

Flag Football Rules

Flag football rules will be conducted under the NIRSA laws of the game with the following additions, exceptions, and clarifications.

- **NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** Each team should start the game with 7 players, and a minimum of 5 is needed to avoid a forfeit. A player may play on only one team per sport. Please check the Rules of Eligibility for all other rules concerning Intramural Sports.
- **LENGTH OF GAME:** The game will consist of two halves of 24 minutes. The clock will run continuously during the first half and the first 22 minutes of the second half, except when a time-out is called, or at the referee's discretion. During the last two minutes the clock will stop for an incomplete pass, when a player goes out of bounds, on penalties, on a change of possession, on any score, and on first downs.
- **OVERTIME (TIE GAME):** If the games score is tied after regulation time, then a coin toss will determine who will get the ball & side. Each team will have the chance to score in series of four downs from the 10 yard line. If the score is still tied after each team has had a try, a second series is played, and so on until a winner is determined.
- **FREE KICK:** There will be no free kicks (kickoffs), only punting.
- **PUNTING:** Quick kicks are illegal. On fourth down the referee must ask the offensive team if they want a protected scrimmage punt. Once the offense has declared their choice, the referee will inform the defense of the offense's choice. The only way the offense can change their decision is to call a time-out, or if a foul occurs anytime prior to or during the down and the down is to be re-played. In the later case the offensive team will be asked if they want a protected scrimmage punt or not. Offensive team must have at least 4 players on the scrimmage line and remain motionless until the punt is made. If a punt crosses the scrimmage line and touches a player from either team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead at that spot and belongs to the receiving team.
- **LINE OF SCRIMMAGE:** The offensive team must have a minimum of 4 players on the line of scrimmage. Once the center has placed his hands on the ball, no offensive or defensive player may enter the neutral zone. Not following these rules warrants a false start, off sides, or encroachment call.
- **BACKWARD PASSES AND FUMBLES:** A player may not intentionally throw a backward pass out of bounds to conserve time or to avoid being downed. This will be penalized as an Illegal pass (loss of 5 yards), loss of down, and the clock will start on the ready for play. If in doubt, the pass is backward. Once a ball has

touched the ground the ball is considered- dead.

- **FORWARD PASSES AND INTERCEPTIONS:** If a player is in the air attempting to catch a ball, the player must contact the ground with at least one foot inbound with the ball in their possession prior to going out of bounds, unless contact by an opponent causes the player to first touch out-of -bounds. If possession of the ball is lost simultaneously when they hit the ground, it is not a catch. If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by the opposing and receiving team, the ball is dead at that spot and belongs to the team that snapped the ball.
- **PASS INTERFERENCE:** It is pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged or touched prior to touching the ball on a pass thrown beyond the offense's line of scrimmage. If the pass interference by the defense is intentional and/or unsportsmanlike, the defense may be penalized an additional 10 yards.
- **SCORING:** Touchdowns = 6 points, Extra Points = 1 point if successful from the 3 yard line, Extra Points = 2 points if successful from the 10 yard line, Safety = 2 points, Extra point interception resulting in touchdown = point value of extra point. Once a team has made their choice on the extra point, they can only change their decision by taking a time-out.
- **SAFETY:** If a player carries the ball across the goal line they are defending and the ball becomes dead while in their team's possession, it is a safety. If a team commits a foul in the end zone where the spot of enforcement is designated as the spot of the foul, it will be declared a safety. Exception- When a player intercepts a forward pass or catches a scrimmage kick between their five-yard line and their goal line and their momentum carries them into the end zone where the ball becomes dead, the ball will belong to the receiving team at the spot of the catch or reception.
- **PERSONAL FOULS:** Any act listed below or any other act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul. Players shall not: Punch, strike, strip, steal, or attempt to steal the ball from a player in possession. Trip an opponent. Contact an opponent who is on the ground. Throw the runner to the ground. Hurdle any other player. Contact an opponent either before or after the ball is declared dead. Make any contact with an opponent which is deemed unnecessary. Deliberately drive or run into a defensive player. Clip an opponent. Position themselves on the shoulders of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage. Tackle the runner. (warrants ejection)
- **SCREEN BLOCKING:** Screen blocking shall take place without contact. The blocker shall have their hands and arms at their sides or behind their back. A screen blocker cannot use their hands, arms, elbows, legs or body to initiate contact. If they do use contact it will be called a Personal Foul. Screen blockers may not:

- **STIFF ARMING:** Stiff arming is not allowed; a personal foul will be called, and if warranted an unsportsmanlike conduct or ejection will result.
- **OBSTRUCTING THE RUNNER:** A defensive player shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of the runner when attempting to remove the flag belt.
- **THE FLAG BELT:** All shirts must be tucked in, and are not permitted to hang over the flag belt. Should a player loose their flag belt legally or illegally during a down and should that player gain possession of a live ball, that player will be considered down when a legal tag (one hand touched by the defense between the shoulders and knees, including the hand and arm) is made. When a player scores they must immediately raise there hands and allow an official to remove their flag belt. This is done to insure that the flag belt has not been illegally secured. If the belt has been illegally secured the score is disallowed, the player ejected and a 10 yard Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty will be administered from the previous spot. Players must have possession of the ball before they can legally be deflagged. It is illegal for a defensive player to intentionally pull a flag from an offensive player who is not in possession of the ball. In cases where a flag belt is removed illegally, play should continue with the option of the penalty of the play (Penalty: Personal foul, 10 yards).
- **GUARDING THE FLAG BELT:** Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag guarding includes: Swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner, which flag guards.
- **OFFICIAL'S AUTHORITY:** An official assumes authority 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time, and until they have left the field. The officials have the authority to rule on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. His/her decision is final, unless ruled otherwise by the supervisor on duty or the Director of Intramural Sports. The official has the right to eject players or have them sit out of part or all of the game. Fans, coaches, and spectators are a part of a team and any fouls they commit will go against their team.

ADDITIONAL CO-REC FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

- **PLAYERS:** A game is played between two teams of 8 players, 4 men and 4 women. Teams with 7 players shall be 4 men and 3 women or 3 men and 4 women. To avoid forfeit six players, 3 men and 3 women are required.
- **THE BALL:** A regular, intermediate, youth or junior size football may be used.

- **LINE OF SCRIMMAGE:** The offensive team must have at least 5 players on their scrimmage line. Penalty: Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot.
- **MALE RUNNER:** The offensive team males cannot advance the ball through their scrimmage line. Penalty: Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot. There are no restrictions: during a run by a male runner once the ball is beyond the offensive scrimmage line; during a run by a female runner, and after a change of possession.
- **MALE TO MALE COMPLETION:** During the offensive team's possession there may not be 2 consecutive legal forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yardage. Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass, 5 yards from the spot where the second consecutive male-to-male completed legal forward pass is released, and a loss of down. The spot where the ball becomes dead by rule must be beyond the offensive scrimmage line. There are no other restrictions concerning a male passer completing legal forward passes to a female receiver, or female to female, or female to male. Any foul, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next legal forward pass completing is "open" or "closed."
- **SCORING:** If a female player scores a touchdown, the point value is 9. If a female player throws a legal forward pass and any offensive team member scores a touchdown, the point value is 9