

# Texas Amateur Athletic Federation

## 4 on 4 Flag Football Rules

### **Rule 1: THE GAME, FIELD, PLAYERS & EQUIPMENT**

#### **Section 1 - The Game**

- No contact allowed.
- NO BLOCKING/SCREENING anytime or anywhere on the field. Offensive players not involved with a play down field must attempt to get out of the way.
- A coin toss determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has three (3) plays to cross mid-field. Once a team crosses mid-field, they will have three (3) plays to score a touchdown.
- If the offensive team fails to cross mid-field or score, possession of the ball changes and the opposite team starts their drive from their 5-yard line.
- All possession changes start on the offenses 5-yard line (Exception: Interceptions may be returned and the ball will be marked where the play ends).
- Each time the ball is spotted a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a Delay of Game penalty is enforced.
- Games consist of 2-14 minute halves. Teams will flip sides at beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> half. Half time will be 30 seconds. Team that started the first half on offensive will begin 2<sup>nd</sup> half on defense. There are NO DEFERMENTS. The winner of the coin toss has the following options: 1) offense, 2) defense or 3) choice of goal to defend. Loser of the coin toss has one of the remaining options.
- Running clock: except injuries & time-outs. Clock will stop in the last minute of the game for out of bounds, incomplete pass and a touchdown.
- Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 28 points or more at anytime during the game, the game will be called.

#### **Section 2 - Fields**

- The field dimensions will be 25 x 64 yards (two - 7 yard end zones).

#### **Section 3 - Attire**

- Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections can and will be made.
- Shirts must be tucked in shorts, pants, etc.
- Flags – The “Sonic” belts will be the only flags allowed. Flags must be a minimum of 12 inches in length and 1-½ inches in width and must be a different color than the players lower uniform.
- No headgear with an extended bill may be worn (ex: caps, visors, etc).

#### **Rosters**

- Official Rosters must be approved by a T.A.A.F. representative and turned into the tournament director 24 hrs prior to a team's first game.
- Team's rosters are not to exceed 10 players in tournament play.

### **Rule 2: PLAYERS/GAME SCHEDULES, SCORING & TIME OUTS**

#### **Section 1 - Players/Game Schedules**

- Teams must field a minimum of three (3) players at all times.

- If a team or teams are more than 10 minutes late for their scheduled games they will be forfeited.
- We reserve the right to reduce, shorten, or reschedule games due to inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances.
- All players must carry I.D. for proof of age and identity.

### **Section 2 - Scoring**

- TD=6 points, Extra Point=1 (5 yards out); 2 (12 yards out), Safety=2 points

### **Section 3 - Time Outs**

- Each team has one: 60-second time out per game, in which the clock stops.
- Officials can stop the clock at their own discretion.

## **RULE 3: RUSHING THE QB, CENTER SNAP, RUNNING, PASSING & RECEIVING**

### **Section 1 - Rushing the QB**

- All players that rush the passer must be a minimum of 7 yards and 1 yard over from the center position (either side) from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the QB.
- Players not rushing the QB may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, the 7 yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders are eligible to rush.
- A special marker, or the referee, will designate 7 yards from the line of scrimmage.

### **Section 2 - 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 the bounce (one or more) 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. At all times the ball shall be snapped from the spot marked by the official ball marker.

### **Section 3 - Running**

- The Quarterback CANNOT run the ball.
- Only direct hand-offs behind the line of scrimmage are legal. NO laterals or pitches of any kind. Offense may use multiple hand-offs.
- The player who takes the hand-off can throw the ball as long as he does not pass the line of scrimmage.
- "No Running Zones" are located 5 yards before the end zone and 5 yards before mid-field in each offensive direction.
- "No Running Zones" are designed to avoid short yardage power running situations.
- Spinning is allowed but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player.
- The ball is spotted where the ball carriers belt is when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is. Ball & flags must break the plane for a 1st down and touchdown.

### **Section 4 - Passing**

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Shovel passes are allowed, but must be received beyond the LOS.

- A Forward Pass/Lateral is defined as a live ball thrown towards the opponents goal line.
- QB has a 7-second "pass clock". If a pass is not thrown within the 7 seconds, play is dead, loss of down, ball returns to line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off the 7-second rule is no longer in effect.
- Interceptions may be returned. Interceptions during Extra Point may be run back for 2 points. Interceptions that occur in the end zone will be brought to the 5-yd line.
- If the QB intentionally grounds the ball to avoid a sack, then the play will be ruled a loss of down and be assessed a 5 yard penalty.

### **Section 5 - Receiving**

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the QB if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- Player must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.
- Pass may not be intentionally tipped in any direction to another teammate.

## **RULE 4: DEAD BALLS, OVERTIME & SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING**

### **Section 1 - Dead Balls**

- Play is ruled "DEAD" when:
  - Offensive player's flag is pulled.
  - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - Touchdown is scored.
  - Ball carrier's knee or the ball hits the ground.
  - If an Offensive Players flag falls out during the course of a play, a defensive player must touch him for the ball to become dead.
- There are no fumbles. Ball is spotted where it hits the ground. Anytime the ball touches the ground it is dead. Exceptions: a. Any ball dropped in a forward motion will be brought back to last point of contact. b. Quarterback may field the ball off of a bounce.

### **Section 2 - Overtime**

- If the score is tied at the end of 30 minutes, teams move directly into overtime.
- Coin toss determines possession.
- Each team receives the ball at the 5-yd line with one possession. This will continue until a winner is declared.
- Interceptions will end series.

### **Section 3 - Sportsmanship/Roughing**

- If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player can be ejected from the game. Tournament director may decide to eject players from the tournament. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
- Trash talking is illegal. Official has the right to determine language that is offensive. (Trash talk is that which may be offensive to official, opposing team, or spectators). Referee can eject players from the game for trash talking.

## **RULE 5: OFFENSIVE & DEFENSIVE PENALTIES & PROTESTS**

### **Section 1 – Offensive Penalties**

- Illegal Snap: Five yards, repeat down
- Illegal Motion: Five yards, repeat down
- False Start: Five yards, repeat down
- Impeding Rusher: Five yards, loss of down
- Blocking/Screening Downfield: Five yards (L.O.S.), loss of down
- Illegal Pick: Five yards (L.O.S.), loss of down
- Flag Guarding: Five yards from the spot of infraction, loss of down
- Lowering Head/Shoulder: Five yards (L.O.S.), loss of down
- Pass Interference: Five yards (L.O.S.), loss of down
- Illegal Forward Pass: Five yards (L.O.S.), loss of down
- Illegal Hand-off/Pitch: Five yards (L.O.S.), loss of down
- Illegal Run: Five yards (L.O.S.), loss of down
- Delay of Game: Five yards (L.O.S.), loss of down
- Intentional Grounding: Five yards (L.O.S.), loss of down

## **Section 2 – Defensive Penalties**

- Off-sides: Five Yards, repeat down
- Illegal Rush: Five Yards, repeat down
- Illegal Contact: Five Yards, automatic first down
- Holding: Five Yards from end of play, automatic first down
- Illegal Flag Pull: Five yards from L.O.S., automatic first down
- Pass Interference, Minor: Five yards from L.O.S., automatic first down
- Pass Interference, Major: Spot Foul, automatic first down
- Roughing the QB, Minor: Five yards, automatic first down
- Roughing the QB, Major: Fifteen yards, automatic first down
- Delay of Game: Five yards, repeat down
- Illegal Push: Five yards (L.O.S.), automatic first down

### **Section 3 - Protests**

- All protests will be resolved immediately. Only managers may protest. Judgment calls by officials may not be protested. Upon protest, a manger shall remit a \$50 protest fee. If the protest is upheld, the \$50 shall be immediately refunded. If the protest is denied, the deposit shall be forfeited. The tournament director and his designees, in consultation with the officials of that game shall resolve protest.