

## Upward Flag Football is BACK!

For quite awhile, we wondered whether we would be able to say that this fall, but we are finally in a position to start registration for our 2020 season. Thanks to all of you who have been patient as we worked through an agonizingly slow process.

As you can imagine, there will be a number of significant changes for us this season. Some of the details are still to be worked out, but what follows are the most important elements of the plan for your family.

We need to be clear with you up front: **If you are unable or unwilling to abide by the rules we are laying out here, then we have to respectfully ask that you wait to register your child for another season.**

We are fortunate to once again be playing at Dock Mennonite Academy's turf field, but you need to know that the school has already "disinvited" one rental group from using their facilities because their parents refused to follow the rules. We do not want your family or our league to forfeit the opportunity to play flag football this year. Please consider whether you are willing and able to follow the plan laid out below **BEFORE** you register.

### Practice and Game Schedule

We plan to play a minimum of six games, and are still negotiating for a 7<sup>th</sup>. **The first game is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 10**, and we will play every Saturday until at least November 14.

Our practice days have not yet been confirmed, but it looks like most of them will either be Monday or Thursday. We will once again have three practice times, at 6:00, 7:00 and 8:00 p.m. We will post more detailed practice information as soon as it can be confirmed. Also, we will schedule as many practices as we can (as many as four) prior to the first game, but this has not yet been confirmed either. After the first game, we will practice once a week for one hour.

**NOTE:** The registration system lists an Evaluation on September 28, but this is incorrect. **We will NOT have in-person evaluations this year.** You will be asked for a uniform size at registration, and to self-evaluate your child. There is a uniform sizing guide on the website to assist you; we ask that you be candid when rating your player's ability.

### Number of players and spectators

We will guard the safety of our players, coaches, families, and fans by committing to these steps:

1. **Limit the total number of players in the league to 320** (40 teams of 8 players each in Divisions 2 and 3). Scroll down for notes about Division 1 (K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade) and Cheerleading.
2. **Play 5v5 for all games** (rather than 6v6)
3. Increase distancing on the field, especially on the sidelines.
4. **Adding at least 30 minutes in between games** to allow for safer and more spaced transitions between games, both coming on and off the field, and in the parking lot

5. All players and coaches will enter the field at one access point (gate), and exit the field at a different access point.
6. **We will limit spectators to a maximum of 250 at any one time.** Adding more time between games should help us stay under this number, but **we are taking the additional step to limit spectators to immediate family only.**
7. **Spectators will NOT be permitted on the field for the 2020 season.**

### **Wearing of Masks**

We have primarily depended on guidance from the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association regarding the wearing of masks for athletic activities. Therefore:

1. Coaches, athletes and spectators **must** wear face coverings unless they can consistently maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet.
2. Athletes are **not** required to wear face coverings while actively engaged in workouts and competition that prevent the wearing of face coverings, but **must** wear face coverings when on the sidelines and any other time in which 6 feet of social distancing is not possible.

Upward will apply this ruling in the following ways:

- a. **Coaches will be required to wear a mask any time a distance of at least 6 feet cannot be consistently maintained, such as team huddles or post-game star distribution.** This will apply to practices **and** games. [Note: With 30 minutes between games, star distribution should be able to happen on the field, where social distancing will be easier to maintain.)
- b. **Players will be required to wear a mask when they are not actively involved in the game** (i.e., before and after practices and games, and when they are on the sidelines).

### **Symptoms and protocol**

Please read the full version of Upward's Health and Safety Plan for the Fall 2020 season at our website, [upwardnorthpenn.org](http://upwardnorthpenn.org).

**Players, coaches, parents, volunteers and any other participant who has had one or more of these symptoms in the 24 hours prior to a practice, game, or other Upward event MUST STAY HOME.** In addition, if you have been in contact with a family member or other person who exhibits these symptoms in the 24 hours prior to an Upward event, **YOU MUST STAY HOME.**

Any player, coach, volunteer, or other participant in an Upward activity who shows these symptoms, including a temperature of 100.4 or above, **MUST BE SENT HOME**, and transportation must be provided for them. On-site temperature checks will be available.

If a parent or caregiver is not present at the practice or game, a predetermined staff member or the League Director will escort the participant to a designated isolation room or area away from others and have them wear a mask or face covering.

In the event there is a positive health screen (i.e., a coach, player or spectator has a temperature greater than or equal to 100.4, or exhibits other symptoms on the list above), we will ask you to go home immediately and contact your primary care physician.

### **Division 1 (K to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade) and Cheerleading**

Because we are capping the number of players this year, we made the difficult decision to delay our Division 1 league to Spring 2021, and to NOT offer cheer this year. We are truly sorry for this inconvenience, and we hope you will consider playing with us in the Spring and cheering with us next fall.

### **Carpool Links**

We are condensing our registration period from four months to less than two weeks. Because of the speed with which we will need to build teams and get the season started, we will **NOT** offer carpool links this season. We regret any inconvenience this may cause.

### **Snack Stand**

We will **NOT** be permitted to operate a concession stand on game days this fall, at least to start the season. However, we do plan to make several fundraiser meal options available, such as Wawa hoagie coupons and others. We will have details available soon about these meal options, and we hope you will consider supporting the league in this way.

Thank you for reviewing this information and adhering to these modifications for our 2020 season. **We need your cooperation and support to help make this season happen!**