



## 2022 Georgia Flag Football League

### Guiding Principles, Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures

#### **Overview:**

Georgia Flag Football League (GFFL) is an association dedicated to all student athletes residing in Columbia County, Georgia. GFFL offers Flag Football opportunities for both boys and girls.

#### **Mission Statement:**

Georgia Flag Football League is committed to the development of our community's student athletes by way of year-round accessibility and inclusivity of fundamental football principals. The goal is to promote physical activity, teamwork, and sportsmanship to maximize each athlete's potential. Through football principals we can teach and instill important values such as pride, accountability, commitment, discipline, leadership and determination.

#### **Guiding Principles:**

##### 1. Purpose

These principles are written to ensure a balanced blend of sportsmanship, recreation, skill development, and competitive activity in keeping with the GFFL Mission Statement.

##### 2. Principles

- a. All players, coaches, officials, parents, and spectators will be treated fairly and with respect.
- b. Retention of athletes is a key measure of success.
- c. Players will be provided with the highest quality training and coaching that GFFL can supply.
- d. Input from Coaches at the next level is critical in developing a progressive schedule of age appropriate fundamental skills.
- e. Players should be evaluated periodically to gauge our success in meeting targets for skills development. The results of these evaluations will be shared with both the player and the parent.
- f. Parents play an extremely important role in the development of young athletes.
- g. All activities and actions sanctioned by GFFL will be conducted in an open and transparent manner.
- h. GFFL will openly accept criticism and complaints, and will effectively and fairly resolve these issues consistent with our Mission Statement.
- i. GFFL has a goal of continuous improvement. As deviations from our mission are noted, we will look for the underlying problem and make the necessary adjustments to ensure that we are living up to the standards and goals of our Mission Statement.

#### **Code of Conduct:**

##### 1. Purpose

Georgia Flag Football League values sportsmanship, fair play, skill development, and mutual respect among all players, coaches, officials and spectators. This Code of Conduct has been established and adopted to ensure the guiding principles of Georgia Flag Football League are understood and met by all individuals associated with this organization.

This Code of Conduct applies to all activities associated with GFFL. These activities include, but are not limited to, email correspondence, registration, drafts, practices, GFFL sponsored games, and any activities attended under the GFFL banner, run by other organizations. The Code of Conduct for coaches, players, parents, and spectators will be thoroughly discussed at the pre-season coaches meeting. In addition, this Guiding Principles, Code of Conduct, and Disciplinary Procedures will be available on the Georgia Flag Football League website for review.

The following Codes of Conduct will be strictly enforced.

## **2. Players Code of Conduct**

Each player will ensure that his/her playing conduct is that of a young lady or gentleman fairly competing to the limit of his/her ability. To satisfactorily meet these responsibilities, the player is expected to:

- a. Know the rules and abide by them.
- b. Respect the game officials and refrain from addressing them or commenting on their decisions during the play of the game.
- c. Maintain control of his/her emotions, avoiding the use of abusive language or profanity, humiliating remarks, gestures of ill temper, and physical assault upon another player at any time.
- d. Respect the coaches and players of the opposing team and demonstrate appropriate gestures of sportsmanship at the conclusion of the game. Be humble and generous in victory and proud and courteous in defeat.
- e. Respect all Georgia Flag Football League volunteers.
- f. Follow all practice and game facility rules and regulations, respecting at all times the property of others.
- g. Realize, accept, and practice the principle that a team's reputation is built not only on its playing ability but also on the sportsmanship, courtesy and manners of each individual player.
- h. Attend every practice and game that is reasonably possible, and notify the coach in advance if the player is unable to attend.

## **3. Coaches Code of Conduct**

The Head Coach will be provided with copies of the Code of Conduct prior to the start of the season. Each Head Coach is responsible to see that their assistant coaches, players, and spectators abide by the respective Code of Conduct. It is also the coach's responsibility to review the Codes of Conduct with their assistant coaches and players.

Each coach will ensure that his/her conduct is that of a responsible adult fairly competing to the limit of his/her ability. To satisfactorily meet these responsibilities, the coach is expected to:

- a. Know the rules and abide by them.
- b. Instruct players in the rules and coach his/her team in such a way as to motivate each player to compete according to the rules at all times.
- c. Place the emotional and physical well being of the players ahead of any personal desire to win.
- d. Respect the game officials and refrain from questioning their decisions in a disrespectful or abusive manner.
- e. Ensure that all building rules and regulations are followed by the players and spectators.
- f. Ensure that fans of his/her team conduct themselves with sportsmanship and maturity at all times while in attendance at game sites, and assist the game officials in maintaining control of spectators during the games.
- g. Respect the coaches and players of the opposing team both during the play of the game and at its conclusion, win or lose.
- h. Respect all Georgia Flag Football League volunteers.
- i. Teach each player, especially through personal example, to be humble and generous in victory and proud and courteous in defeat.
- j. Maintain control of his/her emotions and avoid actions, language, and/or gestures that may be interpreted as hostile and humiliating.
- k. Instruct team support personnel in their responsibilities in accordance with established rules and procedures.
- l. Realize, accept, and practice the principle that a team's reputation is built not only on its playing ability, but also on its sportsmanship, courtesy, and manner.

#### **4. Parents and Spectators Code of Conduct**

Each parent and spectator will ensure that his/her conduct is that of a responsible adult or youth who are positively encouraging all participants to the limit of his/her ability. To satisfactorily meet these responsibilities, each parent and spectator is expected to:

- a. Respect the rules of the game.
- b. Respect the game officials and refrain from questioning their decisions or from addressing them in a loud, disrespectful, or abusive manner.
- c. Grievances or misunderstandings between coaches, officials, parents or spectators should be communicated through the proper channels and procedures, never on or about the field of play and/ or in view of other players, spectators or participants.
- d. Cheer for their team in a positive, supportive manner.
- e. Place the emotional and physical well being of the players ahead of any personal desire to win.
- f. Maintain control of his/her emotions, avoid the use of abusive language, profanity, and gestures of ill temper, and refrain at all times from making hostile or negative remarks about the opposing team.
- g. Respect all Georgia Flag Football League volunteers.
- h. Follow all practice and game facility rules and regulations, respecting at all times the property of others.
- i. Leave practice and game facility grounds in a timely fashion after the conclusion of a game.
- j. Demonstrate appropriate gestures of sportsmanship at the conclusion of a game, win or lose. Do not interact in a negative fashion with fans, players or coaches of the opposing team or game officials.
- k. Realize, accept, and practice the principle that a team's reputation is built not only on its playing ability, but also on the sportsmanship, courtesy, and citizenship of its fans.

#### **5. Offensive Actions**

Any individual violating the Code of Conduct set forth above shall be subject to penalties and sanctions as set forth in the Disciplinary Procedures below. In addition to conforming to the requirements of the Code of Conduct above, the following actions are specifically prohibited

(*"Offensive Actions"*):

- a. Refusing to abide by an official's decision.
- b. Verbally abusing or assaulting any player, coach, official, parent, spectator, or Georgia Flag Football League volunteers.
- c. Physically assaulting, abusing, or threatening any player, coach, official, parent, spectator, or Georgia Flag Football League volunteers.
- d. Displaying personal grievances or misunderstandings between coaches, officials, parents or spectators on or about the field of play and/ or in view of other players, spectators or participants.
- e. Stalking, tailing, or attempting to intimidate any player, coach, official, parent, spectator, or Georgia Flag Football League volunteers.
- f. Engaging in any other type of violent behavior, such as throwing equipment or other objects.
- g. Engaging in any lewd or sexual behavior, physically abusing a player, or engaging in any inappropriate physical contact with a player.
- h. Unless specifically allowed by the rules of the sport, pushing, shoving, or striking any player.
- i. Using drugs or alcohol while coaching, attending, or participating in any GFFL sponsored event.

#### **Disciplinary Procedures:**

##### **1. Reporting Improper Conduct**

Georgia Flag Football League provides a forum on its website to allow coaches, players, parents, spectators, and officials to report to the Disciplinary Committee any issues they observe before, during, or after practices and games. The link to report Code of Conduct violations and Offensive Actions can be found under "Contact Us" on the GFFL website.

**a. Reporting By Coaches**

- i. It is the responsibility of every coach to address improper conduct observed by the coach or brought to the coach's attention in a timely and respectful manner.
- ii. In the event any coach feels that the Disciplinary Committee should be involved in addressing any improper conduct, the coach is encouraged to contact the Disciplinary Committee through the GFFL website.
- ii. Coaches must report any Offensive Actions to the Disciplinary Committee, including, without limitation:
  - 1) Any report or allegation of inappropriate physical contact, violence, or threatened violence against any player, coach, official, parent, spectator, or Georgia Flag Football League volunteers.
  - 2) Any observed or reported use of drugs or alcohol by any player, coach, official, parent, or spectator during any GFFL event.
  - 3) Any situation where a player, coach, parent, or spectator is ejected from a game or removed from the premises.
- iv. Coaches are encouraged to keep the Disciplinary Committee informed of any improper conduct and the steps taken by the coach to address the misconduct, even if the coach is not required to report the misconduct to the Disciplinary Committee.
- v. Coaches shall promptly respond to any request by the Disciplinary Committee for information relating to any incident or violation of the Code of Conduct.

**b. Reporting by Parents and Spectators**

- i. Parents and spectators are encouraged to report any improper conduct to the coach and/or the Disciplinary Committee.
- ii. If a parent or spectator reports misconduct to the coach and feels that the misconduct is not appropriately addressed, the parent or spectator is encouraged to contact the Disciplinary Committee through the GFFL website.

**2. Procedures for Addressing Improper Conduct**

**a. Coaches and Officials**

- i. Coaches and officials shall promptly address any misconduct that is observed or brought to the attention of the coach or official during an GFFL event.
- ii. Coaches and officials have the absolute authority, in their sole discretion, to issue verbal warnings and/or eject any player, parent, or spectator from any game or match if the player, parent, or spectator violates the Code of Conduct or engages in any Offensive Action.
- iii. Officials have the absolute authority to issue verbal warnings and/or eject any coach or spectator from any game or match if the coach or spectator violates the Code of Conduct or engages in any Offensive Action.

**b. GFFL Disciplinary Committee**

- i. The GFFL Disciplinary Committee will conduct a timely and reasonable investigation into any misconduct reported to the Disciplinary Committee. The scope of any investigation will be determined by the Disciplinary Committee in its sole discretion, provided, however, that the Committee will provide any person accused of misconduct a reasonable opportunity to be heard.
- ii. After a reasonable investigation, the Disciplinary Committee will determine the appropriate penalty for any violation of this Code of Conduct and any Offensive Action.
  - 1) Penalties will be based on the nature and severity of the violation.
  - 2) The Disciplinary Committee will strive to treat all similar offenses in a similar manner, while taking into account the individual facts and circumstances of each violation.
  - 3) The Disciplinary Committee will not discriminate in any manner in determining whether to impose a penalty or in determining which penalty to impose.
- iii. The Disciplinary Committee will keep reasonable and appropriate records of each reported violation, and shall document each penalty and the reasons for imposing the penalty.

All decisions of the Disciplinary Committee are final and cannot be appealed.

## 1. Penalties

The Disciplinary Committee shall determine the appropriate penalty for any violation of the Code of Conduct and any Offensive Actions. Penalties may include any one or more of the following:

- a. Verbal Warning
- b. Suspension:
  - i. One game suspension
  - ii. Multiple game suspension, or
  - iii. Indefinite suspension
- d. Suspension of player(s) in accordance with BOD decision
- e.. Parent/Player expulsion from GFFL

## 2. Additional Considerations

- a. If a coach or parent is expelled from the league, any child associated with that person is also expelled from the league.
- b. If a player is suspended from the Local School District, they cannot participate in GFFL events for the duration of their suspension. If a player is expelled from the Local School District, they cannot participate in any GFFL events. If they are currently on a team, they will be removed from that team.
- c. There are no refunds as a result of any person being removed from the league.

## **ZERO TOLERANCE RULE**

The Georgia Flag Football League (GFFL) has instituted a Zero Tolerance Rule for the 2022 flag football season.

This is created to encourage a positive environment for all; players, coaches, officials, and family members.

The rule states: "Directors, coaches, players, cheerleaders, family members and spectators that demonstrate behavior that is **detrimental** to any area program may be removed from that respective program. **Detrimental** behavior is defined as **physical and/or verbal abuse towards any participant, coach, or official at any time.** Vulgar language, physical abuse or gestures **WILL NOT BE TOLERATE.** **Violators of this Zero Tolerance Rule during GFFL functions will be ejected and may be subject to game, practice or season suspension.**

**Georgia Flag Football League (GFFL)**  
**Guiding Principles, Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures**

**Participant (and Family Member) Acknowledgement Agreement**

1. I have been presented with and I understand the Guiding Principles, Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures put into effect by the Georgia Flag Football League.
2. I agree to comply with all Guiding Principles, Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures put into effect by the Georgia Flag Football League.
3. I understand the disciplinary procedures put in place by the Georgia Flag Football League.
4. I acknowledge that by signing this agreement, I accept full responsibility and any consequences for the actions of myself, my participant, my family, and any other spectator I am associated with.

**Name Printed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Player(s) Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 2022 NFL Georgia Flag Football League Permission and Waiver

**1. PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE:** I, the parent/ guardian of the above named participant hereby acknowledge that my child is in good general health and I give approval for my child to participate in any and all NFL Georgia Flag Football league (NFLGFFL), regional, national, conference, association, team, squad activities, including transportation to and from the activities. I give my approval for, and assume any and all risk of my child's use of various playing surfaces and conditions, including, but not limited to, dry and wet natural and artificial grass, hard dirt, and or mud, and I hereby acknowledge and understand that said surfaces may be regular or very irregular.

**2. INTENT TO INFORM:** I acknowledge that I am fully aware of the potential dangers of participation in any sport and I fully understand that the participation of flag football and any sport may result in Paralysis, brain or other serious injury, permanent disability and or death. Further, I fully acknowledge and understand that protective equipment does not prevent all participant injuries, and therefore I waive release, absolve, indemnify, and agree to hold harmless the coaches, local, league, and regional NFL Flag Football and any and all organizations, sponsors, supervisors, participants, and persons transporting the above named participant to and from activities, from any claim arising out of any injury to my/ our child whether the result of negligence or for any other cause.

**3. EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION:** I grant permission for emergency medical care/dental treatment or first aid to be administered to my child for any illness/injury/accident resulting from participation in any and all NFL GFFL activities.

**4. EQUIPMENT RESPONSIBILITY:** I agree to assume full responsibility for any and all equipment/ uniforms loaned to my child and I agree to promptly return, upon request, the uniform and other equipment in good condition except for normal wear and tear. If I fail to comply, I will be responsible for the cost of such equipment.

**5. INSURANCE DISCLOSURE:** I am aware that NFLGFFL carries group accident medical insurance which is secondary or excess to my insurance which is considered primary insurance. Further, I agree to notify, in writing, my head coach and the NFLGFFL of any medical claim from participation in NFLGFFL as soon as reasonably possible. I understand that the registration fee is not premium for insurance and that deductibles may apply.

**6. SCHOLASTIC FITNESS:** I confirm that my child is scholastically fit or that I have completed the scholastic eligibility form or the home school eligibility form and will adhere to all rules and regulations therein. Further, I authorize my child's school to release grades, report cards, and all other scholastic information to a NFLGFFL board member in order to comply with scholastic fitness requirements.

**7. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:** I confirm that I have been advised by the NFLGFFL of my rights, if any, to a refund in accordance with the local organization policies, and I have also been advised of any fundraising obligations, for the entire season and agree to fully comply with those obligations.

**8. COMMUNICATIONS, PROMOTIONS, AND CONSENT:** As a condition of my child's participation, I consent to receive communications by email and mail from NFLGFFL and its partners. I understand that NFLGFFL will not sell its contact list. Communication may contain program information, special offers that may be "Opted out" by instruction in the email or by written request to the NFLGFFL. Further, I hereby grant NFLGFFL the right and permission to make, reproduce, broadcast, or otherwise use participant's name and likeness including photographs, films, videos, recordings, or other depictions or images in any form or media throughout the universe in perpetuity for promotion materials, advertising, editorial, trade, or other purpose. To the extent that any benefit or may accrue therefrom, I forever waive any interest in or claim to such benefits and acknowledge that NFLGFFL is under no obligation to exercise any rights granted herein.

**9. ADHERENCE TO NFLGFFL RULES AND PROCEDURES:** I understand and acknowledge that as a parent/ guardian of a NFLGFFL participant it is my responsibility to comply with all rules and regulations, to include but not limited to the code of conduct and guiding principles, of NFLGFFL or any of its member organizations and understand that a non-compliance may be cause for discipline and/ or dismissal of the participant, myself, and /or other personal affiliated with the undersigned and the participant. I further understand that the participant must meet NFLGFFL age requirements on their official certification date as established by NFLGFFL without exception and that the decision is final. I agree to furnish an authentic certified copy of a birth certificate of the participant to NFLGFFL officials and understand that valid proof of age, a current calendar year's signed medical release form, Code of Conduct and Guiding Principles, and this form must be presented by date of certification in order to participate in NFLGFFL activities. I/ We hereby hold NFLGFFL harmless or any financial loss as the result of any disciplinary action.

**10. DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY SEVERABILITY:** I understand and acknowledge that all disputes with NFLGFFL and all affiliated parties will be subject to binding arbitration in Evans, Georgia in accordance with Georgia law. I hereby agree that this binding arbitration shall be in lieu of any litigation. I also understand and agree that if I contest any decision or ruling of NFLGFFL and seek other recourse that I will reimburse NFLGFFL for all legal fees

and expenses it reasonably incurs. If any portion of this form shall be deemed unenforceable, the remainder shall remain in full force and effect.

**RULES AND REGULATIONS:** In consideration of participation in NFLGFFL activities and by my signature below, I confirm I have read, fully understand, and voluntarily agree to be bound by all of the above and that all information provided by me is true and accurate.