

Edmonton Flag Football Association Official Rules

5v5 format

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Reference:

LD – Loss of Down
PF – Point of Infraction
LS – Line of Scrimmage
EP – End of Play
L+ Number – Loss of Yardage equal to number
DR – Down Repeated
DB – Dead Ball
AFD – Automatic First Down

GENERAL

1. General

- 1.1. The Referee is responsible for the adherence to the rules and regulations by both teams and all officials. The Referee will make the final decision on any on-field situation not covered by the rules and regulations. All officials should strive to maintain a safe environment for the players.
- 1.2. At any time during the game, if a referee feels that continuing to play the game at hand may jeopardize a player's safety, the official may remove that player from the game immediately. An explanation should be included on the game sheet as to the reason why the player was removed. A referee's decision in this matter is final and cannot be challenged by the player affected or his/her teammates. Teams/players wishing to protest an official's decision must do so in writing to the League Executive within 48 hours of the conclusion of the game.
- 1.3. A participant (player or official), suffering from a wound or laceration, where oozing or bleeding occurs, must leave the playing field until appropriate medical treatment is administered. The participant may return to the playing field only after the bleeding has stopped and the affected area or the open wound has been completely and securely covered. The referee must approve the participant's return to the playing field.
- 1.4. If a player or official has any part of his/her uniform or equipment saturated with blood, the uniform must be cleansed or changed immediately. "Saturated" being defined as the amount of blood being sufficient to soak through the garment and onto the skin or such that the blood would easily be transferred to another participant.

2. Officials

- 2.1. Flag Officials are identified as Offensive or Defensive officials.
- 2.2. The Head Official can be any official on the field and they have overall responsibility for managing and decisions in the game.

FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

3. The Field

- 3.1. The 5v5 Field of Play is 70 x 30 including end zones.
- 3.2. Field Dimensions:
 - a) Length: 50-yards (Goal line to goal line) Width: 30-yards
 - b) End Zones: Maximum 10-yards deep

- c) No Run Zones: within 5-yards of each goal line.
- 3.3. Bench Areas are to be located on the same side of the field and shall extend from 5-yards short of the end zone to 5-yards short of the center line. They shall be a minimum of 2-yards from the edge of the field and shall be a maximum of 10-yards in depth.
- 3.4. Team members must stay in the team bench area or be penalized for objectionable conduct or Leaving Team Area unless they are given permission by an official to leave the area or are entering the field during the legal substitution as a player. Only team members are allowed to stay in the team bench area; anyone else in the area must leave immediately or the team will be penalized for objectionable conduct.
- 3.5. Any spectator that interferes with the normal course of the game will be ejected from the field area. It is the local organization's responsibility to ensure that the ejected spectator complies with the decision, to ensure the safety of all players, staff members and officials.
- 3.6. If a spectator interferes during the play, the official will evaluate the impact of the interference and act accordingly. For example, if it is obvious that a touchdown would have been scored without the spectator's interference, the official will allow the touchdown. If the impact is not clear, the down will be replayed at the initial line of scrimmage or distance gained at point of interference at officials discretion.

4. The Ball

- 4.1. Teams may use their own ball of an appropriate size at the referee's discretion, or mutually agree to use 1 game ball provided by the team or league. The ball may not create an advantage for either team.
- 4.2. It is recommended that appropriately sized footballs are used for both male and female players to accommodate the players abilities (see examples below).
 - a) For senior men's and women's leagues / recreational play they will typically use whatever ball they are comfortable with unless otherwise specified by the league.
 - b) For regional, national & international tournaments or championships the ball(s) to be used will be specified in the Technical Package for that event.
- 4.3. No team or player is permitted to make alterations to the natural surface of the ball being used. Teams doing so will be penalized for objectionable conduct. The Referee must remove any ball that has been altered.

5. Uniforms

- 5.1. Official jerseys must be worn during play, flag belt must be on the outside of the shirt, on either side, and must be visible. Longer jerseys must be under the flag belt and should not interfere with flagging. Each team must provide the color of their jersey prior to the season, so there is sufficient contrast between team jerseys.
- 5.2. Longer jerseys must be under the flag belt so as not interfere with flagging. The flag belt must be on the outside of the jersey, on either side of the player's body, and must be visible.
- 5.3. All players require uniquely numbered jerseys and ensure the numbers are visible. Changing jersey numbers during a game is deceitful to the opponents and prohibited. Uniforms cannot contain any equipment that would cause injury to any player, such as flexible padding.
- 5.4. Players are not permitted to use adhesive material, paint, grease or any other slippery or sticky substance applied to equipment or on a player's person, clothing or attachments that affects the ball or an opponent.

- 5.5. Players must not wear skirts. Players must not wear shorts or pants that have pockets, belt, press studs or clips of any kind. Shorts or pants must be of a high-contrast color, different from the flags, to avoid camouflaging flags. Players cannot tape or secure their shorts or pants to meet this regulation. Short pockets may be sewn shut so that an opponent's finger does not get caught and passes inspection of the game official. Shorts cannot have zippered pockets.

6. Player Equipment

- 6.1. Players may choose to wear a protective mouthpiece at their own discretion.
- 6.2. A player is permitted to wear athletic support/protector, completely covered by clothing. Tape or bandages are permitted if they are non-abrasive or are of a non-hardening material in a wet or dry state.
- 6.3. Jewelry must be removed prior to the start of the game. If it is not possible to remove the jewelry it must be covered up completely, padded and secured. Medical bracelets may be worn but they must be fastened securely so as not to cause injury.
- 6.4. Soft headgear, including religious headdresses that are securely fastened and do not include metal or hard plastic that could be harmful to participants, is permitted.
- 6.5. Sunglasses are permitted.
- 6.6. Knee and elbow guards must be flexible and contain no hard material.
- 6.7. Players may not participate with a hard cast. Knee braces may be worn but must be completely covered by pants or by adhesive or tensor bandages such that no part of the brace is exposed, so a finger cannot be placed between any edge of the brace and the leg. Finger splints may be worn to protect an injury, but the finger splint must be appropriately padded. The officials will have the final decision on the acceptability of this type of equipment.
- 6.8. If a player or official has any part of their uniform or equipment saturated with blood, the uniform must be cleansed or changed immediately. "Saturated" being defined as the amount of blood being sufficient to soak through the garment and into the skin or such that blood would easily be transferred to another participant.
- 6.9. Players may wear cleats but must be rubber cleats. There is no minimum or maximum number of cleats to be worn, but cleats must be a part of the natural design of the shoes and in good condition. Spikes or similar sharp pointed type shoes such as track spikes, metal baseball cleats, or golf shoes are not permitted.
- 6.10. No items can be placed on the ground in the field of play, including play cards, play books, and play sheets. Anything tucked into the flag belt, such as a towel, will be considered a flag and may be pulled like a flag by the opposing team during the play.

7. Team Equipment

- 7.1. All players are to wear clipped belts, in which the belt is fastened around the waist with a quick release clip. Flags are typically 2 inches x 17 ¼ inches and are attached with suction sockets. All players should be wearing the same size flags. Clipped belts are available in different sizes. Note: Inspections of players' attire and equipment will be inspected by the official at the beginning of each game. The referee has the final decision and will decide on any on-field ruling not covered by this rule book.

TEAM MEMBERS

8. Players

- 8.1. Teams need a minimum of 4 players to be able to compete and a maximum of 5 players on the field at any given time. At the scheduled game time, any team

without the minimum of 4 players will be penalized for delaying the start of the game. The team will forfeit the game by a score of 6-0 if they do not have a minimum of 4 players on the field within 15 minutes of the scheduled start of the game. A team which has more than 5 players on the field at any time, while the ball is live shall be penalized for illegal substitution.

- 8.2. The official roster size will depend on the guidelines set forth by leagues, national, and international tournaments.
- 8.3. Each team is permitted a maximum of 3 team captains per game.
- 8.4. A rostered player is eligible to play if he/she has arrived prior to the end of the game.

9. Substitutions

- 9.1. Substitute players may enter the field only when the ball is dead. Offensive player substitutions are allowed up to the point when the Center sets up for the snap of the ball and defensive player substitutions are allowed up to the snap of the ball. The penalty for violating these rules is illegal substitution.

10. Captains

- 10.1. Team members identified to the official before the game as spokespersons of a team shall be considered team captains. Each team is permitted a maximum of 2 team captains on the field of play. In case of injury or ejection, an alternate captain may be identified to the officials.

TIMING / OVERTIME / TIME OUTS

11. Length of Game

- 11.1. The official game is 50 minutes (2x25 minute halves).

12. Game Time Responsibility

- 12.1. If there is still time on the game clock when the previous play expires, the game will allow for another play barring a penalty or a score.
- 12.2. One of the officials on the field shall be the official time keeper and shall govern the timing regulations in determining the amount of playing time that has elapsed.
- 12.3. Only the officials on the field can stop and start the clock. Whenever the officials stop the clock, the clock must be stopped first, then the appropriate signals given.

13. The Play Clock

- 13.1. The play clock starts once the Referee blows their whistle to indicate the teams and officials are "Ready for Play".
- 13.2. The play clock is 25 seconds long. Failure by the offense to snap the ball after 25-seconds will result in a Delay of Game penalty.
- 13.3. Whenever the game clock is stopped, it will start again on the next snap. The exception to this is following an injury. After an injury, the clock will start with the "Ready for Play" whistle from the Referee or on the snap of the ball depending on the state of the clock prior to the injury.
- 13.4. Teams will be notified when there are 2 minutes left before the end of each half in the game. If a play is about to start or is in progress when the 2 minutes should be called, the play will be allowed to continue and teams will be notified of the time left as soon as the play is completed.
- 13.5. If there is still time on the game clock when the previous play expired, the game will allow for another play barring a penalty or a score.

14. Overtime

- 14.1. In the event of a tied playoff game, overtime will be played. The period between the end of the game and the start of the overtime shootout will be 2 minutes. A coin toss determines first possession of overtime. There will be no time outs granted during the overtime period.

- 14.2. Overtime will start with a coin toss. The visiting team will call the coin toss. The winner of the toss will choose to start on offense or defense first, or choose the end for the entire overtime period(s). The loser of the toss will choose from one of the remaining options.
- 14.3. The first extra period shall consist of 2 series with each team putting the ball in play by a snap at the midfield line for one series of downs (no first down at middle). Should the defense score during the first series, other than on the try, then the extra period is over.
- 14.4. Each team retains the ball during its series until it scores (including try downs for 1 or 2 points) or exhausts its series of downs. The ball remains alive after a change of team possession until it is declared dead.
- 14.5. If after the first period (with 2 series including tries) the score is still tied, the second and following periods consist of series with each team playing a 1-point try from the 5-yard line. The overtime ends when the score after a period is no longer a tie or the defense scores during the first series of a period.
- 14.6. The team scoring the greater number of points during overtime shall be declared the winner.

15. Time Outs

- 15.1. Each team has 2 60-second time outs per half. These cannot be carried over to the second half or overtime.
- 15.2. Each team captain will be told when 10 seconds remains in the time out. Teams may shorten the 60 second time period if they both agree.
- 15.3. Timeouts can be called by any game official and any player or coach on the field or in the bench area when the ball is dead.
- 15.4. Clock will stop for the length of the time out until the ball is snapped.

16. Team Time Outs

- 16.1. Stopped time / interrupted play used for an equipment check are not to be charged as a team time out; abuse of this privilege will be penalized for objectionable conduct against the team captain who requested the time out.
- 16.2. Stopped time / interrupted play used for a referee discussion is not to be charged as a team time out. The clock shall be stopped, and will be restarted at the snap of the ball.
- 16.3. The two-minute warning does not constitute a stoppage of time.

17. Injury Time Outs

- 17.1. Any official may call an official's time out to allow a team to attend to an injured player. If the time out is called by the officials the injured player must be removed from the field for at least 1 play, unless the injured player's team calls a time out. The officials have full authority to delay the game until the injured player is safely removed from the field.
- 17.2. Unnecessary delay in removing the player shall be penalized for delay of game.

GAME PROCEDURES

18. Pre-game Conference

- 18.1. The Head Official is responsible for the adherence to the rules and regulations by both teams and all officials. The Head Official will make the final decision on any on-field situation not covered by the rules and regulations in this book.
- 18.2. Approximately 3 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the game, and immediately following the rest period, at least 1 captain from each team will meet with the Head Official at center field to review the field conditions and field markings.
- 18.3. The home team will elect to start with the ball, choose a side, or defer their choice to the beginning of the 2nd half.

19. General Play

- 19.1. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has 4 plays to cross midfield. When a team crosses midfield, it has 4 plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
- 19.2. To begin a play, the ball must be snapped by the offensive Center, from the point of scrimmage to the quarterback, which is the first person on the offense to obtain possession of the ball behind the line of scrimmage. There is no minimal distance required by the quarterback who can be either up close to the center or in shot-gun formation.
- 19.3. There is a 1-yard neutral zone extending 1-yard forward from the Line of Scrimmage that the defensive players cannot line up in or enter before the snap of the ball.
- 19.4. An automatic first down by penalty will overrule the other requirements regarding 4 plays to make either a first down or score.
- 19.5. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- 19.6. All possession changes, except interceptions during scrimmage play, start on the offensive 5-yard line. Interceptions that give the defense possession between their own 1- and 5-yard line will be brought to the 5-yard line for the start of their next possession.
- 19.7. When the offense gains a first down by crossing midfield, another first down will not be awarded except through a penalty.
- 19.8. "No Run Zones" are located 5-yards in front of each end zone. When the offense starts a play within this zone, the play must result in a legal forward pass.
- 19.9. The quarterback, defined as the player that gains possession of the ball from the center, cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage, unless the ball has been handed off, tossed, pitched or lateraled to another player and then returned.
- 19.10. Once the ball carrier has crossed the line of scrimmage the ball cannot be tossed, pitched or passed forward in any way.
- 19.11. Forward passes and handoffs are allowed behind the line of scrimmage within the quarterback's allotted 7 seconds to throw the ball after the ball has been snapped. If a pass is not thrown within the 7 seconds, a delay of pass penalty shall be called. See The Passing Game.
- 19.12. The offense may elect to throw a legal forward pass after a handoff has taken place. See Legal Forward Pass.
- 19.13. Legal Forward Pass – The first forward pass thrown that originated from behind the line of scrimmage. See Pass definitions.
- 19.14. Prior to a forward pass, the offense may use multiple handoffs or lateral passes behind the line of scrimmage.
- 19.15. If an offensive penalty in the "No Run Zone" occurs that takes the team outside the "No Run Zone", then the team still cannot run.

20. Touch Downs

- 20.1. The ball is considered to be in the end zone when any part of the ball touches the plane of the goal line.
- 20.2. When the ball is in the end zone, it is considered to be still in the end zone until the entirety of the ball has passed the plane of the goal line.
- 20.3. A touchdown is scored when a player has legal possession of the ball in the opponent's end zone.

- 20.4. The team scoring the most points during regulation time is declared the winner. If the teams are tied after regulation time and a winner must be declared, the team scoring the most points during overtime is declared the winner.

LIVE BALL / DEAD BALL

21. Live Ball / Dead Ball

- 21.1. Live Ball - The ball is live after the officials have signaled play to begin, the ball has been set by the centre of the team in possession and the ball is lifted from the ground. The ball will remain live until the ball is ruled dead according to the dead-ball rules. A team cannot advance the ball or score unless the ball is live.
- 21.2. Dead Ball - The ball is dead when any of the dead-ball conditions are met. A live ball becomes dead when an official's whistle is blown. The team in possession can advance no further when the ball is dead.
- 21.3. Substitutions may be made only when ball is dead. If a ball carrier's flag falls off, the play will be whistled dead and the ball will be spotted where the flag fell off. Players are eligible to catch a pass or receive the ball by hand off, toss or pitch if their flag has fallen off but unable to advance. The play will be called dead where the player (with no flag) caught the ball.
- 21.4. There are no fumbles, if a ball carrier loses possession / fumbles the ball and it touches the ground the play is whistled dead immediately and the ball is spotted where the player lost possession. If the QB doesn't gain possession of the ball during the snap, the ball will be placed at the line of scrimmage and result in a loss of down or turn over on downs. If an offensive player behind the line of scrimmage does not gain possession of a handoff, toss, pitch or lateral the ball will be placed at the last point of possession and result in a loss of down, turn over on downs, or safety if applicable.
- 21.5. A play is ruled "dead" when:
- a) An official blows their whistle.
 - b) Ball carrier's flag is pulled or ball carrier otherwise becomes illegal.
 - c) Ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - d) Ball carrier flag guards dives or jumps
 - e) Points are scored.
 - f) When any part of the ball carrier's body, other than his hand or foot touches the ground.
 - g) When the ball touches an official (it shall be considered as having touched the ground).
 - h) When the flag of the player with possession of the ball falls off.
 - i) When a delay of Game, Delay of Pass, Diving, Flag Guarding / Jumping, Illegal Running, Illegal Forward Pass, or Interference penalty occurs.
- 21.6. When the whistle is blown inadvertently by an official, the play shall stand unless the Head Official decides that the whistle affected the result of the play. They will decide which team is adversely affected by the whistle; that team may choose to let the play stand when the whistle blew or repeat the last play.
- 21.7. If the Head Official cannot decide which team is adversely affected, the play shall be repeated.
- 21.8. Any fouls which occur during the play and are allowed to stand will be administered as they would be in a regular play situation. Dead-ball fouls will be administered in all cases.

IN AND OUT OF BOUNDS

22. In Bounds

- 22.1. The ball carrier is considered in bounds until they either touch or go out of the boundary lines.

- 22.2. Any player who has not touched the boundary lines and has not touched the ground, a person or an object that is on or beyond the boundary lines, is considered to be still in bounds.

23. Out of Bounds

- 23.1. The ball is out of bounds when it touches the boundary lines or the ground beyond the boundary lines. The ball is out of bounds when it touches an object or a person that is out of bounds.
- 23.2. Any player or object that is touching the boundary lines or the ground beyond the boundary lines is out of bounds. An airborne object or object suspended over the playing field is considered out of bounds.

CONTROL AND POSSESSION OF THE BALL

24. Control of the Ball

- 24.1. A player is considered to have control of the ball when the player has the ball firmly held in 1 or both hands, arms or legs or holds the ball firmly in 1 or both hands, arms or legs or holds the ball firmly under the body without having the ball touch the ground. The grip on the ball must be firm enough to enable the player to stop the rotation of the ball and to exhibit influence over its direction.
- 24.2. A player who leaves the ground to make a catch or interception must have control of the ball when first returning to the ground with any part of the body touching the ground in bounds.

25. Possession of the Ball

- 25.1. A team must have possession of the ball to score a touchdown or to earn a first down. When a team obtains possession from the opponents, they will be awarded a first down where the ball becomes dead. After being awarded a first down, a team keeps possession for 4 downs, unless the opponents gain control of the ball, or either is awarded first down by penalty. During the 4 downs, the team in possession must gain the required distance for first down or score a touchdown, otherwise, they will give up possession.
- 25.2. A player is considered to have possession of the ball if that player has control of the ball. If control of the ball is lost, the player no longer is considered to have possession of the ball.
- 25.3. A team is considered to have possession of the ball when 1 of its players has possession of the ball or awarded possession by the rules. A team loses possession when the opponent intercepts a pass or gains control of a free ball.
- 25.4. Both offensive and defensive players are not allowed to slap or strip the ball from a ball carrier while it is in their hands or make contact with a receiver's hands while catching the ball.

THE HUDDLE

26. Huddle

- 26.1. The team on offense has 25 seconds to put the ball in play and teams will be notified verbally when there are 10 seconds left. The officials will give a reasonable period of time for both teams to regroup and will then whistle the 25 seconds period to start. If the ball is not put in play before the end of the 25 seconds, the offense will receive a penalty for a delay of game violation.

THE RUNNING GAME

27. Running

- 27.1. The center is the player who gives the ball to the quarterback via a snap. The center cannot take a direct hand off back from the quarterback (no center sneak play). Any violation of this play is an Illegal Run Play penalty.
- 27.2. The center must take a position facing the defense with the feet straddling either side of the bean bag marking the Line of Scrimmage. The ball must be snapped

off the ground in a reverse or lateral direction, in 1 rapid motion, while remaining in a bent over position. Any player who snaps the ball shall be considered as the center.

- 27.3. The line of scrimmage and point of scrimmage shall be determined by the officials according to the dead-ball rules and scrimmage regulations.
- 27.4. The quarterback is the first player who obtains possession of the ball directly from the Center.
- 27.5. A run play occurs when a player crosses the line of scrimmage with the ball without a forward pass being thrown.
- 27.6. The player who takes a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- 27.7. The defensive unit on the field cannot shout terms that would confuse the offense and draw them offside (objectionable conduct).
- 27.8. All defensive players are eligible to rush from anywhere on the field once the ball has been handed off, passed, pitched, lateraled or there is a fake handoff or lateral.
- 27.9. Spinning and dipping is allowed, but the ball carrier cannot dive forward or jump to avoid a defensive player or gain yardage (no diving).
- 27.10. It is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender.
- 27.11. The ball is spotted at the location of the ball when the ball carrier's flag has been pulled. The ball shall be placed so the long axis is parallel to the sidelines.
- 27.12. The ball cannot be spotted closer than the 1-yard line from either teams end zone.

RECEIVING

28. Receiving

- 28.1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off, tossed, pitched or lateraled).
- 28.2. All players must be behind their side of the Line of Scrimmage neutral zone at the snap of the ball. Violation of this occurs if they have stepped into the neutral zone placing 1 or more of their feet on the ground prior to the snap and is an offside penalty.
- 28.3. Any number of players can be in motion when the ball is snapped; only the center must be at the line of scrimmage. Players in motion towards the line of scrimmage will not be considered offside unless they have entered the 1-yard scrimmage neutral zone by placing 1 or more of their feet on the ground at the snap of the ball. If they return back behind their side of the zone before the ball is snapped, they will not be penalized.
- 28.4. A player who goes out of bounds shall not participate further in that play unless that player went out of bounds as a result of a slippery field, missed flag pull, or contact with an opponent.

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

29. Rushing

- 29.1. All players who rush the passer must be 7-yards from the line of scrimmage at any point after the ball has been snapped. Both the line of scrimmage and the rusher line will be marked with a bean bag. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage after the snap. The rusher must rush continuously, in a direct path towards the quarterback if they are in the pocket or are rolling out. Once the ball is handed off, tossed, pitched or lateraled or a fake handoff, toss, pitch or lateral occurs, the 7-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go across the line of scrimmage from anywhere on the field.

- 29.2. A rusher lined-up within 2-yards (on either side) of the 7 yard marker is entitled to a free direct path to the quarterback – the rusher may not be interfered with by any offensive player. If the rusher is lined up outside the 2-yards (on either side) of the 7 yard marker, or they switch the side that they are on once the center is ready to snap the ball, they are not entitled to a free path to the quarterback.
- 29.3. A rusher lined-up within the 2-yards of the rush line marker cannot line up directly over it, they must choose / position themselves on 1 side or the other and be a minimum of 12 inches away from it clearly indicating which side they are rushing from. The rusher will lose their free direct path to the quarterback if they switch the side they are rushing from after the center positions the ball for a snap. Rushers must also ensure that their entire body is behind the rush line marker, even if they are leaning forward.
- 29.4. Any type of accidental or deliberate contact with the quarterback's upper body or their arm including the ball in their hand by the rusher while they are attempting to throw the ball will result in an illegal contact penalty. This also includes any other offensive player who is attempting to throw the ball.

FLAGGING

30. Flagging

- 30.1. To prevent the ball carrier from advancing, an opponent must pull off 1 or 2 flags without preventing the ball carrier to move forward. The ball is declared dead at this point. Once the defender has removed a flag, they are to remain in place hold the flag up for the officials to confirm the play has stopped and return the flag to the ball carrier. If a defensive player does not immediately return the flag back to the ball carrier, the official will issue a warning to the captain of the team at fault. If the situation repeats itself, no matter which player is involved, the official will issue an objectionable conduct penalty.
- 30.2. Defensive players are not allowed to pull an opponent's flag prior to them gaining possession- or touching the ball with the intent of gaining possession. This is known as an Illegal Flag Pull penalty. If a flag is pulled early and:
 - a) The ball is caught, the penalty results in an automatic first down 5-yards from where the ball is caught.
 - b) The ball is not caught, the penalty results in an automatic first down 5-yards from the line of scrimmage.
- 30.3. The officials will whistle the play dead when they see that a defensive player has removed (flagged) 1 of the flags of the ball carrier. If a ball carrier does not have all his or her flags, the player is eligible to receive the ball, however, they cannot advance it. If a ball carrier's flag is moved out of position by a defender in an attempt to flag them the play will be allowed to continue. Players wearing belted flags must ensure that they are not too loose and cannot move around easily.
- 30.4. An eligible pass receiver who loses a flag at any time can still receive a forward pass, but the ball will be declared dead at the point of reception. Players winding flags on belts will be warned the first time, next time removed from the game.
- 30.5. A player who flags an opponent that does not cause a stoppage of play must release the flag immediately or else they will be penalized for illegal flag pull. But if the play is stopped on the flag pull, the player must hand the flag back to the player.

PASSING

31. Pass

- 31.1. A pass is when there is a transfer of the ball that has not touched the ground from one player to another player where the ball is not in contact with two players at the same time.

- 31.2. A forward pass is when the pass is aimed towards the opponent's end zone.
- 31.3. A lateral or backwards pass is when the pass is aimed in any direction other than towards the opponent's end zone.

THE PASSING GAME

32. Passing

- 32.1. The quarterback has 7 seconds to throw the ball after the ball has been snapped. If a pass is not thrown within the 7 seconds, a delay of pass penalty shall be called.
- 32.2. The offensive official will verbalize the 7-second count at 5 seconds for the quarterback so that they can hear / know that time is running out to pass the ball. If the quarterback's arm is in forward motion when the 7-seconds expires, then the play will be allowed to continue.
- 32.3. Once the ball is handed off, tossed, pitched or lateraled or a fake handoff, toss, pitch or lateral occurs, the 7 second rule is no longer in effect.
- 32.4. Only 1 forward pass thrown is allowed in a down.
- 32.5. Interceptions change the possession of the ball.
- 32.6. Shovel passes are allowed.
- 32.7. Interceptions can be returned by the defense.
- 32.8. On interceptions that occur and remain in the end zone, the ball becomes dead and turned over to the intercepting team at its 5-yard line.
- 32.9. If a ball is intercepted and the ball carrier runs into their own end zone where they are flagged, except in the case of an inadvertent whistle, the result would be a safety for the other team.

COMPLETE / INCOMPLETE PASSES

33. Complete Pass

- 33.1. A pass is completed when a receiver is in possession of the ball.
- 33.2. When an opponent causes the receiver to land out of bounds and, in the judgment of the officials, the receiver would have touched the ground in bounds without the opponent's action, the receiver will be considered to have landed in bounds. This also applies to first downs and touchdowns within the field of play.
- 33.3. When a receiver has control of the ball even for an instant, then loses control because of bodily contact caused by an opponent or the ground, the receiver will be awarded a complete pass.

34. Simultaneous Possession

- 34.1. A complete pass caught simultaneously by teammates shall be awarded to the teammate who first touched the pass. A completed pass caught simultaneously by players on opposite teams shall be awarded to the player whose team had possession before the pass was caught simultaneously.

35. Tipped Pass

- 35.1. Tipped passes are legal. If the pass is legal, the ball can be advanced when caught.
- 35.2. When a player catches a pass that is tipped by a teammate, play continues and they are allowed to advance the ball.

36. Bobbled Pass

- 36.1. If a receiver tips the ball and gets flagged before getting full possession, the ball is considered dead where the player was flagged.
- 36.2. When the ball carrier accidentally loses control of the ball, then catches it without the ball being touched by another player, the play continues. If the ball carrier was flagged by an opponent after losing control of the ball, the play is considered dead where the ball carrier was flagged.

- 36.3. When the ball carrier deliberately throws the ball into the air, then catches it to avoid being flagged, the ball is dead immediately.
- 37. Intercepted Pass**
- 37.1. Any pass that is incomplete by the team in possession but caught by the opponents is an intercepted pass.
- 38. Incomplete Pass**
- 38.1. Any thrown pass is incomplete and the ball is immediately dead when it touches the ground, the goal post or an official, or goes out of bounds before being caught.
- 39. Blocked or Deflected Forward Pass**
- 39.1. A forward pass that is blocked by a rusher is considered to be an incomplete forward pass when it hits the ground. A deflected pass is ruled a regular forward pass playable by both teams. The offense cannot throw a second forward pass; this will be ruled an Illegal Forward Pass.
- 39.2. On a forward pass thrown by an offensive player that is tipped / blocked by a defensive player and is caught by the same offensive player behind the Line of Scrimmage they can no longer attempt another forward pass and must run with the ball across the Line of Scrimmage.
- 40. Deliberate Grounding Pass**
- 40.1. There is no intentional grounding, however, if in the judgment of the officials, if there is an attempt by the passer to delay the game by their actions, then a penalty for delay of game may be called.
- 41. Forward Pass vs. Dropped Ball**
- 41.1. When the passer attempts a forward pass and loses control of the ball after starting the passing arm in a forward motion and following through with the intended pass motion, the ball is dead when it hits the ground and the play is considered to be an incomplete forward pass. If the forward motion of the throwing arm had not started when control of the ball was lost, the play is dead at that spot.
- PASS INTERFERENCE**
- 42. Pass Interference**
- 42.1. Pass interference occurs when a player takes away an opponent's positional advantage.
- 42.2. Pass interference can apply when the pass is in the air and the player who had positional advantage had a reasonable chance of getting to the arrival point for the ball.
- 42.3. Pass interference by the offense or the defense is illegal. The team that violates the pass interference regulations will be penalized as determined by the official.
- 43. Contact**
- 43.1. A player has committed bodily contact when that player makes contact with an opponent and moves the opponent off stride or away from the opponent's intended direction or position. Contact between opponents is legal provided that the contact results from a simultaneous and legitimate attempt to play the ball and occurs at the arrival point of the pass; this contact is legal only when each player is intent on playing the ball and each player is in an equally favorable position to play the ball.
- 43.2. When contact occurs without moving the opponent off stride or away from the opponent's intended direction or position, pass interference has not occurred; this is incidental contact.
- 44. Path to the Ball**

- 44.1. All players have an equal right to a direct path to the arrival point of the ball. However, a player in an unfavorable position cannot commit bodily contact with an opponent to reach the ball, even if the ball was eventually touched by that player.
- 44.2. A player who is in an equal or advantageous position to play the ball, compared to an opponent, is considered to have the right to the path of the ball. When that right is taken away by an opponent using bodily contact, pass interference has occurred.
- 44.3. A player, who is taking a path or a position on the field in order to catch a pass, or defend against a pass, has a right to that path or position unless an opponent has already taken it. A player who takes an opponent's established path or position using bodily contact is guilty of pass interference.
- 44.4. When 2 opponents cross paths and make contact, the player who had clearly declared the intended path first has the right to that path; the opponent is guilty of pass interference unless the contact was incidental. If the officials cannot determine who declared their path first, pass interference has not occurred.
- 44.5. When opponents get their feet tangled up while running their respective paths causing 1 player to lose balance, a pass interference penalty is not automatic. The relevant positions and intended paths of the players must be taken into account.
- 44.6. In all the above cases, the player who is in the advantageous position to play the ball must continue to display intent to reach the arrival point of the ball. Otherwise, any contact by the opponent in a sincere effort to reach the arrival point of the ball will not be considered pass interference. A deliberate attempt to block the opponent from reaching the arrival point of the ball is pass interference.
- 45. Pick Play**
 - 45.1. An offensive player cannot prevent a defensive player from pursuing another offensive player by impeding that defensive player's direct path to the teammate. The defensive player must be moving towards the second offensive player to be considered pursuing that player.
 - 45.2. If the first offensive player is playing the ball, that player cannot be considered as impeding the defensive player from pursuing the second offensive player.
 - 45.3. Violation of these regulations is pass interference.
- 46. Stationary Position**
 - 46.1. Any player who has maintained a stationary position since the ball was snapped shall not be penalized if run into by an opponent.
- 47. Playing the Ball**
 - 47.1. A player must be facing the ball as it arrives to be considered to be playing the ball. When the ball strikes a player who is not playing the ball and who is impeding an opponent's approach to the ball, this is pass interference; for the purposes of this regulation, the opponent must be moving towards the ball to be considered impeded.
- 48. Screening**
 - 48.1. As the ball arrives in the immediate vicinity of a receiver, a player who is not playing the ball cannot extend the arms or wave a hand in an attempt to distract a receiver, to block a receiver's vision or to touch the ball. Violation of this rule is pass interference; if the ball is touched or the receiver's direct line of vision to the ball is blocked; this is pass interference.
- 49. Non-catchable Pass**
 - 49.1. When an official considers a pass cannot be caught even with extraordinary effort, no pass interference penalty shall be assessed even when pass

interference occurs by either team. Therefore no penalty call either way. An official may still call illegal contact if they deem the act to be intentional/severe.

SCORING

50. Obtaining Points

- 50.1. Touchdown: 6 points.
- 50.2. Extra point: 1-point (Played from midpoint of 5-yard line only).
- 50.3. Extra point: 2-points (Played from midpoint of 10-yard line only).
- 50.4. Safety: 2-points.
- 50.5. Interception return on Extra Point Convert to the opponent's end zone: 2-points + Ball Possession.

51. Convert

- 51.1. A convert is scored when a player has legal possession of the ball in the opponent's end zone during a convert attempt.
- 51.2. When a penalty affects the normal point of scrimmage of a convert attempt, the awarding of 1 or 2-points will be based on where the original convert attempt was scrimmaged prior to any penalty application or repeated convert attempt.
- 51.3. If the team chooses the extra point convert from 5-yards, this is within the "No Run Zone".
- 51.4. After the interception, if there is a penalty against the original offense, the yardage will be applied to the intercepting teams next possession.
- 51.5. On a convert, if the defense commits a Pass Interference or Illegal Contact penalty on 2 consecutive plays, the offense will be awarded the points for the convert.

52. Safety Touch

- 52.1. A team scoring a safety touch is awarded 2-points.
- 52.2. A team will score a safety when their opponent is flagged, loses possession of the ball, or goes out of bounds while they are in the end zone.
- 52.3. A safety is not awarded when a player's momentum, while intercepting a pass in the field of play, in the judgment of the officials causes the ball to be brought into the end zone, where it is eventually ruled dead and the intercepting team shall be awarded a first down at the point of the interception.

SPORTSMANSHIP / ROUGHING

53. Sportsmanship

- 53.1. Trash talking / taunting is illegal. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams or spectators.) If trash talking / taunting occurs, the referee will give a 15 yd Major Foul penalty, loss of down or automatic 1st down.
- 53.2. Players cannot cross the line of scrimmage to listen to the opponents' huddle. Players cannot voice signals or make sounds that are intended to confuse the opponents' signals.

54. Roughing

- 54.1. If the referee witnesses any acts of flagrant contact, tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game.
- 54.2. A player is not allowed to trip an opponent using the arm, lower leg or foot.
- 54.3. After the whistle is blown to indicate the ball is dead, a player is not allowed to run into, throw the body against or deliberately fall upon an opponent.
- 54.4. The ball carrier is not allowed to elbow, shoulder, or throw the body into an opponent or attempt to jump through defenders blocking the path.
- 54.5. A player is not allowed to contact the passer's arm in the throwing motion using bodily contact.

- 54.6. A player is not allowed to use bodily contact on a pass receiver before or after the ball is touched. If the bodily contact was caused by a legitimate attempt to catch or down the ball while both players had equally favorable positions to the ball, no foul has occurred.
- 54.7. A player is not guilty of contacting the receiver if the bodily contact was caused by a sudden stop or change in direction by the opponent and the player made every attempt to diminish the contact.

55. Offensive Language

- 55.1. Any player, team official, or bench occupant, who engages in verbal taunts, insults, or intimidation based on Discriminatory Grounds shall in addition to an objectionable conduct penalty be removed/ disqualified for the remainder of the game. Such player, team official or bench occupant shall be subject to such further discipline as the supervising body (ie. League, tournament, etc.) may decide. Discriminatory Grounds include, but are not limited by:
- a) Race, national or ethnic origin, skin color, or language spoken;
 - b) Religion, Faith, Beliefs;
 - c) Age;
 - d) Sex, Sexual Orientation, or Gender Identify/Expression;
 - e) Martial or Familial Status;
 - f) Genetic Characteristics;
 - g) Disability

ILLEGAL ACTS

56. Use of Hands

- 56.1. Players cannot use their arms or hands to impede or redirect an opponent. Violation of this rule is Interference.
- 56.2. Players may touch an opponent to feel their relative positioning as long as the opponent is not impeded or redirected. Players may touch the goal posts with their hands if such touching does not help them change their direction.

57. Interference

- 57.1. Interference is when a player impedes an opponent's direct path to the ball, the ball carrier or the intended receiver, with or without contacting the opponent.
- 57.2. A player may assume a stationary position if the intent is obviously to avoid interfering with an opponent. A player may cut across the path of an opponent if the opponent's progress is not impeded or redirected. Violation of these rules is an interference or illegal contact penalty.
- 57.3. When the ball carrier uses stationary teammates as a means of blocking the opponent from getting to the ball carrier, such stationary teammates are not to be penalized from obstruction unless they move from their spot. This includes any interaction between the center and the rusher.
- 57.4. All players have a Right of Way that allows them to move freely on the field and opponents cannot interfere with them.
- 57.5. Players also have a Right of Place which supersedes all other rights on the field when they are stationary and not moving their feet or body to affect the play. If the center snaps the ball and does not move, no penalty shall be called.

58. Illegal Participation

- 58.1. A player who goes out of bounds shall not participate further in that play unless that player went out of bounds as a result of a slippery field, missed flag pull, or contact with an opponent.
- 58.2. Players, coaches, team members, and fans who leave the team/spectator area or enter the playing field which interferes with the ball, officials, or players during play.

59. Illegal Substitution

- 59.1. Any offensive player substitution after the center is prepared to snap the ball and any defensive player substitution during the play.

PLAYER CONDUCT

60. Major Fouls

- 60.1. Any obscene act of roughness or unfair play by players, coaches, teams, or spectators will result in a 15-yard penalty being assessed against their team as well as LOD or AFD from the appropriate spot. If the intent of the infraction was to cause bodily harm, or unfair play has made a mockery of the game, the penalty can result in a game ejection. Major fouls cannot be declined and must always apply their yardage in full. They will be applied after all live ball penalties have been assessed.

61. Objectionable Conduct

- 61.1. The following acts are defined and classified as Objectionable Conduct, and are illegal:
- a) The use of profane, obscene, insulting language or gestures to an opponent, official, spectator, or occupant of the team bench.
 - b) Throwing the ball at an opponent, an official, or occupant of the team bench.
 - c) Tactics by players, which delay or hinder the smooth operation of the game, shall be penalized under this section. These tactics include spiking the ball, and/or deliberately throwing or kicking the ball away after it has been declared dead on a play.
 - d) Faking an injury or loss of balance in an attempt to delay the game or cause a Unnecessary Roughness penalty to be assessed against an opponent.
 - e) Failure to wear mandatory equipment.
- Penalty: L5 from point where the ball would have been put into play if no other foul occurred. If the foul is of a serious nature, the player or occupant of the bench may be disqualified with no distance penalty.

62. Disqualification (Ejection)

- 62.1. A player or team member shall be disqualified from further participation in the game, with substitution permitted, if:
- a) The player or team member has been disqualified after being called for a Major Foul.
 - b) The player or team member has been disqualified for Objectionable Conduct.
- 62.2. The disqualification penalty cannot be declined by the non-offending team.
- 62.3. At the discretion of the officials, a disqualified player or team member may be allowed to remain on the bench.
- 62.4. If the officials do not permit the disqualified player or team member to remain on the bench, they must leave the park.
- 62.5. If the disqualified player or team member does not leave the park within 3 minutes or leaves and returns during the game, the officials may award the game to the opponents of the offending team.
- 62.6. The officials will take an official's time out while carrying out these procedures.

PENALTIES

63. Penalties

- 63.1. All penalties are 5-yards, the down will be repeated, and will be assessed from the line of scrimmage unless otherwise noted.

- 63.2. In a single penalty application, all penalties may be declined except dead ball fouls, major fouls, and penalties that stop the current play (flag guarding, delay of pass, etc.).
- 63.3. In a multiple penalty situation against one team, penalties that stop the play may be declined by the non-offending team if they choose to accept another penalty.
- 63.4. Yardage on penalties, except Major fouls, will not exceed half the distance to the opposing team's goal line from the line of scrimmage. The yardage on a Spot Foul is assessed from where the infraction took place. The ball can never be placed closer than the 1-yard line.
- 63.5. Game officials determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- 63.6. Games cannot end at half time or the end of the game on an accepted penalty.
- 63.7. Penalties after an interception shall be assessed after the return is over and/or the play is blown dead.
- 63.8. Defensive spot of fouls penalties that occur behind the line of scrimmage will be applied at the line of scrimmage instead of the spot.
- 63.9. If a dead ball foul occurs after a scoring play, the non-offending team will get the choice to apply the yardage to the convert or to the start of the next possession.
- 64. Defensive Penalties**
 - 64.1. Offside – player(s) lined up across or crossing the Line of Scrimmage at the snap of the ball.
 - 64.2. Disconcerting Signals – signals to distract or simulate offensive signals prior to snap.
 - 64.3. Illegal Rushing – Crossing the line of scrimmage from inside the 7-yard rusher bean bag provided the ball has not been faked, pitched, or lateralled.
 - 64.4. Pass Interference – both contact & non-contact that interferes with an offensive player catching a ball while it is in air, also includes screening & pushing off at Spot of Foul (Automatic First Down).
 - 64.5. Illegal Contact – physical contact such as impeding, redirecting, obstruction, blocking, holding, & tackling as well as any lower body contact with an offensive player throwing the ball at Spot of Foul (Automatic First Down).
 - 64.6. Illegal Flag Pull – Pulling a flag of a player before they have the ball. Spot of Catch if caught, LOS if dropped (Automatic First Down).
 - 64.7. Roughing the Passer – any contact with the passer's arm, head, or neck area while throwing the ball, including the ball in the passer's hand. 10-yard penalty (Automatic First Down).
- 65. Offensive Penalties**
 - 65.1. Delay of Game – ball is not snapped within 25 seconds. Play whistled dead. Clock stops.
 - 65.2. Delay of Pass – ball is not passed by Quarterback in 7 seconds, play whistled dead. (Next Down).
 - 65.3. Offside – player(s) lined up across or crossing the LOS at the snap of the ball.
 - 65.4. Illegal Snap – Center lifting or moving ball to simulate a snap. Play whistled dead.
 - 65.5. Flag Guarding, Jumping or Diving – ball carrier uses any part of their body or ball to prevent flags from being pulled or advancing the ball, play is whistled dead at Spot of Foul. (Next Down)
 - 65.6. Rusher Interference – impeding a rusher's direct path to Quarterback.
 - 65.7. Interference – impeding, redirecting, obstruction, blocking with no contact, play whistled dead at Spot of Foul.

- 65.8. Illegal Contact – physical contact such as impeding, redirecting, obstruction, blocking, holding & tackling (Loss of Down).
- 65.9. Pass Interference – both contact & non-contact that interferes with a defensive player's catching a ball while it is in air, also includes screening, pushing off and pick plays (Loss of Down).
- 65.10. Illegal Running Play – a quarterback running with the ball across the Line of Scrimmage without any transfer of the ball. Play whistled dead.
- 65.11. Illegal Forward Pass – when a second forward pass occurs, or when a forward pass occurs after the ball has crossed the Line of Scrimmage. Play whistled dead. (Next down).

66. General / Major Penalties

- 66.1. Illegal Participation – A player who goes out of bounds shall not participate further in that play unless that player went out of bounds as a result of a slippery field, contact with an opponent, or a missed flag pull. This is a LOD penalty if committed by the offense and Repeat Down penalty if committed by the defense.
- 66.2. Illegal Substitution – Any offensive player substitution after the center is prepared to snap the ball and any defensive player substitution during the play.
- 66.3. Game Interference – any substitute players, coaches or spectators interfering with ball, player or official while ball is in play.
- 66.4. Leaving Team Area – players or coaches leaving their designated team sideline area or crossing the middle of the field into the opponent's team area.
- 66.5. Objectionable Conduct – Players, coaches, teams or spectators using profane language or gestures, threats, demeaning or intimidating remarks & actions, persistent arguments, fake injuries, delay of game or targeting players to initiate contact will result in a 5-yard penalty. Any player, coach, team or spectator receiving a second Objectionable Conduct penalty during a game will be ejected from that game.
- 66.6. Major Foul – Any obscene act, acts of roughness, or unfair play by players, coaches, teams, or spectators will result in a 15-yard penalty being assessed against their team as well as LOD or AFD from the appropriate spot. The penalty can result in a game ejection. Major fouls cannot be declined and must always apply their yardage in full. They will be applied after all live ball penalties have been assessed.

67. Multiple Penalties

- 67.1. In a situation where only one team commits multiple live-ball penalties the non-offending team will accept only one of the penalties to be applied.
- 67.2. When both teams commit one or more penalties in the same play, the down shall be replayed from the previous line of scrimmage- regardless of yardage or point of application (LOS vs spot). The only exception to this is Major Fouls which must be accepted and their yardage applied in full. NOTE: Dead ball fouls will be applied after live ball penalties are assessed.

TOURNAMENT TIE BREAKER SYSTEM

68. Tie Breaker System

- 68.1. In any contest, the final score may result in a tie. If a winning team is deemed necessary, then overtime shall be played. See the overtime section for proper procedure.
- 68.2. In a round robin tournament, the winner is that with the best record in the end. If teams are tied with the same record, then the teams may play a head to head contest to determine the tournament winner. Alternatively, the winning team may also be judged by the total point accumulation of a team in the entire season if applicable (for league tournaments).

NO RUN ZONE

69. No Run Zone

- 69.1. If a run happens in the No Run Zone, the play will be whistled dead and the penalty is a loss of down.
- 69.2. Once in the No Run Zone you cannot run until you get a first down outside the No Run Zone or score a touchdown.