

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF LAREDO

R. C. COLA

2024 FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES

1. Coach's preseason Obligations

1.1 All coaches and team managers must complete a background check on bgcsports.com by being added to a roster and completing the process online.

1.2 All coaches and team managers must complete Child Sexual Abuse Prevention training on BGCA.net. Instructions may be found on bgcsports.com/downloads.

1.3 All coaches must be registered as volunteers at the campus they coach for.

1.4 All coaches must complete their roster on bgcsports.com (Team Sideline) and all parents must register their children on bgcsports.com (Team Sideline).

1.5 All players must be registered by their parents as members of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Laredo. To register, visit bgclareo.com and complete the registration process under Program Registration.

1.6 All coaches must submit photo to sportsdirector@bgcsports.com via email with team(s) name they are coaching for and full name. Photo will be used to make ID Card for coaches with verification of background check completion. ID Cards for coaches are required to be on able to coach on the sideline.

2. There are no height or weight restrictions on players.

3. Divisions

1st Grade- May not be 8 years old on 09/01/2024.

2nd Grade- May not be 9 years old on 09/01/2024.

3rd Grade- May not be 10 years old on 09/01/2024.

4th Grade- May not be 11 years old on 09/01/2024.

5th Grade- May not be 12 years old on 09/01/2024.

6th Grade- May not be 13 years old on 09/01/2024.

A younger player may play in a higher grade level, but an older player MAY NOT play in a younger division. Once a player plays in a game, he/she cannot be promoted or demoted to another team or division. A player may only play on one team.

4. Playing Time

4.1 If a coach desires, the best 8 players may play both offense and defense. However, every coach must make an effort to play all players.

5. Number of Players

5.1 A team may only have 8 players on the field at one time.

5.2 A minimum of 6 players are needed to start a game.

5.3 If at any point, a team has less than 6 players on the field due to injury or ejection, the game must stop.

5.4 Each team must have at least one captain on the field at all times during game. The captain will address referees only on matters of interpretation and to obtain information.

6. Game Length

6.1 Two 18 minute halves.

6.2 Overtime (see Rule #9)

7. Time Outs

7.1 One (1) Time out in the first half allowed. One (1) time-out in the second half allowed. One (1) Time out allowed in overtime (if necessary). **Time outs do not carry over.

8. Game Play

8.1 Coin Toss

- A) The referee will call the team captains together for the toss of a coin to decide a choice of who starts on offense. The winning captain has the choice.
- B) The offensive team that started the game will start with defense in the second half.

8.2 At the start of each possession, the offensive team will start at the 45-yard line. (No kickoffs)

8.3 Downs (First down and zone to go)

- A) Each team will have three (3) consecutive downs to advance the ball into the next zone or score a touchdown.
- B) Once a team enters into the next zone, it is a first down and a new set of downs begins. If a team loses yards on a play, the zone does not reset. The line to gain will be the same as it was on first down.
- C) A team failing to move the ball into the next zone will lose possession. The opposing team will gain possession at the 45-yard line and it will be first down and zone to go.
- D) When an offensive team is within the last zone (red zone), it is first and goal. The red zone will be 4 down territory.

8.4 De-flagging

- A) There shall be no tackling of the ball carrier.
- B) The ball carrier is down when the flag is removed from his/her waist (de-flagging). The defensive player will hold the flag above his head and stand still.
- C) The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier down to remove his flag. Accidental touches of the body or shoulder while reaching for the flag will not be considered a violation.

8.5 Blocking

- A) There will be no blocking.

8.6 Moving the ball

- A) Offensive plays must be forward passes beyond the line of scrimmage.
- B) The field is marked at 15-yard intervals with cones or markers.
- C) Mandatory two tight ends lined up inside 5 yards from the center.
- D) 3 players must be on the line; the center and one tight end on each side. Up to 7 players may be on the line.
- E) All Players must be set for at least one second. One player may motion at a time. The motion must be lateral or backward. Offensive shifts must be set for at least one second before any other motion may occur. The player in motion may be in motion when the ball is snapped.
- F) Possession always begins at the 45-yard line. Officials must enforce hash mark placement of the ball in accordance with NCAA rules, once the ball has advanced.
- G) No penalty will be assessed in excess of the 45-yard line. On an unsuccessful or successful offensive play from the 45-yard line resulting in an offensive penalty: the ball will be returned to the 45-yard line and 1st down will become 2nd down; 2nd down will become 3rd down; and 3rd down will result in a turnover.
- H) Offenses always move in the same direction.
- I) The initial pass must be a forward pass that crosses the line of scrimmage. No flea flickers or double passes will be allowed. Once a forward pass has been thrown past the line of scrimmage, backward passes (laterals) are allowed.
- J) No rushing plays will be allowed.
- K) The ball carrier may not use his hands or arms to protect his flags. The defensive player must have the opportunity to remove the ball carrier's flags.
- L) The ball carrier cannot lower his head to drive or run into a defensive player.
- M) Stiff arming by the ball carrier is illegal.
- N) The ball carrier cannot hurdle to prevent a defensive player from removing his flags. Spinning is allowed.
- O) The ball carrier may run in any direction until the ball is declared dead.

8.7 Center

- A) The center must snap the ball between his/her legs.
- B) The center must have both feet on the scrimmage line, with no part of his body beyond the forward point of the ball.
- C) The center may adjust the long part of the ball at right angles to the scrimmage line one time only per play.

8.8 Passing

- A) Passing will be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage only.
- B) A quarterback has a count of 6 from the referee to throw the ball. The 6 count will be demonstrated by the referee's arm extending.
- C) There will be no running plays. All passes must be forward passes that pass the line of scrimmage.
- D) A forward pass is a pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage toward the defensive team's goal line and passes the line of scrimmage.

8.9 Receiving

- A) All players are eligible to receive forward passes.
- B) A receiver has completed a catch as long as he/she secures control of a live ball in flight before the ball touches the ground and then maintains control of the ball long enough to perform an act common to the game.
- C) An offensive player cannot be out of bounds and return in bounds to catch a pass. This will be ruled an incomplete pass.
- D) If an offensive and defensive player catches a pass simultaneously, the ball is declared dead at the spot of the catch and the passing team is awarded possession.

8.10 Dead Ball - The ball is declared dead at the following times:

- A) All balls touching the ground are immediately dead. The only exception is on the snap.
- B) When the ball carrier touches the ground with his body, other than his/her hands or feet.
- C) When the ball carrier's flag has been pulled.
- D) If a pass receiver has a missing flag, the ball is dead at the spot of the catch.
- E) Following a touchdown.
- F) When the ball goes out-of-bounds for any reason.
- G) When the ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble. Exception: A quarterback fumbling a ball on the snap, or a bad snap will not result in a dead ball, but the count will begin on the snap.
- H) If a lateral pass touches the ground (the ball is declared dead at that point). If a lateral pass goes out-of-bounds, the ball is ruled dead at the point it crosses the boundary line.
- I) An interception is a dead ball upon possession by the defense. 3 pts and possession will be awarded to the defense.
- J) If a quarterback's 6-second throwing clock expires.

9. Scoring Values

9.1 Touchdown: 6 points

9.2 Interception: 3 points

9.3 Points after touchdown:

- A) From 3-yard line: 1 point
- B) From 10-yard line: 2 points
- C) Interception on conversion attempt: 1 point

8.3 Forfeit (offended team wins 1-0)

10. Tied Game at the End of Regulation

10.1 Both teams will have an offensive possession.

10.2 After a coin flip to determine first possession, teams will alternate series from the 10-yard line and will try to advance towards the goal line with four downs each.

10.3 If the game is still tied at the end of the overtime period, the game will be declared a tie.

10.4 In the playoffs only, overtime periods will continue until we have a winner. After the first overtime, teams must go for a two-point conversion after a touchdown.

11. Penalties

11.1 The offended team will always have the choice of accepting or declining a penalty. If the penalty is declined, the down will remain the same as if no infraction occurred. When the penalty is greater than the distance to the goal line, the penalty shall be half the distance to the goal line.

11.2 Line of Scrimmage – Centering

- A) Offsides, defensive or offensive: 5 yards
- B) Illegal snap: 5 yards
- C) Failure to observe the 25-second rule: 5 yards
- D) Illegal motion- more than one person in the backfield in motion: 5 yards
- E) Illegal formation, offense: 5 yards

11.3 Passing

- A) If an illegal forward pass is thrown and intercepted: The intercepting team has the option of being awarded 3 points and possession or accepting the penalty and having the offensive team remain in possession of the ball and the 5-yard penalty.
- B) Passer crosses the line of scrimmage: 5 yards and loss of down.
- C) Intentional grounding: 5 yards and a loss of down.
- D) Offensive pass interference: 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down.
- E) Defensive pass interference or holding: spot foul and an automatic 1st down if under 10 yards or 10 yards and an automatic 1st down if the foul occurs past 10 yards.

11.4 Delay of Game

- A) Continuing to play after the ball is dead: 5 yards from where the ball is dead
- B) Delaying the game for any reason: 5 yards
- C) An offense does not snap the ball within the 25 seconds given by the official: 5 yards.

11.5 Flag Wearing and De-Flagging

- A) Flags must be worn on the waist, on the sides of the body: 5 yards penalty
- B) Jerseys may not cover the flags and should be tucked in: 5 yard penalty
- C) There shall be no tackling of the ball carrier: 10 yard penalty
- D) The ball carrier is down when the flag is removed from his/her waist (de-flagging). The defensive player will hold the flag above his head and stand still.
- E) The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier down to remove his/her flag. Accidental touches of the body or shoulder while reaching for the flag will not be considered a violation. A violation is a 10 yard penalty.

12. Substitutions

8.1 Free Substitutions. A player may substitute for another player any time the ball is dead.

13. Warm-up and Start Time

13.1 Teams must warm up prior to the listed game time. Teams must be ready to play when the referee signals for the game to start. The clock will start upon the referee's direction but no sooner than the beginning of the hour unless agreed upon by both teams.

14. Bench Etiquette

11.1 Only two coaches per team may be coaching on the bench during a game.

11.2 Coaches and players must remain between the 45-yard line and the 15-yard line.

11.3 The coach is responsible for his player's conduct and the conduct of the team's fans.

11.4 Players and coaches must be at least 1-yard from the sideline to give referees and players room on the sideline.

15. Field Guidelines and Equipment

12.1 Field

- A) The field shall be rectangular with lines and zones
- B) The field measures 55 yards in length, divided into 3 zones of 15 yards each with an end zone of 10 yards. It is 40 yards wide.
- C) Goal posts are not necessary as points after TDs (conversions) are made only by passing and there are no field goals kicked.

- D) A conversion line will be marked 3 yards from the goal line and at an equal distance from the sideline.
- E) The following field equipment will be used: A down marker may be used to indicate the number of downs. If a down marker is unavailable, referees will signal the down with their hands. Soft pylons will be placed at the four sections of the end zones and sidelines

12.2 Equipment

- A) Flags and shorts should be different colors.
- B) Flags
 - a) “Sonic Boom” and Velcro flags only. No “Shruumz” style flags allowed.
 - b) Tip of flags may not be tipped in the shape of a triangle.
 - c) Each player must wear a belt with two flags.
 - d) The flags will be attached to a belt and extend or hang from each side of the player’s body.
 - e) Flags will be 16-20 inches long and 2 inches wide.
 - f) The securing of flags to the body, waist or belt is illegal.
 - g) Jerseys cannot be worn over the flags.
 - h) If a player’s flag is inadvertently lost, ball is dead at the sport he catches the ball. If player catches the ball in the end zone, touchdown is accepted.
- C) Football size for 1st-3rd: **Peewee Size**; 4th-6th: **Junior size**
- D) Gamebreaker Style soft head gear is allowed.

12.3 Game Uniforms

- A) All team members should wear the same color jersey. It is preferable if teams have 2 jerseys or for the jerseys to be reversible, but not mandated. Primary jersey shall be your team color and secondary jersey should be white.
- B) Any type of pants or shorts may be worn. NO POCKETS on shorts or pants allowed.
- C) Jersey will be tucked in at all times.
- D) Sneakers are the preferred shoes, however, non-detachable, rubber-cleat shoes (soccer style) are allowed. No other footwear is acceptable.

12.4 Eye Glasses

- A) Eyeglasses when worn shall be of athletically approved construction with non-shattering glass.
- B) Contact lenses may be worn.

12.5 Prohibited Equipment

- A) Spikes or street shoes
- B) Padding of any kind, including hard surface padding such as shoulder pads, hip pads, and hard helmets.
- C) Hard metal or any other hard substance on a player’s clothing.
- D) Anything that conceals the flags
- E) Sticky substances such as grease or glue.
- F) Any equipment, in the opinion of the referee that will endanger or confuse players.

16. Playoffs

16.1 End of the season playoff tournament

- A) Top 5 teams make the playoffs in any division with 8 or more teams. All teams make the playoffs if the division is 7 or less teams.
- B) Tie breakers will be determined by Team Sideline’s tie breaker process which may be seen by clicking on “Tie Breaker List” on your standings page.

17. Conduct

17.1 All parents, spectators and coaches must read and abide by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Laredo Code of Conduct. The Boys & Girls Clubs of Laredo Code of Conduct may be found on bgcsports.com/downloads

17.2 Coaches

- A) Do not criticize players in front of spectators

- B) Accept decisions of game officials on the field as being fair and called to the best of said officials ability.
- C) Refrain from excessive “sideline coaching.”
- D) Together with game officials, be jointly responsible for the conduct and control of team fans and spectators.
- E) Do not criticize an opposing team, its players, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or by gestures.
- F) Refrain from using abusive and profane language.
- G) Refrain from running up the score.
- H) Do not permit an ineligible player to participate in the game.
- I) Do not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
- J) Abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages at both the game and practice fields.

17.3 Parents and Spectators

- A) Parents and spectators are not allowed to approach the scorer’s table or officials (score keepers and referees) before, during, or after a game. Violation of this rule could lead to a personal foul to the related team’s bench and/or ejection from the field of the parent in question. The Boys & Girls Clubs of Laredo will review every case and may issue further actions.
- B) Parents and spectators are not allowed on the field unless invited on to the field due to an injury.
- C) Parents and spectators may not make contact with players, parents, coaches, and spectators from an opposing team.

18. Eligibility of Players

18.1 Players must be from the same school

a) Exceptions:

- 1) Any player that exhibits the skill to move up a grade level may be allowed to do so, ONLY under these circumstances:
 - Coach must notify the Boys and Girls Club of Laredo of the situation.
 - The Boys and Girls Club of Laredo must verify that player is playing for the correct feeder school.
 - ALL FINAL DECISIONS are made by the Boys and Girls Club of Laredo.
- 2) Special Needs Provision (see #16)

18.2 Player can play in one grade division only. He/she cannot change to another age division once the season starts. If a player transfers to another school during the season, he/she has the option to play for either school, but must pick which school.

18.3 Using an INELIGABLE player will cause team to forfeit all games said player played in and coach is subject to suspension.

18.4 If any coach feels an opposing team has an ineligible player, please call/text the Boys and Girls Club Sports Department at (956) 722-7549 or email sportsdirector@bgcsports.com . We will then conduct an investigation. To avoid hard feelings, coach requesting verification of age will be kept confidential.

18.5 Player can only play for one team. Once team is eliminated, players cannot transfer to another team.

18.6 All coaches must verify roster.

19. Student Special Needs Provisions: As a service to the growing number of special needs students that want to participate in our sports leagues, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Laredo would like to provide all special needs students with options to play when deemed safe & enjoyable for the student. These conditions are put in place for the student to feel comfortable & part of a competitive team and in no way should be used to gain an edge over other teams within the league. When these conditions can be satisfied the student will be allowed to play:

- a. **Permission from the school sponsoring the student must obtain prior approval from the principal**
- b. **Student must be qualified special needs**

- c. Students must be able to play the sport in a safe manner where he/she will not injure themselves or others
- d. Student attends school that has no participating teams in his/her grade level for a sport that they are asking for the transfer
- e. Student must play in his/her grade level at sponsoring school provided the school is within his/her school district "LISD & UISD"
- f. A student may also play for a school they intend on transferring to, or is a feeder school to the middle school they intend on transferring to as long as the principal of the sponsoring school has given approval.
- g. All final approval for students requesting team transfers remain at the discretion of the Boys & Girls Club of Laredo.

20. School Principal

20.1 The Boys & Girls Clubs of Laredo will work closely with the schools' principal. The principal has the ability to hold a player(s) and/ or a team out from participating in any BGC league due to conflict with grades, disciplinary violations, etc.

21. Facility Conduct

21.1 No outside food or drinks allowed at any of our gyms.

21.2 Water bottles are allowed to be brought in for players and coaches only.

21.3 Coaches are responsible for team benches to be clean after a game (i.e. all trash must be disposed of). Sports bottles are not responsibility of the Boys and Girls Club of Laredo and will be thrown out after the 2nd day.

21.4 Spectators are asked to be sure to dispose of trash properly and to leave a clean area after the game.

21.5 Snacks must be distributed outside BGC facilities or gyms. Please dispose of trash properly.

21.6 Satellite gyms (i.e. school gyms) may have their own rules that are expected to be followed.