



Prep Flag Football

The state-by-state record of sanctioning

Girls Flag Football

The State Reference

Which states have sanctioned the sport, what each association required, and where the differences actually are.

EDITION

15 September 2026

WHAT IT COVERS

All 50 states and the District of Columbia. 27 of 51 entries checked against the association's own materials.

WHO IT IS FOR

Athletic directors, coaches, parents and reporters who need the institutional position rather than the scores.

How to read this

24 states and the District of Columbia have sanctioned girls' flag football as a varsity high school sport, by our count.

Other published counts disagree. The NFHS membership map put the figure at 20 on 20 August 2026. Press coverage that month said 24. The Ohio association said 23 in June. These are not errors so much as different questions being answered.

What we mean by sanctioned

A state is sanctioned here when its association has formally adopted girls' flag football as an interscholastic sport, normally reflected in its constitution, bylaws or handbook — whether or not a season has been played yet. Kentucky sanctioned in May 2026 and will not play until spring 2028. It still counts.

Championship structure is recorded separately, because it does not follow from sanctioning. California sanctioned in 2023 and the sport sits in the CIF bylaws, but CIF holds no state championship — its sections run their own playoffs.

What checked means

An entry marked checked means a person opened that association's own materials and confirmed it, on the date shown. Entries without a date have not been checked yet. That is not a claim that nothing is happening in those states — only that we have not verified them.

Every checked entry on the website links to the document behind it.

What this does not cover

Scores, schedules, rosters and rankings. Those are covered well elsewhere. This is a record of institutional decisions.

Every state and the District of Columbia

Sorted alphabetically. Shaded rows are sanctioned. A blue edge and a blue date mean the entry was checked against the association's own materials on that date.

State	Assoc.	Status	Season	Rules	Schools	Checked
Alabama	AHSAA	Sanctioned	—	—	—	2026-09-15
Alaska	ASAA	Sanctioned	Fall	—	—	2026-09-15
Arizona	AIA	Sanctioned	—	—	—	2026-09-15
Arkansas	AAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
California	CIF	Sanctioned	Fall	NFHS	—	2026-09-15
Colorado	CHSAA	Sanctioned	Fall	NFHS +adopt.	74	2026-09-15
Connecticut	CIAC	Sanctioned	Spring	NFHS +adopt.	—	—
Delaware	DIAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
District of Columbia	DCSAA	Sanctioned	Spring	NFHS	—	2026-09-15
Florida	FHSAA	Sanctioned	Spring	—	—	2026-09-15
Georgia	GHSAA	Sanctioned	Late fall	GHSAA book	—	2026-09-15
Hawaii	HHSAA	Sanctioned	Spring	NFHS +adopt.	—	2026-09-15
Idaho	IHSAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Illinois	IHSA	Sanctioned	Fall	NFHS	234	2026-09-15
Indiana	IHSAA	Pilot	Fall	—	—	2026-09-15
Iowa	IGHSAU	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Kansas	KSHSAA	Sanctioned	Fall	NFHS	—	2026-09-15
Kentucky	KHSAA	Sanctioned	Spring, from 2027-28	—	—	2026-09-15
Louisiana	LHSAA	Sanctioned	—	—	—	—
Maine	MPA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Maryland	MPSSAA	Sanctioned	Fall	—	132	2026-09-15
Massachusetts	MIAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Michigan	MHSAA	Not sanctioned	—	—	—	2026-09-15
Minnesota	MSHSL	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Mississippi	MHSAA	Sanctioned	Spring	NFHS +adopt.	—	2026-09-15
Missouri	MSHSAA	Pilot	—	—	—	—
Montana	MHSA	Pilot	Fall	—	—	2026-09-15
Nebraska	NSAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Nevada	NIAA	Sanctioned	Winter	—	—	2026-09-15
New Hampshire	NHIAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
New Jersey	NJSIAA	Sanctioned	Spring	NFHS +adopt.	—	2026-09-15
New Mexico	NMAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
New York	NYSPPHSAA	Sanctioned	Spring	—	—	2026-09-15
North Carolina	NCHSAA	Sanctioned	Fall	NFHS	—	2026-09-15
North Dakota	NDHSAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Ohio	OHSAA	Sanctioned	Spring	—	—	2026-09-15
Oklahoma	OSSAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Oregon	OSAA	Pilot	Spring	—	—	2026-09-15
Pennsylvania	PIAA	Sanctioned	Spring	NFHS	—	2026-09-15
Rhode Island	RIIL	Sanctioned	Spring	—	—	—
South Carolina	SCHSL	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
South Dakota	SDHSAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Tennessee	TSSAA	Sanctioned	Spring	NFHS +adopt.	155	2026-09-15
Texas	UIL	Not sanctioned	—	—	—	2026-09-15
Utah	UHSAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Vermont	VPA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Virginia	VHSL	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Washington	WIAA	Sanctioned	Fall, winter or spring	NFHS +adopt.	—	2026-09-15
West Virginia	WVSSAC	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Wisconsin	WIAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—
Wyoming	WHSAA	Unconfirmed	—	—	—	—

What each association required

There is no shared standard. Six different mechanisms appear among the states we have checked, which is the main reason national counts disagree.

A share of member schools

North Carolina requires two years of data showing at least 25 per cent of member schools participating. Maryland requires 40 per cent for championship consideration, and had reached 66 per cent by 2026.

A fixed number of teams

Pennsylvania required at least 100 participating teams across the Commonwealth before the PIAA would sanction.

A petition from member schools

Rhode Island requires schools to petition under Article 15 of the RIL rules. Sixteen did, and the committee approved unanimously in August 2026 — having denied the same request 5-11-1 seven months earlier, then formed a sub-committee to write standards. A denial is often the step before a standard gets written.

Legislation and a membership ballot

New Jersey ran a two-year pilot from December 2023, extended it a year, put legislation to an advisory committee, and then to the membership, which voted 311-18 in May 2026.

A periodic survey

Kentucky added the sport off a Triennial Survey of member schools' offerings. Where an association surveys on a cycle, the timing of the next survey matters as much as the level of interest.

A board vote with no published threshold

Ohio and Kansas sanctioned on board votes. Where there is no published number, the practical requirement is demonstrated demand plus a sponsor inside the association willing to bring the motion. In Kansas that sponsor was a league.

An extra layer of government

Maryland also required sign-off from the State Superintendent of Schools. The District of Columbia is governed by DCSAA, a District government body.

The sport is not the same everywhere

Sanctioning settles whether a state recognises the sport. It settles very little about what the sport is.

One format, more than one rulebook

The NFHS rules book is written for seven on seven and leaves several choices, including field size, to each state. Georgia uses its own rules book: also seven a side on a 40 by 80 yard field, but with four ten-minute periods and a try worth one, two or three points from the 3, 10 or 15 yard line. The format is shared; the scoring options, equipment rules and calendar are not.

The national rulebook is behind

Pennsylvania's statewide rules interpreter reported in July 2026 that the NFHS Flag Football Rule Committee would not publish an officials manual or casebook for 2026-27, and that he would write one for his state instead. States are sanctioning faster than the national body is producing materials to officiate the sport.

Everyone amends the rules

The 2026-27 NFHS rules book carries state adoptions from twenty associations, according to TSSAA. Colorado, Tennessee, Washington, New Jersey and Hawaii all publish their own amendments. Pennsylvania allowed exceptions for its inaugural season, then withdrew them.

Equipment differs

Georgia mandates protective headgear from 2026, requiring a five-star Virginia Tech Helmet Lab rating and a manufacturer carrying at least \$5 million in product liability insurance. Pennsylvania has ruled NFL Flag branded footballs illegal, along with jerseys carrying NFL team logos.

The season differs

Winter: Nevada. Spring: Florida, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Kentucky, Tennessee, California, Hawaii, Mississippi. Fall: North Carolina, Kansas, Maryland, Illinois, Georgia, Colorado, Alaska. Washington plays all three — schools choose among a main season and two alternates.

Classifications differ

Illinois runs a single series with no classifications at all. Colorado runs two, Tennessee two across sixteen regions, Maryland three, Florida four, Georgia five divisions on an area basis.

Where it leads after high school

More than 102,000 girls played high school flag football in 2025-26, up from 15,716 four years earlier. The college picture changed twice in 2026.

NAIA — a championship sport now

Women's flag football is the NAIA's 30th championship sport, raised from invitational status for 2026-27. Around 35 programmes competed in 2025-26. The first invitational was held in May 2026 at IMG Academy; Warner (Fla.) beat Keiser (Fla.) 13-6.

NCAA — a vote in January 2027

Flag football entered the NCAA Emerging Sports for Women programme in January 2026. A sport must reach 40 schools sponsoring at varsity level to be considered for championship status. In May 2026 a committee recommended all three divisions create a National Collegiate Flag Football Championship.

All three divisions vote in January 2027, and all three must approve. On that timeline the first NCAA championship would be spring 2028 — months before flag football's Olympic debut in Los Angeles.

NJCAA — invitational play

The NJCAA held a Flag Football Invitational in 2026 at the College of DuPage. We have not yet confirmed its status against NJCAA's own materials.

What we will not tell you yet

Which colleges have programmes, and which offer athletic aid. Roughly 400 programmes are reported to exist across all levels including club, but a list assembled from recruiting sites would be stale and unsourced. We are building it from governing body and athletics department records instead.

Using and checking this

Where the data comes from

State association constitutions, bylaws, handbooks, rules books, board minutes, season bulletins and official announcements. Where an entry rests on reporting rather than an association document, it is marked unchecked.

The underlying data is free

The whole dataset is published as a CSV with open access headers:

prepflagfootball.com/data/states.csv

Free to use, including commercially. Attribution and a link appreciated, so that anyone downstream can trace a figure back to the association document behind it.

Suggested citation

Prep Flag Football, Girls' High School Flag Football Sanctioning by State, prepflagfootball.com, accessed [date].

Tell us when we are wrong

If your association is recorded incorrectly here, we would rather hear it from you than from a reader. Corrections are logged publicly with the date and what changed.

corrections@prepflagfootball.com

This edition is a snapshot. Association votes cluster around board meetings, which run heaviest in spring and autumn, so a printed copy goes out of date. The website carries the current position and a verification date on every entry.