounds or comes down first in bounds with at least one foot.
- j. Pass interference- after the pass is in the air, neither pass receiver nor defender may touch the other until one of them touches the ball. Stripping the ball from another player's hands is considered pass interference. Once a player has established possession of the football, the defender must go for the flag and not the ball.
- k. Blocking shall be done by use of arms and body without the use of hands. No part of the blocker's body, except his feet, shall be in contact with the ground throughout the block. There shall be no rolling blocks.
- l. Blocking or pushing a ball carrier that is running near a sideline for the purpose of knocking him out of bounds and stopping his progress is a penalty. The ball carrier's progress can be stopped only by deflagging him/her. One warning per team then a penalty.
- m. The ball carrier will not deliberately run or drive into a defensive player. The ball carrier shall not protect his flags by blocking with his hand, arm, or head, the opportunity of an opponent to pull his/her flags.

**VII. PENALTIES:**

- a. All penalties shall be marked 5 or 10 yards unless, in the opinion of the officials/coaches, they are flagrant or excessive contact, in which case they will be marked 15.
- b. 5 yard penalties- Delay of game, offsides, clothing covering flag, fake deflagging, improper position of flags, illegal forward pass.
- c. 10 yard penalties- Pass interference, runner and receiver stripping, unsportsmanlike conduct
- d. 15 yard penalties- Flagrant and deliberate contact, unnecessary roughness, abusive language, stiff arming.

