

## TFFA FLAG FOOTBALL INVITATIONAL RULES

### TEAMS

The format is eight on eight, with a minimum of six players needed at the start of the game. Rosters are limited to a maximum of 14 players with no more than two (2) non Public Safety/Active Military employees. Teams must have matching jerseys. If the situation arises in which both teams have like colors, the team-designated visitor is tasked with changing jersey color if needed. Substitutions are unlimited but must take place during a break in play and must be completed before the snap of the ball.

### EQUIPMENT

Players are encouraged **not** to wear any type of jewelry, for the purpose of preserving keepsakes, avoiding injury to self and fellow competitors. No padding or other type of hard material may be worn. Exception- Knee/other type braces. If braces are used, they must be covered by padding sufficient to eliminate injury to others. Players **WILL NOT** wear metal cleats. Footballs will be official size and constructed of leather, composite leather or rubber. The Triple Threat Flags (**one piece belt system**) will be used. Players **will not** tie knots or unfairly secure belts during competition. Issues of safety will be directed to the Referee for final determination.

### GAME CLOCK

The game will consist of 2 twenty-minute halves with a five-minute intermission. The clock will run continuous for the first 18 minutes of each half. **The clock will stop for the two minute warning and every time there after when the following occurs:**

Incomplete Pass- restarts on snap

Ball carrier goes out of bounds- restarts on snap

First Down- restarts when Official sets ball in play

Penalty- restarts on snap

Touchdown- restarts on change of possession snap

Time outs (2 per half)- 1 minute (clock starts when Official sets ball in play)

**Note:** Offense has **25 seconds** to put ball into play to avoid delay of game penalty.

## FIRST DOWNS

The field itself will be sectioned off into 20-yard zones or increments, as the next line to gain. First Downs are awarded when the ball is advanced past the next line to gain, not 20 yards from the spot of the ball.

## FORMATIONS

The ball will be put into play on the 15-yard line at the beginning of each half and following the change of possession post touchdown & PAT. **No kickoffs**- there are however **declared** punts. No fakes or quick kicks.

Offense- The Offense must have **four** men on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. One person may be in motion at snap, but that motion is restricted to lateral and reverse, no up-field movement prior to snap. The snap must go between the center's legs and travel at least 3 yards. All members of the Offense are eligible receivers. **Only one forward pass is allowed.** Multiple lateral or backwards passes are also allowed, however; **no forward passes are allowed after the ball has passed the line of scrimmage.** Intentional grounding - If the quarterback is under duress and throws the ball away to avoid a sack the ball must cross the line of scrimmage or land within 5 yards of an eligible offensive player.

Defense-The Defense must keep a 1-yard neutral zone from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players may bump receivers **once** within the first 5 yards. Players may rush immediately following the snap, but **bull rushing** is not allowed. You must attempt to go around the blocker. **3-point stance is prohibited.**

Protected Status- Defenders may not contact **The Center** until: either they stand up or begin running a pass route. Additionally any contact with the **Quarterback** other than attempting to deflag is prohibited. (Most common violation is attempting to hit QB's arm with ball in hand or as it is just released.) Go for flag not the arm. In both cases these players are unprotected and vulnerable to unnecessary injury. Penalty- 15 yards automatic first down.

## BALL CARRIER

**Flag Guarding:** The ball carrier may not stiff-arm, or otherwise hit a defensive player's hands away from the flag belt. *If the ball carrier's hands or arms impede the defenders access to the flag or flag belt, even in the normal motion of running, it is considered flag guarding.* Best solution is to keep your hands and arms above your waist when running past defenders. Ball carriers will not lower their heads and drive into a defensive player.

Once defensive position is established the runner must attempt to go around. Spinning is allowed however, jumping and or diving to avoid de-flagging is not. . During a passing play, any offensive blocking more than 5 yards downfield **prior** to the ball passing the line of scrimmage is considered **Illegal Downfield Blocking**. Defenders **will not** attempt to chop or strip the ball from the carrier's hands. There are **no fumbles**. The ball is dead where it hits the ground. If a carrier's flag inadvertently falls off the defenders simply touch the runner with one hand to end play. If a runner falls down or touches a knee to the ground, the play is over at that spot. The carrier may use their hands on the ground to maintain balance and remain alive. Ball carriers may lateral the ball to another player, so long as the other player is parallel to or behind the carrier.

### RECEIVING

Receivers and Defenders may leave their feet to catch a ball. Receivers must have possession and one foot in bounds for a legal catch. Defenders may make a play on the ball, but should be aware of the pass interference rule: Referee will interpret. Simultaneous possession of the ball goes to the offense. If a receiver goes out of bounds during the course of his route, he cannot be the first to touch the football when it is thrown. He may re-establish position by putting both feet in bounds and may catch any deflected or tipped pass. If the receiver is inadvertently pushed out of bounds while being bumped by the defender, he can re-establish his position in bounds and be the first to touch a pass. If the defender intentionally pushes the receiver out of bounds, it is a personal foul (15 yard Penalty).

### DEFLAGGING

Defensive players may not tackle, strip ball etc. When the flag is removed from the ball carrier the Defender should stop and hold up the flag. It is important to remember that the location of the stop is as close to where the football is, versus where the player's flags ended up...example (Runner is approaching goal line and extends the ball across the line, while at the same time flags are pulled just behind.) Call- touchdown, as ball crossed the line. Referee has final determination.

### SCORING

Touchdown- 6 points

Extra points - 1 point from 5 yards (run or pass) - 2 points from 10 yards (run or pass)

Safety- 2 points

Interceptions of extra point attempts can be returned for 2 points

### BLOCKING

Push blocking between the shoulders and waist only. Arms must be extended **prior** to contact with defensive player or not extended at all (may not shove or impact push as part of downfield block, contact between waist and shoulders only (no chop blocks)) No dive or chop blocks or blocks to the back allowed. However if a defensive player spins and turns back to blocker, you may keep hands on for control- just no shoving directly to the back in that circumstance. Blockers and rushers may not lower their shoulders to plow into a defender and must be attempting to block with their hands. Blockers and Rushers **will not** use forearms or elbows to gain an advantage over the other. Additionally there will be no intentional hands to the face/head area.

**DOWNFIELD BLOCKING:** Blockers may block on the move behind the line of scrimmage and no further than 5 yards downfield. As previously stated. Push blocking between the shoulders and waist only. Arms must be extended **prior** to contact with defensive player or not extended at all.

Beyond 5 yards downfield all blocking must be stationary pick-blocking. If a blocker has established position the defender must attempt to go around. Once position is established the offensive blocker may not move his feet or use his arms/hands to obstruct the defender.

The Official will determine if a defender running into a pick blocker has committed an illegal contact foul or an unsportsmanlike conduct foul based on the nature of the act. **Downfield blocking penalties will be assessed from the spot of the foul for Offensive violations and from the end of the run/possession for Defensive violations.**

### PUNTS

Must be declared- All offensive players must stand motionless on the line of scrimmage until ball is kicked. **Two receivers** may go back to field the punt, all other members of the receiving team must also stand motionless at the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. The ball may be fielded by the KR on the fly or off **one bounce** from the ground. However if the Kick-Returner muffs or drops the ball after touching it in the air, the ball is dead at the spot where it hit the ground. The Returner may also call/waive for a fair catch. In either case a 5-yard cushion must be given to catch the ball.

### OVERTIME FORMAT

If the game ends in a tie, there will be a 2-minute intermission followed by another coin toss at center field.

The winner of the toss will elect to go on Offense or Defense first.

The ball will be placed on the first-and-goal line (20 yards from end zone).

Team A has 4 plays to attempt a score- If during those 4 plays the ball is intercepted, the defender may attempt to run the ball back to score and end the game. If the defender does not score, a change of possession will occur and Team B will take over on offense.

After Team A's series is over, whether successful or not, Team B takes over and runs 4 plays. If there is no score or the game remains tied, the game goes into another overtime, with the opposite captain having the decision of Defense/Offense.

During the second overtime the ball will be spotted at the ten-yard line and goal-to-go. The sequence of plays is repeated.

If again scoreless or tied a third overtime will take place. A coin toss will be used and the ball will be spotted at the 5-yard line. This third O.T. format will be repeated as many times as necessary to determine a winner.

**NOTE:** There is no game clock during the O.T. session. The only clock to run will be the 25-second clock. Each team is allowed 1 (one) time-out during the O.T. period.

### PERSONAL FOULS and PROHIBITED ACTS

No player will block in a manner that would cause his feet, knees, or legs to strike an opponent, and there will be no dive or chop blocking (all blocking will be with the feet in contact with the ground)

There will be no "bull rushing" A player will not rush through an offensive player. When the rusher makes contact, he must go to either the inside or the outside of the offensive lineman.

There will be no hurdling or diving to advance the ball (A player may dive, jump or hurdle to avoid injury)

There will be no contact with an opponent who is on the ground

The runner will not be thrown to the ground

There will be no unnecessary roughness or unsportsmanlike conduct of any nature

The ball carrier will not deliberately drive or run into a defensive player

The defensive player will not deliberately drive or run into a ball carrier

The center may not be touched until he has begun his pass pattern or stood up to block

No Pushing out of bounds

Abusive or insulting language (referee may opt to give one warning prior to calling a personal foul for unsportsmanlike conduct, a third offense may result in ejection from the game)

Fighting – automatic ejection from tournament

Any acts of unfair play

## **SUMMARY of PENALTIES**

*(A loss of down included in a penalty simply means the down will not be repeated after a penalty has been assessed. This means that if a 10 yard penalty is assessed on a 2<sup>nd</sup> down play with a loss of down then after the 10 yards have been assessed it will be 3<sup>rd</sup> down. If after the 10 yard penalty a First down was still obtained, it will be first down.)*

### 5 YARDS

Delay of game

Illegal Substitution

Free kick infractions

False start

Illegal snap (less than 3 yards)

Encroachment

Less than 4 players on Offensive line at snap

Illegal motion

Article of clothing covering portion of players flag

Defender using 3-Point Stance

Illegal forward pass (5 yards plus loss of down)

## 10 YARDS

Holding

Illegal block (excluding dive/chop blocks)

Interference with opponent or ball before snap

Offensive pass interference (yardage plus loss of down)

Illegal use of hands

Pushing the ball carrier

Illegally quick kicking the ball

Illegal contact

Stripping the ball (spot of foul, possession must be clearly established)

Intentional Grounding (loss of down)

Downfield blocking fouls

## 15 YARDS

Striking, Kicking, Kneeing, Tripping, Clipping, Hurdling, or Hitting

Striking the head

Unsportsmanlike conduct by player or bench

Roughing the passer or center

Fighting (Automatic Ejection)

Bull rushing

Dive/Chop Blocks

Any listed unfair or unsportsmanlike, personal foul, or prohibited act.

Any player leaving the bench area during a fight, and if not actually involved in the fight, is ejected for that game. If any player is involved in the fight, event expulsion, in addition to the yardage penalty.

## SPOT of FOUL

Defensive pass interference (automatic first down, if occurring in the end zone the ball will be spotted at the one yardline)

Flag guarding (5 yard penalty plus loss of down)

Offensive blocking fouls that occur downfield after the catch

Pushing the Ball Carrier

## OFFSETTING PENALTIES

Any combination of penalties committed by both offense and defense during the same play will be considered offsetting penalties. No yardage will be assessed and the down will be replayed. (Personal fouls or unsportsmanlike

conduct occurring before or after the play will be assessed, with no loss of down)