

**Hays Recreation Commission**  
**FLAG FOOTBALL**  
**Rules and Regulations**

**INTRODUCTION:**

The HRC Flag Football League Rules and Regulation are adopted from a combination of policies and procedures set forth by USA Football, NFL FLAG, and Hays Recreation Commission (HRC). These rules have been drawn in accordance with the purposes and the aims of Hays Recreation Commission (HRC), and have as their basis the development and teaching of the elements of good sportsmanship and fair play. HRC shall be the interpreter of these rules.

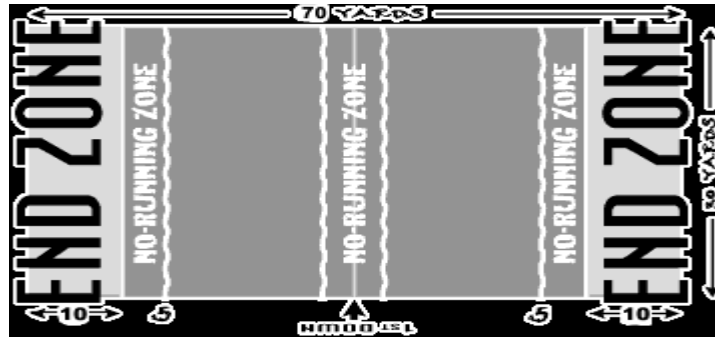
**RULE 1. PLAYERS/TEAMS**

- A. Teams are randomly formed through HRC computer program.
- B. Players may only play on ONE (1) team in the league, and it must be the team they are rostered.
  - a. Exception 1 being a player is allowed to sub up for a team in the older age groups.
    - i. Exception a1: 6-8-Year-Old League may borrow players from within their division when they are short on players (5 players or under).
- C. All players must be registered through HRC. NO "GUEST" PLAYERS ARE ALLOWED.
- D. Teams/Leagues will be made up of players in their respective grade levels.
- E. Teams will consist of six (6) to ten (10) players per team. Teams may pick up player(s) from a younger age group if they do not have enough players to play. If a team only has five (5) players, then an emergency sub may be utilized for that game.
  - a. **Each player must play at least 15 minutes each half and may not sit out two consecutive offensive and defensive series.**
  - b. Teams must have at least 4 players to begin the game.

**RULE 2. SPORTSMANSHIP**

- A. Positive sportsmanship shall always be a top priority in all leagues.
- B. Head coach is responsible for the action of his/her players, assistants, and spectators.
- C. There will be a ZERO tolerance for foul language.
- D. There will be a ZERO tolerance for alcohol, tobacco, or drugs on the premises.
- E. If the referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. This is the referee's discretion.  
FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED

### **RULE 3. THE FIELD**



- A.
- B. Field dimensions are 30 yards by 70 yards with two 10-yard end zones, and a midfield line-to-gain. No-run zones precede each line-to-gain by 5 yards.
- C. No-Run Zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the no-run-zone, teams cannot run the ball in any fashion and all plays must be pass plays.
- D. Stepping on the boundary, or out-of-bounds, line is considered out-of-bounds.
- E. Each offensive team approaches only Two (2) no-run-zones in each drive
  - a. 1<sup>st</sup> is located 5 yards before midfield line-to-gain
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> is located 5 yards before end zone.

### **RULE 4. PRACTICES**

- A. Practices are allowed to begin the week of August 21.
- B. ALL practices must be assigned, approved, and scheduled through the HRC office. THIS INCLUDES ALL OUT OF TOWN TEAMS, as well as ANY TEAM WHO CHOOSES NOT TO PRACTICE AT HRC.
- C. Teams are allowed TWO (2) practices per week lasting ONE (1) hour in length.
  - a. Penalty for more than allotted practice time per week are as follows
    - i. First offense the coach will be suspended for one (1) game.
    - ii. Second offense the coach will be suspended for two (2) games.
- D. Practices will be held at the Pratt-Optimist Field (5<sup>th</sup> and Pine).
- E. Teams will be scheduled on one-half of the field.
- F. PRACTICE BALLS will be provided by HRC.

### **RULE 5. GAME INFO**

- A. Games will begin on September 10
- B. Game and practice cancellation information can be found by signing up for TextCaster.
- C. Officials may NOT start the game before scheduled game time.
- D. Game balls will be provided by HRC
- E. Four (4) players must be present to start the game.

## **RULE 6. TIMING**

- A. Games will consist of two (2) twenty (20) minute halves with continuous clock.
- B. At the beginning of each half, the clock will begin on the snap.
  - a. Clock will only stop on timeouts and injured player
    - i. If clock stops for a timeout, clock will start again on the snap.
    - ii. If clock stops for an injured player, clock will start once injured player is off the field and on the officials ready for play.
      - 1. If clock stops for injured player, said player must sit out for one (1) play.
        - a. Should a team decide to utilize their time-out, player may stay in the game.
- C. Teams will be granted one (1) timeout per half with no carryover. If overtime is played, teams will be granted 1 additional time-out.
  - a. Time-outs are thirty (30) seconds in length.
- D. Halftime will be two (2) minutes in length.
- E. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
  - a. If official stops the clock, he/she will start the clock on with the ready-for-play signal and whistle.

## **RULE 7. OVERTIME**

- A. If score is tied at end of regulation, and overtime period will be used to determine a winner.
- B. Paper, Rock, Scissors will determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first.
  - a. If a second overtime must be played, the team that lost the Paper, Rock, Scissor will get to choose offense or defense for the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round.
- C. The referee will determine which end the overtime period will take place on.
- D. Each team will take turns getting one (1) play from the defense's 5 yard line for one point or the defense's 10 yard line for two points. Whether to go for one or two is up to the offensive team. Whether or not the team that begins on offense converts, the team that started on defense will get a chance on offense to win or tie by converting a one or two-point play of their own.
  - a. For example, if TEAM A has the ball first, and decides to go for a two-point conversion and fails, TEAM B has the choice to go for 1 or two-point conversion to win the game.
  - b. If Team A scores on a two-point conversion, Team B will have to do the same to force a second overtime.
  - c. If Team A scores on a one-point conversion, Team B will have the choice to go for a two-point conversion and the win, or convert a one-point conversion to force a second overtime.
- E. A maximum of two (2) overtimes will be played. If we are still tied after 2<sup>nd</sup> overtime, a tie will be declared.

## **RULE 8. SCORING**

- A. Touchdowns = 6 points
- B. Point-after-touchdown (PAT) will be held from 5-yard line (pass only) or 10-yard line (open play call).
  - a. 1 point awarded for successful 5-yard conversion
  - b. 2 points awarded for successful 10-yard conversion
- C. Safety = 2 points
  - a. Safety occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. Runners can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, a flag falls off, they step out of bounds, their knee or arm touches the ground, a fumble occurs in the end zone, or if the ball is snapped out of the back of the end zone.
- D. Defensive Interception on 1 or 2 point conversions will be blown dead right away, and not allowed to return
- E. If score differential reaches 28 points, the scoreboard will be shut off, and the game will continue to be played with no score being kept.

## **RULE 9. EQUIPMENT**

- A. HRC will provide each player with official HRC Flag Football Flag, as well as 2 jerseys to wear for the games
  - a. Team that is listed first on the schedule will wear lighter colored jersey and will be considered visitors on scoreboard. 2<sup>nd</sup> team listed on schedule will wear darker colored jersey, and be the home team.
- B. Player must wear shoes. Cleats are allowed.
- C. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads and knee pads provided no metal is exposed.
- D. Players must remove all jewelry, hats, and sunglasses prior to game play.
- E. Player's jerseys must be tucked into their shorts or pants

## **RULE 10. OFFENSIVE RULES**

- A. Prior to the game
  - a. Captains will meet at midfield to determine who gets the ball, and what side of the field they want to start.
  - b. Paper, Rock, Scissors will determine who gets the ball to start the game
- B. Play Clock
  - a. Play clock is 40 seconds.
- C. Start of the game
  - a. The offensive team will take possession of the ball at its own 5-yard line and will have three (3-4) plays to cross midfield.
    - i. After completion of 3<sup>rd</sup> down, offense will have the option to run a 4<sup>th</sup> down play or punt.**
      - 1. Punt = Defense takes over at their own 5 yard line**
      - 2. 4<sup>th</sup> down = if 4<sup>th</sup> down attempt is unsuccessful, the defense will take over on downs at the spot.**

- b. Once team crosses midfield, they will have a fresh set of downs and will have 3 plays to score a touchdown.
  - c. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.
  - d. All possession changes (EXCEPT FOR INTERCEPTIONS, failed 4<sup>th</sup> down attempts) start on the offense's 5-yard line.
  - e. Teams will change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.
- D. Live Ball/Dead Ball
- a. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead
  - b. The official will indicate the neutral zone and the line of scrimmage.
    - i. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone.
      - 1. The official may give both teams a "courtesy" neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage
  - c. A player who gains possession in the air is considered inbounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
  - d. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play.
    - i. Penalty will result in in unsportsmanlike penalty.
  - e. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
  - f. Any official can whistle the play dead.
  - g. Play is ruled dead when:
    - i. The ball hits the ground.
      - 1. If the ball hits the ground on the snap, the ball will be placed in the spot that it hit the ground.
    - ii. The ball carriers flag is pulled
    - iii. The ball carrier steps out of bounds
    - iv. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored
    - v. The ball carriers knee or arm hits the ground
    - vi. The ball carriers flag falls off
    - vii. The receiver catches the ball without a flag on
    - viii. The seven (7) second pass clock expires.
    - ix. Inadvertent whistle
      - 1. In the event of inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options
        - a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed
        - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage
        - c. Inadvertent whistle on a defensive interception will be placed at the spot of inadvertent whistle.

## E. Running

- a. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball-carrier has the ball.
- b. Ball carriers must make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
- c. The quarterback may not directly run with the ball.
  - i. Quarterback is defined as the offensive player who receives the snap.
  - ii. **EXCEPTION: 9-12 AGE GROUP, QB CAN RUN IF HE IS RUSHED**
    1. **WHETHER THE RESULT OF A LEGAL RUSH OR ILLEGAL RUSH**
      - a. **EXCEPTION: 9-12 AGE GROUP, QB CANNOT RUN IF RUSHED INSIDE THE NO RUN ZONE**
- d. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage.
  - i. Offense may utilize multiple handoffs
  - ii. Center sneak play is not allowed. The QB is not allowed to hand the ball to the center on the first handoff of the play.
- e. No-Run Zones are located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones.
  - i. If a penalty on the defense takes a team into the No-Run Zone, then they are allowed one (1) open play call.
- f. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage
- g. Once the ball has been handed, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- h. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. This includes diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag full
  - i. Penalty is considered flag-guarding
- i. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to do so.
  - i. Players spinning wildly out of control will be considered flag guarding
- j. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she is attempting to avoid collision.
- k. No blocking/screening is allowed at any time
  - i. Offensive players without the ball must stop their motion once the ball crosses the line of scrimmage
    1. No running with the ball carrier
- l. Flag obstruction
  - i. All jerseys must be tucked in before the play begins.
  - ii. Flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction
    1. Penalty for obstructed flag will be considered flag-guarding

## F. Passing

- a. ONLY WHILE IN NO RUN ZONE, ALL passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage
    - i. All passes INSIDE THE NO RUN ZONE that do not cross line of scrimmage are considered and illegal forward pass
  - b. Intentional Grounding
    - i. Quarterback can throw the ball away to avoid a sack as long as ball crosses the line of scrimmage in the air.
  - c. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage when inside the NO RUN ZONE
  - d. PASSES/TOSSES BEHIND THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE ARE ALLOWED OUTSIDE OF THE NO RUN ZONE.
  - e. **The quarterback has a seven second pass clock. If a pass is not thrown with 7 seconds, the play is dead, and the down is consumed. Ball will be placed at original line of scrimmage.**
    - i. Once ball is handed off, the 7 second clock is no longer in effect.
  - f. Defensive interceptions are returnable
- G. Receiving
- a. All player are eligible receivers including the quarterback once he/she hands it off.
  - b. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
    - i. All motion must be parallel with the line of scrimmage.
  - c. A player must have at least one foot in bounds to receive a pass successfully.
  - d. Interceptions are returnable for touchdowns.
- H. Formations
- a. Offenses must have a minimum of one (1) player on the line of scrimmage and up to four (4) players on the LOS. Quarterback must be off the LOS.
    - i. 1 player may go in motion
      - 1. Must be parallel with LOS
      - 2. No motion allowed toward the LOS
  - b. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the LOS while in motion is considered a false start.
  - c. The center must snap the ball in a rapid, continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

## **RULE 11. DEFENSIVE RULES**

- A. Rushing the passer
  - a. **Rushing the passer is NOT allowed in 6-8 Flag Football.**
  - b. All players who rush the passes must be a minimum of seven (7) yards from the line of scrimmage on the snap
    - i. Any number of players can rush the quarterback

- ii. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage
  - iii. IF DEFENSE RUSHES IN 9-12 AGE GROUP, QB IS ALLOWED TO RUN
- c. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-yard rule is no longer in effect and all defender may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- d. Referee will designate a rush line 7 yards from the line of scrimmage.
- e. A legal rush is defined as:
  - i. Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage
  - ii. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback
- f. An illegal rush is defined as:
  - i. The rusher leaves the rush line early before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff is made.
    - 1. Penalty – ILLEGAL RUSH: 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
  - ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped
    - 1. Penalty – OFFSIDES: 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
  - iii. Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off
    - 1. Penalty – ILLEGAL RUSH: 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
- g. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass, however NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.
- h. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. It is the OFFENSIVE PLAYERS RESPONSIBILTIIY to avoid contact.
  - i. Exception being if the offensive player never moves after the snap, then it is the rushers responsibility to go around the offensive player to avoid contact.
- i. A sack occurs if the QB's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the QB's feet are when the flag is pulled.
  - i. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

#### B. Flag Pulling

- a. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball
- b. **Defenders are NOT allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.**



- c. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but not to tackle, hold, or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
  - d. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.
  - e. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends.
  - f. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who is not in possession of the ball
  - g. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by still arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.
- C. Interception are returnable.
- a. Exception being on point(s) after touchdown

## **RULE 12. PENALTIES**

### A. General

- a. The referee shall call all penalties
- b. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal play.
- c. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted
- d. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about the rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question calls.
- e. Games may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
- f. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
- g. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
- h. Offensive penalties in occurring in the NO RUN ZONE, will still carry the "no run rule". If offensive penalty back the offensive team out of the NO RUN ZONE, the offense will still be required to pass the ball.
- i. A Defensive penalty which forces the Offense into the NO RUN ZONE will result in the offense getting one (1) OPEN Call where they have the option to run or pass.

#### DEFENSIVE SPOT FOULS

DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE	AUTOMATIC 1 <sup>ST</sup> DOWN
HOLDING	AUTOMATIC 1 <sup>ST</sup> DOWN
STRIPPING	+10 YARDS & AUTOMATIC 1 <sup>ST</sup> DOWN

#### OFFENSIVE SPOT FOULS

SCREENING OR BLOCKING	-10 YARDS & LOSS OF DOWN
CHARGING	-10 YARDS & LOSS OF DOWN

FLAG GUARDING	-10 YARDS & LOSS OF DOWN
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#### DEFENSIVE PENALTIES

UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS	+10 YARDS & AUTOMATIC 1 <sup>ST</sup> DOWN
UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT	+10 YARDS & AUTOMATIC 1 <sup>ST</sup> DOWN
OFFSIDE	+5 YARDS & AUTOMATIC 1 <sup>ST</sup> DOWN
ILLEGAL RUSH	+5 YARDS & AUTOMATIC 1 <sup>ST</sup> DOWN
ILLEGAL FLAG PULL	+5 YARDS & AUTOMATIC 1 <sup>ST</sup> DOWN
ROUGHING THE PASSER	+5 YARDS & AUTOMATIC 1 <sup>ST</sup> DOWN
TAUNTING	+5 YARDS & AUTOMATIC 1 <sup>ST</sup> DOWN

#### OFFENSIVE PENALTIES

UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS	-10 YARDS AND LOSS OF DOWN
UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT	-10 YARDS AND LOSS OF DOWN
OFFSIDE/FALSE START	-5 YARDS AND LOSS OF DOWN
ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS	-5 YARDS AND LOSS OF DOWN
OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE	-5 YARDS AND LOSS OF DOWN
ILLEGAL MOTION	-5 YARDS AND LOSS OF DOWN
DELAY OF GAME	-5 YARDS AND LOSS OF DOWN
IMPEDING THE RUSHER	-5 YARDS AND LOSS OF DOWN

### **RULE 13. COACHES**

- A. One (1) coach is allowed on the field per team.
- B. Coaches are expected to adhere to National Standards set forth by the Nationals Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA)

# ***National Standards of NYSCA Coaches***

The National Standards for Youth Sports place in motion a nationwide policy for youth leagues that strive to operate their programs with the best interests of children as their primary objective.

*Copies of the National Standards for Youth Sports, with complete information including rationale and implementation, are made available to youth leagues by contracting NYCA Headquarters.*

## ***#1 Proper Sports Environment***

*Parents must consider and carefully choose the proper sports environment for their child, including the appropriate age and development for participation, the type of sport, the rules of the sport, the age range of the participants, and the proper level of physical and emotional stress.*

## ***#2 Programs Based on the Well-Being of Children***

*Parents must select youth sports programs that are developed and organized to enhance the emotional, physical, social and educational well-being of children.*

## ***#3 Drug, Tobacco & Alcohol-Free Environment***

*Parents must encourage a drug, tobacco and alcohol-free environment for their children.*

## ***#4 Part of a Child's Life***

*Parents must recognize that youth sports are only a part of a child's life.*

## ***#5 Training***

*Parents must insist that coaches are trained and certified.*

## ***#6 Parent's Active Role***

*Parents must make a serious effort to take a active role in the youth sports experience of their child providing positive support as a spectator, coach, league administrator and/or caring parent.*

## ***#7 Positive Role Models***

*Parents must provide positive role models, exhibiting sportsmanlike behavior at games, practices, and home, while also giving positive reinforcement to their child and support to their child's coaches.*

## ***#8 Parental Commitment***

*Parents must demonstrate their commitment to their child's youth sports experience by annually signing the Parents Code of Ethics Pledge.*

## ***#9 Safe Playing Situations***

*Parents must insist on safe playing facilities, healthful playing situations, and proper first aid applications, should the need arise.*

**#10 Equal Play Opportunity**

*Parents, coaches, and league administrators must provide equal play opportunity for all youth regardless of race, creed, sex, economic status or ability.*

**#11 Drug, Tobacco & Alcohol-Free Adults**

*Parents must be drug, tobacco and alcohol-free at youth league sporting events.*

## **Players' Code of Ethics**

**I hereby pledge to provide a positive attitude and be responsible for my participation in Youth Sports by following this Code of Ethics:**

**I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at every game and practice.**

**I will attend every practice and game that is reasonable possible and notify my coach if I cannot.**

**I will expect to receive a fair and equal amount of playing time.**

**I will do my very best to listen and learn from my coaches.**

**I will treat my coaches with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.**

**I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert parents or coaches if it stops being FUN!**

**I deserve to play in an alcohol, tobacco and drug free environment and expect adults to respect that wish.**

**I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it's important to me.**

**I will do my very best in school.**

**I will remember that a sport is an opportunity to learn and have fun.**

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***Players' Signature***

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***Date***

# ***Parents' Code of Ethics***

**I hereby pledge to provide positive 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, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports event.**

**I will place the emotional and physical wellbeing 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 demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.**

**I will remember that the game is for youth—not for adults.**

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

**I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and official, 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 respectful fan, assisting with coaching, or providing transportation.**

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

**I will read the NYSCA National Standards for Youth Sports and do what I can to help all youth sports organizations implement and enforce them.**

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Parent signature

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Parent Signature

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Date