

# **YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL HANDBOOK 2026**

Coaching Information  
Rules/Regulations  
Policies & Procedures



## **Dear Coaches, Parents, and Participants,**

The Colby Recreation Department welcomes you to the 2024 Flag Football Program! Our goal is for all youth sports participants, as well as parents and other spectators, to have an enjoyable sporting experience. Skill development is the main component of our youth sports programs. Organized games are a part of every season in which each player will receive an equal amount of playing time and opportunity. At this level it is not about winning yet. Learning the fundamentals of the game, making friends, and having fun are the goals we are setting for this season.

This Handbook will describe the K-1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Flag Football Leagues, while hopefully answering any questions you may have. Pages 2-5 consist of general information and policies, while the rules begin on page 6. Please take a few minutes and read the information inside this handbook as it may help eliminate confusion in the future.

Youth Sports Programs are only possible through the dedication of Volunteer Parent Coaches. Many volunteers put in several hours of work to make our programs a success and there is no way this would be possible without them. Thank you to all the volunteers who invest time and energy into the lives of young people today. If you are interested in future volunteer opportunities, please contact us.

Thank you for your participation. We look forward to serving you and your child within the city of Colby!

**Aaron Lambertson**  
**Director of Recreation & Facilities**  
**785-460-4435**  
[cecdirector@cityofcolbyks.gov](mailto:cecdirector@cityofcolbyks.gov)

**Robert Fossum**  
**Assistant Director of Recreation & Facilities**  
**785-460-4400**  
[recreation@cityofcolby.com](mailto:recreation@cityofcolby.com)

# THINGS TO REMEMBER

## **TIMELINE FOR SEASON:**

Practices: Begin the week of August 24<sup>th</sup>. Exact time and date is up to the volunteer coach.

Games: All games will be played at Young Memorial Park in Colby (Ballfields) Games will take place Sunday afternoons beginning September 13<sup>th</sup>. Each team receives a 6-game guarantee.

## **WEATHER INFORMATION/CANCELATIONS:**

We have a procedure that we follow when cancelling/postponing games. Once a decision is made regarding weather an email/phone call will be first sent out to all head coaches. We will then post the update on our social media platforms (Facebook). It may be helpful to follow this account to stay in tuned not only with weather cancellations but other happenings as well.

**Facebook:** @ColbyRecDepartment

If any games are missed due to bad weather, we will try everything we can to get it rescheduled, but there is no guarantee.

Note: Weather is constantly changing, and conditions can vary hour to hour. As soon as we know something, we will communicate it. Please, if you have any questions stay in tuned to your email and our social media platforms.

## **TOBACCO/ALCOHOL:**

Smoking of tobacco products is prohibited in all facilities and locations within a city park. Alcohol is prohibited from all youth sporting venues.

# TEAM FORMING

Coach/Child- It is understood that if you are volunteering your time to coach the child will automatically be placed on that team.

Special Request - You may request your child be placed on the same team as one of their friends, family member, coach, or anyone you choose. You can only whatever you would like on your registration. If you list more than one, only the first one listed will be taken into consideration. There are no guarantees that all requests or any will be made, but the Colby Recreation Department will do its best to accommodate.

School – If you have no individual friend requests, your child may be placed with other kids from their school. If you are driving in from Brewster, for example, you will be placed on a team with other Brewster kids.

**We do not accept full pre-formed rosters from volunteer coaches.**

In some situations, a draft may be used to form teams. This will be discussed at the coaches meeting. A draft is used in effort to make the teams as even as possible.

It is the coach's responsibility to clearly state on the coach's request form their child's name, one mutual friend, as well as their one assistant coach. If you are a parent wanting a specific coach, you will need to contact that coach directly and clarify it with them and make sure he or she puts your child down on their coach request form.

Requests are **NOT** guaranteed but are taken into great consideration according to your registration. Unfortunately, with the number of participants all requests may not always be met, but we will try our best.

# COACHING INFORMATION

We appreciate every one of our volunteer coaches and our leagues would not be made possible if it was not for their participation.

## Contacting Parents:

It is important to call each of your player's parents individually when you receive your roster. After making individual contact it is also a good idea to send out a follow up email so they each have something in writing to refer to later on. This is crucial because it will help in establishing good communication for your team.

## Parent Meeting:

We suggest you schedule a parent meeting before the first practice with your team. This meeting is a good chance for you to go through the handbook with your parents, so it can avoid confusion later on in the season. A drink and snack schedule is also something that this meeting can accomplish. This meeting can be done 15-20 minutes before your first practice, or at a separate location off-site. Whichever is easier for you and your parents.

## Practices:

You will not know your child's practice time until the coach receives it at the coaches meeting. Please be patient as some coaches may contact players sooner than others. The Colby Recreation Department has practice plans and access to plays if you so choose to request them. Just email Bobby to let him know you are interested and these can be sent to you.

Coaches Agreement: It is required that all coaches fill out a coach's information sheet (Application).

Background Check: It is required that all coaches fill out a background check. This will be for all head coaches and assistant coaches. These will be filled out by Bobby in the NCSI database and results will be shared within two weeks.

## Please Remember:

Being a coach, you are now representing yourself, your team, and the Colby Recreation Department. It is crucial that you let your parents know the importance of a positive attitude during games and practices and that the main objective of the league is for the kids to have fun and learn the fundamentals.

If you have a disagreement or an issue with an umpire, we ask that you do not address the issue during the course of the game. If the issue is still bothering you the following morning, please send our staff an email giving us a detailed explanation of the issue. Asking questions to an umpire during the course of a game is understandable, as long as it is done in a reasonable and appropriate manor.

We have zero tolerance with disruptive coaches/parents/spectators. The Colby Recreation Department will handle every situation on a case to case basis and move forward. Please be respectful to others and treat them with the same respect you expect them to give you.

# FLAG FOOTBALL RULES & REGULATIONS

## **ADMINISTRATION:**

The flag football league is supervised by the Colby Recreation Department. Decisions rendered by the Parks and Recreation Department are final, no exceptions.

## **Contact:**

Bobby Fossum  
Assistant Director of Facilities and Recreation  
785-460-4440  
recreation@cityofcolby.com

## **TEAM:**

- All teams are formed through the league director. The number of players per team all depend on the number of total players in the program, as well as the number of volunteer parent coaches.
- All players must be registered through Colby Recreation to play.

## **UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT:**

- Required uniform consists of a NFL Flag jersey provided by Colby Recreation. Uniforms shall be the same color. NFL team names will be assigned after the coaches meeting.
- Tennis shoes or rubber cleats only are to be worn. No metal cleats are allowed.
- Colby Recreation will provide each coach with a duffel bag containing footballs, a few flags, and cones at the coaches meeting. One coach will be assigned to check out and return the bag at the end of the season.

## **GAME TIME:**

- Games are scheduled primarily on Sunday afternoon/evenings.
- Games will start promptly as scheduled. A team must have four (4) uniformed players to start or continue a game. A 5-minute grace period is allowed from the scheduled starting time. The officials watch is official. All games will 40 minutes long, split into two – twenty minute halves.
- One coach is allowed on the field during game play. You may have as much help as you would like on the sidelines.
- Both coaches, and one captain from each team, will meet 5 minutes prior to game time for the coin toss. Whoever calls the toss in the air is up to the official. The winner of the toss will decide if they want to be on offense or defense first. If a team starts on offense the first half, they will start on defense the second half, and vise-versa. The losing team of the coin toss will decide which end zone they want to defend. Coaches and captains will shake hands following the coin toss.

## **SCORE KEEPING:**

-During gameplay a touchdown is worth 6 points. Extra point attempts can be attempted for (1) point from the five-yard line, or (2) points from the 10-yard line. There are no points rewarded for safeties. If you are tackled in the end zone the ball will be placed at the 1-yard line.

-Score will not be kept publicly in the Kindergarten-1<sup>st</sup> grade league but will be in the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade leagues. Score is kept by officials due to the fact certain game rules come into play when a team is up by 28 points. Once a team is up by 28 points the score is no longer kept publicly.

## **GAME PLAY:**

1. Each game will be 40 minutes long consisting of two, twenty minute halves.
2. A team will receive **one** timeout each half of play. (30 seconds each)
3. Coaches will be notified of a two minute warning by officials before the end of each half. But no stoppage of play will take place for a two minute warning.
4. Once gameplay begins the clock will not stop unless under special circumstances. These circumstances will be determined by the official but can include; injury, dispute of a call by a coach, weather conditions, etc.
5. Halftime will consist up to five minutes.
6. The start of each drive will begin on the teams own 5 yard line. Each team will have four downs to reach midfield (25 yard line) for a first down. They will then have four downs to reach the end zone for a touchdown.
7. The conversion after the touchdown can be placed from the 5 yard line (1 Point) or the 10 yard line (2 Points)
8. There is a no running zone five yards from each end zone. This is to prevent teams from powering through with a running play up the middle for a touchdown. **(This rule will not be in effect for the K-1<sup>st</sup> grade play.)**
9. When a player fumbles the ball, the play is dead. This to prevent injury from kid's dogpiling after the ball.
10. **If a ball is intercepted, possession will change but the team will have to start play back from its own five yard line. Once the ball is intercepted the play is dead where the ball is caught. This is to prevent one team from dominating procession of the ball on offense the whole half.**
11. The play is dead at the spot where the flag is pulled. If the flag falls off of the player with the ball, the play is dead where the flag falls off.
12. There is no kick offs or punting allowed.

## **PLAYING REQUIREMENTS AND SUBSTITUTIONS IN THE FIELD:**

1. It is understood that every player will receive an equal amount of playing time.
2. Every player will get an opportunity throughout the season, at least once, to play every position. If a player does not want to play a certain position, then they do not have to.
3. Substitutions may take any time there is a dead ball, but is recommended to wait until the end of a drive or change of possession. This is designed to not slow down game play. If a coach feels they can sub mid drive and not slow down the speed of the game, they are welcome to do so. If constant subbing is interfering with the speed of gameplay, an official will have to speak to the coach.
4. Players are required to wear flags at all times, even if they are on the sidelines.
5. Players must show up with their team jersey on. If they do not, it is the duty of our official to check if they are registered with the program. If a player does not show up with his or her jersey, it will be the officials decision as to whether or not they can play that day. If a jersey is lost or tore, CRD staff should be notified to handle the situation.

6. Every players uniform must be tucked in with their flags vividly showing and reachable.
7. Once a team is up by 18 points, no more rushing the quarterback will be allowed.

### **OFFENSE:**

1. On offense, each team is required to have a quarterback , a center, and one person in the backfield. The other three players can either be split out wide on the line of scrimmage, or in the backfield. Max of 3 players in the backfield at the snap of the ball. All games are 6 vs 6. If both teams have more than 6 players we can play 7v7 or 8v8, the extra players will just need to be lined up on the line of scrimmage. If we do this it will need to be agreed upon by both coaches prior to the game.
2. The quarterback may start the play from under center, or from shot gun. When taking the ball from under center, the center can either hike the ball between their legs, or turn around and hand the ball to the quarterback. Keep in mind, when going from shot gun, if the center fails to reach the ball to the quarterback, or the quarterback fails to handle the snap, the play is dead where the ball lands and a loss of down is assessed. There is no exception to this rule.
3. The quarterback must throw the ball behind the line of scrimmage forward, past the line of scrimmage (cannot be caught behind the neutral zone), and no backwards passes allowed.
4. The quarterback is not allowed to rush. Handoffs must take place from behind the line of scrimmage to a player in the backfield. Reverses are allowed.
5. No running zones are located five yards from each end zone.
6. The player who receives the ball behind the line of scrimmage (snap or handoff) is allowed to throw a forward pass. No laterals or pitches of any kind.
7. All players are eligible to receive a pass, even the quarterback once the ball has been handed off. For a complete catch, the player must have possession of the ball with at least one foot in bounds.
8. If the ball carriers knee hits the ground, flag is pulled, flag falls off, player fumbles the ball, or the player steps out of bounds, the play is dead.
9. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
10. No forceful blocking is allowed. When blocking each player must have their hands in an "X". The player is allowed to hold his or her ground and get in the way of the defensive player. The player blocking should not engage force (push, shove, move) the defensive player backward in anyway.

### **DEFENSE:**

1. The defense is allowed to lineup whichever way they choose. Usually they will lineup according to the formation the offense comes out in.
2. **Rushing the quarterback is only allowed in the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade league. To rush the QB the defensive player must be 10 yards back. There will be an official to help enforce this 10-yard rule. The person rushing MUST report to an official prior to the snap.**
3. Once the ball is handed off, or changes possession from the quarterback, every defensive player is allowed to rush.

## **PENALTIES:**

1. Off sides: 5 yards and repeat the down
2. Pass Interference: 5 yards and repeat down
3. Illegal contact (blocking, shoving, tackling, screening): 5 yards and repeat down
4. Illegal blitz/rushing: 5 yards and repeat the down
5. Flag Guarding: 5 yard penalty from spot of the foul and repeat the down.
6. Unsportsmanlike Conduct: 15 yards and automatic first down. If a player consistently shows unsportsmanlike conduct they may be asked by an official to sit out the remainder of the quarter, half, or game. This is strictly up to the official's judgement. If there is a consistent problem the league director will be notified and action will be taken accordingly.

Note: All officials ruling is final. The official may give both sides a warning call when dealing with a penalty. This is strictly up to the official and it is their responsibility to give balanced warnings to each team. All warnings should be discussed in the coin toss meeting prior to the game.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP:**

Team members, coaches and spectators shall exhibit appropriate behavior toward other players, coaches, spectators, and officials. Unsportsmanlike conduct from team members and/or associates, including spectators, will result in one or more of the following:

- a) Player, coach or spectator ejection from the game
- b) Player, coach or spectator ejection from the league
- c) Player, coach or spectator suspension
- d) Forfeit of game

During the game, the officials have the authority to eject players, coaches and spectators. The Parks and Recreation Department has the final authority on determining the duration of suspension or other penalty. Any player (if he/she has a way home) and/or coach ejected from the game must leave the playing area.

These circumstances will be handled strictly on a case to case basis based on the level of severity.

# Flag Football Field Diagram

