



Indiana Women's Flag Football League Rules

Adopted March 20, 2019

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Mission Statement: *The mission of the Indiana Women's Flag Football League is to provide affordable opportunities to promote women in sport without regard to level of experience, skill level, race, national origin, sexual orientation, religion and socio-economic status.*

Disclaimer: *The Indiana Women's Flag Football League reserves the right to make changes to this document at any time. Participants will be notified of any consequential changes made.*

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Section 1: Participation Requirements

Article 1: Player Eligibility

Any woman aged 21 years and older by May 1 may register to play with Indiana Women's Flag Football League (IWFFL).

Article 2: League Non-Discrimination Policy

IWFFL does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, athletic ability, or experience. Participants are expected to adhere to this policy in their conduct.

Article 3: Insurance and Liability

IWFFL maintains liability insurance. All players and officials are required to sign and submit both an IWFFL Liability Waiver and the CAMP Insurance Waiver prior to the start of the season. Failure to sign these waivers will prevent a player from participating in game play. IWFFL does not provide players with medical insurance coverage. Individual medical coverage is not required to play but is highly recommended.

Section 2: Equipment and Uniforms

Article 1: Footballs

IWFFL provides junior sized balls. Game balls will be clearly marked and brought to the coin toss by the Referee.

Article 2: Flag Belts

All flags will be Triple Threat Flags provided by the IWFFL. All flags are to be returned to team game bags, which will be turned into league officials at the end of each game.

Article 3: Practice Equipment

IWFFL will provide a practice bag complete with balls and flags to captains of each team. Practice bags will be turned in at the end of the season.

Article 4: Footwear

Cleats are allowed and encouraged, but they must be hard plastic or rubber. No metal spikes are allowed. Running shoes are also allowed.

Article 5: Player Uniforms

Only Current-season issued shirts are to be worn to the games. Alterations may only be done to the neck and the sleeves. No player or referee may intentionally alter the length of the shirt, the IWFFL Team Logo, the sponsor logos on the back, or lengthen the armholes such that the gap extends to or beyond the flags belt (this easily leads to injuries and severe damage to shirt). Participants who alter their shirts in violation of these rules will be provided with a new shirt and billed \$20. (Exception: Team shirts torn during game play may be modified in length if necessary but must still be long enough to be tucked under flag belts. If accidental damage is so severe this cannot be accomplished, a new shirt will be provided free of charge.)

Article 6: Protective Gear

The following items are permitted but not required: protective mouthpieces, receiver gloves, elbow pads, ankle braces, and knee pads. Players may also tape their forearms, hands, and fingers. Any braces with exposed metal must be taped and reviewed by Referees before the start of game play.

Article 7: Hazardous Clothing and Accessories

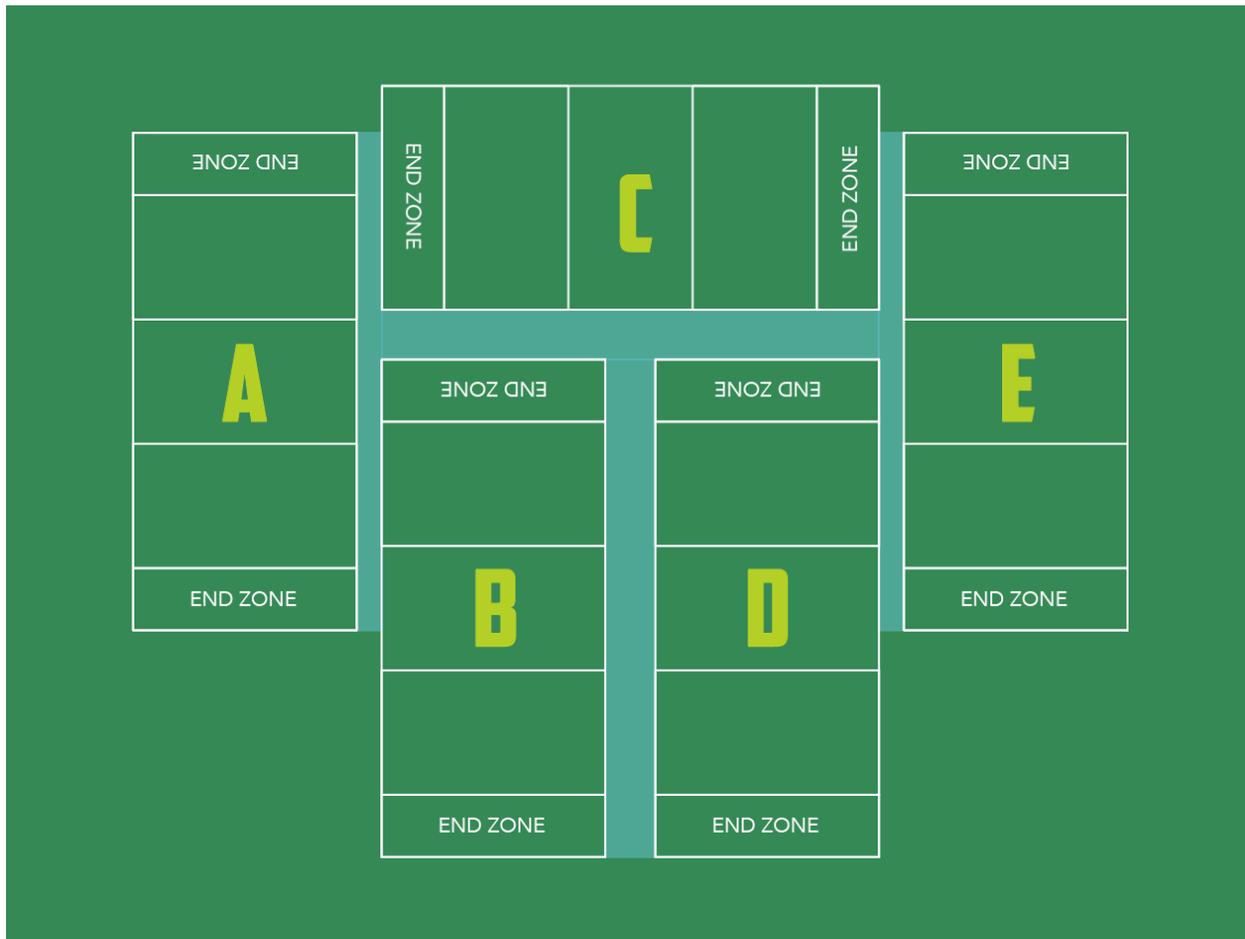
- A. Players should avoid wearing bottoms with large open pockets that can cause injury to defensive players reaching for flag belts. Be aware that loose pants or shorts may lead to possible embarrassing situations. Players are advised to wear well-fitting bottoms.
- B. Players must remove watches, any long or hoop earrings, large rings or any other jewelry that could cause injury. The Referees have final say on any item that needs to be removed.

Section 3: Playing Field

Article 1: Field Dimensions

Each field is 36 yards wide and 80 yards long. End Zones are 10 yards deep. Down markers are placed every 20 yards.

Article 2: Field Diagram



Article 3: Field Boundaries

Field boundaries are marked with a combination of paint, and flat orange or yellow cones. Stepping beyond the boundary line is considered out-of-bounds. (See Section 8, Article 3: Receiving)

Article 4: Down and End Zone Markers

First down lines and End Zones are clearly marked with orange upright pylons.

Article 5: Line of Scrimmage and Defensive Line

The Line of Scrimmage (LOS) is indicated by the line referee at the start of each possession, the defensive team is responsible for moving the cones and retrieving the ball (if necessary). Attached to the LOS cone is the Defensive Line cone.

Article 6: Player Zone

Only current-season players, referees, time keeper, and press are permitted in the marked area between the three fields during game play. Signs and flat blue cones will be used to mark entrances to the Player Zone. Players may leave the zone to speak to spectators during half-time or if a personal issue needs to be addressed.

Article 7: Team Bench

Team Benches are located between the first down marker and the center of the field within the Player Zone. Players not active on the field should stay in the team bench area to allow freedom of movement of Referees and ease of team conversations.

Article 8: Fan Zone

All spectators must remain on the perimeter of the five fields during game play.

Section 4: Teams

Article 1: Captains

Each team is designated two (2) captains. Their role is to represent the team in the league, relay information to players on the team, conduct coin tosses, approach the referee about questions during the game, and foster a positive environment within the team. Team captains are not considered “coaches” and should allow their entire team to develop plays and game strategies.

Article 2: Coaches

IWFFL does not sanction the use of external team coaches during game play. Team players will make any and all decisions during game play. While IWFFL teams may choose to involve spouses, partners, or friends to advise during practices, those individuals will be considered SPECTATORS during game play. Illegal communication during game play between spectators and players will be taken seriously by referees.

Please remember that while YOU may feel your spouse, partner, or friend add valuable input and experience to the team, your teammates may not feel similarly. In order to foster a positive and equitable team environment, these non-league advisors should only be used after agreement from the entire team. Should an individual from your team bring any issues to the attention of league officials, an anonymous team vote will be taken on any further involvement of these non-league advisors.

Article 3: Size of Teams

Each team has a roster of a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 14 players. A player may only appear on one team's roster, NO EXCEPTIONS, even both teams agree. If a player from another team plays for your team, your team will forfeit the game, and the opposing team will be awarded the win and one (1) point.

Article 4: Insufficient Players

A team must have seven (7) players on the field at the start of the game. If a team does not have seven (7) players at the start of the game, the game is officially forfeited. (See Section 6, Article 3: Forfeiture Scoring)

Article 5: Substitute Players

If a team knows in advance of the game that seven (7) players will be unable to play, either due to time conflict or injury, a team may recruit substitute players. The league representatives must be notified prior to obtaining substitute players. All substitute players will be provided a temporary team shirt, and must sign the league and insurance liability waivers. It is up to the team to explain game play rules to the substitute players. The league representatives will notify the captains of the opposing team that substitutes will be playing. A total of three (3) substitute players may play with a team, and only if the team roster for a particular game falls below eight (8) players. Substitute players may not play in post-season (play off) games.

Section 5: Game Time and Overtime

Article 1: Game Day and Time

Games are played on Thursday evenings. Games are scheduled to begin at 6:45pm and end at 8:10pm. Games consist of two 40-minute halves with a 5-minute half-time. A 2-minute time warning will be given prior to end of each half. All five games are played concurrently using the same clock (See Section 5, Article 4).

Article 2: Weather Cancellations

Games will only be cancelled due to extreme or dangerous weather conditions (i.e, heavy rains, high winds, electrical storms). Cancellations will be decided by 5:30pm on the day of the game by majority vote of team captains. Make up games are played on Sunday of that week at 6:45pm.

Article 3: Huddle Clock

Offensive teams may huddle for 30 seconds prior to the start of the play. 30 seconds will be counted off by the Referee, teams will receive one warning to start the play before penalty is enforced. Defensive Teams must also be in position by the snap.

Penalty for Delay of Game: 5 yards from LOS, Replay Down.

Article 4: Injury Delay

In the event of an injury, official game time will continue. The Referee of the affected game will keep track of the time it takes to move the injured player off the field. The time lost will be added to the current half.

Article 5: Overtime

In the event of a tie at the end of regulation play, the game will continue into overtime. Overtime is divided into two (2) phases: Overtime and Sudden Death Overtime. The team who won the original coin toss automatically receives first possession during Overtime play.

- A. Prior to the start of overtime play the referee will conduct a second coin toss, this toss relates to Sudden Death Overtime.
 - A. The team who won the first coin toss calls the coin.
 - B. The winner of the second coin toss will have first possession should the game move to sudden death.
- A. In the first phase of Overtime, each team will have one full (4 down) possession from their 20 yard line.
 - A. If Team A scores, but Team B does not during their possession the game is over and Team A wins.
 - B. If both Team A and Team B score, or no team scores, the game moves to Sudden Death Overtime.
 - C. Interceptions may be returned for a touchdown. Interceptions end the offensive team's possession.
- B. Sudden Death Overtime:
 - A. The team that won the second coin toss has the first possession from the 20 yard line.
 - B. Teams will alternate possession until a point is scored.
 - C. The first point scored wins the game.
 - D. Regular Season Games: In the event that overtime play stretches 30 minutes past the end of normal game play, a tie will be called.
 - E. Post-Season Games: In the event that overtime play stretches 30 minutes past the end of normal game play, a make up game will be scheduled wherein the teams will restart overtime play.

Section 6 - Scoring and Ranking

Article 1: Scoring Values

One (1) point will be awarded for every touchdown. There are no extra point options.

Article 2: Forfeiture Scoring

In the event of a forfeiture, the game will be considered a win and the average of all points scored by teams that day will be the points awarded to the winning team.

Article 3: Mercy Scoring

In the event that during a game, one team is ahead of another team by 10 points (10 touchdowns), the losing team may choose to end the game (and freeze scoring). The game may continue into “free play” where teams may then mix players, change positions and continue to play for fun and without additional scoring. The losing team may also choose to continue regular game play and scoring rather than use the “mercy scoring” option.

Article 4: Ranking

Records will be kept and published by League Officers of team wins, total points scored, and total points scored against. These will be used to determine season rankings. Teams with the most wins will be ranked highest. If two teams are tied for wins, the team with the most points scored will be given higher ranking. If two teams remain tied for both wins and points scored, the teams head to head record will be the next deciding factor; if the teams remain tied, the team with the lowest number of points scored against will be given higher ranking. Rankings are used to determine the post-season game match-ups, and next season's schedule.

Section 7: Possessions

Article 1: Pre-Game Coin Toss

Prior to each game, the Referee shall conduct a coin toss with team captains to determine possession. The winning captain shall choose to start the game on either offense or defense, and which End Zone they would like to defend. Whichever team started on Offense in the 1st Half will be on Defense starting the 2nd half.

Article 2: First Downs

First Downs are achieved by reaching the down markers. Down markers are placed every 20 yards. Teams have 4 downs to reach the down markers.

Article 3: Mercy Rule

On the 4th down, if the offensive team has not advanced past the down marker closest to their end zone (the FIRST for the two down markers), the team has the option to punt the ball. (See Section 11: Punting)

Article 4: Interceptions

- A. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions may be returned. The team will take possession of the ball where the intercepting defender's flag was pulled.
- B. If a penalty occurs on an interception return by the return team, the penalty will be assessed at the spot of the foul. (Exception: Overtime play)

- C. If a penalty occurs on an interception return by the defensive team, the penalty will be assessed at the end of the run.

Article 5: Dead Ball

A ball is live at the snap and remains live until one of the following:

- A. A snap to the quarterback hits the ground.
- B. A fumble hits the ground (no fumble recoveries are allowed).
- C. A ball carrier's knee touches the ground.
- D. A ball carrier steps out-of-bounds.
- E. A ball carriers flags are legally removed.
- F. A touchdown.
- G. An official whistles the play dead.

Article 6: Inadvertent Whistle

In the case of an inadvertent whistle that has affected the outcome of the play, the team in possession of the ball has the option to repeat the down.

Section 8: Starting the Play

Article 1: Flag Belts

All players must start with her flag belt properly secured and fully accessible OVER her shirt. If a player starts the play without her flags properly attached, a penalty will be called. (See Sec 10, Art 3: Flag Obstruction)

Penalty for Starting without Flags: 5 yard from LOS, Replay Down.

Article 2: Line of Scrimmage

- A. The ball and Line of Scrimmage (LOS) cone will be marked by the referee to start the play.
- B. At the start of a half or after a touchdown the LOS will be on the End Zone line.
- C. During a possession, the LOS will be at the point of flag-pull.

Article 3: Players on the Line of Scrimmage

- A. Offense must have a minimum of four (4) players on the LOS at the snap. The Quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.

A. Penalty for Illegal Formation: 5 yards from LOS, Replay Down.

- B. There is no minimum player requirement for defense.

Article 4: Snaps

- A. Ball must be snapped between the legs or from the side to start the play.
- B. Direct snaps or "hand-off" snaps are not legal. The snap must be received at least 2 yards behind the center.

Article 5: Movement before Snap

- A. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for 1 second before the ball is snapped unless she is the only player in motion.

- B. One offensive player may go into motion at the snap behind and parallel to the LOS.
- C. No motion is allowed towards the LOS. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs towards the LOS while in motion is considered a false start.

A. Penalty for Illegal Motion/False Start: 5 yards from LOS, Replay down.

Article 6: Rushing the Quarterback

- A. Any defensive player(s) may rush the Quarterback after the snap from any location beyond the Defensive Line cone.
- B. Defensive motion past the LOS prior to the snap is illegal.

A. Penalty for Illegal Motion/False Start: 5 yards from LOS, Replay Down.

Article 7: Offensive Movement after Snap

- A. After the ball is snapped, any and all offensive players may move freely behind or across the LOS.

Section 9: Running a Play

Article 1: Hand-Offs

- A. The Quarterback may hand-off to any offensive player behind the LOS.
- B. The offense may use multiple hand offs or tosses behind the LOS.

Article 2: Passing

- A. Only one (1) forward pass across the LOS is permitted per down.
 - A. Penalty for Illegal Forward Pass: 5 yards from POI, Loss of Down.*
- B. If a passer crosses the line of scrimmage and comes back behind the line of scrimmage and throws a pass, it is an illegal forward pass.
- C. Backward passes and lateral pitches ARE allowed anywhere on the field.
- D. Intentional Grounding - A passer may not intentionally throw the ball into the ground or out of bounds to avoid a loss of yardage.

A. Penalty for Intentional Grounding: 5 yard loss from LOS, Loss of down.

Article 3: Receiving

- A. All Players are eligible to receive passes.
- B. A player must have at least 1 foot in-bounds to make a legal reception.
- C. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
- D. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception.
- E. Defensive players must avoid illegal contact with the receivers. Illegal contact includes holding or preventing a receiver from free movement or contact from behind or over the head of a receiver when attempting to intercept or prevent a catch.

A. Penalty for Illegal Contact: 10 yards from EOR or LOS, Replay Down.

Article 4: Running

- A. Ball carriers may not intentionally leave their feet to avoid a flag pull (i.e., skipping or jump spinning). (see Sec 10, Art 2: Flag Guarding).
- B. Ball carriers may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that she has done so to avoid collision with another player or avoid a hazard on the field without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
- C. Grounded spinning and lateral moves to the left or right are permitted.
- D. Absolutely no contact is permitted by the ball carrier with a defensive player. Efforts must be made to move around, not through opponents. It is the responsibility of the offensive players to avoid contact with defensive players.

A. Penalty for Illegal Contact: 10 yards from POI, Replay down.

- E. Distance gained based on position of flags, not ball.

Article 5: Rushing

- A. (See Sec 7, Art 6: Rushing the Quarterback)
- B. Defensive players rushing the Quarterback may attempt to block a pass, however, NO contact can be made with the Quarterback's arm, hand, chest or face. Players must go for a Quarterback's flags.

A. Penalty for Unnecessary Roughness: 10 yards, Automatic 1st down.

- C. A sack occurs if the Quarterback's flags are pulled behind the LOS. The cone is placed where the ball is at when the flag is pulled.

Section 10: Offensive Blocking

Article 1: Screen Blocking Fundamentals

- A. Screen blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without contacting her with any part of the screen blocker's body. The offensive screen block shall take place without contact.
- B. The screen blocker shall have her hands and arms at her side or behind her back. Any use of the arms, elbows or legs to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. Incidental shoulder contact is permissible.
- C. Screen blockers should maintain a distance of one (1) normal step from her opponent (from any angle, front, back, or side).

Article 2: Screen Blocking Violations

- A. A blocker may use her hand or arm to break a fall or to retain her balance but otherwise must be on her feet before, during and after screen blocking (no jumping/diving).
- B. Screen blockers may not take a position so close to a moving opponent that her opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take her stationary position. This position will vary and may be one or two normal steps or strides from the opponent.
- C. After assuming her legal screening position, she may not move to maintain it.

Article 3: Blocking and Interlocking Interference

Teammates of a runner or a passer may interfere for her by screen blocking, but shall not use interlocking interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner.

Article 4: Downfield Blocking

Screen Blocking for the ball carrier is allowed downfield but must be a set block.

Article 5: Use of Hands or Arms by the Defense

Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent. Incidental shoulder contact is permissible.

Penalty for Illegal Contact: 10 yards, Replay Down.

Section 11: Flag Pulling

Article 1: De-Flagging

De-Flagging is the legal removal of a flag from an opponent in possession of the ball.

- A. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- B. Defenders may dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
- C. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession.
- D. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off without contact from defensive player, the game defaults to one-hand touch (between shoulders and knees only). If a defensive player is seen to shove the offensive player during "one hand touch", a penalty of Unnecessary Roughness may be called.
- E. If the flag is removed illegally, play should continue until the referee calls it dead.
- F. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who is not in possession of the ball.

A. Penalty: 5 yards from LOS or point of completed pass.

Article 2: Flag Guarding

A. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, pinching the belt with body, or intentionally covering the flag with your shirt.

A. Penalty for Flag Guarding: 10 yards from POI, Loss of Down

B. Tampering with the flag in any way to gain an advantage including tying the flag, cutting the flag, using foreign materials or other such acts are illegal.

A. Penalty: Disqualification

C. Flags must be worn such that a "tail" of extra waistband is clearly visible where clipped. No wrapping, looping or otherwise securing of flags to prevent easy removal will be tolerated.

Article 3: Flag Obstruction

All t-shirts MUST be under the players flag belt, or tucked in to pants, before the play begins. The flags must be placed on the players hips and free from obstruction. The Referee will give one (1) warning to fix flags. After the warning, obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

Section 12: Punting

Article 1: Punting

- A. The offensive team may choose to punt on the 4th down if they are on or before the down marker closest to their end zone/mercy line.
- B. Offensive teams must clearly announce punt attempt to referee prior setting punt.
- C. At least 4 offensive players must be on the LOS at the time of the punt.
- D. Defense may raise their arms or jump to try to block the punt but cannot cross the LOS.
- E. If the punter drops the snap the ball is dead at the spot of snap.
- F. Muffs and fumbled punts are dead at the spot of snap.
- G. Punter must be at least 2 yards behind the center when receiving the snap.

Article 2: Punt Return

The Defensive team may catch and return any in-bounds punt.

- A. After a punted ball is caught, ONLY the defensive ball carrier may move in a FORWARD direction. All other defensive players may move laterally to position themselves as set screens but may not move forward with the ball carrier as a moving screen.
- B. All players on the punting team may pursue the ball carrier.
- C. If the punting team or the punt return team touches a punt and it hits the ground, the ball is dead at the spot.
- D. If the punted ball lands in the end zone, the ball is dead on the end zone line.
- E. If a punted ball lands out of bounds the ball is dead on the down line closest to end zone.
- F. If a punt returner catches a punt in the end zone and kneels down, it is considered a touchback and the ball is brought out to their first down marker.

Section 13: Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- A. If a referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision will be made at the Referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered. Foul Play Will Not Be Tolerated.
- B. Offensive and confrontational language is unacceptable. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the Referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player/players will be ejected from the game and asked to leave the premises. Once a player is ejected, any future conduct violations will result in expulsion from the league.
- C. Spectators must also adhere to good sportsmanship.
 - A. Cheering on your team is acceptable, harassing officials or other teams is not.
 - B. Keep comments clean and appropriate for all-ages.
 - C. Comments must adhere to the spirit of our mission statement and be free of blatant sexism, racism, homophobia, etc.
 - D. Fans are required to adhere to Fan Zones for their safety and the players' safety. Only players, referees and approved media are allowed in the Player Zone.

Please help the referees and league officials by reminding your fan club of this final rule. Our insurance company requires there be set boundaries, and it is awkward for everyone to be told they need to move, so let's avoid the awkward.

Section 14: Penalties

Article 1: General

- A. The Referee will call all penalties.
- B. Only Team Captains may ask the Referee questions about rule clarifications and interpretations. Players may not question judgment calls.
- C. Games may not end on a Defensive Penalty unless the Offense declines it.
- D. Penalties may not be assessed beyond the end zone line.
- E. Flagrant contact fouls will not be tolerated. Offending players will be ejected from that game, and possibly sit out the next game.

Article 2: Offensive Fouls**OFFENSE FOULS**

Illegal Contact/Illegal Block	10 yards from POI, Loss of Down	Sec. 9, Art 4
Flag Guarding	10 yards from POI, Loss of Down	Sec 11, Art 2
Illegal Forward Pass	5 yards from POI, Loss of Down	Sec 9, Art 2
Delay of Game	5 yards from LOS, Replay Down	Sec 5, Art 3
Illegal Motion/False Start	5 yards from LOS, Replay Down	Sec 8, Art 5
Illegal Formation	5 yards from LOS, Replay Down	Sec 8, Art 3
Starting with no Flags	5 yards from LOS, Replay Down	Sec 8, Art 1
Intentional Grounding	5 yards from LOS, Replay Down	Sec 9, Art 2

Article 3: Defensive Fouls**DEFENSIVE FOULS**

Unnecessary Roughness	10 yards from EOR or LOS, Automatic First Down	Sec 10, Art 5
Illegal Contact/Bodying Up the Ball Carrier	10 yards from EOR or LOS, Replay Down	Sec 9, Art 3
Illegal Motion/False Start	5 yards from LOS, Replay Down	Sec 8, Art 6
Illegal Flag Pull	5 yards from EOR or LOS, Replay Down	Sec 11, Art 1

Article 4: Personal Fouls**PERSONAL FOULS**

Fighting	15 yards from LOS (2nd - Ejection)	Sec 13
Conduct Unbecoming	15 yards from LOS (2nd - Ejection)	Sec 13

Personal Foul Disclaimer: Flagrant disregard for rules or referees by players and/or spectators will be taken seriously by league officials and may result in the removal from the field, game suspension, forced forfeiture, or removal from the league.

EOR = End of Run / POI = Point of Infraction / LOS = Line of Scrimmage