



March 29, 2026

SPRING 2026 GIRL'S HIGH SCHOOL FLAG FOOTBALL

New season!

New rulebook!

Consistency throughout the season.

FLAGS & FLAG BELTS

Flags cannot be cut to be shortened but still be within the limits set in the rules book. 1-5-1f and 1-5-3c.11

- Flags are made to meet minimum measurements and must be worn as intended by the manufacturer. If a school cuts a belt that is manufactured longer than 14' so the belt measures within the specified length, this is considered illegal equipment
- Flag belts may not be altered

FUMBLING THE SNAP, INCLUDING ON A PUNT PLAY

Any time a snap hits the ground, the ball is dead, and the play is over. We've had very kind referees trying to be nice to the teams by allowing the punter to pick up the muffed snap off the ground and punt it. This is incorrect and does not help the players learn and respect the rules of the game. As harsh as it seems, the snap hitting the ground causes the ball to be dead, and because this is occurring on 4th down, the opposing team takes over on downs. 4-2-2g

PUNTS

One report I received was an officiating crew quoting last year's rule that an untouched grounded punt was dead. A grounded punt that is untouched can be recovery and returned by R. 6-1-2

BACKWARD HANDING & BACKWARD PASS (LATERAL)

Any player may hand the ball backwards at any time. "Any time" includes after possessing a punted ball and during the return. The same is true for a backward pass (lateral). Any player may lateral the ball backwards at any time.

A backward pass, or lateral, can be used on any play at any time, even after a change of possession such as an interception or on a punt return. It is always legal if it is backwards. 7-3-1

ILLEGAL CONTACT

Continue to encourage players and coaches to eliminate contact from the sport of flag football. The only contact that I can think of that would be unpenalized is when two or more players are attempting to catch or block a pass. There is no remedy for that form of contact. Blocking, running and flag pulling need to be without contact. It is far better to penalize the contact than trying to determine what level of contact is legal, and what level of contact is not legal - the players will adjust. 9-3-2



NO PLACE KICKS IN NEW YORK

A team cannot attempt a place kick (PAT / field goal formation). Additionally, a place kick cannot be used instead of punting the ball. Officials should prevent this from happening.

MECHANICS

In 3-man mechanics:

- R should be positioned to the throwing arm side of the QB
- Line Judge should straddle the neutral zone between the 2 pucks marking the line of scrimmage and defensive neutral zone
- Field Judge should be 5 yards deeper than the deepest defenders on the opposite sideline of the LJ
 - The Field Judge should never be beaten deep

In 4-man mechanics:

- R and LJ are the same positioning as 3-man mechanics
- Field Judge will be positioned 7 to 12yards downfield on the opposite sideline of the LJ
- Back Judge should be 20-25 yards downfield in the middle of the field
 - The Back Judge should never be beaten deep

PLAY CLOCK VISIBLE COUNT DOWN

The Referee should wear a ReadyRef type device or a watch to keep track of the 25-second play clock. The NYSACFO mechanic is the referee will raise his arm with 10-seconds remaining and then begin a 5-second count down signal (sideways chop).

THE NYSACFO FLAG FOOTBALL RULES TEST IS NOW CLOSED.