



FUQUAY-VARINA

# Flag Football Handbook

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Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation & Cultural  
Resources

[www.fvparks.org](http://www.fvparks.org)

2/18/2021

## **Inclement Weather Information**

[www.fvparks.org](http://www.fvparks.org)

*Select "Facility Status" under the youth sports tab  
If your facility is CLOSED your activity is CANCELLED*

**Weather Hotline: 919-552-2698**

**Sign up to receive text message alerts!**

*Both the weather hotline and webpage are updated weekdays by 4pm and weekends  
by 8am.*

## **I. General Information**

- a. The Town of Fuquay-Varina's youth flag football league is administered through Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department will focus on providing a recreational, fun, safe option for players to learn and enjoy the game of flag football. Good sportsmanship and skill development should be the main goal of all coaches. Winning is secondary to having fun and learning the game.
- b. All rule interpretations will be administered by the Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department (FVPRCRD).
- c. All team activities must be supervised by an approved head or assistant coach.
- d. No unsanctioned activities are permitted. Unsanctioned activities include practices held away from town owned/leased property; practices/activities held outside of the team's schedule provided by FVPRCRD.
- e. All who wish to participate in Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Athletic Programs must register and pay the registration fee prior to being assigned a team and participating in the program.

## **II. Coaches and Assistant Coaches**

- a. No team shall have more than three (3) coaches. They are designated as Head Coach and two (2) Assistant Coaches.
- b. Head coach appointments are to be made by the Recreation Department for one (1) season. All coaches will be evaluated following each season. This evaluation will be used to determine whether or not he/she will be invited back to represent a team in the future.
- c. All coaches are required to submit a formal application and background check. The background checks are subject to approval of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department.
- d. All Assistant Coaches may be selected by the Head Coach after the teams have been determined, pending approval of the Recreation Department. Assistant Coaches must submit a formal application and background check.
- e. All coaches must understand and agree to carry out the duties, responsibilities, policies, and philosophies as established by the Town of Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department. All coaches must be approved by the Recreation Department. Any coach not carrying out these duties and responsibilities will be subject to dismissal.
- f. Head Coaches are required to hold a preseason parent meeting to discuss rules, conduct, responsibilities, etc.
- g. Coaches should always keep in mind they are setting examples in sportsmanship and fair play and should conduct themselves accordingly at all times.

- h. Only the Head Coach and their Assistants will be allowed on the sideline/field of play during the playing of an official game.
- i. Only the head coach may confer with officials during the play of a regulation game. Any assistant coaches who approach an official on field during play may be removed from the game.
- j. Coaches are responsible for reporting players who have dropped from their team. If a spot opens FVPRCRD will fill the opening with the next player available on the wait list. If no players are on the waitlist the roster spot will remain open.
- k. All coaches must wear their FVPRCRD issued coaches shirts and wristbands to all team activities. No coach will be permitted on the sideline that is not in uniform.
- l. Coaches are responsible for leaving the field area clean after their game. Please pick up any trash, equipment or items before leaving.
- m. Coaches must remain on the sideline unless the age specific rules state otherwise.

### III. Communication

- a. **24 HOUR RULE:** Parents sometimes disagree with a coach’s decision or coaching style, especially when it involves their child. Parents must understand that the coach does not represent a player, but the entire team and must make decisions from the team perspective first and foremost. For parents, it is important to separate their child’s sports development from game emotions. For this reason, we have adopted the “24 HOUR RULE,” which simply states that the coach will not discuss game situations until at least 24 hours after the game. This rule helps to move the discussion away from the presence of the players and allows all parties to have time to put things in perspective and cool off if necessary. This rule also applies to coaches and parents contacting the recreation department.

**Contact Info: *Primary Contact – Sidney Peterson***

**Adam Hairr**, Athletic Program Administrator  
Office: 919-753-1033  
[ahairr@fuquay-varina.org](mailto:ahairr@fuquay-varina.org)

**Trey Baggett**, Athletic Program Specialist  
Office: 919-753-1866  
[tbaggett@fuquay-varina.org](mailto:tbaggett@fuquay-varina.org)

**Thomas DeGruchy**, Athletic Program Specialist  
Office: 919-753-1867  
[tdegruchy@fuquay-varina.org](mailto:tdegruchy@fuquay-varina.org)

**Sidney Peterson**, Athletic Program Specialist  
Office: 919-552-1439  
[speterson@fuquay-varina.org](mailto:speterson@fuquay-varina.org)

**Fuquay-Varina Community Center**  
Office: 919-552-1430  
[info@fvparks.org](mailto:info@fvparks.org)

**Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Administration Offices**  
Office: 919-552-9140

#### IV. Weather Updates

- a. Decisions are made weekdays by 4pm and weekends by 8am or as status changes. Once the decision is made, FVPRCRD will email coaches so that they can communicate with their parents any changes. You can also check for updates by visiting [www.fvparks.org](http://www.fvparks.org) and selecting 'Field Status' icon. If your facility is listed as "CLOSED" then your activity is cancelled. Coaches and families may also check the town's **weather hotline by dialing 919-552-2698**.
- b. An attempt will be made to reschedule all games that are cancelled due to inclement weather. If space/time allows, rained out practices may be rescheduled at the discretion of the FVPRCRD. Coaches may not request to change game times once schedule has been posted.

#### Text Message Alert Sign-up Instructions

1. Go to FVPARKS.ORG
2. Either:
  - Hover your mouse over the "Sports" tab, which will bring down a list of links. From there, you will find the "Alerts from PRCR" link on the left-hand side; click the link to go to the Alerts page.
  - Or click the "Sports" tab, which will take you to the main sports page. From there, you will find and click the link labeled "Alerts from PRCR".
3. You will then be directed to the Fuquay-Varina Alert Center. Find the link in the grey box labeled **"Notify Me ®"**
4. Click the "Notify Me" link. (To subscribe to text and/or email alerts.)
5. Type your email address in the box labeled "Email Address" and click the button labeled "Sign In".
6. For text message alerts, check the 2<sup>nd</sup> box that reads **"I would like to be able to receive text messages on my mobile phone"** and type your desired phone number in the box provided. Click save before continuing.
7. Underneath the Alert Center there are two icons beside PRCR Alerts:  & 
  - To subscribe or unsubscribe, you must click the Mobile phone icon,  beside PRCR Alerts. Once completed there will be a green check mark on the icon, which will look like: 

You will receive a text message asking to receive text alerts from PRCR. Reply **"Y"** to opt into the service. Once you reply **"Y"** you will receive a text confirming that you are signed up to receive text alerts.

## V. Uniforms and Equipment

- a. Shirts will be provided by the FVPRCRD. Parents may be required to purchase additional equipment.
- b. Teams shall NOT alter the uniforms that are distributed to players in any manner (including adding names to shirts, cutting sleeves, changing colors). Parents will be responsible for the cost of replacing a modified uniform.
- c. All players participating in flag football are expected to wear a mouthpiece. The town will provide one mouthpiece for each player, but players may purchase their own.
- d. All players must wear a flag belt, provided by FVPRCRD, at all times during play on the field.
- e. No jewelry, including earrings, shall be worn by any player. Hair clips must be soft, elastic ties and may not be metal/plastic.
- f. Coaches will be issued a shirt and wristband that must be worn to all practices and games. Once a coach has been approved (both assistant and head) they may come by the Community Center and pick up their shirt and wristband.
- g. Coaches will be issued a bag of footballs, cones, flags and pinnies. All town-owned equipment must be returned at the conclusion of the season. Any equipment that is damaged during the season must be returned to FVPRCRD immediately. If damaged equipment is returned promptly, there will be no fee incurred.
- h. No metal cleats are allowed.
- i. All players must wear solid black pants or shorts. No pin stripes or different colors.
- j. Uniforms must be the outermost garment worn during play. Uniforms must be tucked in.

## VI. Playing Rules

- a. **All Divisions**
  - i. Field size will be 80yds by 30yds.
  - ii. Games will consist of 2-25-minute halves with a 5-minute half time. A five-minute half time will begin at the 25-minute mark.
    1. **Regular Season:** If at the end of the regulation clock the game is tied, said game will be recorded as a tie.
  - iii. Each team will have one, one (1) minute time out per half.
  - iv. Games must be played with a minimum number of players. Any team that does not have the minimum number of players required to play will forfeit the game. If this occurs, we encourage teams to share players in order to scrimmage.

- v. 3 players minimum must line up on the line of scrimmage; 3 players maximum allowed in the backfield.
- vi. Every child must play at least half of every game. Coaches who do not meet their minimum playing time requirements will receive a warning for the 1<sup>st</sup> offense and suspended for three (3) games for any subsequent offenses. More than 2 violations of playing time minimums may result in expulsion from the program.
- vii. Player substitutions may be made at any dead ball. Any number of players may be substituted.
- viii. If a player is hurt during a play, the player must leave the field for at least 1 play.
- ix. The quarterback is eligible to advance the ball.
- x. All games will be with a minimum of one (1) official.

#### **1. Starting the Game**

- a. The game begins with a coin toss. A coach and two players from each team will meet in the center of the field with the official for the coin toss. Visiting team calls. At the start of the second half, the team which did not start the game with the ball will begin the 2nd half with the ball. The ball is placed at the 10-yard line to start the game.
- b. Each team will have four downs to advance the ball into the next zone or score a touchdown.
- c. Once the teams enter the next zone, a new series of downs begins.
- d. If a team fails to advance the ball into the next zone, they lose possession. The opposing team takes over at the point of the dead ball and begins its series of downs.
- e. At the conclusion of each down, the ball will be placed where the play ends, between the hash marks.

#### **2. Dead Ball**

- a. The ball will be considered dead and the play over under the following conditions:
  - i. Flag pull (the whole belt will be pulled off).
  - ii. Player steps or lands out of bounds.
  - iii. The flag belt falls off the ball carriers' belt.
  - iv. Ball contacts the ground for any reason (ball is spotted where it hits the ground).
  - v. Offside on a defensive player or false start on the offense (does not result in a loss of down).

#### **3. Defense**

- a. The defense is to stand at least three yards off the ball.
- b. Defense cannot line directly over the center.

- c. Stripping the ball from an offensive player is not allowed. Players must pull flags only.
- d. All players must stand in a 2-point stance, 3 point stance not allowed (for safety reasons).
- e. Diving and tackling is not permissible in attempts to pull a flag. No player should leave their feet; either as an attempt to pull flags or as a ball carrier avoiding having flags pulled. Block with soft hands.
- f. Defensive rushers must avoid contact with offensive players (blockers). Rushers may not use their hands/arms to shove or move offensive players.

#### 4. **Offense**

- a. The offensive team must form a huddle away from the line of scrimmage between each play. No type of “hurry-up” offensive is permitted. The defense is not required to huddle and should be ready for play before the offensive team snaps the ball.
- b. The ball must be snapped between the center’s legs; not off to one side or in any other manner.
- c. Center Snap
  - i. The ball must be snapped to the Quarterback between the center’s legs and without touching the ground. Should the ball touch the ground, it shall be declared dead at the spot of the ball touching the ground.
  - ii. A false movement of the football by the center after he is set shall constitute a false start. At all times the ball shall be snapped from the center of the field or the spot marked by the official ball marker.
  - iii. Direct Snaps are legal; but there must be a clear and immediate exchange of the ball between the center and the quarterback.
  - iv. No center sneaks
  - v. Shotgun is allowed if ball can remain in motion to continue play.
- d. If the ball is intercepted the play will continue.
- e. Teams will start with the ball on their own 10-yard line. They will have 4 downs to reach the next zone. Zones will be marked on the field every 20 yards (20-yard line, 40-yard line, 20 yard line). Once a team reaches the next zone, they will have 4 more downs to reach the next zone.
- f. All players are eligible receivers.

- g. Quarterbacks may advance the ball. Once the quarterback has crossed the line of scrimmage, any defensive player may pursue the quarterback. If the quarterback remains behind the line of scrimmage, only the defensive players who were seven yards off the ball prior to the snap may cross the line of scrimmage to pursue the quarterback. If the ball is down at or within the 3 yard line of the defending teams goal line the quarterback is ineligible to rush the ball.
- h. Screen blocking is allowed. Offensive linemen must have their hands holding the front of their shirt with their elbows down when blocking a rushing defensive player.
- i. Once the ball has been marked/blown “ready for play” the offense will have 40 seconds to snap the ball.

#### **5. Rough Play**

- a. Flag is non-contact and intentional blocking, or unsportsmanlike contact will not be allowed. Incidental contact is common and unavoidable. It will be the responsibility of all coaches to monitor and regulate their own players in regard to rough play. Coaches should exercise good judgment on dealing with rough play, according to fairness and sportsmanship. Teaching should take precedent over penalty assessment concerning roughing. Children may be asked to sit a game out if they engage in rough play after being warned by a coach or official.
- b. Any issues concerning rough play, unsportsmanlike conduct or rule violations during a game should be reported to the Athletic Programs Supervisor as soon as possible. The Town retains the right to resolve issues to maintain fairness and integrity to the game process.

#### **6. Scoring**

- a. Touchdown – 6 points
- b. Extra point (from 3-yard line) – 1 point
- c. Two-point conversion (from 5-yard line) – 2 points
- d. Safety – 2 points

#### **7. Forfeits**

- a. There will be a five (5) minute grace period for the first game of the day. Teams may start and play with the minimum number of players required for each league. Teams that do not have the minimum number of players must forfeit their game, but a scrimmage game may be

played. If a team does not have enough players to play, rather than forfeit, split players from both teams so that a game may be played.

- b. All other games will start at the regular scheduled game time or immediately following the previous game.

#### 8. Penalties

- a. Offside – 5 yards from the previous spot
- b. Delay of Game – 1<sup>st</sup> offense will result in a warning; any occurrence thereafter – 5 yards
- c. Illegal formation (too many players in the back field; not enough players on the line of scrimmage) – 5 yards
- d. Illegal rush – 10 yards from the previous spot
- e. Tackling/Illegal contact – 10 yards from spot of the foul
- f. Defensive player pulling offensive player's flag to make him/her ineligible for play – 10 yards from the previous spot
- g. Flag guarding – 5 yards from the spot of the foul, loss of down.
- h. Illegal procedure (more than 1 player in motion; shifts are legal, but all players must reset for 1 second before the ball is snapped) – 5 yards
- i. Offensive or Defensive Diving – 10 yards from the spot of the foul

#### b. 5-6 Year Olds

- i. The game will be played 7v7. If a team is missing players, the game may be played with as few as 6 players.
- ii. Every child must touch the ball at least once every game.
- iii. One coach for each team may stay on the field to call plays and adjust their players. The on-field coach and the sideline coach may switch responsibilities at any time. Once the offense lines up on the ball the coaches must be back 10 yards from the line of scrimmage. At this point on-field coaches are no longer allowed to talk or communicate to the players and must not interfere with player progress. **Penalty:** 1<sup>st</sup> offense is a warning; all subsequent offenses will result in a 10 yard

unsportsmanlike penalty on the coach and he/she must leave the field. Another coach may take the place of the dismissed coach.

- iv. Penalties for the 6U league are more lenient.
- v. Players may not rush the quarterback; once the ball has been pitched or handed off, players may pursue the ball carrier.

c. **7-9 Year Olds**

- i. The game will be played 7v7. If a team is missing players, the game may be played with as few as 6 players.
- ii. One coach for each team may stay on the field to call plays and adjust their players. The on-field coach and the sideline coach may switch responsibility at any time. Once the offense lines up on the ball the coaches must be back 10 yards from the line of scrimmage. At this point they are no longer allowed to talk or communicate to the players and must not interfere with player progress. **Penalty:** 1<sup>st</sup> offense is a warning; all subsequent offenses will result in a 10-yard unsportsmanlike penalty on the coach and he/she must leave the field. Another coach may take the place of the dismissed coach.
- iii. Any player that wishes to rush the quarterback must be 7 yards off the ball prior to the snap. The official will mark 7 yards off the line of scrimmage prior to the snap showing where players must line up who will be rushing. Once the ball has been pitched or handed off players may pursue the ball carrier.
- iv. PUNTS:
  - 1. Punting team must notify the official that they will punt.
  - 2. The receiving team may place one player back to receive (catch) the punt.
  - 3. There are no punt returns
  - 4. All players other than the center, punter and a receiver must take a knee.
  - 5. No fake punts.
  - 6. No rushing the punter.
  - 7. If the ball touches the ground when hiked to the punter, the ball may be picked up and punted.
  - 8. The ball will be placed:
    - a. At the spot of the catch.
    - b. Where the receiving player first touches the ball.
    - c. Where the ball goes out of bounds.
    - d. Where the ball stops (if not caught by the receiving team).

**d. 10-12 Year Olds**

- i. The game will be played 6v6. If a team is missing players, the game may be played with as few as 5 players.
- ii. Coaches are not allowed on the field.
- iii. Any player that wishes to rush the quarterback must be 7 yards off the ball prior to the snap. The official will mark 7 yards off the line of scrimmage prior to the snap showing where players must line up who will be rushing. Once the ball has been pitched or handed off, players may pursue the ball carrier.
- iv. PUNTS:
  1. Punting team must notify the official that they will punt.
  2. The receiving team may place one player back to receive (catch) the punt.
  3. All players other than the center, punter and a receiver must take a knee.
  4. No fake punts.
  5. No rushing the punter.
  6. If the ball touches the ground when hiked to the punter, the ball may be picked up and punted.
  7. The ball will be placed:
    - a. At the spot of the catch.
    - b. Where the receiving player first touches the ball.
    - c. Where the ball goes out of bounds.
    - d. Where the ball stops (if not caught by the receiving team).
    - e. There are no punt returns – ball may be caught but no contact is allowed.

**VII. Protest Procedure**

- a. All protests must be noted in the score book at the time of the objection and received in writing within 24 hours of the game in question. Protest will only be allowed for rule misapplications. All judgment calls are final. Coaches may not question judgment calls or the integrity of the umpire.
- b. Protests must include a brief description of the play in question and the ruling that was made, reference to the written rule and how the rule was misapplied.
- c. Protests will be ruled on by the Athletic Program Administrator. All decisions are final.
- d. Protests may be denied if the outcome does not have any bearing on final standings.
- e. All decisions will be made within one (1) week of the protest

## **VIII. Schedules**

- a. Practices will be held during the week and on weekends until games begin. After the start of the game season, practices will be scheduled during the week with games being held on Saturdays.
- b. The Town of Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department reserves the right to make changes to activity schedules when necessary.

## **IX. Awards**

- a. FVPRCRD provides individual awards for all players. Coaches are responsible for passing out individual awards to each player. If an award cannot be given to a player, please return it to the Fuquay-Varina Community Center and notify the parent that they may pick up their award there. Divisions ages 9U and younger receive individual commemorative trophies. Divisions 10U and older will receive individual achievement certificates.

## **X. COVID Rules**

- a. Parents are required to self-assess their children and additional persons they are bringing before attending each activity. If symptoms are present or attendees have recently been exposed to someone with COVID-19, please do not attend the activity and notify our designated COVID-19 Full-Time Staff contact.
- b. All coaches and players are required to wear a mask at all times, including while actively participating.
  - i. Any player, coach or spectator that wishes to be granted an exemption to the Mask Mandate as outlined in the Governor's current Executive Order (181) must provide a Doctor's note from his/her primary care physician that states he/she (the person applying for the exemption) is currently under their medical care and is not required to wear a mask during physical activity.
- c. All spectators must wear a mask when they are unable to social distance or are within six (6) feet of anyone residing outside of the household.
- d. All attendees are encouraged to stay in their vehicles until 10 minutes before their scheduled activity start time. This will allow the attendees in the prior event time to make their way out of the park.

## **XI. Code of Conduct**

- a. Any coach, player or spectator that is ejected by an official or town staff member will be suspended for the team's next scheduled game. Suspensions may be longer depending upon the severity of the offense. All suspensions are at the discretion of the Athletic Program Administrator.

- b. No coach, player or parent shall berate, belittle or taunt opposing team player, parents or coaches. Any unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Offenders may be warned or immediately ejected if the behavior is particularly inappropriate. If ejected the offender must leave the premises immediately. All judgement calls are final.
- c. No coach, player or parent may harass or continually argue with officials, scorekeepers or FVPRCRD Staff. Offenders may be warned or immediately ejected if the behavior is particularly inappropriate. All judgment calls are final.
- d. Coaches, players or parents that have been ejected from an official game will be required to vacate the premises and escorted out by a staff member immediately. Failure to abide by this will result in forfeiture of the game.
- e. Drugs and alcohol are prohibited at all games and practices. Violations will result in a minimum one (1) game suspension.
- f. Spectators that wish to use tobacco products are encouraged to be courteous of others around them and do so away from other spectators & program participants. Use of tobacco products on the field is prohibited. Tobacco products are prohibited on Wake County School property (Banks Rd, Herbert Aikens, Ballentine, & FV Middle).
- g. Pet owners are asked to leave pets at home for town sanctioned athletic events (practices, games, & special events).
- h. No spectator (non-coach) may enter the field of play to argue or discuss an on-field issue. Violations will result in an immediate ejection.
- i. Coaches may not intentionally run up the score. Any coach found to be guilty of running up the score could face suspension.
- j. No coach or player may deliberately or intentionally try to injure or harm another player or coach. No player, coach or spectator shall be guilty of physical attack as an aggressor upon any players, official or spectator.
- k. Coaches who do not meet their minimum playing time requirements will receive a warning for the 1<sup>st</sup> offense and suspended for three (3) games for any subsequent offenses. More than 2 violations of playing time minimums may result in expulsion from the program. Protests for not meeting minimum playing time requirements will be considered on a case by case basis. The intent of the protesting coach will be considered when ruling on playing time cases.
- l. The Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department reserves the right to suspend any coach, parent or player found to be violating the mission, vision or philosophy of the department.