

COLLEGE GROVE ATHLETICS

FALL FLAG FOOTBALL

OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES — 2026

Divisions: 6U · 8U · 10U · 12U **Format:** 5-on-5, non-contact

1. GOVERNING RULES

These rules adopt the **NFL FLAG Official Playing Rules** (published by RCX Sports under license from the National Football League) as the governing standard for all College Grove Athletics flag football play.

Where this document is silent, the NFL FLAG rulebook governs. Coaches and officials should keep a current copy on hand.

A full list of everything College Grove changed from the NFL FLAG standard is at **Appendix B**, for the benefit of anyone who has coached or played NFL FLAG elsewhere.

2. DIVISION RULE MATRIX

Rule	6U	8U	10U	12U
Rushing the passer	None	10-yard rush line	7-yard rush line	7-yard rush line
Max designated rushers	—	2	2	2
No-Run Zones	None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Coach on field (offense)	Pre- and post-snap	Pre- and post-snap	No	No
Coach on field (defense)	20 yds back, clearly out of play	20 yds back, clearly out of play	No	No
Snap "do-over"	Yes	No	No	No
Defender pre-snap depth	5 yds (3 inside the 5)	Standard	Standard	Standard

3. GAME SETUP AND FLOW

- Captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss. **The visiting team calls it.**
- The winner chooses offense or defense. The loser chooses direction. **There is no option to defer.**
- Teams switch sides at halftime. The team that started the game with the ball begins the second half **on defense.**
- The offense takes possession at its own **5-yard line** and has **four downs to cross midfield.**
- Once a team crosses midfield, it has **three downs to score a touchdown.**

Punt or Play

- On **third or fourth down**, when a punt-or-play decision exists, the referee **will ask the offense's head coach to declare.** The coach must answer immediately or risk a delay of game penalty.
- If the offense fails to cross midfield through third down and declares **punt** on fourth, possession changes and the opposing team starts a new drive from its own 5-yard line.
- If the offense declares **play** on fourth down and fails to cross midfield, the opposing team takes over **at the spot where fourth down ended.**
- A team may use a timeout to change a "play" declaration at any point before the play clock expires.
- After crossing midfield, if the offense fails to score on third down, possession changes and the new offense starts at its own 5-yard line.

4. THE FIELD

Dimensions: 25 yards wide × 70 yards long, with two 10-yard end zones.

- Midfield serves as the **line-to-gain** for a first down.
- No-Run Zones** sit 5 yards before midfield and 5 yards before the opponent's end zone. (8U, 10U, and 12U — not 6U. See Section 10.)
- Stepping on a boundary line is **out of bounds.**
- The referee spots the ball in the middle of the field before the ready-for-play whistle. **The ball is never spotted closer than 10 yards to a sideline.**

5. TIMING

Game length	44 minutes, continuous clock
Halves	Two 22-minute halves
Halftime	2 minutes
Play clock	30 seconds from the spot of the ball
Timeouts	One 60-second timeout per half. Does not carry over.

- The clock stops for halftime, injuries, team timeouts, and at the officials' discretion.
- **Mercy rule:** When one team leads by **28 points or more, the game is over**. Teams may agree to keep playing without changing the recorded score.
- **Forfeits are recorded 28-0.**
- A team may spend a timeout to question an official's **rule interpretation**. If the official ruled correctly, the timeout is charged. If the rule was misapplied, the timeout is returned and the correct ruling is enforced. *This applies to rule application only — not judgment calls.*

6. OVERTIME

If the score is tied at the end of regulation, overtime determines the winner.

Setup: The home team calls the coin toss. The winner chooses offense or defense first. The referee determines which end of the field the entire overtime is played on.

Alternating choice: If a second round is required, the team that **lost** the toss chooses offense or defense. The choice alternates every round thereafter.

First Overtime

Each team gets **one play**, choosing either: - The defense's **5-yard line for 1 point**, or - The defense's **10-yard line for 2 points**

Each team makes its own choice in the first period only.

Example: Team A goes for one from the 5 and converts. Team B may either take one from the 5 to tie and force a second round, or take two from the 10 to win outright.

If the second team on offense fails to match or beat the first team, **the game is over**.

Second Overtime

Both teams must attempt a **2-point conversion from the 10-yard line**.

Third Overtime and Beyond

Each team gets **one play from the 5-yard line, going out from the end zone**. The team gaining the most yards wins and is credited **1 point** on the final score.

Overtime Conditions

- All regulation rules and penalties apply.
- **No timeouts.**
- Each team gets **one coach's challenge** for the entire overtime session. A challenge must allege a **misapplication of a rule**, not a judgment call.
- **An interception on any 1- or 2-point attempt — in overtime or regulation — is a dead ball at the spot of the interception. It is never returned and no points are scored on the return.** The attempting team's conversion has failed; the defense then takes possession normally.
- The final score includes all overtime points.

7. SCORING

Play	Points
Touchdown	6
PAT from the 5-yard line — pass only	1
PAT from the 10-yard line — run or pass	2

Safety	2
Interception returned for a score during a regulation scrimmage down	6
Interception on a 1- or 2-point attempt (regulation or overtime)	Not returnable — dead ball, 0 points

Conversion Attempts

- A team must **declare** 1-point or 2-point before the attempt.
- Changing the declaration **costs a timeout**.
- The declaration **cannot be changed after a penalty**.
- **If the defense intercepts a conversion attempt, the play is dead immediately at the spot of the interception.** No return, no points, whether in regulation or overtime. The defense then takes possession at its own 5-yard line for the next series.

Safety

A safety is awarded when the ball-carrier is declared down in their own end zone. This includes: - Flags pulled by a defender - A flag falling out - Stepping out of bounds - Knee or arm touching the ground - A snapped ball landing in or beyond the end zone - **The ball touching the ground in the end zone during a play** (see Section 9 — there are no advancing fumbles; any ball that hits the ground is dead at that spot)

After a safety, possession changes and the team that scored the safety takes over at its own 5-yard line.

8. EQUIPMENT

Required: - Official NFL **FLAG belts and flags** - **Mouthguards at all times** while on the field - **Cleats** (*cleats with exposed metal are never allowed and must be removed*)

Flag belts and flags may not be the same color as the player's shorts or pants.

Permitted: - Tape on forearms, hands, and fingers - Gloves, elbow pads, knee pads - Soft-shell helmets, halos, and sunglasses — **must be secured at all times** - Prescription glasses, no strap required - Headbands and winter beanies

Not permitted: - Cleats with **exposed metal** - **Braces with exposed metal** - All jewelry and hats (other than the headwear noted above)

Uniform: Jerseys must be tucked in if they hang below the belt line. Shorts and pants **without pockets or belt loops are strongly recommended**. Games will not be delayed for a player to tape pockets.

Flag Placement — Strictly Enforced

Flags must sit on the sides of the player's body at all times play is live. This will be strictly enforced and reminded to teams before the season and at check-in.

- **First violation:** warning to the player and team. No penalty enforced.
- **Second and any subsequent violation:** the play is ruled dead at the **original line of scrimmage**, wiping out any yardage gained on the play, and the offense is charged a **loss of down**.

Game balls are provided and are age-specific by division.

Electronic communication between any player and a coach or spectator is prohibited during league play. Violation results in immediate disqualification of the team, and may carry additional discipline at the league's discretion.

9. LIVE BALL / DEAD BALL

- The ball is **live at the snap** and remains live until an official whistles it dead. **Any official** may whistle a play dead.
- The official indicates the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. It is an **automatic dead ball foul** if any player enters the neutral zone. Officials may issue a **courtesy notification** allowing players to move back behind the line.
- A player who gains possession in the air is in bounds as long as the **first foot — or any body part other than a hand — contacts the ground in the field of play** while maintaining possession.
- **Substitutions** may be made during any dead ball period.
- The defense **may not simulate offensive signals** to confuse the offense while the quarterback is calling out signals. Other unfair acts — such as failing to return five eligible players to the field after halftime, or calling a timeout before the ready-for-play signal — draw an **unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on the head coach**.

Play is dead when:

	Condition
a	The ball hits the ground, for any reason
b	The ball-carrier's flag is pulled
c	The ball-carrier steps out of bounds

d	A touchdown, PAT, or safety is scored
e	The ball-carrier's knee, shin, leg, forearm, or arm hits the ground
f	The ball-carrier's flag falls out on its own
g	A receiver catches the ball while wearing one or zero flags
h	The 7-second pass clock expires
i	An inadvertent whistle sounds
j	The ball-carrier leaves their feet to dive, jump, or hurdle a player

Exception to (j): A player may leave their feet to *catch a pass* or *pull a flag*.

No Fumbles — Dead at the Spot

There is no such thing as an advancing loose ball. If the ball ever touches the ground during a play — on a snap, a backward pass, a pitch, a lateral, or any other exchange — the play is dead **immediately at the spot where the ball hit the ground**. It does not matter where the ball rolls or bounces to afterward. Nobody may recover and advance it.

Inadvertent Whistle

The team in possession chooses either: - Take the ball where the whistle blew, and the down counts, or - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage

If an inadvertent whistle occurs on the **last play of a half or game**, the offense is awarded **one untimed down** with the same two options.

10. RUNNING

1. **The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.**
2. The quarterback **cannot run across the line of scrimmage** with the ball. The quarterback is the player who receives the snap, directly under center or in shotgun.
3. **Direct handoffs, pitches, and laterals are permitted behind the line of scrimmage only — never beyond it.** If one occurs after the ball carrier has crossed the line, the play is blown dead and the ball placed at the spot possession was lost.
4. **"Center sneak" is not allowed.** The quarterback may not hand off, pitch, or lateral first to the center.
5. Any player receiving a handoff, backward pass, pitch, or lateral **may throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage**.
6. Once a handoff, backward pass, pitch, or lateral occurs — in front of, behind, or to the side of the quarterback — the **7-second passing clock is eliminated** and **all defenders become eligible to rush**.
7. **A handoff must be a complete, clean transfer of the ball.** Once a player hands the ball to a teammate, that player has no further claim to it — they cannot fake the exchange and keep running with it, and they cannot take it back. This is what prevents mesh-point trickery where the "give" is really a fake.

Play action is legal and is not affected by this rule. The distinction is whether the ball actually left the quarterback's hands: - **Play action (legal):** The quarterback fakes putting the ball into the running back's belly — pump-fakes the exchange — but **never releases the ball**. The QB still has it the entire time and can pass or, if the ball was already handed off, this doesn't apply. Since no handoff ever happened, Rule 7 above never comes into play. This is standard play-calling and is fully allowed. - **Illegal fake handoff (not allowed):** The ball genuinely leaves the quarterback's hand into the runner's possession, and then the officials or defense are deceived into thinking the runner kept it when the QB actually retained it — or vice versa, where the "receiver" pretends not to have it and lets the real ball-carrier run free unmarked. Once the ball leaves the passer's hands and is caught or gripped by the runner, that's a real handoff, and Rule 7's clean-transfer requirement locks in. A player can't un-catch it.

The simple test: if the ball never left the QB's hands, it's play action and it's legal. If the ball did leave the QB's hands and change possession, the exchange is final and irreversible. 8. **No-Run Zones (8U, 10U, and 12U — not 6U):** Teams may not run the ball across the line of scrimmage while in a No-Run Zone. All plays must result in a forward pass crossing the line of scrimmage. Each offensive team approaches only **two** No-Run Zones per drive — one 5 yards from midfield for the first down, one 5 yards from the goal line to score. 9. Runners may **not jump, leap, or hurdle** while advancing the ball, at the officials' judgment. The play is blown dead and the ball spotted **where the jump occurred**. 10. Ball carriers **may** leave their feet for spinning, jump cuts, quarterback throws, or a clear attempt to avoid a collision. Play continues. If illegal contact is made while airborne, a penalty may still be enforced. 11. **No blocking or screening at any time.** 12. Offensive players in close proximity to the ball carrier must **stop their motion** once the ball crosses the line of scrimmage. **No running with the ball carrier.** 13. **Flag obstruction:** Jerseys must be tucked in before play. Flags must sit on the **sides** of the body and stay free from obstruction — see the strict enforcement policy in Section 8. Deliberate obstruction is **flag guarding**. 14. **No stiff-arms of any kind.** A stiff-arm is always ruled flag guarding, regardless of the level of contact. 15. Once the ball is advanced beyond the line of scrimmage, the **current ball carrier is the only player permitted to possess it** until the play is dead.

11. PASSING

1. **Only one forward pass per offensive play**, thrown from behind the line of scrimmage. The ball must be released before the passer crosses the line. **Unlimited backward passes** are permitted behind the line.
2. **There is no intentional grounding.** The quarterback may throw the ball anywhere across the line of scrimmage to avoid a sack.
3. All forward passes must travel **beyond** the line of scrimmage. A forward pass received or landing behind the line is an **illegal forward pass**, unless touched by a defender.
4. **Shovel passes** are legal — a forward pass thrown from behind the line and received beyond it, delivered underhand, backhand, or by pushing the ball forward.
5. **7-second pass clock:** If no pass is thrown within 7 seconds, the play is dead, the down counts, and the ball returns to the line of scrimmage. The clock is eliminated once the ball is handed off, pitched, or lateraled behind the line.
6. If the quarterback is standing **in the end zone** when the 7-second clock expires, the ball returns to the line of scrimmage and the next down is played. **This is not a safety.**
7. If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the play is dead and treated as an **incomplete pass.**

12. RECEIVING

1. **All players are eligible** to receive a pass, including the quarterback once the ball has been handed off, pitched, or lateraled behind the line of scrimmage.
2. A receiver must have at least **one foot or other body part in bounds**, contacting the ground first, with possession.
3. On **simultaneous possession** by an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the **offense**.
4. **Interceptions during a regulation scrimmage down are returnable and worth 6 points if returned for a score.** A backward pass intercepted in the air behind the line of scrimmage may also be advanced.
5. **Interceptions on any 1- or 2-point conversion attempt are never returnable — regulation or overtime.** The play is dead immediately at the interception. *(See Sections 6 and 7.)*

13. RUSHING THE PASSER

6U Division — No Rushing

Defenders may not rush the passer. Rushing is permitted only after a legal handoff is executed in the backfield.

Additionally in 6U: - Defenders must line up **at least 5 yards** from the line of scrimmage before the snap. If the ball is spotted on or inside the 5-yard line, that distance drops to **3 yards**.

8U Division — 10-Yard Rush Line

Rushing is permitted from a **rush line 10 yards** from the line of scrimmage. All other rushing provisions below apply.

10U and 12U Divisions — 7-Yard Rush Line

Rushing is permitted from a **rush line 7 yards** from the line of scrimmage.

Rushing Provisions (All Rushing Divisions)

1. **A maximum of two players may rush.** Rushers **must identify themselves by raising a hand before the snap**, and must **rush immediately after the snap**. Delayed rushing is not permitted.
2. Players not rushing may defend the line of scrimmage.
3. Once the ball is handed off, pitched, or lateraled backward behind the line of scrimmage, **all defenders may cross** to defend and pull flags.
4. A marker or the game official designates the rush line. **Defensive players should verify their position with the official on every play.**
5. **Teams are never required to rush** while the 7-second clock is in effect.

Legal Rush

- Any rush by one of the designated rushers, from the correct rush line for that division
- A rush from anywhere on the field **after** the ball has been handed off, pitched, or thrown backward by the player who received the snap

Illegal Rush Penalties

Situation	Ruling
Rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the LOS before a handoff, pitch, lateral, or pass	Illegal rush — 5 yds from LOS & first down
Any defender crosses the LOS before the snap	Encroachment — 5 yds from LOS &

	first down
Any defender not lined up at the rush line crosses the LOS before the ball is passed, pitched, lateraled, or handed off	Illegal rush — 5 yds from LOS & first down

Drawing the rusher: If the offense draws a designated rusher across the rush line marker before the snap, **that rusher may not legally rush** on that play. Jumping the rush is not itself a penalty until the rusher crosses the line of scrimmage ahead of a handoff, pitch, lateral, or forward pass.

The Rusher's Path

- The **path** is established **pre-snap**, running directly from the rusher to the quarterback. **It does not move when the quarterback moves.**
- If a **moving** offensive player occupies that path, it is the **offense's responsibility** to avoid the rusher. Any disruption or contact is **impeding the rusher.**
- If the offensive player is **stationary**, it is the **rusher's responsibility** to go around and avoid contact.

Contact with the Passer

Rushers may attempt to **block a pass**. Contact with the quarterback, unless ruled incidental by the official, is **roughing the passer.**

Sacks

A sack occurs when the quarterback's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is spotted where the ball is at the moment of the flag pull. A flag pull in the offense's own end zone is a **2-point safety.**

14. FLAG PULLING

1. A legal flag pull requires the ball-carrier to be in **full possession** of the ball.
2. Defenders **may dive** to pull flags, but may not tackle, hold, or run through the ball carrier.
3. It is **illegal to strip or pull the ball** from the carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag **inadvertently falls off** while that player has possession, the player is **down immediately** and the play ends. **The ball is placed where the flag lands.**
5. If a player with **one or no flags** on their belt takes possession, the play is **dead at that spot.**
6. A defender **may not intentionally pull the flags** off a player who is not in possession.
7. **Flag guarding** is any attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct access to the flags — including but not limited to stiff-arming, dropping the head, hand, ball, arm, or shoulder, or covering the flags with the football or jersey.

15. FORMATIONS AND MOTION

1. The offense must have a **minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center)** and a **maximum of four**. The **quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.**
2. Movement simulating the snap by a set player is a **false start.**
3. **Snapping technique:** The center must snap the ball with a rapid, continuous motion **between the legs** to a player in the backfield, OR — if snapping sideways/shotgun-style rather than between the legs — must have **one knee down** while executing the snap. In either case, the ball must completely leave the center's hands.
4. **Only one player may be in motion at the snap.** That player must be genuinely in motion, off the line of scrimmage, moving **parallel to or backward from** the line of scrimmage.
5. Players may **shift** positions at any time, but all players must **reset for one full second** before the snap.

16. COACHES

Coaches are expected to follow NFL FLAG coaching philosophies, guidelines, and the code of conduct.

Division	On Offense	On Defense
6U	One coach on the field, pre- and post-snap , at a safe distance through the completion of the play	Coach must stay a minimum of 20 yards back and clearly out of the field of play
8U	One coach on the field, pre- and post-snap , at a safe distance through the completion of the play	Coach must stay a minimum of 20 yards back and clearly out of the field of play
10U	Sideline only	Sideline only
12U	Sideline only	Sideline only

A coach on the defensive side who is not clearly clear of the field and at least 20 yards back risks a defensive pass interference call if their positioning affects a passing play.

- Team photographers, managers, position coaches, and fans must remain **off the playing field** in the designated viewing area.
- Coaches are **responsible for the conduct of their fans** and team personnel.
- Teams may huddle on the sideline for a play call, **but the play clock does not stop** once the ball is signaled ready for play.

6U Snap Do-Over

If the ball falls to or touches the ground during the initial center-to-quarterback exchange, the play is a **"do-over" with no loss of down — once per down**. On a second consecutive occurrence, the down is consumed.

17. SPORTSMANSHIP AND CONDUCT

Intentional physical play will not be permitted.

If an official or field monitor witnesses intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, **the game is stopped and the player is ejected**. This is at the officials' discretion. **No appeals will be considered.**

- **Offensive or confrontational language is not allowed.** Officials determine what qualifies, will penalize for unsportsmanlike conduct, and will determine whether ejection is warranted.
- Players and coaches may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach, or official.
- **Ball carriers must make an effort to avoid defenders who have established position.**
- **Defenders must give free releases** off the line of scrimmage. Offensive players may **not initiate contact** at the line of scrimmage.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct Penalties

- **Defense:** +10 yards from the **dead ball spot** and an automatic first down
- **Offense:** –10 yards from the **dead ball spot** and a loss of down
- **Two unsportsmanlike penalties on any player or coach in a single game result in disqualification**, and may lead to further discipline.

Spectators

- Cheer for your own players. Do not harass officials or the opposing team.
- Keep comments clean and profanity-free.
- Compliment **all** players, not just one child or team.
- Keep younger children, coolers, chairs, and tents a **minimum of 10 yards off the field** in the end zone area.
- Stay in the end zone area, not between fields.
- Dispose of all trash in designated containers.

18. PENALTIES

General

- **Game officials administer all penalties.**
- Officials determine what constitutes **incidental contact** in the normal run of play.
- All penalties are assessed **from the line of scrimmage**, except spot fouls as noted.
- **Only the team captain or head coach** may question an official regarding rule clarification or interpretation.
- **Games or halves may not end on a defensive penalty**, unless the offense declines it.
- Penalties are assessed **live ball, then dead ball**. Live ball penalties must be assessed before the play is considered complete.
- Penalties are assessed **half the distance to the goal** when the yardage exceeds half the distance.

Spot Fouls in the End Zone

- **Defensive foul:** Ball placed on the **1-yard line**, first down
- **Offensive foul:** **Safety**

Defensive Penalties

Penalty	Enforcement
Unnecessary roughness	+10 yds & automatic first down
Unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yds & automatic first down
Taunting	+10 yds from LOS & automatic first down
Encroachment / illegal substitution	+5 yds from LOS & automatic first down

Illegal rush (starting inside the rush marker)	+5 yds from LOS & automatic first down
Illegal flag pull (before the receiver has the ball)	+5 yds from LOS & automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+5 yds from LOS & automatic first down
Pass interference	Automatic first down
Holding / illegal contact	+5 yds & automatic first down
Stripping	+5 yds & automatic first down

Offensive Penalties

Penalty	Enforcement
Unnecessary roughness	−10 yds & loss of down
Unsportsmanlike conduct	−10 yds & loss of down
Taunting	−10 yds from LOS & loss of down
Offside / false start / illegal substitution	−5 yds from LOS & loss of down
Illegal forward pass	−5 yds from LOS & loss of down
Offensive pass interference	−5 yds from LOS & loss of down
Illegal motion (more than one player moving)	−5 yds from LOS & loss of down
Delay of game	−5 yds from LOS & loss of down
Impeding the rusher	−5 yds from LOS & loss of down
Illegal procedure	−5 yds from LOS & loss of down
Screening or blocking	−5 yds & loss of down
Charging	−5 yds & loss of down
Holding / illegal contact	−5 yds & loss of down
Flag guarding (including stiff-arms)	−5 yds & loss of down
Improper flag placement — 2nd offense	Play dead at the original LOS (no gained yardage) & loss of down. First offense per team is a warning only.

APPENDIX A — QUICK REFERENCE

Downs: 4 to cross midfield → 3 to score **Play clock:** 30 seconds **Pass clock:** 7 seconds, eliminated by a handoff, pitch, or lateral **Rushers:** Max 2, hand raised pre-snap, immediate rush required **Rush line:** None (6U) · 10 yds (8U) · 7 yds (10U, 12U) **On the line:** Min 1 (center), max 4, QB off the line **Motion:** One player, parallel or backward, 1-second reset after any shift **Ball spot:** Where the ball is at the flag pull **Fumbles:** No such thing — dead at the spot the ball hits the ground **Timeouts:** 1 per half, no carryover **Half length:** 22 minutes × 2 **Mercy:** 28 points, game over **Conversion interceptions:** Never returnable — dead ball **Forward passes:** One per play, must cross the line of scrimmage, no laterals beyond the LOS

APPENDIX B — DIFFERENCES FROM NFL FLAG RULES

Everything in this rulebook is the NFL FLAG standard **except the items below**. If you've coached or played NFL FLAG elsewhere, this is the complete list of what's different here.

#	Rule	NFL FLAG Standard	College Grove Athletics
1	8U rushing	No rushing permitted for this division during the regular season	Rushing permitted, from a 10-yard rush line
2	No-Run Zones in 8U	Eliminated for this division	In effect , same as 10U/12U
3	Interceptions on 1- and 2-point attempts	Returnable — worth 2 points if returned for a score	Never returnable, in regulation or overtime. Dead ball at the interception, no points
4	Mercy rule	Game ends at a 35-point lead	Game ends at a 28-point lead
5	Forfeit score	35-0	28-0
6	Safety possession	Not explicitly addressed	The team that scores the safety takes possession at its own 5-yard line
7	8U offensive coach	Pre-snap only; must be off the	Pre- and post-snap access , matching 6U

	access	field before the snap	
8	Defensive coach positioning (6U/8U)	Off the field of play, no specific distance given	Minimum 20 yards back and clearly out of the field of play , to avoid a pass interference risk
9	Snap technique	Between the legs only	Between the legs, OR one knee down for a sideways/shotgun snap
10	Play clock	40 seconds (25 in tournament play)	30 seconds
11	Half length	Two 24-minute halves (48 min total)	Two 22-minute halves (44 min total)
12	Footwear	Shoes required; cleats permitted where allowed	Cleats required
13	Flag placement enforcement	Obstruction is flag guarding — standard 5 yds & loss of down	One warning per team, then the play is killed at the original line of scrimmage (erasing gained yardage) plus loss of down

Note on Item 1: This is the one modification that is *more permissive* than the NFL FLAG standard rather than stricter or simply clarifying. If College Grove is a sanctioned NFL FLAG league or plans tournament play under the NFL FLAG banner, confirm with your RCX representative that a 10-yard rush line for 8U is an approved local adaptation before the season opens.

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