

CENTER OF RECREATIONAL EXCELLENCE

ADULT FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

Philosophy

The CORE Adult Flag Football Program is intended to provide participants with an opportunity to play flag football in an organized and recreational environment.

One of the goals of the program is to promote the ideals of sportsmanship and physical fitness to all participants, regardless of sex, race, creed or color. More important than any game are the participants and their needs. The Adult Flag Football Program strives to bring area residents closer together through common interests in sportsmanship, cooperation and appreciation of the game.

Sportsmanship

A good portion of this manual is devoted to this topic, primarily out of necessity. The desire to win often produces a style of play contrary to the principles of sportsmanship and fair play. The CORE cannot and will not tolerate such a style that ignores good sportsmanship and clean play. Excessive complaining and verbal abuse towards a referee will result in a 10-yard penalty or ejection from the game. The referee or the site supervisor can eject a player if they are abusive towards the site supervisor, officials, other players or spectators. If a player is ejected, then he/she will not be allowed to play in the next scheduled game.

Remember - It's only a game.

Player Eligibility

- All players in the adult programs must be at least 16 years old to participate. Young men and women under 18 will be required to have their parents or legal guardian complete and sign a Minor Consent Form, available from the site supervisor.
- **Valid photo ID must be shown to the site supervisor in order to add a name to the roster.**
- **It is the player's responsibility to produce photo ID to the site supervisor, if requested, on the day of the game or the player will not be eligible to play.** If a team thinks an ineligible player is playing, then ask for a roster check from the site supervisor. Roster checks must be made during the game in question. Ineligible player will result in a forfeit. Both teams will be checked. A player may not play for, or be on the roster of, more than one team within a division.
- For a player to be eligible for tournament play, they must play within the first 4 weeks of league play.

Rosters

- All rosters must be completed and signed by the team manager and turned into the site supervisor prior to the start of the first game. No players can be added to the roster after the 4th week of play.
- Because of legal requirements, everyone must sign the roster before playing in any game.
- A un-rostered player may not play under the name of a rostered player.
- Before a new player is eligible to play, his/her name must be added to the roster before the start of that game. ID is required to add a name to the roster.
- It is the responsibility of the team manager to keep his/her roster current.
- There will be 5 players on the field at a time. For coed play, there must be at least 2 females on the field at all times.
- Teams may carry a maximum of 15 players on their rosters. If a team wants to add an additional player, another player must be dropped to keep the maximum number of 15.

If a player is found to be ineligible, the game will be a forfeit. If the player does not have identification with him/her, it will be the player's responsibility to provide and show identification to the scorekeeper *on the day of the game*. If player is unable to do so, he/she must provide identification before his/her next game.

Rules and Guidelines

- **Coin Toss.** At the beginning of the first half, a coin toss will be held. The winner of the coin toss will have the following options: (1) offense, (2) defense or (3) choice of goal to defend. The loser of the opening toss will have choice of the remaining options for the first half and will have the first choice of all options in the second half. The loser of the toss shall have first choice at the beginning of the second half. The winner of the toss has remaining second half options. There is no deferment to the second half.
- **Start of Game.**
 - The first team on offense will start the ball on their own 20 yard line.
 - Teams may start with 4 players on the field, one of which must be a female, but must have the 5th player on the field by the end of the first half. If they are unable to obtain a 5th player by the end of the 1st half, the game will be declared a forfeit.
- **Clock Management and Regulations:**
 - Game clock will start each half when the official puts the ball in play.
 - The official's whistle makes the ball ready for play and starts the play clock prior to each down throughout the games. The play clock is twenty-five seconds in length.
 - After a team time-out, the game clock will start at the snap of the ball.
 - Because the game clock is a continuous click, it does not stop during P.A.T. attempts.
 - The game clock will stop for team time-outs, official time-outs, and at the discretion of the official to retrieve long incomplete passes.

- The play clock is 5 second and starts once the official marks the ball ready for play. (Delay of Game penalty if exceed 5 seconds)
- Half time – A minimum of 2 minutes and a maximum of 5 minutes.
- The on-field captain or quarterback may request the amount of time left in the game from the officials at any time. Officials will be expected to give the correct time.

Periods of Play

- **Regulation Period.** The game shall be played in 2 halves of 20 minutes in length. In all games the clock will be running continuous.
- **Point After Touchdown.** The period of time after a touchdown is made. During regulation game time, the game clock does not stop.
- **Tiebreaker.** In the event of a tie game at the end of the second half of elimination play, the following method will be used:
 - After an official's time out of two (2) minutes, during which time officials and team captains will have a coin toss, the winner will have choice of playing offense or defense first. Both teams will go in the direction of the wind or if no wind in the direction chosen by the loser of the toss.
 - Ball will be placed on the 40 yard line and each team will have 4 consecutive plays unless terminated by an interception, in which to score the most points or gain the most yards. If no team scores, the team that gains the most additional positive yardage shall be the winner. Positive yardage is defined as yardage gained while on offense only and must be in advance of the 40yard line. If after 4 consecutive downs each, the two teams remain tied in all of the above combinations, additional downs will be played, one down at a time, alternating, until a winner is decided.
 - If a team scores a touchdown, it will be allowed to use its remaining downs, beginning again at the 40 yard line. A free down will be granted for P.A.T. attempts after each touchdown.
 - During Tie Breaker, teams will be allowed one time out each.
 - An interception terminates the offensive team chances. The offensive team is credited with positive yardage gained to point of the last snap prior to the interception. The defense may not advance the interception. Play stops.
 - Winner of the Tie Breaker shall be given one point.

Mercy Rule

If a team is ahead by 30 points with 10 or less minutes to play in the game, the game will be over. Both teams will be allowed to continue to play but the officials are not required to officiate the game and the play will end at 5 minutes before the next scheduled game.

Scoring

- **Touchdown** – 6 points. Hips in which flags are attached must be on or in advance of the goal line before any points can be awarded.) If a female scores a touchdown it is worth 8 points.
- **Point After Touchdown**
 - 1 point: run or pass from 5 yard line (white arch). If a female scores the 1-point PAT it is worth 2.
 - 2 point: run or pass from 10-yard line (yellow line). If a female scores the 2-point PAT it is worth 3.
 - Teams must declare before the official marks the ball ready for play. Once the ball is marked ready for play, a team may only “re-declare” if team uses a time out first. The PAT period is a separate period of the game. During regulation time, the game clock continues to run. During the Overtime Period, the PAT does not count as a numbered play. If infractions occur during the PAT, proper penalty enforcement may cause a re-play of the PAT and in some cases may be marked from the succeeding spot. Enforcement depends on type of infractions that occurs.
- **Safety** – 2 points (Punt ball from 20 yard line, Rule VI-R applies.) (This is a guaranteed punt. The ball must be put in play by a snap.)
- **Forfeited Game** – Score is 7 – 0.
- **Winner of Tie Breaker** – 1 point.

Time Outs

- Each team shall have two (2) time outs per half.
- Each time out will be one (1) minute in length.
- Each team will be allowed only one (1) time out during a tiebreaker period.
- A “time out” to be called from any player that participated on the playing field during the previous play is allowable. Said player may not have left the field and returned prior to the request.
- A team may use a time out to change their option during the PAT.
- A team MAY NOT use a time out to change any 4th down option (Punt or Play).
- Officials may call additional time outs at their discretion. If a team exceeds their time out limits per half or during a tiebreaker. Delay of Game 5-yard penalty
- During a team charged time out, a team representative may confer with their team either on the field or at the sidelines.

The Ball

- **Live Ball** - A live ball is a ball in play. A pass, lateral, kick or a fumble that has not touched the ground is a live ball in flight.
- **Dead Ball** - A dead ball is a ball not in play.
- **Loose Ball** - A loose ball is a ball not in player possession:
 - Following the snap and prior to a player fielding the ball cleanly in order to keep the ball live and in play.

- Following a punt that has hit the ground and has not been fielded by the receiving team or touched by the punting team.

When a ball is marked ready for play

- A dead ball becomes ready for play once the referee:
 - If time is in, sounds his whistle and signals ready for play. The 5 second play clock begins on that whistle, Delay of Game (5 yards LOS) enforced if exceed time to put ball in play.
 - If time is out, sounds his whistle and either signals “start the clock” or “ready for play.”
- “In Possession”
 - A player is “in possession” when in the judgment of the covering official, the player exhibits control or is holding the ball.
 - A team is “in possession” of the ball when its players is “in possession” or attempting to punt; while a pass or lateral is in flight; or when one of its players was last in possession during a loose ball.
- Catch or Interception
 - A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball in flight.
 - A catch of an opponent’s pass, lateral or fumble (prior to touching the ground) is an interception.
 - Simultaneous catch or a double reception of an offensive pass or lateral always goes to the offense.
- Fumble
 - When a backward pass hits the ground between the goal lines or a fumble occurs, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the team last in possession at the spot where the ball hits the ground or at the spot where the ball goes out of bounds (if in the air).
 - When a forward fumble occurs and hit the ground, it is considered dead. The End of the Run in this case would return to the point and which control was lost or from where the fumble originated. If the offensive fumbles forward and crossed or hits the ground beyond the next line-to-gain or goal line, the result will bring the ball back to where the fumble occurred and next down will be played.

Line of Scrimmage

- Is the plane of the ball that extends from sideline to sideline and ninety (90) degrees from the plane face of the field, once an official places his ball marker and signal the ball “ready for play”. Once the ball marker is set, the neutral zone becomes established.
- If a change of team possession occurs between the five (5) yard line and the goal line due to an interception or a kick catch and the original momentum of the player catching the ball carries him into the end zone where he is downed by any means, the ruling will be a touchback.

Neutral Zone

The neutral zone is the space between the end of the ball when in a normal resting position on its long axis while parallel to the sidelines and one yard beyond the line of scrimmage. This zone extends from sideline to sideline and is established once the ball is marked ready for play.

Line to Gain

The line to gain is the established line designating the twenty-yard zones as well as the ten-yard end zones. The zone shall be considered reached when one of your flags are on or in advance of the line marking the next zone or in this case “the line to gain” when the play is declared dead.

Series of Downs

A team will be allowed four downs to advance the ball from one zone to the next. (A zone is to be 20 yards.) If after four (4) consecutive downs, a team has failed to advance the ball into the next zone, possession shall go to the defense at that spot.

Positioning, Motion, Shift, Substitution

- **Huddle/Lining Up on Offense or Defense**
 - Teams may choose to huddle prior to a play. It is not necessary to huddle after a play if a team wishes to use predetermined plays or audible signals.
 - Lining up: Any number of players may be on the offensive or defensive L.O.S. at the snap. Defense line must be one (1) yard off the ball at the snap. No defensive player may be within 4 yards of the ball if lined up directly in front of the center or within one yard of the ball if lined up to the side of the center at the snap. (5 yards)
- **Substitution**
 - There will be free substitution as long as players being substituted for are off the field prior to the next snap OR player is out of the area of play and is departing the field in haste. “Sleepers” on substitutions will not be allowed on any play. No player may line up closer than 5 yards from the sideline unless he came out of the huddle or unless he was on the field of play during the previous play and did not leave the field of play. (5 yards)
- **Shift**
 - Two or more offensive players may be shifting their position at the same time prior to the snap. Their movement may be in any direction but they must become set for one full count before the ball is snapped or before another player can go in motion prior to the snap. (5 yards)
- **Motion**

- Only one player is allowed to be in motion at the snap and his movement must be parallel or away from the L.O.S. and must be continuous. (5 yards)
- **Stance**
 - Any stance is permitted. Any number of players may be on the offensive or defensive L.O.S. at the snap. Defense line must be one (1) yard off the ball at the snap. No defensive player may be within 4 yards of the ball if lined up directly in front of the center or within one yard of the ball if lined up to the side of the center at the snap. (5 yards)
- **Encroachment/Off-sides**
 - Shall be called if either the offense or the defense passes over the plane of their L.O.S. before the ball is snapped. A false movement of the football by the center shall constitute offensive encroachment. These are dead ball fouls and the play shall be immediately whistled dead before play begins and 5 yards automatically marked off against the encroaching team. (Exception: Defensive encroachment resulting in an offensive first down will become an offensive captain's choice penalty.) If a player on either side lines up off sides, the official will point toward that player's team side. If that player does not get back on-sides before the ball is snapped, he will be considered as having been off sides at the moment of snap. If an official has not "off sides warned" a team for lining up off-sides, by pointing at them, he should not call off-sides on them at the snap of the ball. Play continues in this instance and following the play, this becomes a captain's choice penalty. This is a 5-yard penalty from L.O.S.

Center Snap

A center snap may touch the ground before it gets to the quarterback and remain playable if the quarterback fields it cleanly off of a bounce (one or more) or from the ground. However, if quarterback muffs the ball to the ground or the ball goes past the quarterback it is dead where the ball touches the ground. All center snaps must be made between the center's legs. A false movement of the football by the center after he is set shall constitute encroachment. No direct snap may be taken at any time. The snap must travel a minimum of 5 yards to be legal (either backwards or sideways). At all times the ball shall be snapped from the spot marked by the official ball marker.

Screening

Only screen blocking is permitted.

- **Screen Blocking:** shall be defined as obstructing the rusher's path to the quarterback or ball carrier, as long as it is done behind the L.O.S., with any part of the body except head, hips, and legs. There can be no independent movement of the elbows.
- **Techniques:** The screener must use one of the two following methods:
 - Screener must have his thumbs hooked in his pants and holding the flag belt with each hand
 - Screener must hold his arms behind his back with arms locked together in some manner. A screener may not leave his feet to screen.
- **Type of screening includes: Moving Screens and Stationary screens.**
 - Moving screens are when a player is in motion in an attempt to prevent the rusher from maneuvering to de-flag a player. These are only legal behind the L.O.S. when protecting the passer or potential passer.
 - Stationary screens are screens set by players in a manner that places the screener in a position that attempts to prevent the rusher or defender from maneuvering to de-flag a ball carrier, receiver or potential receiver or ball carrier. A stationary screen is legal behind the LOS. Once the passer or potential passer or ball carrier crosses the L.O.S., all downfield screens must be stationary screens.
 - As the ball crosses the L.O.S., offensive players may maneuver for laterals behind the ball but in doing so must not be deliberately screening any defensive players. They must be clearly in the act of positioning for a lateral.
- **Enforcement (Infractions behind the LOS):** A penalty will automatically be called if a screener's hand leaves his pants and flag belt or if arms are separated from behind his back while in the process of screening within 2 yards of the rusher. Although this method of screening cuts down on excessive contact by the screener, it nevertheless laces the screener in very vulnerable position; therefore; THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY OF AVOIDING CONTACT RESTS WITH THE RUSHER. (10 yards) The screener may not step into the rusher. (Added for interpretation) Illegal screen, behind LOS, 5 yards from LOS, if excessive 10 yards and loss of down.
- **Enforcement (Beyond the LOS):** Moving screens shall be penalized from the end of run (E.O.R.) or the point of infraction (P.O.I.), whichever hurts the offensive team the most. If the illegal screen is judged to have caused excessive contact, it will be penalized 10 yards and loss of down. (Cannot have loss of down if penalty leaves ball in front of line-to-gain and 1st down.) (If Not Excessive- 5 yards) "Pick Plays" by receivers on defensive backs or linebackers are illegal if set by receivers within 5 yards of defender (a form of downfield screening).

Rushing

- Rushing is defined as the act of a defensive player pursuing the offensive player who is in possession of the ball.
- The defensive players must be 5 yards back from the L.O.S. prior to the snap.
- The rusher may not run over the screener. The rusher may not pull the screener toward him or push the screener away from him.

- Stunting is not allowed. Stunting is when a player starts to rush and then suddenly stops at the L.O.S. to freeze the QB.
- **Enforcement:** Illegal Rushing – A penalty will be automatically called if the rusher touches the screener's head as long as the screener is screening upright. (10 yards) Roughing the passer when the pass is incomplete will be marked off 10 yards from the L.O.S., when the pass is complete the penalty will be 10 yards marked off from the E.O.R. and automatic first down in either case. If the rusher touches the quarterback in the head in his attempt to block the pass a penalty will be called. This will also go for striking the passer's arm when in a forward motion while attempting to block a pass. Roughing the passer will be called when the rusher, if while attempting to de-flag the quarterback or block a pass, lets his momentum carry him into the passer. Defensive player may not have any contact with the passer when he is passing. The defensive may rush as many players as it wishes. NOTE: OFFICIALS SHOULD BE AWARE IF CONTACT IS CAUSED BY PASSER STEPPING UP OR MOVING INTO RUSHER. IT IS ASKED THAT BOTH THE SCREENER AND THE RUSHER STRIVE FOR NON-CONTACT AT ALL TIMES.

Passing Regulations

- **Passing**
 - There can be only one forward pass per play. There can be only two (2) exchanges of the football in the air (forward pass or lateral) which are initiated from behind the L.O.S. After the 2nd exchange of the football in the air, if completed behind the L.O.S., the football must be run across the L.O.S. A forward pass is defined as a live ball thrown toward the opponent's goal line.
 - The quarter back will have 5 seconds to throw the ball if there is no rush. Penalty to do so will result in a delay of game. The count does not stop when the ball exchanged behind the L.O.S.
 - The quarter back is not allowed to run, even if rushed.
 - A completed direct handoff, even if bobbled, shall not be considered an exchange of the football in the air.
 - If the passer is beyond the L.O.S. when the football is released, or if a 3rd exchange of the football in the air is initiated from behind the L.O.S., an illegal Forward Pass has occurred and will result in a 5 yard penalty and loss of down if accepted. Illegal forward passes will be marked from P.O.I.
 - Once the ball has crossed the L.O.S., in the air or in possession of a player, it cannot be passed forward, even if the ball is first returned back across the L.O.S. (Illegal Forward Pass)
 - Intentional grounding shall also constitute an illegal forward pass.
 - A lateral will be any pass thrown overhand or underhand perpendicular or away from the direction of advancement of team in possession. Forward laterals are treated as an illegal forward pass if beyond L.O.S.
 - Push Passes thrown across the L.O.S is illegal. Once a player crosses the L.O.S., push passes are legal if thrown parallel or behind the ball carrier.
 - Backward Lateral Passes are legal beyond the L.O.S. but is considered a dead ball if it hits the turf. Defense can intercept laterals and advance.
 - Only one (1) backward lateral pass allowed per play past the L.O.S.
- **Receiving**
 - All players of both teams are eligible pass receivers. Each player is eligible, even if he steps out of bounds or out of end zone, as long as he catches the ball inbounds or comes down first in bounds with at least one (1) foot. If a receiver comes down with one foot in bounds and one foot out of bounds simultaneously, the pass is incomplete. The lines marking the sidelines and the extreme end of the end zone shall be considered out of bounds if stepped on to any degree. Two or more offensive receivers or defensive players may touch a pass in succession, resulting in a completion. After a pass is thrown, it is too much to expect of the officials to keep track of exactly who touched the ball and in what order, if receivers and defenders are battling for possession. Therefore, the only things that will be judged will be (1) did pass interference occur, (2) who caught the ball, and (3) was receiver in bounds with at least one foot at moment of possession.
 - Body contact with a wall by a receiver to brace for a catch is illegal and pass will be deemed incomplete no matter the result.
- **Pass Interference**
 - Pass Interference Rules shall apply to any pass made from behind the L.O.S., whether it is a forward pass or a lateral pass and applies to both offensive and defensive players. After the pass is in the air, neither the pass receiver nor the defender may touch the other player until one of them touches the ball, or else offensive or defensive pass interference may be called. If contact occurs after one of them touches the ball, then pass interference cannot be called unless one of them catches the ball and the other "strips" or attempts to "strip" the ball from his hands.
 - Receiver stripping is attempting to take the ball from the grasp of a receiver after he has caught the ball, but before he has brought the ball into a possessive position. In which case, Pass Interference will be called: If player established possession of the football, the defender must go for the flag and not the ball.
- **Pass Interference Enforcement**
 - Any contact that occurs after the pass is touched (excluding Receiver Stripping) and is either complete or incomplete, must be judged by the officials as either Non-Intentional contact caused by both players "playing the ball" or Intentional contact/pass interference which shall be penalized from the point of infraction. Penalty will be 5 yards if incomplete or complete, and if judged to be flagrant, the penalized player may be removed from the game and penalty will be 10 yards.

- All pass interference plays, offensive or defensive, whether they occur during the “Regulation Play Period”, “Tie Breaker Period”, or the “P.A.T. Try Period”, will be captain’s choice penalties. If the captain refuses penalty the play will stand.
- All offensive pass interference plays, whether they occur during the “Regulation Play Period”, “7-Play Period”, “Tie Breaker Period”, or the “P.A.T. Try Period” which are accepted by the defensive captain shall be marked 10 yards from L.O.S. with a loss of down (and loss of play number if during Tie Breaker).
- Defensive pass interference plays, which occur on the playing field, during the “regulation play period” and the “Tie Breaker Period”, and are accepted, shall be marked 15 yards from the L.O.S., and receive an automatic first down (except in Tie Breaker), and play number will be run again. Defensive pass interference that occurs in the end zone during the “Regulation Play Period” and accepted: ball will be placed on one (1) yard line, and 1st down. Defensive pass interference that occurs during the “P.A.T. Try Period”, and accepted: ball will be placed on one (1) yard line – P.A.T. try will be rerun, plus one (1) free P.A.T. try will be awarded if needed. Point value will be whatever was declared prior to original P.A.T. Defensive pass interference which occurs in the end zone during the “Tie Breaker Period” and accepted: ball will be placed on the one (1) yard line – same play will be run again, plus one (1) free down will be awarded, if needed, to score.
- Shielding/screening a receiver’s eyes by a defender without playing the football is pass interference and shall be penalized as such. Bump and Run, or checking an offensive receiver during a passing play will be a 5-yard penalty from P.O.I. and captain’s choice.

Running with the Ball

- **Quarter Back**
 - The quarter back is not allowed to run with the ball, even when rushed.
- **Ball Carrier**
 - The responsibility of avoiding contact rests with the ball carrier. He must show the officials he made an effort to avoid contact. The ball carrier will not deliberately run or drive into a defensive player. A ball carrier may spin or jump but realize that while spinning or jumping he is in a “State of Non-control” and should contact occur as a result of his uncontrolled momentum, he will be penalized. The “Stiff Arm” is illegal. Penalty: 10 yards from P.O.I. (added for interpretation) and loss of down.
 - The ball carrier shall not protect his flags by blocking with his hand, arm or head, the opportunity to pull his flags. Flag guarding will be marked 10 yards from P.O.I./L.O.S. (if behind line) and loss of down.
 - If any of the above acts are judged to have caused excessive contact, 10 yards and loss of down.
- **Offensive Players**
 - No blocks, screens, or picks downfield that lead to body contact in order to free a runner to score will be allowed. A player may run interference for a runner by making the defensive player re-direct their path. Stopping in front of an opponent resulting in a collision or any contact will result in a 15 yard penalty to the offense.

Deflagging the Runner

- The ball carrier is down and the ball is dead when either flag is detached from his belt or when the ball or either knee touches the ground. A defensive player may leave his feet to pull the offensive player’s flag but may not make contact while doing so. When a defensive player pulls the ball carrier’s flag he should stop and hold it above his head for officials to see. If the act of deflagging a player is simulated or faked, the infraction will be treated as a delay of game penalty.
- The ball carrier is declared down if their flag belt falls off.
- Tackling is prohibited. Tackling is grasping or encircling the body of the ball carrier with a hand or arm. Grabbing the ball carrier’s clothing shall be penalized as tackling. If the defensive player reaches across the body of a ball carrier to pull his flag, and contact occurs, the responsibility of the contact lies with the defensive player. Penalty: 5 yards for impeding – 10 yards for tackling (encircling of body) with automatic first down if tackling from P.O.I. or L.O.S. If in the opinion of officials, the act prevented a score, the ball will be placed on the one (1) yard line, first down and goal. The offender will be disqualified if the act was flagrant.
- Illegal deflagging is prematurely pulling an opponent’s flag with the intent of making the offensive player ineligible to become a ball carrier. Penalty – 5 yards from L.O.S. or E.O.R. Runner Stripping occurs when a defender attempts to strip or take the ball from the grasp of a player in possession. This is a form of Illegal Deflagging.
- The intended receiver of either a pass or lateral may be deflagged only after first touching the ball – even while fumbling or bobbling the ball and before possession is established. That receiver will be considered downed at the point he was deflagged.
- If the quarterback’s arm was in forward motion when his flag was pulled, the pass is allowed. If the passer is legally deflagged as he is passing the football, and later in that play receives the ball back, he shall be downed at that spot. If he is deflagged after he has released the football and he then receives the ball back, illegal deflagging should be called.
- A defender may not push or knock a ball carrier into the wall. This is a form of illegal deflagging and results in a 15-yard penalty. If excessive, the player can be subject to ejection.

- Illegal Advancement – Advancement may not occur as a result of the ball being slapped, kicked, pitched, or pushed by either team in the direction of their goal line. The ball will be declared dead at the spot of such illegal advancement and a 5-yard penalty.
- Checking a receiver into a wall is illegal contact and will receive a 15 yard penalty.

Punt

- A punt will be in the form of a throw. Kicking is prohibited.
- If a punt is to be made, the offense must announce it to the referee before the ball can be declared ready for play. Offense must declare within 10 seconds after asked by referee on 4th down play. (Penalty delay of game.) After offense declares, the referee will mark ball ready for play whereupon the offense will have 15 seconds to punt the ball.
- When the offense declares the punt, it becomes a guaranteed punt, and only if a defense penalty occurs after the offense declares punt can the offense reconsider, due to change in field position.
- The ball will not be dead if it touches the ground before the punt is made even if muffed by the punter. After a punt has been declared, it must be made and neither team may cross the L.O.S. until the ball is thrown. The offense may have any number of players on the L.O.S. The punt returning team must have 5 players within 5 yards of the L.O.S. and they must remain in that zone until the punt returner enters that zone, at which time they may provide stationary screens or maneuver for a lateral. These 5 men may not attempt to screen any member of the punting team as they pass through this 5-yard zone. (Penalty – 5 yards from EOR/POI)
- If the punt hits a member of the punting team, which has not crossed the L.O.S., it is dead at that spot. Any member of the punting team may down the punt if it is beyond the L.O.S. and has touched the ground prior to being downed. The punt will be declared dead at the spot where the ball first touches the ground.
- The punt receiving team must be given an opportunity to field the punt in the air; therefore, there will be a 10-yard penalty if touched in the air beyond the L.O.S. by the punting team, from the P.O.I.
- The punt returning team may have 3 returners in deep positions. The 2 returners that do not carry the ball may not be moving screens. They may run forward and provide stationary screens or be maneuvering for a lateral. (Penalty – 5 yards from EOR/POI)
- The punt receiving team may field a punt in the air, off of a bounce (one or more), or directly off of the ground, if fielded clearly. When a punt touches a player on the receiving team who is in bounds and the ball rebounds into the air, all players become eligible to intercept and advance the ball before it touches the ground.
- On a punt play, there are no line-to-gain lines (1st down lines) established. When the punt receiving team is returning a punt, any live ball fouls committed by either team, which are accepted, will result in the penalty being marked off after which the next line will become the line-to-gain for a first down. As soon as the play is blown dead, the line-to-gain is established. Any dead ball fouls that occur will result in the line-to-gain remaining the same (unless the enforced penalty leaves the ball past the line-to-gain.)
- When a punt is left unattended, it becomes dead where it rolls still.
- Punts muffed by the receiving team in the end zone before possession, and ball hits in or out of end zone, it will be a touchback. If the ball is touched in the air or on the ground by the punting team in the zone, it is a touchback. If a punt receiver who has gained possession of the punt in the end zone is deflagged prior to crossing the goal line into the field of play, it is a touchback. If punt receiver remains in end zone 5 seconds after fielding punt, or downs punt by knee or ball touching ground after possession, it is a touchback. A muffed lateral in the end zone will be a safety.

Penalty Enforcement

- Penalty Information
 - All live ball fouls (fouls which occur while play is in progress) are captain's choice. All dead ball fouls (Fouls which occur prior to snap or after ball is blown dead) will automatically be marked off. This means if a foul occurs during a down and is a live ball foul and then a dead ball foul occurs both fouls will be enforced. They do not offset, even if against different teams.
 - After a penalty is called, only captain of the penalized team may discuss it with the officials. The official making the call is obligated to give the player's number and the act they committed (without discussion) to the penalized team captain. Official will then give the opposing captain his options on the penalty. That captain's first choice will be final.
- In the judgment of any game official, the following acts are deliberate or flagrant, the player or players involved shall be ejected from the game:
 - using fists, kicking, or kneeling
 - illegal use of hands, forearms, or elbows
 - tackling
 - any deliberate or flagrant act which could cause injury
 - any act of unsportsmanlike conduct
 - abusive, profane, or insulting language
 - any act of unfair play
 - harassment of officials or other players
- Penalties, which would otherwise be marked off past the goal line, shall be placed on the one-yard line.
- Offsetting Penalties – If offsetting fouls occur during a down, or while the ball is ready-for-play, that down shall be played over. If offsetting fouls occur between successive down, the next down shall be the same as if no fouls occurred.

- If there is a change of team possession during a game, the teams last gaining possession may decline the offsetting fouls and retain possession after the penalty for its own infraction providing that the infraction occurs after the change of possession. If offsetting fouls occur prior to change of possession, play shall be repeated.

Penalty Chart

- All penalties will be marked 5 or 10 yards, if in the opinion of the officials, the foul is flagrant or excessive contact, the player (or players) might be ejected.
- In order to establish a simple philosophy in assessing penalties, these general rules hold true with only a few exceptions:
 - All Accepted Penalties: are marked from the E.O.R., L.O.S., or P.O.I., whichever hurts the infracting team the most and the down may or may not be replayed.
 - All Refused Penalties: the ball stays where blown dead and down is not replayed.
 - All Live Ball Fouls: are captain's choices
 - All Dead Ball Fouls: are not captain's choices and will be marked off.
- "Little-To-Lose" Penalties: If the full penalty cannot be marked off due to the field position relative to the goal line, the ball will be marked off to the one yard line.
- Defensive penalties on teams backed up within 1 yard from their goal will result in play being run again from L.O.S. Plus one free down awarded to offense if they have not scored by the 4th down.
- Offensive penalties on team backed up to within 1 yard from their goal will result in Loss of Down unless there is a change of possession during a play.
- Offensive fouls in their own end zone will be captain's choice: Safety or Loss of Down.
- Penalty Enforcement During Tie Breaker Periods: When infractions occur during the Tie-breaker Period, if the penalty is accepted, the down number may or may not be lost, depending on the penalty. In turn, that same infraction may or may not also lose the play number, depending on the penalty. Officials must enforce the combination that hurts the infracting team most. Exception: Only the offensive pass interference penalty during the tiebreaker period, if accepted, will cause that play number not to be repeated.
- Penalties on the playing field during the tiebreaker period shall be marked the same as during regulation time.
- Penalties Enforcement and Line-To-Gain:
- Enforcement of any penalty which leaves the ball across the line-to-gain will result in a new line-to gain (1st down).
- After enforcement of any live ball foul that leaves the ball short of the line-to-gain will result in the first down line remaining the same.
- All defensive dead ball fouls after a touchdown but before the ball is put in play after change of possession will be penalized from the 20-yard line. All live ball fouls during this period are captain's choice penalties.

Defensive Fouls During/After Touchdowns and PAT Attempt

- Foul A: Touchdown
 - Penalty A: Live Ball Fouls – Captain's Choice Penalties (can take points & have penalty marked off from 20- yard line after PAT attempt.
- Foul B: Dead Ball Period After Touchdown But Before Pat Attempt
 - Penalty B: Dead Ball Fouls – Marked Off After Change of Possession from the 20 Yard line.
- Foul C: PAT Attempt
 - 1. Which is Unsuccessful - Penalty: Captain's Choice Penalties Which if Accepted – Ball Marked To The One Yard line and PAT Attempt Run Again (Same Point Value)
 - 2. Which is Successful - Live Ball Fouls – Captain's Choice Penalties (can take points and have penalty marked off from 20 yards line.
- Foul D: Dead Ball Period After PAT Attempt But Before Ball is Put in Play from the 20-yard line.
 - Penalty D: Dead Ball Fouls – Marked Off After Change of Possession From the 20 Yard line.

Blood Rule

A player who is bleeding or has an open wound must leave the game until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is completely covered, and if necessary, the bloody clothing has been replaced. No penalty will be assessed if a replacement jersey does not exactly match the team color, as long as it is similar. Any bleeding or bloody player refusing to leave a game will be ejected.

Uniforms

As a team, it will be *mandatory* for all players to have matching uniforms. Uniforms will consist of the following:

- Same color shirts or jerseys with at least 6-inch numbers in a contrasting color on the front and back.
- The deadline for having uniforms is the third league game.
- Players must have shorts pulled to the waist.
- Proper athletic shoes must be worn. No street shoes, sandals of any kind, bare or stocking feet allowed. Plastic or rubber cleats are allowed. No metal cleats allowed.
- It is suggested that managers bring extra jerseys for team members.

Forfeit Games

- If a team has less than the required four players at game time, the game is a forfeit and will not be played. Players may scrimmage with a 32-minute running clock, but officials are *not* required to officiate and stats will not be recorded.
- Any misconduct or abusive action by players in a scrimmage will immediately terminate play, and unsportsmanlike conduct may be reported and enforced at the scorekeeper's discretion. Only rostered, legal players may participate in a scrimmage.
- Any team forfeiting more than three games in a season may be dropped from the league with no refund at the Sport Coordinators discretion.
- Out of common courtesy, a team who knows they are going to forfeit is urged to contact the Sports Coordinators office so that their opponent can be notified.

League Winners

- League winners will be determined by the overall best season records or a seeded single elimination tournament.
- If there is a tie for first or second place, head-to-head games will be the first tiebreaker. If a forfeit game is involved in leagues where teams play each other more than once and a tie exists, the team with the forfeit will take the lower award.
- Any team that forfeits three or more times during a season cannot win any team awards.
- Points differential will be used if necessary to resolve ties in the standing. An example of using Points Differential:

SCORES		DIFFERENTIAL	
Team A 55 vs. Team B 47	A+8	B-8	
Team A 70 vs. Team C 71	A-1	C+1	
Team B 63 vs. Team C 62	B+1	C-1	
Team A 52 vs. Team B54	A-2	B+2	
Team A 72 vs. Team C67	A+5	C-5	
Team B 49 vs. Team C 40	B+9	C-9	
Point Differential	A+10	B+4	C-14
1 st Place Team = Team A			
2 nd Place Team = Team B			

- If a tie exists for second place, the same tie-breaking procedure listed above will be used. If any tie still exists after using the Points Differential formula, teams will be declared co-champions or co-runners up.

Tournament Rules

- All flag football league rules will apply for tournaments with the exception of the following:
 - A player's name may appear on only one roster during the tournament. Rosters are frozen 3 weeks prior to the start of the tournament; no players may be added to the roster during the tournament. Maximum team roster will include 15 active players.
 - For a player to be eligible for tournament play, they must play within the first 4 weeks of league play.
 - If a player is ejected from play on the last week of league play, the week before tournament play, they are suspended and ineligible to play in the tournament.
 - Length of game time may be adjusted to ensure that the tournament finishes within the scheduled time.

Awards

1st & 2nd Place teams will receive individual awards at the last scheduled game or last tournament game.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

The CORE staff or the referee has the authority to disqualify, suspend or remove any manager, coach, player, spectator or team that behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner before, during or after a game. The following are included (but not limited) in defining unsportsmanlike conduct:

- **Spitting:** No player, manager, team or spectator may spit within the Turf area or on the turf itself.
 - a. Minimum Penalty: Warning by CORE staff or officials.
 - b. Maximum Penalty: Suspension for the remainder of the season.
- **Verbal Abuse:** No player, manager, team or spectator shall verbally abuse, taunt, provoke or disrespectfully address an official, site supervisor, other player or spectator before, during or after a game.
 - a. Minimum Penalty: Loss of yards or downs.
 - b. Maximum Penalty: Ejection from current game and the next two games.
- **"F-Word Rule":** Any player, coach or bench personnel that say the four letter "F-word" loud enough for the referee(s) and/or game personnel to hear.
 - a. Minimum Penalty: Ejection from the current game and the next scheduled game.
 - b. Maximum Penalty: Suspension for the remainder of the season.
- **"Racial Slurs" or "Sexual Harassment":** From any player WILL NOT be tolerated.

- a. Minimum Penalty: Ejected from the current game and the next TWO scheduled games.
 - b. Maximum Penalty: Suspension from all CORE adult sports programs for one year or a lifetime ban could be imposed depending on seriousness of offense.
- **“Taunting & Trash Talking”**: have no place whatsoever in CORE sports. Any player, coach or bench personnel participating in such behavior will be penalized. Any referee(s) or game personnel hearing or seeing said behavior will enforce the penalty.
 - a. Minimum Penalty: Ejection from the current game and the next two scheduled games
 - b. Maximum Penalty: Suspension for the remainder of the season.
- **No Fighting Policy**: The CORE strictly prohibits fighting before, during or after a game. The definition of a fight includes, but is not limited to, punching, slapping or swinging a fist or open palmed hand at another person. A punch does not have to land to be considered a fight. The definition may, at the program administration’s discretion, also include, kicking, shoving, and throwing objects at another person or any other violent act. Any fight that occurs outside of the facility (parking lot or street) and is witnessed by a CORE employee or representative shall carry the same consequences as if it had occurred in the facility.
 - a. Minimum Penalty: Suspension from ALL CORE Adult Sports programs for one year from the date of the offense.
 - b. Maximum Penalty: Lifetime suspension from ALL CORE Adult Sports programs.
- **Threatening**: No player, manager or team shall threaten any player, referee, site supervisor or spectator before, during or after a game.
 - Minimum Penalty: Suspension from remainder of the current season.
 - a. Maximum Penalty: Lifetime suspension from ALL CORE Adult Sports programs.
- **Alcohol/Drunkness**: No player shall consume alcohol in the facility or on the grounds (i.e. parking lot) of the CORE facility. A player who, in the opinion of the officials, appears to be intoxicated and displays behavior of someone under the influence of alcohol will be ejected from the game.
 - a. Minimum Penalty: One game suspension and probation for the remainder of the season.
 - b. Maximum Penalty: Suspension from all CORE Adult programs for one year from the date of offense.
 - c. Once a player has been suspended from play for one year, a second year long suspension *may* result in a lifetime ban from ALL CORE Adult Sports programs.
- **Ejections**:
 - a. If a player is ejected from a game for any reason, they are suspended for the next scheduled game.
 - b. If a player is ejected and suspended two times in one season he/she will be suspended from all CORE Adult Sports programs for one year.
 - c. If a player refuses to leave the facility after being ejected, the official will request the scoring table to set and start the clock for two minutes. If the ejected player is still in the facility at the end of the two minutes his/her team will forfeit the game, and the player will be suspended from all CORE Adult Flag Football leagues for one year.
- **Flagrant Fouls**: A flagrant foul may be a personal or technical foul of a violent or savage nature or a technical noncontact foul which displays unacceptable conduct, whether intentional or unintentional. A personal foul involves kicking, kneeling, etc. A technical foul involves dead-ball contact or noncontact type behavior at any time which is extreme, persistent, vulgar or abusive in nature.
 - a. Minimum Penalty: Immediate ejection from that game.
 - b. Maximum Penalty: Immediate ejection from game and suspension form the next two league games.
- **Spectator Behavior**: Spectators are expected to behave in a civil manner. Any spectator who engages in unsportsmanlike conduct including, but not limited to verbal abuse, physical abuse of any nature, throwing items on the floor, or any other behavior deemed detrimental to the spirit of the game will be warned by the officials or scorekeeper for their first offence. A second offense during the same game will lead them to be ejected immediately from the facility. If a spectator refuses to leave the facility within two minutes then the team they are affiliated with will forfeit the game. At the score keepers discretion, any spectator who is ejected from the facility *may* receive a season-long suspension and may be banned from the facility.

Protests

A team has the right to protest a game on the following grounds:

- Player eligibility status
- Illegal player issues
- Interpretation of rules and regulations listed in this manual

A team does NOT have the right to protest a game on the following grounds:

- Official’s judgment calls
- Only one official present at game
- Scorekeeper decisions

Any suspended player has the right to protest suspension, but ignorance of rules is *not* a legitimate defense to overturn a suspension or ban.

Protest Procedure

- A team wishing to protest a game must notify the scorekeeper of their intent to do so before the end of the game. *No protests will be accepted* if the scorekeeper is not notified before the end of the game.

- A player wishing to protest a suspension or ban must do so within 30 days of the date of the suspension notice.
- A protesting team or player must file a protest form with the CORE Sports Coordinator in person. A \$20 Protest Fee must be submitted before the protest will be considered. A hearing will be scheduled with a panel of three to five persons, and the Board will decide the case within 24 hours after the hearing. The \$20 Protest Fee will only be refunded if the protest is upheld; otherwise, it will be retained by the CORE.

Alcohol/Smoking

No player shall consume alcohol in the facility or on grounds. A player, who, in the opinion of the referee(s) or CORE Staff, appears to be intoxicated and displays behavior of someone under the influence of alcohol, will be ejected from the game.

Spectators/Guests

- **Player + 1 Card:** Players will receive a Player +1 card on the first night of the league. This card must be used each week to gain access to the CORE for your scheduled game for the player registered in the league and 1 guest. Any additional spectators must check in with their membership or pay the day pass fee for entry.
- Spectators are not allowed on the field/court/bench at any time during league play and must remain in spectator seating.
- Children 12 years of age or older must remain in the area of league play and be accompanied by an adult at all times. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in an automatic forfeit.

Staff Privilege

The staff reserves the right to refuse a player, coach or spectator from continuing in the league. This league is designed for recreational play and to have FUN!

