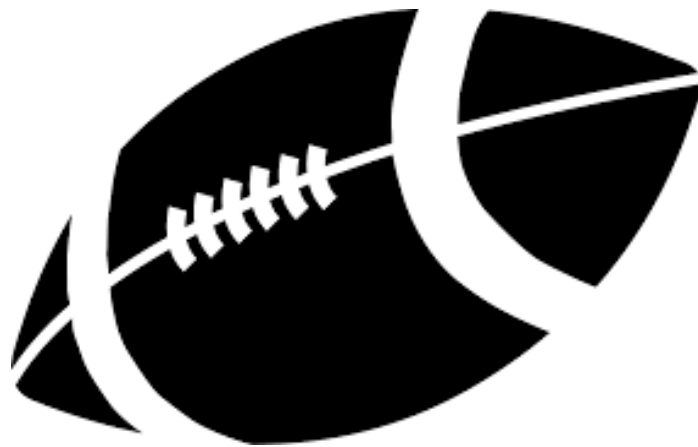


# **Flag Football Intramural Rules**



**Uniform:** No jewelry of any kind will be permitted while playing intramural sports. No participant will be allowed to participate in street clothes. This includes jeans, or other “non-gym” clothing. Athletic footwear must be worn at all times (No sandals or bare feet allowed). Softball is the only sport in which participants will be permitted to wear hard-billed hats. Metal cleats are prohibited from any intramural sport.

Each team MUST have coordinating colored shirts for every player. It is strongly recommended that teams provide their own shirts. Pinnies will be provided if a team is unable to provide their own uniform. Teams may have to wear pinnies worn in a previous game. **If the entire team does not have the same color shirt, the whole team will be required to wear pinnies.**

**Pants with pockets are strictly prohibited.** Players that wear pants with pockets will not be allowed to play.

**Facility:** Fish Fieldhouse

**Dimensions:** Two fields will be set up at one time. Fields will be 60 yards in length (plus the 10 yard end zones) and roughly 27 yards in width.

**Roster Management:** Rosters may consist of as many players as a team desires, however the championship team will only be awarded fourteen (14) mugs and championship t-shirts.

**Minimum Player:** Games will consist of seven (7) vs seven (7). CoRec teams must have no more than four (4) players of either gender on the field at one time. Teams must have a minimum of five (5) players to start a game. If for any reason the number drops below this, the team will be forced to forfeit. For CoRec league, a team may play with five (5) as long as two (2) players are of one gender and three (3) of the other.

**Clock Management:** Each game will consist of two 20-minute halves. The clock will run continuously except for the last two minutes. The clock will stop within the last two minutes of each half in the same manner as it does on college football.

- The first 18 minutes of each half the clock will only stop for timeouts and injuries.
- The clock will stop for the 2 minute warning in each half, but will restart on the referee’s ready for play whistle
- The final 2 minutes of each half the clock will stop for timeouts, injuries, and in the following situations:
  - Incomplete pass, clock will restart on the snap

- The ball carrier runs out of bounds, the clock will restart on the snap
- There is a change of possession, clock will restart on the snap
- A first down is picked up and the ball carrier is downed inbounds, clock will restart on the ready for play whistle
- On a scoring play, the clock will stop and start on the snap of the ensuing drive
  - The try for an extra point will be an untimed down.
- On any penalty, clock will restart in the manner in which the play ended

**Time-outs:** Each team is granted two (2) timeouts per game. An (1) additional timeout is awarded for overtime. Unused timeouts do not carry over into overtime.

**Mercy Rule:** If a team faces a deficit of 19 points or greater, there will be no stoppage time or 2 minute warning.

**OVERTIME:** There will be no overtime in the regular season, games can end in a tie. In the case of a tie in the playoffs a coin toss will be held to determine who gets first possession and which end zone the game will be played toward. Both teams will play into the same end zone for the entirety of all overtime sessions. Each team is given possession on the 15-yard line and given 4 downs to score. Each team will get an equal number of possessions, it is not sudden death. Teams must go for 2 or 3 beginning in the third overtime.

### **Game Rules**

**Governing Rules:** NIRSA rules shall govern all play with the exceptions listed on this rule sheet. Final interpretations and modifications shall be determined by the Assistant Director of Intramural Sports.

**Coin Toss:** Before the start of the game, the referee will have the captain play rock, paper, scissors to determine who gets the ball, side, or deferral to the second half. The captain winning the toss shall choose one of the following:

- To start on offense or defense
- To designate which goal his/her team will defend
- To defer their decision until the second half

The opposing captain shall exercise the remaining option. The captains will be reconvened at halftime to determine which team will get the ball to start the 2<sup>nd</sup> half and

which direction the teams will go. The results of the coin toss do not automatically reverse in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half.

No Kick offs: Ball will start on the 9-yard line.

Substitutions: Substitutions are unlimited, but may only be made during dead ball situations. All substitutes must make it within 5 yards of the spot of the ball prior to their first play on the field.

Diving/Hurdling: Diving is allowed, including, but not limited to, ball advancement, flag pulling, or catching of a live ball. However, a diving player may not dive over another player, or directly into another player. At no point in time is a player allowed to jump over/hurdle another player.

First Downs: Are awarded to teams that advance the ball into the next zone within 4 downs. The first down line in any series shall be the original first down zone at the beginning of the series, regardless of negative yards and/or penalties.

Hikes: Side hikes are allowed but must be completed in a fluid motion. The player receiving the snap must be at least 2 yards away from the center and 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage. All snaps must be in the shotgun formation. The center can hike it traditionally or snap the ball from one knee.

Passing: All players are eligible receivers. The passer's entire body must pass the line of scrimmage for it to be considered an illegal forward pass.

Intentional Grounding: Will be called for passes that do not reach the line of scrimmage with no eligible receiver in the area. As there is no defined tackle-box, intentional grounding will be called regardless of the location of the pass thrower.

Receiving: A receiver needs only 1 foot in bounds to complete a catch. If a receiver is missing the flag belt when catching the ball (fell off accidentally); the defense will have to touch the player with 1 hand below the shoulders to down them. If the flag is pulled off by a defensive player before it is caught, it will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty (10 yards). Bump and run coverage is not allowed.

Force out: There is no force out rule, but by forcing a player out of bounds, the defense would be committing an illegal contact penalty, resulting in 10 yards for the offense.

*Fumbles:* The ball is declared dead when it hits the ground. The last team maintaining possession gets the ball at the spot where the ball touches the ground (unless it's fourth down). Fumbles in the offensive team's end zone result in a safety. If fumbled into the opponent's end zone, the play is a touchback. Opponent puts the ball in play at the 9-yard line. In the event that the player fumbles the ball forward, the ball will be marked at the point at which it left the players hands. *Defensive players may not strip or attempt to simultaneously hold or steal the ball away from an offensive player; this is an illegal contact penalty.*

*Inadvertent whistle:* If an official blows an inadvertent whistle, the play is dead on the sound of the whistle. The offensive team has the option of keeping the result of the play at the time of the whistle or re-playing the down.

*Line of Scrimmage:* There must be at least 4 offensive players on the line of scrimmage at all times, but they do not necessarily need to be offensive linemen. The minimum number of offensive linemen is one (1), the center. The defense does not have to play any players on the line of scrimmage.

*Linemen:* There will be no down linemen of any type (i.e. no 3 point or 4 point stances). All linemen must start with both hands off of the ground.

*Blocking:* No contact is allowed while blocking, this pertains both to blocking on the line and down field. Offensive players may move their feet to get in front of a defensive player, but cannot engage the defensive player. Blocking will consist of screen blocks only, very similar to shuffling your feet to stay in front of an opponent in basketball. The offensive player may not stick out arms, legs, or hips to make contact with the defensive player. The defense must make a move to get around the offensive player. Any contact while blocking will result in an illegal contact penalty on the player who initiated the contact.

*Motion:* Is allowed for one (1) offensive player at the time of the snap as long as it is not towards the line of scrimmage. No stop is required in this motion during the snap. Two players may not be in motion at the same time; if they are they both must come to a stop for a full second prior to the snap. Any player in motion toward the line of scrimmage must come to a full one (1) second stop prior to the snap.

*Tackling:*

- A play is concluded when: The flag or belt of the player with the ball becomes unclipped by a defender, an incomplete pass is thrown, a player runs out of bounds, when any part of the ball carrier's body besides the feet or hands touches the ground, when a fumbled ball hits the ground, or when the referee's whistle is blown.
- The following actions will not be permitted:
  - Tackling/pushing a player out of bounds
  - Attempting to cause a fumble (i.e. punching the ball)
  - Stiff arms
  - The lowering of a player's head or shoulder in the attempt to initiate contact.
    - Offensive players must run around defensive players, they may not run into or through them. If a defensive player is positioned in front of the offensive player, it is the responsibility of the offensive player to make a move and avoid contact.
- The ball will be spotted where the ball is when the flag belt is pulled; hence, if the ball is just over the first down line and the belt is pulled on the other side of the line, a first down would be awarded.
- Defenders may not block, hold, trip, or push the runner in an attempt to remove his/her flag belt.

*Flag Guarding:* A runner may not protect his/her flag with his/her arm or the ball. This includes a running motion in which the runner's hands interfere with the flag belt. It is highly suggested that the ball carrier run with the ball outstretched when in traffic. The runner may not run with their head and shoulders down in an effort to shield his/her flags from defenders.

*Scoring:*

- 6 Points for a Touchdown
- 3 Points for a PAT from the 20-yard line
- 2 Points for a PAT from the 10-yard line.
- 1 point for a PAT from the 3-yard line.
- 2 points for a Safety.
- There are no Field Goals or kicking of the PAT.
- PAT conversions CANNOT be returned for a score. Play is blown dead after an interception may occur on the conversion.

*Punting*

- A punt is an automatic play, it has to be announced and no one can cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. The referee will ask the offensive team on 4<sup>th</sup> down if they would like to punt or play. Once it is announced, the punting team must punt; the only exception is if a time out is called or a penalty is called prior to the punt.
- The punter must be in the shotgun and receive the snap from the center. The punter then in a single fluid motion can walk up to the line of scrimmage and punt the ball.
- All players from the kicking team (besides the punter) must be on the line of scrimmage.
- There are no restrictions on how many players must be on the line of scrimmage for the receiving team.
- The receiving team cannot cross the line of scrimmage in an attempt to block the punt, but may knock it down from the defensive side of the line of scrimmage.
- If the punt hits the ground the receiving team may pick it up and advance it.
- If a ball touches any player on the receiving team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead and receiving team starts with the ball at the spot.
- If the ball touches any player on the kicking team, the ball is dead at the spot and receiving team starts with the ball at the spot.
- Any punt kicked out of bounds will be the receiving team's ball at the spot where it crossed the sideline, be that in the air or on the ground.
- Any punt that crosses the goal line will be an automatic touchback.

### Penalties

The distance for any penalty can be declined by the non-offending team.

### Before the Snap, Dead Ball - 5 Yards from previous & repeat down

- False Start
- Illegal Snap
- Encroachment
- Delay of Game (2 in a row = 10 yards; including bench infraction)

### Simultaneously with Snap - 5 Yards from previous & repeat snap

- Illegal Motion or Shift
- Offsides
- Illegal substitution
- Minimum number of players on line

- Illegal participation (too many)
- Receiving the snap closer than 2 yards from the line of scrimmage

### Penalty Enforcement

There are two types of plays in Flag Football: Loose Ball and Running. The type of play (loose ball play or a running play) will determine the spot of enforcement.

- Loose Ball plays will have a penalty enforcement spot of the original line of scrimmage.
- Running plays will have a penalty enforcement of the spot of the foul.
  - The exception to the above spots of enforcement is if the spot of the foul would hurt the offense more, then the penalty would be enforced from the spot of the foul
- A loose ball play is a play where the ball is in the air because of a pass (legal or illegal) or punt AND all the action in the play that preceded the loose ball.
- A running play is everything that occurs after the loose ball, or is a play where there was neither a pass nor a punt. One play could both be a loose ball play and a running play.
  - Example: The Quarterback drops back to pass. While the quarterback still has the ball a defensive player commits illegal contact on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback then completes a pass to a receiver. As the receiver tries to advance the ball a defensive player grabs a hold of the receiver's shirt, holding the receiver so he/she can then pull the receiver's flag.
    - There are two illegal contact penalties on the defense in this play
      - The first is during a loose ball play (as it was in the action preceding the loose ball) and would be enforced from the original line of scrimmage
      - The second is during a running play (as it happened after the loose ball portion of the play had concluded) and would be enforced from the spot of the foul.
      - The offense should decline the first illegal contact and accept the 2<sup>nd</sup> illegal contact as the basic spot of enforcement is farther down field and will result in more yards.

### Multiple Penalties

In the case of multiple penalties on the same play here is what would happen:



- Each team commits one (1) or more live ball penalties
  - Penalties offset and we replay the down
- One team commits two (2) or more live ball penalties
  - The offended team gets the option of which one (1) penalty they would like to accept
- All dead ball penalties will be assessed

### Penalties on Scoring Plays

If there is a penalty on the defense on a play where the offense scores, the offense will be able to assess that penalty either on the extra point, or the start of the subsequent series when the defense becomes the offense

### 5 Yard Penalties (Generally non-contact penalties)

- Illegal forward pass
- Not wearing required equipment (i.e. flags)
- Delay of game
- Minimum line players
- Illegal participation
- Illegal substitution
- Encroachment
- False Start
- Illegal Snap
- Illegal Formation
- Illegal Motion
- Illegal Shift
- Intentional Grounding (also results in loss of down)
- Help the Runner

### 10 Yard Penalties (Generally penalties that involve contact)

- Stripping the Ball
- Hurdle Another Player
- Dive or Run into Opponent
- Illegally Removing the Flag Belt
- Illegally Tying the Flag Belt (Player ejection & loss of down)
- Consecutive Encroachment Penalties
- Flag Guarding
- Obstructing the Runner

- Pass Interference
- Roughing the Passer
- Offensive Pass Interference
- Quick Punt
- Illegal Contact
- Illegal Equipment
- Kick Catch Interference