

Plantation Athletic League

Flag Football Rules and Guidelines

Revised 8/10/13

www.plantationflagfootball.com

Mark Reuther, Commissioner

Objectives

- To provide the players with an opportunity to learn and participate in an organized recreational team sport.
- To have fun.
- To develop sportsmanship and teamwork.
- To develop skills, knowledge, and appreciation of the game as both a player and a spectator.
- To develop team play and provide leadership opportunities.
- To develop each player's potential and instill the desire to put forth their best effort.

Organization

The PAL Board approves all rules, policies, and procedures under which flag football is administered. Overall responsibility for flag football is given to the Flag Football Commissioner and Vice Commissioner. A carefully selected committee of administrators assists the Flag Football Commissioner and Vice Commissioner with all responsibilities through-out the season.

Eligibility

All boys and girls ages 5-14. Age based on September 1.

Age Divisions

5-6U (6-Clinic) 8U (7-8) 10U (9-10) 12U (11-12) 14U (13-14)

The Flag Football Recreational League reserves the right to place players on teams and in divisions for the overall benefit of the League. These decisions are made on an individual basis. The League reserves the right to rank players in the draft based on past league experience regardless of the player's rating.

General Rules

Game Rules

Plantation Athletic League Flag Football Rules as explained in this document. These rules have been created and approved by the PAL Board and the Flag Football Board expressly for the fun and enjoyment of the game called Flag Football.

Registration

Registration is open to the children of Plantation and surrounding communities who meet the various program age requirements. Children registered after the designed registration period will be charged a late fee of \$50.00 and will be subject to availability of openings. In no circumstances should a player be added to teams after the season has begun, except on a replacement basis only and not without a rating evaluation and permission of the Flag Football Commissioner. Registrants must provide a proof of residency along with a copy of your child's birth certificate. All registrants must complete the required PAL registration form before starting participation.

Refunds

No refunds will be made once a player is registered except for the following reasons:

- Transfer of family out of Plantation.
- Injury or other medical reason as proven by a written statement by a medical doctor.

Additionally, you **MUST** have your copy of the registration form as proof of payment. No refunds will be issued without a copy of the registration form. Cost of insurance, and/or full uniform will be deducted if not returned unused and in original packaging. There will be a \$25.00 fee applied to Refund requests.

Participation and Voluntary Termination

Registrants may only sign-up for one sport per season. Seasons consist of fall, winter and spring programs. The first sport signed up for will be the sport a player is required to play in case of duplicate registrations, unless otherwise approved by the PAL board. A player attending a Board approved clinic in another sport is not in violation of this rule. **A player dropping out of a program after being placed on a team will be prohibited from playing in any PAL Sport for one additional year.** Unless the reason is due to transfer, medical reasons or approved by the Sport's Commissioner and Board of Directors.

Selection of Coaches

Head coaches will be selected from volunteers who fill out a coach's application during registration. Coaches will be recommended by the League Directors and be approved by the Flag Football Board. A coach can only have one team if more eligible coaches sign up. Coaches can be refused if the PAL Board or Flag Football Board is aware of any previous complaints about the coach's style or refusal to follow PAL rules. Any coach who quits or is removed during a season will not be eligible to coach for a minimum of one year. **Every coach must sign and obey the Coaches Code of Conduct and the Coaches Responsibility Form or be subject to disciplinary actions.**

Suspensions

A coach cannot suspend a player for any reason without approval of the Flag Football Commissioner. However the Flag Football Board can suspend a player or coach for unsportsmanlike acts. If a player, coach, or spectator is ejected from a game, he/she is suspended for the following game. Suspensions may be appealed to the Flag Football Board and must be appealed, prior to the next game.

COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head Coach has overall responsibility for the conduct of his team. He is expected to instill fun and the spirit of good sportsmanship.

Head Coaches are required to follow written PAL rules. Any infraction of these rules will result in necessary disciplinary action. Any player suspension or limitation of playing time in a game by a coach without approval of the Flag Football Board will result in necessary disciplinary action, including suspension. Players missing scheduled games and practices with regularity that are not approved by the head coach will be subject to disciplinary action by the Flag Football Board. Coaches should escalate these situations through the Flag Football Board member.

Head Coaches are expected to attend all mandatory coaches meetings, certification procedures if offered and are required to sign and follow the PAL Coach's Code of Conduct.

All that is dishonorable, unsportsmanlike and unsafe is particularly and expressly condemned. Penalty for violation: **The player, coach or team guilty of such violation of using profane language on the field shall be removed from the game and park and may be further penalized by the Flag Football Board.**

All types of noise makers shall be disallowed for all games, such as: whistles, horns, drums, shakers, and other instruments that may disrupt the fair play and sportsmanship that is required at all events.

The Head Coach is responsible for the conduct of his players, parents, assistant coaches and spectators of his team. The maximum number of coaches allowed in the sideline box during a game for each team is three. A team can have less than three but they must have an acting coach. Only coaches and players are allowed in the box (the area between the 20 yard lines outlined with chalk).

Coaches must be inside the coach's box. Coaches who disregard the coach's box and continue to coach up and down the sideline (outside of the coach's box) and behind the end zone will be penalized the following:

- **1st offense: 5 yd penalty.**
- **2nd offense: 15 yd penalty.**
- **3rd offense: Ejection from game.**

Any coach or parent confronting or questioning a PAL referee or official after the completion of a game and/or leaving the playing field is strictly prohibited. Any coach or parent violating this rule shall be subject to game suspensions and / or banishment from parks or elimination from all further participation in PAL.

Any coach or player ejected for the first time shall not play in the next scheduled game. Penalty for violation: He/she shall have a board review to determine the severity of the ejection for further punishment.

Any person, coach, referee, player, spectator or league official who commits an act of violence prior to, during or after any game is subject to an indefinite suspension and/or elimination from all further participation in PAL.

Each coach shall have access to a copy of the rules and he/she shall acquaint his players, coaches, sponsors, etc. with the contents of same. The rules can be found on the PAL Flag Football website at www.palsports.org. **Ignorance shall not be accepted as an excuse for any violation of these rules.** If a coach or parent does not have access to a computer a printed copy of the rules may be obtained by contacting the Rules & Ethics Director.

Equipment Return

Equipment must be returned at the end of the season. If all equipment is not returned the head coach is responsible for paying replacement costs.

Coaches failing to return equipment will be suspended from coaching until past equipment is returned. The coach's player (son, daughter, etc.) will also be suspended from all PAL activity until equipment is returned.

Receipt Collection of Parent Code of Ethics

The Head Coach is responsible for familiarizing his / her team with the PAL General Rules and the sport's specific playing rules.

The Head Coach is responsible for ensuring that every parent, and coach on his team, in addition to himself signs and hands in the Parent Code of Ethics to the Age Group Director prior to the start of the regular season. The above mentioned is the last page of the PAL Flag Football Rules.

PARENT/PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES

Team Parent Responsibilities

Each team should have a team parent who will assist the coach. These duties include:

- Making phone calls to team members regarding practices.
- Organizing team pictures.
- Arranging for team drinks during and after games.
- Organizing a team party after completion of the season.
- If requested, arrange for team parents to assist in registration or other program events.

Parents Responsibilities

PAL is a totally volunteer run organization.

Parents are required to contribute volunteer time when requested and to support the rules and objectives of PAL. Parents are spectators and use of alcoholic beverages; profanity or unsportsmanlike conduct toward any coach, player or official at a PAL event will NOT be tolerated and will result in forfeiture of the game and suspension of the parent from the current and all future games.

The home team must provide one responsible volunteer for each game to move the down marker. **Fans are not permitted inside of the coach's box or within 10 yards of the sidelines or end zone.**

Players Responsibilities

The player is responsible to cooperate with the coaches, officials and teammates. Attendance at all scheduled practices and games is mandatory unless approved by the Head Coach. Infractions by players will be dealt with on an individual basis per the instructions above under the "Coaches Responsibilities" and may lead to limited playing time and or game suspensions. Profanity and unsportsmanlike conduct are infractions that could lead to the player's suspension and elimination of further participation. **Fighting will not be tolerated.** All rulings by the PAL Sports Grievance Committee are final.

Any player willfully damaging PAL property will be suspended from all activities until PAL has been compensated for the damage. Reinstatement will be subject to PAL Board approval.

Opposing players, on the field, or on the sidelines, may not harass the opposing team based on the referee's discretion.

Throwing of any flag football equipment as a sign of negative aggression may warrant ejection from the game, after 1st warning (15 yd penalty: unsportsmanlike conduct) at the discretion of the referee.

All players not active in the game must remain in the box or on the bench on the sideline.

Players FIGHTING before, during or after the game will NOT be tolerated and are infractions that will lead to the player's ejection and elimination of further participation in all PAL Flag Football-- for a period of at least one year.

Any player or coach who has any inappropriate comments toward the referee, other players, or coaches may be ejected and suspended for the following game. **Trash talk is illegal. (Trash talk is language that is offensive to officials, players, teams or spectators). The referee shall assess an unsportsmanlike penalty and any infractions thereafter may result in ejection from the game.**

A player may not participate in more than one PAL sport at the same time, unless approved by the Flag Football Board. High School Varsity Football players are not permitted to participate in the PAL recreational Flag Football program.

Equipment Provided

PAL will provide jerseys, shorts and flags only, which shall be worn at all scheduled games. A Head Referee or Flag Football Board member may suspend any player not in full uniform from playing. Players shall provide the following equipment: all purpose molded cleated shoes, and a mouth piece. **Metal and screw-on cleats are not permitted.**

Practice and Games

Practices and Games will be held at Central Park, Monday thru Thursday from 6pm to 9pm and Saturday from 9am to 3pm as approved by the City of Plantation and Flag Football Board. **Teams will be limited to three meetings per week** until the end of the post season (i.e. one game and two practices, two games and one practice, three practices and no games, no practices and three games). A meeting is defined as any time a parent/coach is present with three or more members of the team and there is a football present; or when four or more members of the same team are together with a football. The week runs from Sunday to Saturday. No Practice may exceed two hours. **Teams violating this rule may result in the suspension of Head Coach and or Assistant Coaches.**

Weather and Field Conditions

If the conditions of the playing field or lights are questionable for starting the game, a vote of two head coaches and head referee will be taken 5 minutes before game time. If the Head Coach from one of the teams is not present the head referee will decide whether conditions are satisfactory for play. In case of darkness or inclement weather, the head referee in charge will make the decision as to postponement or calling the game over. This will be done at the field. **Note: Games will be considered complete games after the first half of the game has been completed. Games with less time played will be re-scheduled in its entirety.**

Lightning/Rain Delay Rule

When a rain or lightning delay occurs, teams must wait at least 30 minutes before leaving the park unless the situation is dangerous and the weather obviously warrants taking shelter. **A Lightning Delay may occur with an alarm sound from the Lightning Prediction System with one (1) long 15-second blast indicates immediate evacuation of all fields and seek shelter in a nearby building or car.** Three (3) short 5-second blasts indicate all field activities may resume.

All Head Coaches are responsible ensuring full compliance from his team and all parents to the above mentioned evacuation rule. If anyone fails to comply, they are subject to trespassing laws (When System indicates evacuation, technically the Park closes.). The Police will be notified of offenders.

A rain or lightning delay shall last no longer than 30 minutes (unless it is the playoffs whereas the League official shall determine when the game should be called). The Head Referee shall keep track of the duration of the rain delay. This time will be tacked on to the end of the game up to a maximum of 30 minutes.

Game Rescheduling

When the minimum number of players cannot be fielded, the game will be forfeited; not re-scheduled. **Games need to be played as scheduled. No game will be rescheduled unless it has been cancelled due to park closure or weather**

conditions. Only the Flag Football Board can officially reschedule games. There is no guarantee that the game will be replayed.

Reporting Game Scores

The Coach from the winning team must report their game score within 24 hours to the website at www.leaguelineup.com/palflagfootball. **Failure to do so will result in a forfeit.**

Championships

The team's won/loss record will determine their standings for post season playoffs. Standings will not be kept in the clinic division. Clinic division players will get a participation award. For all other divisions, a single elimination "Super Bowl" championship tournament will conclude postseason play.

Player Participation

6U thru 14U will play with a 7-players on field. However, a game can be played with a minimum number of 5 players. A game cannot be played with less than 5 players. Once player participation drops below the 5 player minimum, a forfeit will be declared. A team will be given ten minutes from the official start time to field a team. If, after ten minutes, a team still does not have enough players, a forfeit will be charged to the team unable to start the minimum numbers of players. If a forfeit is declared, game officials are not permitted to referee "pick-up" or scrimmage games.

No player may be sidelined for more than one consecutive series offensive/defensive/special team unless the referee is notified that the player is sick, injured or departs early. (Penalty: Forfeit)

Each player must play on offense and on defense. (Penalty: Forfeit)

Coaches must make an effort to give every player an offensive play. (Penalty: Forfeit)

Coaches Field Participation Game Rules

In the clinic division, (5-6 year old league); offense and defense, one coach per team is allowed on the field to "position" the players and call the play. This coach must stay away from the action at all times.

In the 7-8 division, only an offensive coach may set the plays and remain on the field. The defensive coach can call defensive plays but must be off the field before the play starts. **While in play, the coaches on the field may not participate IN ANY WAY (running with, directing, shouting counter plays, etc.). Violation will result in penalty.**

A player, coach, or fan may be ejected from the game. Any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike acts may result in the player being ejected from the game. **Foul play will not be tolerated.**

Coaches are not allowed on the playing field except for injury, timeout, or invitation by the referees. Any coach who goes on the playing field without invitation from the referee will be charged a time out. In the case there are no time outs remaining, the team will be called for delay of game. Subsequent violation of this rule by the same team will result in an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty. Additional infractions will result in ejection from the game. Any coach who goes on the playing field to protest a call from an official is subject to a charged time out and a 15 yd unsportsmanlike penalty. A repeat offense in the same game is an automatic ejection from the game.

The Game Rules

Field

The playing field is 80 yards in length and 40 yards in width with a 10-yard end zone. First downs will be determined when a team reaches or passes the First-to-Gain line (20, 40, and 20 yard lines). The ball will be spotted when the flag is pulled and the hips are in the normal position as determined by the referee. **Scoring:** The player scores a touchdown when the hips **break the plane of the goal-line, without the player diving, or extending the ball from his body as determined by the referee.** Safeties, extra points and Field Goals are also earned.

Coin Toss

One coin toss prior to the beginning of the game determines first half and second half possession and the direction in which the teams will be defending. The visiting team makes the call when a coin reflecting heads and tails is flipped into the air. The referee announces the results after the coin comes to a complete rest on the ground. The team that wins the coin toss can choose one of the following three (3) choices: kick, receive, or defend goal. Kicking and direction are

reversed in the second half. There is no deferring to the 2nd half. Home team takes press box side of field.

Kickoff

There will be no kickoffs in the Clinic Division. The team that would be starting on offense will get the ball at their own 30 yard-line. **In all other divisions**, the ball is kicked off from a tee at their 30-yard line. There is no minimum requirement of players on the receiving team restraining line. The restraining line will be marked 20 yards from the spot of the ball to be kicked. The ball must be kicked from the tee. If the ball is downed in the end zone, it is a touchback and brought out to the receiving team's 20 yard-line. If the ball goes out of bounds without being touched, the receiving team may take the ball from the spot of the kick going out of bounds or at mid-field or re-kick (5 yd penalty); whatever the receiving team chooses. **If the ball fails to travel 10 yards before being touched by the receiving team, the ball will be ruled dead and the receiving team will take possession of the ball at the spot it is first touched.** On kickoffs and punts, the ball is a live ball until touched down or a flag pulled by a player on the kicking team. If the kick or punt is trapped, dropped, or bobbed, the ball may be picked up and advanced by any player on the receiving team only. On-sides kicks cannot be recovered by the kicking team. Therefore, no on-sides kicks allowed. The receiving team is always in possession of the kickoff except for an intercepted lateral.

Game Clock

The referee keeps official time. Although scoreboards may be used, it is not to be considered official time. The game consists of two 25-minute halves for a total of 50 playing minutes in the 14U Division. All other Divisions will play two 20-minute halves for a total of 40 playing minutes. **The clock runs except for time outs, the two-minute warning, after a touchdown is scored and extra point is attempted. The clock will stop at the 2 minute warning mark for 1 minute, allowing the teams to re-group.** Inside two minutes, the clock stops on an "out of bounds", time out, incomplete pass, penalty, PAT and change of possession. The clock starts after the official spots the ball on the field. Halftime is 5 minutes. The referee may extend halftime at his/her discretion.

Scoring

Touchdown - 6 points

Extra Point Run or Pass from 5yd line - 1 point; from 10 yd. line - 2 points

Safety - 2 points

Extra point Safety - 1 point

Interception return to opposing end zone on P.A.T. attempt - 2 points

Line of Scrimmage

Any number of players can be on the line of scrimmage. Players on the line of scrimmage must be minimum two arms length apart. Violation will result in penalty

21-Point Rule

In the 2nd half only, teams ahead by 21 points or more cannot throw a forward pass beyond the line of scrimmage (ball cannot be caught past the line of scrimmage).

Specific Division Rules

Clinic Division

- **Coaches from the older age divisions will be strongly encouraged to referee these games, as a sign of mentoring to the younger / less experienced coaches at the clinic level.**
- **It is strongly recommended that the Clinic level coaches take the time to teach the game to all players, and not be so concerned about winning.**
- No kickoffs. Ball will be placed at own 30 yard-line.
- There is no overtime period.
- Quarterback cannot run with the ball beyond the line of scrimmage more than once per 4 down series. He must hand off, lateral, or pass.
- One coach from each team is allowed on the field to coach.

8U Division

- There is no overtime period.
- One offensive coach from each team is allowed on the field.
- A Defensive coach may call plays however the Defensive coach must be off the field **and in the coach's box** before play is started.

The Offense

Passing and Receivers

All players are eligible receivers. A catch is considered legal if the receiver has control of the ball and the receiver has at least one foot or one knee in bounds at the point of reception. A player cannot go out of bounds and re-enter the playing field to catch a pass. This is an *illegal forward pass*. **Unlimited** forward passes **behind** the line of scrimmage are permitted. **Any player that is beyond the line of scrimmage is no longer eligible to throw a pass.** New players must check in the huddle prior to each play. **No offensive substitutions allowed on "no huddle" offense.** Offensive and defensive line of scrimmage will be a **seven-yard zone**. The first-to-gain or goal-line will be the defensive line of scrimmage on 7 yards or less to go.

Handoffs

An offensive player receiving a handoff must be at least one full step behind the line of scrimmage or even with the quarterback under center. A ball carrier cannot place the ball in the hands of any other player that is on or beyond the line of scrimmage. A handoff behind the line of scrimmage or a lateral must take place.

Punting

All punts must be announced. A team can punt on any down. Quick punts are illegal. The team must announce that they are punting and give the defensive team time to get into position. Both teams remain on their side of the line of scrimmage until the punt is made. The punter must kick the ball from behind the line of scrimmage anywhere between the hash-marks. **Blocking the punt is not allowed.** The only way the Offense can change their decision to punt is to call a time out, or if a penalty is called prior to or during the down and the down is to be replayed. Within two minutes, if a player on the receiving team does not touch the ball, the clock will not start until the snap of the ball. A called fair catch will stop the clock inside 2 minutes. On punts, a snap is not required.

Plays

Plays may be sent in by signals from coaches, or players going into the game. **A player that brings in a play must play.** Players must be substituted as stated in the rules.

Centering

On all offensive plays (except punts), the ball must be centered directly through the center's legs in one continuous motion to any player standing directly or indirectly behind him. **No center sneaks are allowed.** **The center cannot double pump the snap - this will result in a false start penalty.** The center must direct snap to a back to be considered legal. A player cannot run behind the center and take the ball he/she is holding. Once the offensive line is set, the center may not move the ball except to put the ball into play. **The QB only is permitted to pick up a bad exchange from center, the QB is the person directly behind the center and who calls the signals.**

Motion

Only one player may be in motion at the time of the snap. Motion must be parallel or backwards to the line of scrimmage.

Fumbles and Laterals

The ball is dead at the spot where the ball carrier last had possession and not where the ball hits the ground (except QB on snap from the center). Laterals are allowed in all divisions. There is no limit on the number of laterals. If the lateral is intercepted by the defense, it is treated as an interception. **Attempt to slap or strip the ball from a ball carrier is not permitted and will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.**

Safety

If the ball carrier fumbles the ball, has his flag pulled, or an offensive penalty occurs in the offensive end zone, a safety

is scored. A safety results in the defensive team receiving two points. This is followed by a free kick by the scored upon team at their own 20-yard line. An interception in the end zone, and downed in the end zone, or flag pulled in the end zone, is a touchback. A safety scored on an extra point attempt will be awarded 1 point and the team that just scored the touchdown will then kickoff.

Charging

Charging is defined as running into or over a player. This will result in a 10 yard penalty/spot foul result of play. All players must make a definite effort to avoid collisions. Any player, while in the act of catching the ball, shall be allowed reasonable movement without a penalty. If, in the referee's opinion, the charging was flagrant, the player can be assessed a 15 yd unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and/or ejected from the game.

Spinning

Spinning is allowed, as long as the ball carrier does not make physical contact with the defender. If contact is made by the ball carrier, the contact will be considered charging. Refer to charging penalty.

Blocking

Blocking is not permitted. Any contact to impede an offensive or defensive player is considered blocking. A 10 yard penalty will be assessed from the spot of the foul.

Screening

Screening is defined when an offensive player or players are running within two full strides near the ball carrier and beyond the line of scrimmage. Offensive players may not move in a way to impede the defender in making a play on the ball carrier. This will result in a 10 yard penalty from the spot of the foul. NOTE: Offensive players may remain stationary after the snap of the ball, without being called for screening.

Illegal Use of Hands, Hurdling, Diving

A ball carrier may not stiff arm, place hands on a defender, dive or hurdle to avoid having a flag pulled. A runner is allowed to jump between players but the runner cannot make contact. Contact while jumping between players, will result in a 10 yard penalty at the spot of the foul (charging).

Flag Guarding

Ball carriers shall carry the ball at or above their waistline as to not guard or shield their flag by using their hands, arms, lowering shoulder, or the ball to deny the opponent to pull or remove the flag.

If the defender cannot pull the ball carrier's flag with ordinary effort due to tampering of the flag or flag guarding a 10 yard penalty at the spot of the foul will be called. Flag guarding can be called in the following instances:

- A) The runner slaps the defender's hand when trying to pull his flag.
- B) The runner holds the ball on or over his belt or flags.
- C) The runner ties his flag or makes it so it doesn't come off in a normal manner.
- D) The ball carrier runs with his hands below his waist while defenders reach for their flag.
- E) The ball carrier pushes a defender away when trying to pull his flag.
- F) If the ball carrier lowers his/her shoulders in such a manner, which places the arm over the flag to prevent an opponent from pulling his flag.

In any of the preceding instances, if a defender is not within 3 yards of the runner, there is no flag guarding.

After a player scores a touchdown the referee may request to pull his flag. If the flag does not come off with ordinary effort, a 15 yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will be called and the play will be nullified. The penalty will be assessed from the original line of scrimmage.

The Defense

Defensive Line of Scrimmage

Defensive players must line up at the 7 yards from the offensive line of scrimmage. When the offensive team is within 7 yards of their line to gain or touchdown; the defensive line of scrimmage will be the line to gain or touchdown line.

Encroachment/Off-Sides

Encroachment is defined as any defensive player who goes beyond his/her line of scrimmage and fails to return behind the

defensive line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped. Jumping off sides resulting in a defensive player making contact of an offensive player is also encroachment. Offense does not get a free play if the defense is off-sides.

Dead Ball

Dead ball is declared when the following happens:

- The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
- The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
- A touchdown, extra point, or safety is scored.
- Ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
- The ball touches the ground after touched or handled by any player (exception: kickoffs and QB first touches).
- False start
- Contact encroachment/Off-sides

Flag Pulling

Once the flag of the ball carrier is pulled off, the ball carrier is considered down and play is stopped. The location of the ball (if carried in normal manner) at the time the flag is pulled, determines where the ball is marked for the next play. **In the event that the ball carrier's flag falls without being pulled by the defensive player, the defense must touch the player for him to be considered down.** If the referee thinks the flag was purposely removed before the defender could pull it, the referee will call a penalty. **Deliberate flag pulling by the defense of a potential ball carrier's flag will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct 15 yard penalty.**

Pass Interference

An offensive player is not allowed to run a pattern that interferes with a defensive player who is rushing or in a set position. A defensive player cannot physically interfere with a potential receiver. An offensive player may not interfere with a defensive player in position to intercept a pass. A defender must play the ball. **Entanglement** may occur without penalty if at the discretion of the Referee, both players in the act of playing the ball get entangled and one or both players collide or fall as a result.

Tackling

Tackling or pushing a player out of bounds, whether incidental or flagrant, is dangerous and illegal in flag football, which will result in a 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty. If a player is tackled and the referee, in his opinion, thinks the player would have scored, the referee may award a touchdown to that team.

Illegal Contact

Is the act of a defensive player running into the ball carrier and unintentionally knocking that player down. This occurs when the offensive player is trying to avoid the defender.

Tripping

Tripping, (not entanglement) is not allowed in flag football. **If, in the referee's opinion, the tripping was purposely done and/or is flagrant, the player can be assessed a 15 yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and/or ejected from the game.** If a player is tripped to avoid him getting a touchdown, the referee, at his discretion, may award a touchdown to that team if he thinks the trip was the only thing that prevented the touchdown.

Holding

Grabbing shorts, shirt, belt, or any other part of the player to hold or to slow a player, is illegal. Putting two hands on the player in an attempt to get his flag is also illegal. **Holding will result in a 10 yard penalty from the spot of the foul.**

Roughing the Passer

Roughing the passer is defined as:

- The rusher makes contact with the passer in the act of throwing the football.
- Hitting the passer's arm.
- Running into the passer.
- Knocking the passer down.
- Hitting the football while in the hand of the passer.

- **Roughing the Passer will result in a 15 yard penalty, automatic 1st down.**

Slapping or batting a thrown pass intentionally into the passer will result in a flagrant penalty or unsportsmanlike 15 yard penalty. **Jumping up to block a pass is permitted.**

Spiking

Spiking the ball to stop play, by the QB immediately after the snap is allowed (**inside the 2 minute warning only**). **Spiking the ball any other time, will result in a 5 yard delay of game penalty.** **Spiking the ball in anger or throwing a pulled flag in anger will result in a 15 yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.**

Time Outs

Each team has 2 60-second time outs per half. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion. A time out will be charged to a team for an injury inside two minutes. Only coaches (up to 3) may go out on the field during timeouts. At the two minute warning, the clock will stop to announce the 2 minutes. **There will be a 2 minute warning (to be considered a 1 minute official timeout).** **For Saturday games only, there will be an official time out at the 10 minute mark of both halves for a one minute water break.**

Delay of Game

After the referee has whistled play to begin, if the play has not been started within 30 seconds, a delay of game will be called. Delay of game can be called on the defense for slowing down the tempo purposely or delaying the referee's spotting of the ball.

Overtime

There will be no overtime in regular season games.

In the event of a tie ending any playoff, or championship game, one overtime period will be played as follows:

- After a five-minute intermission to discuss the rules with both head coaches, the referees will conduct a coin toss.
- The winner of the coin toss has the choice to start on offense or defense or choose a goal to defend.
- The loser of the coin toss decides one of the remaining two choices.
- **The offensive team shall put the ball in play at the 20-yard line and shall have four downs to score.** The series can be terminated by a score, interception, or if the team fails to score. If the offense scores a touchdown, it is entitled to try for the P.A.T. **The defense can score in overtime.**
- After the team with the first possession completes its series, the other team becomes the offensive team and will similarly put the ball in play at the same 20-yard line.
- **One timeout will be given per OT period.** No carryover of time outs remaining after regular play or any overtime period shall be permitted.
- During playoff or Championship, these procedures will be repeated until a winner is determined.

Quick Whistle

When a referee inadvertently blows the whistle, the play is dead at that point, and the team in possession has the option of replaying the down or taking the outcome of the play up until the whistle was blown.

Flags

All players must wear the flags provided by PAL. Flags must be of contrasting color to the shorts worn by any legal player. All flags in all divisions will be fifteen-inches. The flags must be properly worn at all times (one flag on each side). If improperly worn equipment is found prior to the snap, there will be a warning by the referee. If the infraction continues, the referee can eject the player. If the flag falls off during play, the player is considered down when touched any place by an opposing player.

Belts must be worn with the flag connectors facing outward. Any improper securing of the flag belt will result in a 15 yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty after the referee warning. If the tips of a player's flags are cut illegally, the player may be disqualified and ejected from the game. **Coaches are responsible for cutting the excess portion of the belt strap so that it does not dangle from the waist and interfere with the flags.**

Flag Football Uniforms & Equipment

All players must report for an equipment check prior to the game by the referee at mid field. The uniforms provided by PAL must be worn at all games. If a player does not wear the full uniform of jersey and solid color shorts, he will not be allowed to play. **Jerseys must be tucked in.**

No jewelry is to be worn except for medical alert.

Mouthpieces

Mouthpieces are mandatory for all practices and games, and must be purchased by the player. Any player without a mouthpiece will not be allowed to play in the game or participate in a practice. Players and/or coaches in violation will be suspended. **Every Coach is responsible for enforcing this safety rule. This is for the player's safety!**

Shoes

Shoes with all-purpose molded rubber cleats or round plastic screw-on cleats are acceptable. **Metal spikes or cleats are not allowed.** Shoes must be worn for the entire game. The player must supply the shoes.

Other Equipment

Soft elbow and/or kneepads, **gloves and head bands are permitted.** No hard surface padding such as hip pads, shin guards, helmets, hard casts, etc., are allowed. Players are allowed to play with knee braces only if soft padding covers all hard parts of the brace and the player has a doctor's note. **Bandanas will not be permitted.**

Protests

There are no protests of games in flag football. Decisions by the referees are final. All games played are official.

Grievance Procedure

The Grievance must be filed in writing within 48 hours with the Flag Football Commissioner. The Flag Football Board will rule within 7 days of receipt of complaint. A \$100.00 non-refundable grievance fee must be submitted with the written grievance. Appeals of the Flag Football Board decision may be filed to the PAL Board of Directors after complying with Flag Football grievance procedure.

2012 PAL Flag Football Board Members

Commissioner:	Mark Reuther
Vice Commissioner:	Daniel Gurtov
Scheduling/ Website:	Mark Reuther
Head of Officials/Treasurer:	Bob Horland
Rules & Ethics:	Vince D'Antonio
Director:	Doug Hoffman
Director:	Juan Scheele
Director:	Vince D'Antonio
Director:	Blake Moselle
Director:	Alex Leon
Director:	Warren Santos

PENALTIES

5 Yard

- Delay of Game - Dead ball - Repeat Down
- False Start- Dead ball - Repeat Down
- Illegal Motion- Dead ball - Repeat Down
- Illegal Formation - Dead ball - Repeat Down (Toe to Toe)
- Off sides (defense or offense) - Dead Ball - Repeat Down
- Too Many Players on the field - Repeat Down or Result of Play
- Illegal Forward Pass - (Loss of Down)
- Illegal Substitution - Dead Ball - (Loss of Down)
- Coaches Interference - Opposing coaches option - result of play
- Coaching Box Violation - 1st. offense

10 Yard

- Flag Guarding - spot foul - Loss of Down, except if the runner made 1st down
- Screening - spot foul - Loss of Down, except if the runner made 1st down
- Blocking - spot foul - Loss of Down, except if the runner made 1st down
- Charging - spot foul - Loss of Down, except if the runner made 1st. down
- Diving - spot foul - Loss of Down
- Defensive Holding - spot foul - Repeat Down
- Illegal Use of Hands - spot foul - Loss of Down
- Pass Interference (Defensive) - Result of Play, automatic 1st down
- Pass Interference (Offensive) - Loss of Down from the line of scrimmage
- Illegal Contact - spot foul
- Illegal Use of Hands - spot foul

15 Yard (Flagrant) - Can warrant ejection.

- Unsportsmanlike Conduct or Flagrant rule violation
- Roughing the Passer (Automatic 1st down)
- Unnecessary Roughness
- Stripping
- Tackling or Pushing out of bounds
- Tripping (not entanglement)
- Coaching Box Violation 2nd. offense
- Coaching Box Violation 3rd. offense - ejection

PARENTS CODE OF ETHICS

I hereby pledge to provide support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents` Code of Ethics Pledge.

I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and park staff at every game, practice or other youth sporting event.

I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.

I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.

I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.

I will remember the game is for my child and the other children and not for the adults.

I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.

I will ask my child and expect that my child will treat other players, coaches, fans, officials and park staff with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.

I promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectable fan, assist with coaching, assist the league in whatever way possible.

I will have my child at all scheduled practices and games. I will contact my Coach if my child is not at a scheduled team event. I understand that flag football is a team sport and every player is needed by his/her team mates at all practices and games.

I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that my child's coach upholds the Coaches Code of Ethics.

I understand that my child may be removed from a team and the league if my actions as a parent/spectator are in anyway inappropriate.

I am aware that a Lightning Prediction System monitors the City of Plantation parks. I will insist that my child's coach immediately evacuate the fields and seek shelter in a nearby building or vehicle if the alarm sounds. I understand that one (1) long 15-second blast indicates immediate evacuation of all fields and that three (3) short 5-second blasts indicates all field activities may resume.

I HAVE READ, UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO THE 2010 PAL FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AS STATED ON THE PAL WEBSITE. If a coach or parent does not have access to a computer a printed copy of the rules may be obtained by contacting their League Director. Ignorance shall not be accepted as an excuse for any violation of such rules.

PARENT NAME _____ (PRINTED)

PARENT SIGNATURE _____ (DATE)

It is the responsibility of the Head Coach of each team to collect these signed forms and submit them to the PAL Flag Football Board prior to the start of the regular season.