

CITY OF BOERNE
FLAG FOOTBALL RULES & REGULATIONS

Texas Amateur Athletic Federation
Flag Football Rules (TAAF)

1.0 FIELD

The field parameters are as follows:

The field will be 80 yards from goal line to goal line with 2 End zones of 10 yards each.

The field shall be divided into 4 zones of 20 yards each.

The field shall be a minimum of 40 yards wide and a maximum of 53½ yards wide.

2.0 EQUIPMENT

2.1 BALL

It is recommended that teams use the Wilson Official ball or its equivalent. However, each team must provide an official size leather covered football that is properly inflated.

Each team is responsible for their own ball (retrieving it after an incomplete pass and keeping it dry during adverse weather conditions). The center may carry the ball to the huddle.

2.2 Uniforms shall be each team's choice as long as it does not include any hard or unyielding surface. All members of the same team must wear the same color jersey with at least an 8-inch high number on the back. Jersey's must be tucked in. No article of clothing may cover any portion of a player's flag (Flag Guarding). Officials should warn violators of this between plays.

The lower uniform may be shorts, warm-ups, pants, or any other type of athletic wear. It is recommended that no loose fitting pants, or pants with front or side pockets be worn.

Players may wear no jewelry of any kind. Uniform/Equipment penalty: (a charged timeout or delay of game if no timeouts remain.)

2.3 SHOES

Any flat-soled or completely molded cleat shoes are acceptable. Baseball cleats, 1 inch cleats, track spikes or any shoes that have steel or metal tips are prohibited. All players must wear shoes. Uniform/Equipment penalty: (a charged timeout or delay of game if no timeouts remain).

2.4 FLAGS

Flags will be provided by the City of Boerne. Each player on the field will wear 2 flags at the waist, one on each side. Flags must be attached to a belt and the belt will be worn snug around the waist to eliminate being turned partially around the waist during an attempt deflagging.

Illegal alteration, securing, or substitution of flags or belts will result in removal of player(s) from the game and a 15-yard penalty from the L.O.S. of last snap if against the offense, and if against the defense from P.O.I.

Any player not having the required 2 flags will be ruled deflagged immediately at the point at which he gains possession of the football. If a player is not wearing flags in the proper position (including flags not turned outwards) he will be penalized.

3.0 LENGTH OF GAMES AND TIMEOUTS

3.1 PERIODS

The game shall be played in 2 halves of 18 minutes in length. In all games the clock will be running continuously.

At the end of 18 minutes in the first and second half, the teams will be notified that there are only 7 plays left in that half.

Time periods may be modified during Tournament/Post-Season play and during adverse weather conditions.

Clock Regulations:

The clock will start each half when the official puts the ball in play and ball is snapped.

After a team timeout, the clock will start at the snap of the ball.

Clock is continuous, but will stop during Point After Touchdown (P.A.T.) attempts.

The clock will stop for team timeouts, official timeouts, and at the discretion of the official to retrieve long incomplete passes.

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.

3.2 CHANGING ENDZONES

3.3 HALF TIME

Half Time will be the period of non-play between the 1st and 2nd halve. It will be a minimum of 5 minutes.

3.4 TIMEOUTS

Each team shall have 2 timeouts per half. Each team will be allowed 1 timeout during a tiebreaker. Timeouts will be 1 minute in length. Any player that participated in the last play and is on the field of play may call Timeouts. Unused timeouts DO NOT carry over into the next half or period of play.

If a team exceeds its timeout limit in either half they will receive a 5-yard penalty for Delay of Game.

4.0 SCORING

4.1 TOUCHDOWN

A touchdown scores 6 points. A touchdown occurs when both hips which flags are attached are on the goal line or in the end zone.

4.2 POINT AFTER TOUCHDOWN

The points awarded after a touchdown are:

1 point – Run or pass from the 3-yard line.

2 points – Run or Pass from 10-yard line.

4.3 SAFETY

A safety scores 2 points. The team scored against will then punt the ball from their 10-yard line. Receiving team must have 5 players on the 20-yard line. Punt rules apply (6.18).

4.4 "17-POINT RULE"

If either team is ahead by 17 points or more at the 7-Play warning of the 2nd half, the game is declared over.

5.0 PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

5.1 PLAYERS

TAAF Flag Football teams will consist of 8 players with all being eligible receivers. A team may not field less than 6 players with proper equipment at any time or a forfeit will be called.

5.2 SUBSTITUTION

There will be free substitution as long as players being substituted for are off the field prior to the next snap or are out of the area of play and are departing the field in haste.

5.3 TEAM ROSTER

A team's regular playing roster shall not exceed **15** players, including a Player/Manager. No new player may be added to a team's regular playing roster after the fourth week of league play.

5.4 ELIGIBILITY

No player shall be permitted to play TAAF Flag Football if he is presently, or has, during the current season, been a member of any 9th grade, Jr. Varsity, varsity, college, or B-team football team. Any player who has played regular season professional football (NFL, CFL, NFLE, and AFL) shall be ineligible to participate for one year after his last day as a member of a professional team.

Any team violating this rule shall forfeit all games played with ineligible players.

5.5 PLAYERS BEHAVIOR

Any verbal badgering of officials or derogatory language between opposing players after officials have asked once for Team Captains' control may result in player(s) involved in action being disqualified. The first derogatory action or language will be penalized 15 yards and the team captain warned. The second derogatory action or language will cause player(s) to be disqualified, and a 15-yard penalty against the team of the disqualified player(s).

Consumption of alcoholic beverages on the sidelines by players, Manager, or Coaches is prohibited (Unsportsman like Conduct).

6.0 PLAYING REGULATIONS

6.1 COIN TOSS

At the beginning of the game, a coin toss will be held and the winner (team A) will get his choice of offense, defense (goal line to defend), or to defer until second half. The loser of the coin toss (team B) will have the remaining option of either offense or defense depending on what team A choose, or either offense or defense if team a deferred. In the second half, the deferring team chooses first or if there was no deferring team, team B chooses first.

6.2 BALL IN PLAY

The ball shall be put in play at the beginning of the game, beginning of the second half, after a touchback, and after a score by placing the ball on the 20-yard line of the offensive team with 1st down and “line-to-gain”. At all times the ball shall be put in play from the center of the field or the spot marked by the official ball marker. Penalty Illegal snap, 5 yards from L.O.S.

6.3 HUDDLE

After the official marks the ball “ready-for-play”, the offense will have 25 seconds to put the ball in play or else be penalized 5 yards for a Delay of Game. It is not necessary to huddle after a play if a team wishes to use predetermined plays or audible.

6.4 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 (1 second) before the ball is snapped or before another player can go in motion prior to the snap.

6.5 MOTION

Only 1 player is allowed to be in motion at the snap and his movement must be parallel to or away from the L.O.S. and must be continuous.

6.6 ENCROACHMENT OFFSIDE

Encroachment Offside shall be called if either the offense or the defense passes over the plane of the 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 unless a 1st down would occur (Captain's Choice).

6.7 1ST DOWN

A team will be allowed 4 downs to advance the ball from one zone to the next. A Zone is 20 yards. The zone will be considered reached when the both hips (flags) are on or over the line marking the next zone, or in this case "the line to gain" when the play is declared dead.

If, after 4 consecutive downs, a team has failed to advance the ball into the next zone, possession shall go to the defense at the spot at the end of the last down.

6.8 LINE PLAY

Any or all of the 8 players may be on the offensive or defensive L.O.S. at the snap.

The defensive line must be 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 1 yard off the ball if lined up to the side of the center at the snap.

6.9 SCREENING/RUSHING

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., as follows: The screener must have arms at his side, have thumbs hooked in his pants or belt or arms locked behind his back; and the screener may not block with his head, hips or legs; the screener may not leave his feet to screen; there can be no independent movement of the elbow.

The rusher may not run over the screener. The rusher may not pull the screener toward him or push the screener away from him. A penalty will be automatically called if the rusher touches the screener's head as long as the screener is screening upright. The screener may not step into the rusher.

Moving screens behind the L.O.S. for the passer or potential passer is legal. Once the pass or the potential passer crosses the L.O.S., all down field 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 deliberately screen any defensive players. They must be clearly in the act of positioning for a

lateral. Moving screens shall be penalized from the P.O.I. Penalty: 10 yards and loss of down if it occurs beyond the L.O.S.

“Pick Plays” by receivers on defensive backs or linebackers are illegal if set by receivers within 5 yards of a defender (a form of down field screening).

Roughing the passer when the pass is incomplete will be marked off from the L.O.S. When the pass is complete the penalty will be marked off from the E.O.R. Penalty: 10 - yards and an automatic 1st down.

Defensive player may not have any contact with the passer when he is passing. The defense 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. If the rusher touches the quarterback on the head in his attempt to block a pass. If the rusher, while attempting to deflag the quarterback or block a pass, lets his momentum carry him into the passer, Roughing the Passer will be called.

6.10 PASSING

There can be only one forward pass per play. There can only be 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.

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).

6.11 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING

Intentional Grounding shall constitute an illegal forward pass.

A lateral will be any pass thrown overhand or underhand perpendicular to or away from the direction of advancement of the team in possession. Forward laterals are treated as illegal forward passes if beyond the L.O.S.

Push or Shovel Passes thrown in any direction are legal if initiated behind the L.O.S. Once a player crosses the L.O.S., push or shovel passes are legal if thrown parallel to or behind the ball carrier.

6.12 RECEIVING

All players of both teams are eligible pass receivers. Each player is eligible, even if he steps out of bounds or out of the end zone, as long as he catches the

ball inbounds or comes down first inbounds with at least 1 foot. If a receiver comes down with one foot inbounds and one foot out of bounds simultaneously, the pass is incomplete. The lines marking the sidelines and the extreme back of the end zone shall be considered out of bounds if stepped on any degree.

6.13 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 pass receiver nor defender may touch the other 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 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 “strip” the ball from his hands.

Receiver stripping is defined as attempting to take the ball from the grasp of a receiver after he has placed both hands on the ball but before he has brought the ball into a possessive position, in which case, Pass Interference will be called. If the player established possession of the football, the defender must go for the flag and not the ball. (Officials judgment will determine if a catch has taken place). Penalty is same as Pass Interference.

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 unavoidable contact caused by both players “playing the ball” or avoidable contact, which shall be penalized. Penalty will be 10 yards from P.O.I. if incomplete or complete, or judged to be flagrant, the penalized player may be removed from the game and penalty will be 15 yards. If pass is judged to be uncatchable, penalty will be assessed from the L.O.S.

All pass interference calls, whether offensive or defensive, occurring during the “Regulation Play Period”, “7-Play Rule”, “Tie Breaker Period”, or the “P.A.T. Try Period”, which are accepted by the defensive captain shall be marked off 10 yards from L.O.S. with loss of down (and loss of play during “7-Play Period” and “Tie Breaker Period”).

All defensive pass interference calls, whether they are during “Regulation Play Period” or “Tie Breaker Period” which is accepted by the offensive captain shall be marked off 10 yards from P.O.I. and awarded an automatic first down. During P.A.T. try period team will be awarded an additional play (two tries), if needed to score.

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 will be a 10-yard penalty from L.O.S. and Captain's choice.

6.14 DEFLAGGING

The ball carrier is down and the ball is dead when either flag is detached from the ball carrier's belt or when the ball or either knee touches the ground. A defensive player's feet may leave the ground to pull the offensive player's flag, but he 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.

Tackling is prohibited. Tackling is defined as 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 is made, the responsibility of the contact lies with the defensive player. The penalty for tackling will be as follows: 10 yards for impeding; 15 yards for tackling (encircling of body), with automatic first down (if tackling) from P.O.I. or L.O.S.; and if, in the opinion of the officials, the act prevented a score, the ball will be placed on the 1-yard line, first down and goal. The offender will be disqualified if the act was in the officials' judgment to be flagrant.

The intended receiver of either a forward or lateral pass may be deflagged only after first touching the ball – even while fumbling or bobbling the ball and before possession is established. The 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.

Runner Stripping occurs when a defender attempts to strip the ball from the grasp of a player who has the ball in a possessive position. This is a form of Illegal Deflagging.

6.15 QUICK WHISTLE

Pretending to pull an opponent's flag (raising empty hand intentionally) resulting in official's "Quick Whistle" will be penalized 10 yards.

6.16 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, but must realize that while spinning or 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. and loss of down if it occurs beyond the L.O.S.

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 L.O.S. (if behind the line), or from P.O.I. if beyond the L.O.S. and loss of down.

6.17 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 a bounce (one) or from the ground. However, if the 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 center of the field or the spot marked by the official ball marker.

6.18 PUNT

If a punt is to be made, the offense must announce it to the referee before the ball can be declared ready for play. The offense must declare within 10 seconds after asked by referee on 4th down play. (Penalty: Delay of Game.) After the 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. If a defensive penalty occurs after the offense declares the punt, a timeout is called by the offense, or a delay of game penalty is called on the offense, they can reconsider their choice to punt.

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, neither team may cross the L.O.S. until the ball is kicked. The offense may have any number of its 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 the zone until the punter enters that zone, at which time they may provide stationary screens or maneuver for a lateral. These 5 may not attempt to screen any member of the punting team as they pass through this 5-yard zone. Penalty: 10 yards from E.O.R./P.O.I.

If the punt hits a member of the punting team, who 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 it is first touched by the punting team.

The punt returning team may have 3 returnees in deep positions. The 2 returnees that do not carry the ball may not act as moving screens. They may run forward and provide stationary screens, or maneuver for a lateral. Penalty: 10 yards from P.O.I.

The punt returning team may field the punt in the air, off a bounce (one or more), or directly off the ground, if fielded cleanly. When a punt touches a player on the receiving team who is inbounds and the ball rebounds into the air, all players become eligible to intercept and advance the ball before it touches the ground. This applies even if the punt hits the ground before first touching the receiving team's player.

The punt returning team must be given the opportunity to field the punt in the air. If the ball is touched in the air by the punting team there will be a 10-yard penalty from the P.O.I.

On a punt play, there is 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).

If a punt is left unattended, it becomes dead where it rolls to a stop.

No Quick Kicks are allowed. It is a 5-yard penalty from L.O.S and loss of down.

Punts muffed by the receiving team in the end zone before possession, and ball hits in or out of the end zone, will be touchbacks. If the ball is touched in the air or on the ground by the punting team in the end 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 the punt receiver remains in end zone 5 seconds after fielding the punt, or downs the punt by knee, or touching the ball to the ground after possession, it is a touchback. If the punt receiver is carried into the end zone by his original momentum (officials judgment) and falls to cross the goal line, it is a touchback. (Punt return rules may also apply to interception return.)

A muffed lateral in the end zone will be a safety.

6.19 TIE BREAKER/OVERTIME

Tie Breaker – In the event of a tie game at the end of the half, the following method will be used:

The 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 (P.A.T.s included) the most points or gain the most yardage. 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 40-yard 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.

6.20 PENALTIES

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 the snap or after the ball is blown dead) will automatically be marked off. This means that 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 the Captain of the penalized team may discuss it with the officials. The official making the call is obligated to give the players' number and the act they committed (without discussion) to the penalized team captain. The official will then give the opposing team captain his options on the penalty.

If, in the judgment of any game official, the following acts are deliberate or flagrant, the player(s) involved shall be ejected from the game.

- 1) Using fists, kicking, or kneeling
- 2) Illegal use of hands, forearms, or elbows
- 3) Tackling
- 4) Any deliberate or flagrant act which could cause injury
- 5) Any act of unsportsman like conduct
- 6) Abusive, profane, or insulting language
- 7) Any act of unfair or rough play
- 8) Threats or harassment of other players/officials
- 9) Verbal badgering of officials
- 10) Sideline interference

Note: Warning is not required.

There will be a minimum of 1-game suspension for any person ejected from a game for any reason.

6.21 7-PLAY RULE PERIOD

The period goes into effect once time has expired in the 1st and 2nd half.

6.22 OFFSETTING PENALTIES

If offsetting fouls occur during a down, while the ball is ready-for-play, that down shall be played over.

7.0 COED MODIFICATIONS

a. **Number of Players:** Coed games shall be played between two (2) teams of seven players, four (4) men and three (3) women. A team must have at least five (5) players present to start and continue a game. The five (5) players must contain at least two (2) members of the opposite gender. A team may never have more than four (4) male players on the field at any time. Teams may play with any of the following male and female combinations:

- i. 2 males/3 females
- ii. 3 males/2 females
- iii. 2 males/4 females
- iv. 3 males/3 females
- v. 4 males/2 females
- vi. 2 males/5 females
- vii. 3 males/4 females
- viii. 4 males/3 females

b. **Game Ball:** Coed games will use the regular, intermediate, junior, or youth size football.

c. **Male Runner:** An offensive male runner cannot advance the ball through his scrimmage line. There are no restrictions during a run by a male runner once the ball has been touched beyond the scrimmage line, during a run by a female runner, after a change of team possession, and after a legal forward pass. **Penalty:** Illegal Advancement, 5 yards from the previous spot.

d. **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. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yards. The spot where the ball becomes dead by rule must be beyond the A 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. **Penalty:** Illegal Male Reception, 5 yards from the previous spot and a loss of down. Any other foul, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next legal forward pass completion is open or closed.

e. **Mercy Rule:** The "mercy rule" is reached if a team is twenty-three (23) or more points ahead (in the second half) when the referee announces time has expired. It is also reached should a team score during the last 7 plays of the game and the score creates a point differential of twenty-three (23) or more points.

f. **Touchdown Value:** If a female player scores a touchdown, the point value is 9. If a female player throws a legal forward pass and a touchdown is scored by any player, prior to change of possession, the point value is 9. All other touchdowns are worth 6 points. All PATs will be 'open' plays.