

# T.F.F.A.



## Flag Football Rules and Regulations

[WWW.TEXASFLAGFOOTBALL.COM](http://WWW.TEXASFLAGFOOTBALL.COM)

## **Texas Flag-Football Association (TFFA)**

TFFA is a network of leagues and teams that promote non-contact flag football as a year round competitive sport. TFFA will sponsor a series of tournaments culminating with a state championship. TFFA seeks to collaborate with other state and national organizations interested in the advancement of flag-football.

### **Goals of TFFA thru Sanctioning**

- \* State-wide standardized rules
- \* Development of state ranking system
- \* Development & Maintenance of [texasflagfootball.com](http://texasflagfootball.com)
- \* State-wide promotion of sanctioned tournaments
- \* Participate in a structured state qualifying system
- \* Establishment of Texas Flag-Football Hall of Fame
- \* to create a general public awareness of Flag-Football

### **Registration Fees**

- \* Sanctioned Tournament - \$75 per tournament
- \* Sanctioned League - \$50 per season

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### 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 53-1/3 yards wide.

### 2.0 EQUIPMENT

#### 2.1 BALL

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

An infraction of using too small of a football will be an automatic penalty of reversing possession of the football at the place of the last snap prior to discovery of the illegal ball, if the ball was used for 1 play. If the illegal ball is discovered prior to the snap, there will be a **10-yard penalty**, no reversal of possession and removal of the ball.

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

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. A number on the front is recommended but not mandatory. Jerseys must be tucked in. The midriff shirt is legal, if in the judgment of the referee, it does not hinder the defense from pulling the flag. No article of clothing may cover any portion of a player's flag (Flag Guarding). **Officials should warn violators of this between plays.** This incurs a **10-yard penalty** from Point Of Infraction (P.O.I.) or Line Of Scrimmage (L.O.S).

The lower uniform may be shorts, warm-ups, pants or any other type of athletic wear. Pants with pockets are not allowed.

No jewelry of any kind may be worn by players. Players in violation are given 20 seconds to remove jewelry and the team is penalized a **Uniform/Equipment penalty: (a charged timeout or delay of game if no timeouts remain).**

No headgear with an extended bill may be worn. (i.e. baseball caps, visors etc.) Players in violation are given 20 seconds to remove headgear and the team is penalized a **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 or track spikes or any shoes that have steel or

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metal tips are prohibited. All players must wear shoes. (Exception: Punter has the option to kick barefoot). Players in violation will be given 20 seconds to remove footwear and the team is penalized a **Uniform/Equipment penalty: (a charged timeout or delay of game if no timeouts remain).**

### 2.4 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Helmets, shoulder pads are prohibited. Knee or thigh pads are allowed if made from a soft material. Any question as to the legality of players' equipment shall be decided by the referee of that game. The use of any unyielding hard substance cannot be used to protect an injury, no matter how well covered or padded. Therapeutic or prevention knee braces can be used if covered from direct external exposure. Players in violation will be given 20 seconds to remove equipment and the team is penalized a **Uniform/Equipment penalty: (a charged timeout or delay of game if no timeouts remain).**

### 2.5 FLAGS

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 attempted de-flagging.

Sonic flags are recommended, but the choice of type, material, and securing mechanisms used shall be determined by league or tournament directors.

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 flag belt malfunction must be brought to the attention of director to rule on whether flags will be allowed.**

Any player not having the required 2 flags will be ruled de-flagged 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.

**Penalty: 10-yards from P.O.I. or L.O.S.**

The flags must be 12 inches (flag itself) in length and 1-1/2 inches in width and must be a different color than the players' lower uniform. (Stripes may be same color as flags, provided stripe is no more than 3 inches wide.

Any hanging object on the ball carrier (such as towels, or playbooks etc.) shall be considered flags if they are pulled during an attempted de-flagging.

### 3.0 LENGTH OF GAMES AND TIMEOUTS

#### 3.1 PERIODS

The game shall be played in 4 quarters of 10 minutes in length. In all games the clock will be running continuously.

At the end of 8 minutes in the second and fourth quarters, the teams will be given a **Two-Minute Warning** and told that there are only 7 plays left in that half.

Time periods may be modified during Tournament/Post-Season play and during or approaching adverse weather conditions all other situations may be decided by local director,

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### Clock Regulations:

- \* The clock will start each quarter when the official puts the ball in play.
- \* After a team timeout, the clock will start at the snap of the ball.
- \* Because the clock is continuous, it does not stop during Point After Touchdown (P.A.T.) attempts.
- \* The clock will stop for team timeouts, official time outs, long explanations or discussions 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

Teams shall exchange End Zones at the end of the first quarter and then again at the end of the third quarter.

### 3.3 HALF TIME

Half Time will be the period of non-play between the 2nd and 3rd quarters. It will be a minimum of 3 minutes and a maximum of 5 minutes.

### 3.4 TIMEOUTS

Each team shall have 2 timeouts per half. Each team will be allowed 1 timeout during a tie breaker. Timeouts will be 1 minute in length. Timeouts may be called by any player that participated in the last play and is on the field of play.

Additional Timeouts - Additional timeouts may be called by the officials at their discretion.

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

**NOTE:** During a team's charged timeout, a team representative may confer with their team either on the field or at the sidelines.

## 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:

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- \* 1 point - Forward pass from the 3-yard line.
- \* 2 points -
  - Run from 3-yard line.
  - Run or Pass from 10-yard line.

The scoring team must declare prior to marking the ball ready for play whether they will snap from the 3 or 10-yard line. Scoring team may reconsider choice by calling a timeout or taking a Delay of Game Penalty (if no timeouts remain).

### 4.3 SAFETY

A safety scores 2 points. The team scored against will then punt the ball from their own 10-yard line. Receiving team must have 5 players on the 20 yard line. Punt rules apply (6.20).

### 4.4 FORFEITED GAME

In a game forfeiture, the score is recorded as 7-0.

### 4.5 WINNER OF TIE BREAKER

The winner of the overtime period will be awarded 1 point; to be added to the final score of regulation play.

### 4.6 "MERCY RULE"

A game is declared over if: 1. either team is ahead by 17 points or more at the 7-Play warning of the fourth quarter, 2. either team is ahead by 17 or more during the 7-Play period, or 3. if a winner has been determined during the 7-Play period.

## 5.0 PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

### 5.1 PLAYERS

TFFA Flag Football teams will consist of is 8 players with all being eligible receivers. A team may not field less then 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.

"Sleepers" on substitution 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.



### 5.3 TEAM ROSTER

A team's regular playing roster shall not exceed 20 players, including a Player/Manager. No new player may be added to a team's regular playing roster after a set date (determined prior to start of season).

### 5.4 ELIGIBILITY

No player shall be permitted to play TFFA 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 team violating this rule shall forfeit all games played with ineligible players.

### 5.5 CLASSIFICATION OF TEAMS

Team classification shall be determined by the League Director or Regional Coordinator. For tournament play it shall be determined by State Director. Directors may make an on-the-spot decision in order to avoid an unfair situation.

### 5.6 PLAYER 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).

Sideline players and fans are subject to the same disqualification for abusive, obscene, or badgering language to either opposing players or officials. If the Captain or Coach of the penalized team cannot control the action of his players or fans, the game can be forfeited at the discretion of the game officials.

Consumption of alcoholic beverages on the sidelines by players, Managers or Coaches is prohibited (Unsportsmanlike Conduct).

### 5.7 FAKING EXCESSIVE CONTACT

Any player, who in the judgment of the officials, fakes excessive contact for the sole purpose of drawing a penalty may be warned once by the officials and then **penalized for Unsportsmanlike Conduct** on the next offense. A warning to 1 player may be applied to a team as a whole if the officials so state that this warning is to the team. **Penalty: Treated as a Dead Ball Foul, 15 yards.**

### 5.8 BEGGING A CALL

During a play, if a possible infraction occurs and players or Coaches from either team, either on the field or sidelines begin yelling out (Begging A Call), a **penalty of 5 yards** can be tacked onto the end of the play. This penalty will be marked off as a Dead Ball Foul even if it occurred while play was in progress.

## 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, or to defer choice until second half. The loser of the coin toss (team B) will have the option of which goal to defend. In the second half, the deferring team will be on offense or if there was no deferring team, team B will be on offense.

Team A will have choice of which goal to defend.

### 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. At no time shall more than 8 players break from the huddle. **Penalty: Illegal participation: 5 yards from L.O.S.**

### 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).

If a player on either side lines up offside, the official will point toward that player's team side. If that player does not get back on side before

the ball is snapped, he will be considered as having been offside at the moment of the snap. If an official has not "offside warned" a team for lining up offside by pointing at them, he should not call offside on them at the snap of the ball. **Penalty: 5-yard penalty from L.O.S. or captain's choice after play is over.**

## 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 STANCES

Any stance is permitted (when lining up for a play).

## 6.9 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 of the ball if lined up to the side of the center at the snap.

## 6.10 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.

A penalty will automatically be called if a screener's hands extends away from his body 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 places the screener in a very vulnerable position. Therefore, **The Main Responsibility of Avoiding Contact Rests With the Rusher.** IT IS ASKED THAT BOTH THE SCREENER AND THE RUSHER STRIVE FOR NON-CONTACT.

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).

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Defensive player may not have any contact with an offensive player when he is in a passing position. 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 passer on the head in his attempt to block a pass; if the rusher, while attempting to de-flag the passer or block a pass, lets his momentum carry him into the passer, Roughing the Passer will be called.

Roughing the passer when the pass is incomplete will be marked off from the L.O.S. When the pass is complete or the ball has been advanced down field the penalty will be marked off from the E.O.R. **Penalty: 10 yards and an automatic 1st down.**

### 6.11 PASSING

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

A direct handoff or a bobbled, but complete direct handoff, 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./L.O.S.

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).

### 6.12 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.

### 6.13 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.

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. The official(s)

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will determine (1) did pass interference occur? (2) who caught the ball? and (3) was receiver inbounds with at least one foot at moment of possession?

A double reception always goes to the offense.

### 6.14 PASS INTERFERENCE/RECEIVER STRIPPING

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 or 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 cannot be called. 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 un-catchable, penalty will be assessed from the LOS.

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. 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.**

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", will be Captain's choice penalties. If the captain refuses the penalty, the play will stand.

All offensive pass interference calls, whether they are during "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 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", "7-Play Period" or "Tie Breaker Period" which are 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 two tries from either the 3 or 10 yard line.

Screening a receiver's eyes by a defender without playing the football shall be penalized as pass interference.

Bump and Run or checking an offensive receiver will be a **10-yard penalty** from L.O.S. and Captain's choice.

### 6.15 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. **Penalty: 10 yards from P.O.I. or L.O.S.** 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

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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 de-flagged 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 de-flagged.

If the quarterback's arm was in forward motion when his flag was pulled, the pass is allowed. If the passer is legally de-flagged as he is passing the football, and later in that play receives the ball back, he shall be downed at that spot.

Illegal De-flagging is prematurely pulling an opponent's flag with the intent of making the offensive player ineligible to become a ball carrier. Penalty: 10 yards from L.O.S. or E.O.R. A defender may not push or knock a ball carrier out of bounds, (a form of illegal de-flagging). **Penalty: 10 yards from P.O.I.(Automatic First Down) and placed on the 1 yard line if act prevented a score .**

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 De-flagging.

### 6.16 QUICK WHISTLE

If the official whistles the play dead prematurely, the offense shall have the choice of: 1) accepting the ball where it was whistled dead, or 2) replaying the down or play unless a quick whistle occurs when ball is in the air and is immediately followed by a reception, then that team (offense or defense) shall have choice of option.

Pretending to pull an opponent's flag (raising empty hand intentionally) resulting in official's "Quick Whistle", will be penalized 10 yards and offense's choice of either #1 or #2 above. 3) Will have a choice of accepting a score when a quick whistle was blown obviously preventing a score.

Offensive fouls, if they were committed before a "Quick Whistle", have priority over a "Quick Whistle".

### 6.17 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 must 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. 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.

### 6.18 FUMBLE

Forward offensive fumbles will result in ball being marked dead at the point of fumble, backward fumbles will be marked at point where ball hits the ground or goes out of bounds.

## 6.19 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 more) 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, and must travel in a backward or parallel direction. 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.

Direct Snaps are Legal; but there must be a clear and immediate exchange of the ball between the center and the quarterback.

## 6.20 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 that zone until the punt return man enters that zone. **Penalty: 5 yards from E.O.R.** 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 return men in deep positions. The 2 return men 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. However, if receiving teams player is within 5 yards of the LOS, the ball is dead where touched, if the motion of the ball is altered.

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 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 enforce penalty leaves the ball past the line-to-gain).

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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.

The initial direction of a punt must be towards the opponents goal line. **Penalty: Illegal kick**

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 de-flagged 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 fails 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.

### 6.21 TIE BREAKER/OVERTIME

Tie Breaker - In the event of a tie game at the end of the 4th quarter, the following method will be used:

The officials will call a timeout of 2 minutes, during which time the officials and team Captains will have a coin toss. The winner will have the 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.

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 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.

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 a Tie Breaker, teams will be allowed one timeout each.

An interception terminates the offensive team's chances (unless ball changes possession again during play). The defense cannot score but may advance the interception and negate positive yardage if advanced beyond the point of the last snap. The winner of the Tie Breaker shall be given awarded one point.

**Negative yards are considered ZERO "0" yards.**

### 6.22 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.



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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. That Captain's first choice will be final.

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 unsportsmanlike 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
- 11) Defensive interference with offensive signals

**Note: Warning is not required.**

There will be a minimum of 1-game suspension for any person ejected from a game for any reason. Local and tournament rules may be more severe.

At the officials discretion, a player may be removed for two (2) or more plays and then be allowed to return to the game.

Penalties which would otherwise be marked off past the goal line, shall be placed on the 1-yard line.

### **6.23 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 there will be a 5-yard penalty plus loss of down.

### **6.24 7-PLAY RULE PERIOD**

The period goes into effect at the 2-minute warning of the 2nd and 4th quarters. From this point on, the clock is no longer kept. Instead, there will be 7 plays left in the half or game. At the 2-minute warning of the 2nd or 4th quarters, the officials will give the down, distance, and play number on all plays remaining. Teams must continue to make first downs if they want to keep possession, as it is while using the clock. However, if they don't make a first down, the defense has a chance to gain possession and use the remainder of the 7 plays. P.A.T. try will not count as one of the 7 plays.

### **6.25 OFFSETTING PENALTIES**

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

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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 down, the team last gaining possession may decline the offsetting fouls and retain possession after accepting the penalty for its own infraction, providing that the infraction occurs after the change of possession. This exception is commonly known as the principle of "clean hands". If offsetting fouls occur prior to change of possession, play shall be repeated.

### 6.26 GENERAL PENALTY INTERPRETATIONS

All penalties shall be marked 5 or 10 yards, unless in the opinion of the officials, the foul is flagrant or of excessive contact, in which case, penalty will be 15 yards and the player may be ejected.

In order to establish a simple philosophy in assessing penalties, these general rules hold true with only a few exceptions:

1. Accepted Penalties: Are marked from the E.O.R., L.O.S., or P.O.I., and the down may or may not be replayed.
2. Refused Penalties: The ball stays where blown dead and the down is not replayed.
3. Live Ball Fouls: Are Captain's choice.
4. Dead Ball Fouls: Are not Captain's choice and will be marked off unless penalty enforcement would award offense a first down.
5. Downfield Offensive Penalties: Shall be marked from P.O.I., and result in a loss of down or play.
6. Downfield Defensive Penalties: Will be marked from P.O.I., and the down or play will not be repeated
7. Defensive Penalties: where the full distance cannot be marked off; play and down will be repeated
8. After enforcement of a defensive foul ball may not change possession, game or half may not end and P.A.T. try will be repeated.

"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 and if against the defense down will be repeated.

1. Defensive penalties on teams backed up to within 1 yard from their goal line will result in the play being run again from L.O.S. plus one free down awarded to the offense if they have not scored by the 4th down.
2. Offensive penalties on the team backed up to within 1 yard from their goal line will result in a Loss of Down unless there is a change of possession during the play.
3. Offense Fouls in their own end zone will be the Captain's choice: Safety or Loss of Down.

7-Play Period and Tie Breaker Penalties: If accepted, that play number shall be repeated, unless penalty is loss of down or a downfield defensive penalty.

Penalties that are enforced as loss of down play will not be repeated. If down is repeated or an automatic first down is awarded, then play will be repeated.

Penalties on the playing field during the tie breaker shall be marked the same as during regulation time.

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Penalty Enforcement and Line-to-Gain

1. Enforcement of any penalty which leaves the ball across the line-to-gain will result in a new line-to-gain (1st down).
2. Enforcement of any live ball foul which leaves the ball short of the line-to-gain will result in the first down line remaining the same.

All 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 the Captain's choice penalties.

**6.27 PROTEST PROCEDURE**

Any protests for misinterpretation or application of playing rules must be settled on the spot before the next play. The Manager or Coach must have a copy of the rules in order to validate his protest. Otherwise, "Delay of Game" will be called. Judgment calls can not be protested. **Tournament Director may assist in protest**

See Appendix for Penalty Table.

ADOPTED AUGUST 1992

Revised February 2008

<b>GENERAL INFRACTIONS</b>				
<b>Penalty</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Yards</b>	<b>Marked From</b>	<b>Loss of Down</b>
ILLEGAL BALL	2.1	10	LOS	NO
UNIFORM/EQUIPMENT	2.2-2.4	5	LOS	NO
DELAY OF GAME	2.4/6.3	5	LOS	NO
DEROGATORY ACTION/LANGUAGE	5.6	15	LOS	NO
FAKING EXCESSIVE CONTACT	5.7	15	EOR	NO
BEGGING A CALL	5.8	5	EOR	NO
ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTION	5.2	5	LOS	NO
ILLEGAL PARTICIPATION	5.2/6.3	5	LOS	NO
ENCROACHMENT/OFFSIDE	6.6	5	LOS	NO

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ILLEGAL SCREEN(PUNT)	6.20	10	POI	NO
FLAGRANT/DELIBERATE	6.22	15	LOS/POI/ EOR	NO
ILLEGAL ADVANCEMENT	6.23	5	LOS/POI	YES
SIDELINE INTERFERENCE	6.22	15	LOS	NO
UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT	6.22	15	LOS/EOR	NO

<b>OFFENSIVE INFRACTIONS</b>				
<b>Penalty</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Yards</b>	<b>Marked From</b>	<b>Loss of Down</b>
CLOTHING COVERING FLAG	2.2	10	LOS	NO
(BEYOND LOS)	2.2	10	POI	YES
UNIFORM/EQUIPMENT	2.2-2.4	5	LOS	NO
ILLEGAL FLAGS (carries a disqualification as well)	2.5	15	LOS	YES
FLAGS OUT OF POSITION	2.5	10	POI	NO
(BEYOND LOS)	2.5	10	POI	YES
FAKING EXCESSIVE CONTACT	5.7	15	LOS	NO
ILLEGAL SNAP	6.2-6.19	5	LOS	NO
ILLEGAL MOTION/SHIFT	6.4-6.5	5	LOS	NO
ILLEGAL SCREEN	6.10	10	LOS	NO
ILLEGAL DOWNFIELD SCREEN	6.10	10	POI	YES
ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS	6.11	5	LOS/POI	YES
INTENTIONAL GROUNDING	6.12	5	LOS	YES
PASS INTERFERENCE	6.14	10	LOS	YES
CHARGING INTO DEFENSE	6.17	10	LOS	NO
(BEYOND LOS)	6.17	10	POI	YES
FLAG GUARDING	6.17	10	LOS	NO
(BEYOND LOS)	6.17	10	POI	YES

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STIFF ARM	6.17	10	LOS	NO
(BEYOND LOS)	6.17	10	POI	YES
ILLEGAL TOUCHING OF BALL IN AIR	6.20	5	POI	NO
QUICK KICK / ILLEGAL KICK	6.20	5	LOS	YES
EXCESSIVE CONTACT		10/15	LOS	NO
(DURING PASS)	6.14	10/15	LOS	YES

**DEFENSIVE INFRACTIONS**

<b>Penalty</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Yards</b>	<b>Marked From</b>	<b>Repeat Down</b>
ILLEGAL LINE PLAY	6.6/6.9	5	LOS	YES
ILLEGAL RUSH	6.10	10	LOS	YES
ROUGHING THE PASSER	6.10	10	LOS/EOR	AFD
PASS INTERFERENCE	6.14	10	POI	AFD
RECEIVER STRIPPING	6.14	10	POI	AFD
SCREENING RECEIVERS EYES	6.14	10	POI	AFD
BUMP AND RUN	6.14	10	LOS	YES
CONTACT ON RECEIVER	6.14	10	POI	NO
(PASS UNCATCHABLE)	6.14	10	LOS	YES
CONTACT ON BALL CARRIER	6.15	10	LOS/POI	Y/N
TACKLING	6.15	15	LOS/POI	AFD
ENCIRCLING/HOLDING/ IMPEDING	6.15	10	LOS	YES
(DOWNFIELD)	6.15	10	POI	NO
IMPEDING TOUCHDOWN	6.15	*		AFD
ILLEGAL DEFLAGGING	6.15	10	LOS/EOR	Y/N
RUNNER STRIPPING	6.15	10	LOS/POI	YES
PUSHING BALL CARRIER OUT OF BOUNDS	6.15	10/15	LOS/POI	AFD

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FAKING DEFLAGGING	6.15	15	LOS/POI	YES
ROUGH PLAY	6.22	10/15	LOS/POI	Y/N

AFD - Automatic First Down

\* - Ball on 1 yard

# TFFA



## Fall & Spring State Tournaments

**The Fall tournament is always the weekend before Thanksgiving.  
The Spring tournament is always on Memorial Weekend.**

**For more information, contact the State Director  
@ 210/734-0374**



**Andy Gonzalez  
State Director**

**210/734-0374**

**[www.texasflagfootball.com](http://www.texasflagfootball.com)**

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