

TURF FOOTBALL LEAGUE (TFL) RULES

SCHEDULE:

- The league will run for 9 consecutive weeks. The first 7 weeks represent the regular season. The final 2 weeks represent playoffs and championship and are only for the teams that are eligible.
- We receive direction from the County regarding our ability to play in questionable weather. It is not at our discretion.
 - If a game is pushed off due to inclement weather, that postponed game will typically be added to the end of the regular season schedule.

EQUIPMENT:

- Flags - Players must wear their flag belts in a manner so that their flags drape down their sides and that their belts are on top of their jerseys (more details below).
- At the beginning of the season, each team Captain (or Coach) will be provided with a bag of flag belts for the season. The Captain/Coach are responsible for those flags throughout the season and must return the bag of flags to the league upon the season conclusion. Failure to return flags will result in a \$10 charge per missing flag belt.
- Players **MUST** wear their team jersey (or if lost, a shirt of the same color) as their team t-shirt. (The referees can use their discretion when determining how to implement this rule.)
- Metal cleats are not allowed.

FIELD OF PLAY:

- Junior Division:
 - **Width:** 15 yards wide
 - **End Zones:** 6 yards deep
 - **“10-yard” line/starting position:** 5 yards from end zone
 - **First Down marker/Middle of field:** 17.5
 - **Total length of field to include end zones:** 57 yards
- Senior Division:
 - **Width:** 20 yards wide
 - **End Zones:** 7 yard deep
 - **“10-yard” line/Starting position:** 7 yards from end zone
 - **First Down marker/Middle of field:** 16 yards from the 10
 - **Total length of field to include end zones:** 60 yards

GAME TIME: Games consist of two 25-minute halves, with a 3-minute halftime break.

PRIOR TO THE GAME:

- Before the game, each team must identify its Coach to the referees.
 - If a Ref needs to provide direction to a team (to include a team’s fans/spectators), that direction will be provided to the Coach.

TFL Rules

- **NOBODY** (other than the Coach) should debate/petition/clarify a rule or call with the Refs. Parents (who are not coaching) who are unable to abide by these rules will risk a) having their son's team be issued penalties and b) being told to leave.
- Each game begins with a coin toss. The team winning the coin toss will have the prerogative to decide either which team receives the ball first or the direction they will go. A team not represented at the coin toss five minutes prior to game time automatically forfeits the coin toss.
- The teams switch directions for the second half, which begins with the team that did not receive the ball for the first half, receiving the ball.

GAME CLOCK:

- The game clock runs continuously except during timeouts, during the last two minutes of each half, or a sudden death period (which only occurs in the playoffs/championship.) In said last two minutes, the clock is stopped:
 - At the first dead ball with two minutes or less remaining, (if relevant, the play-clock resets at the two minutes warning)
 - When a play ends out of bounds
 - On incomplete passes
 - After a touchdown
 - At the end of a play that includes a change of possession
 - On penalties
 - However, when a team trailing commits a penalty in a situation in which the game clock would otherwise not have stopped, the clock will be stopped to assess the foul, but will restart (with a 25-second play clock) on the ref's whistle.
 - On time outs
 - On first downs

TIME OUTS

- Each team receives two timeouts per 25-minute half. A timeout may be called by any team member and they can do so to either referee.

Note: The referees will endeavor to accept and charge a timeout call when it is clearly signaled or stated by an identifiable team member. In a situation where a player requests a time out when the clock is already stopped, the referee will endeavor to inform him, and clarify whether the player nonetheless wants a time out. All this notwithstanding, ultimately it is the responsibility of the team to ensure that their timeouts are clearly indicated by their players to one of the referees.

A team who calls a timeout when they do not have one will be assessed a 5-yard penalty.

- Each timeout lasts 60 seconds. The play clock is then started, and the game clock is restarted at the beginning of the following play. A referee is allowed, at his discretion, to stop the game clock or play clock, and may retroactively change a team's time out to an official time out if it emerges that one was necessary. After an unscheduled official time-out, the game clock and play clock will

resume upon the referee's signal, not on the subsequent snap; if less than 10 seconds remain on the play clock, it will be reset to 10 seconds.

- If the game clock or play clock is stopped to enable an injured player to receive treatment or recover, that player must sit out at least one play unless there is a team timeout. A referee will announce the two-minute warning.

PLAY CLOCK:

- Upon the conclusion of every play, the referees will position the line of scrimmage as necessary, and the line referee will signal the down. A 25-second play clock will then immediately begin.
 - The play clock will only start once the referee has spotted the ball.
- The offense is responsible for retrieving the ball in time for the next play. (If a defensive player is closest to the ball, it is encouraged that they grab the ball for the offense.) If play does not begin within the 25 seconds allowed, a Delay of Game penalty will be called. The line referee will count down the time remaining on the play clock, announcing the following seconds remaining: 10, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.
- In the last 10 minutes of the game, each delay-of-game penalty beyond the first one, on the same drive, may result in loss of down.
- **NOTE:** After each change of possession, the referee managing the Play Clock will wait approximately 20 seconds before starting the clock (providing the defense with time to account for any offensive substitutions.)

BEGINNING THE GAME:

- For the lower division (4th and 5th grades), games begin on Monday evenings at **6:45 PM** sharp.
- For the older division (6th and 7th grades), games begin on Monday evenings at **8:15 PM** sharp.
- Each game/half begins with the offense receiving the ball at the ten-yard line.
- If a team is not ready at game time, the game clock will start (subject to the referee's decision, as warranted only by unusual circumstances), and the team present will choose direction and receive the kickoff in both games/ halves. (Teams will still change directions for the second half/game).
- For every five minutes that a team is not ready, its opponent will be awarded eight points (and the late team will take possession, as on any other Touchdown, when they arrive).
- If a team is not ready 15 minutes after the game clock has started, the team present and ready is awarded a forfeit win. The official score of a forfeited game is 24-0.

BALL USAGE:

- The League will provide a Junior sized football for each game.
- Teams must use the league provided balls. No other balls will be allowed.

ROSTERS/PLAYERS ON THE FIELD

- Each roster is made up of 8 players.
- If both teams full rosters are present, it will be an 8 on 8 on the field.
- If one team is short a player (i.e. "8 on 7"), the team with 8 must sit one player on **OFFENSE** to account for the imbalance. (They do not need to sit a player on Defense.)

TFL Rules

- When sitting a player on Offense, the the team must create an ordering system in which Player A sits for a full offensive set, then Player B does the same for the next set, Player C for the following set, and so on and so forth. This system must be established in a manner that in theory, if the order completes an equal number of times, all players will have sat equally.
 - The exception to this rule is the team Quarterback who will not be required to sit.
 - If a team attempts to manipulate this process (by switching QBs to avoid certain players having to sit), the team may be assessed a penalty by the Referees. (It will be at the Ref's discretion to determine whether the "QB switch" was done to skirt the rules, rather than a strategic offensive decision.)
- At the start of each offensive set in which alternation is occurring, the Coach of the offense must announce to the defense, which player is sitting and which player is taking his place.
- A team with only 4 players present at the kickoff must Forfeit. A minimum of 5 players **MUST** be present at the start of the game.
- **Note:** A team will never be required to sit more than one player at a time. The below table illustrates potential roster scenarios and the associated rules:

Team A	Team B	Rules
Full Roster of 8	Full Roster of 8	Both teams will play 8 on 8, nobody will sit
Short 1 (7 Players)	Short 1 (7 Players)	Both teams will play 7 on 7, nobody will sit
Full Roster of 8	Short 1 (7 Players)	Team A alternates 1 on offense; Team B plays all 7 (The game will be a 7 on 7 when Team A is on offense; 8 on 7 when Team B is on offense)
Full Roster of 8	Short 2 (6 Players)	Team A alternates 1 on offense; Team B plays all 6 (The game will be a 7 on 6 when Team A is on offense; 8 on 6 when Team B is on offense)
Full Roster of 8	Short 3 (5 Players)	Team A alternates 1; Team B plays all 5 (The game will be a 7 on 5 when Team A is on offense; 8 on 5 when Team B is on offense)
Full Roster of 8	Short 4 (4 Players)	Team B must Forfeit

ENTERING AND EXITING THE FIELD:

- Teams must be stationed on the side of the field designated by the referee. All players must enter and exit from that side of the field.
- There is free substitution between plays. A substitution used, in the referee's judgment, to deceive the other team as to who is on the playing field for the ensuing play, is Illegal Procedure.
- **NOTE:** All offensive substitutions must be announced by offensive team's coach so that the defense can make necessary adjustments.

OFFENSIVE SCRIMMAGE:

- All offensive players may line up in any type of formation, on or off of the line of scrimmage.
- All offensive players (other than the QB), including the snapper (discussed below) are eligible.

SNAPS:

- To begin each play, the ball must be snapped between an Offensive player's legs or to the center's side. (**NOTE:** The snapping player is an eligible receiver.)
- The ball must be snapped **from the ground** (the line of scrimmage marker is considered part of the ground).
- No player on either team may simulate the snap. A snapper who comes to a set position and then lifts the ball and replaces it on the ground has committed a False Start (see below). The defense may not touch the ball before it leaves the snapper's hands.
- Receivers may only begin their routes **AFTER** the QB has caught the Snap OR, in the instance of a "botched snap," when the ball hits the ground.
 - Please note that on a botched snap (e.g., the snap hits the ground as opposed to being caught by the QB), the defense can elect to use their blitz (assuming they still have one) as soon as the ball hits the ground.

LINE REFEREE COUNT

- Immediately following the snap, the Line Ref will begin a 5 count ("1 Rush, 2 Rush," etc.). Upon reaching "5 Rush," the defense can elect to rush the QB.
 - If the defense elects to rush, the QB can run with the ball. (There is no limit to the number of times that a QB can run per set – if the defense rushes every down, the QB can run every down.)
 - If the defense elects to **NOT** rush, the line Ref will continue counting to 10. After completing "10 Rush," the play will be whistled dead.

DEFENSIVE RUSH:

- Defensive players may not cross the line of scrimmage, except:
 - After the completion of the line referee's "Five Rush" count.
 - After the quarterback (the player receiving the snap) releases the ball. Players may then cross the line of scrimmage immediately.
 - On a blitz (see below)
- A Defensive player who crosses the line of scrimmage in any scenario not listed above will result in a 5-yard penalty.

- Should the Line referee forget to count, the play must be replayed.

BLITZING:

- The defense may blitz once per set of downs. The defense is required to announce the blitz (shouting “blitz!” so that it can be heard by the line ref.) An unannounced blitz will result in an offsides penalty.
- The defense can blitz **ONLY** once the snapped ball reaches the QBs hands OR once the ball hits the ground on a botched snap.
- The defense cannot blitz on a Point After Touchdown attempt, even if they did not use their blitz during the previous set of downs.

INADVERTENT DEFENSIVE RUSH OR BLITZ:

- In some instances, a defensive player may “inadvertently rush” or blitz the QB by accidentally stepping over the line of scrimmage in his efforts to follow the route of a receiver. This can create challenges in that it would enable a QB to sneak in an instance when the defense was not intending to rush.

In such instances, it will be at the discretion of the Referee to determine whether the defensive player was intending to rush or not - and thereby determine whether the QB is eligible to rush.

If a QB runs in response to an “inadvertent rush,” at the discretion of the Ref, the play will be whistled dead and the down will be replayed.

NOTE, this ruling is only intended to be applied in instances of a **clear** inadvertent rush. A defensive rush where the intention is vague will always be deemed an intentional rush.

OFFSIDES/FALSE STARTS:

- It is a False Start when an offensive player:
 - Is beyond the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. *Note: While referees try, where feasible, to warn players that they are set up offsides before the snap, offsides is solely the responsibility of the player.*
 - The snapper simulates the snap (in a manner to trick the defense into jumping offsides.)
- When a False Start by the offense is called, no play will be allowed to occur.
- If a defensive player is offsides when the ball is snapped, a penalty flag will be thrown but play will proceed. A defensive player may rectify a potential offsides situation by returning onsidess before the snap.
- If the defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage and initiates contact with an offensive player before the snap, or draws an offensive player offsides, the offsides may not be rectified, and no play will be allowed to occur.
- All offsides and false starts will result in a 5-yard penalty (either forward or backward, depending on the offending team.)

BLOCKING:

- Blocking is allowed under the following conditions:
 - A block must be delivered with the chest, arms, or open hands.
 - Players may not hold onto an opponent.
 - A block by any player must be above the waist and below the neck, and must be initiated from in front of the player being blocked. For the purpose of this rule, the front of a player is both the player's chest and the direction in which the player is intentionally moving at the time of the block. A block may not be initiated from an opponent's blind side.
- In addition to the above definition, the following blocks are specified as illegal:
 - Any swinging forearm blow or punch.
 - A block with any part of the legs or head.
 - A block below the waist or to the back.
 - Offensive receivers blocking for one another (i.e. any kind of moving pick) downfield before a pass is caught.
 - Tackling of any sort.
 - A block thrown while not facing the opponent.
 - A block intentionally thrown against a player who is in the act of attempting to catch a pass, unless the ball has already been touched.
- The above blocking rules apply to both offensive and defensive players, on every play and regardless of the location of the players in relation to the line of scrimmage. Any illegal block will result in a 5-yard penalty.

DOWNFIELD BLOCKING:

- No contact may be initiated by an offensive player beyond the line of scrimmage, except on a QB running play (after "5 Rush"), or on a passing play after the ball has been caught.
- On a QB run, offensive and defensive players are not restricted in the number of legal blocks they can throw at any position on the field of play.
- On a passing play, no contact may be initiated over five yards beyond the line of scrimmage (towards the defense) by either side, unless:
 - The forward pass has already been caught, or
 - The contact is entirely incidental to the pursuit of the ball-carrier or of a ball which is not in any player's possession.
- On a passing play, defensive players may initiate contact with opponents once within five yards of the line of scrimmage. Offensive players may not initiate contact. The same player may be "contacted" by more than one opponent. The player may use any legal block, with the following qualifications and clarifications:
 - A player may initiate and maintain continuous unbroken contact with the opponent, as long as the opponent is within five yards of the line of scrimmage. However, throwing more than one block, while not maintaining continuous unbroken contact, is not legal even within five yards of the line of scrimmage.
 - Even within five yards of the line of scrimmage a defender may not initiate a block if the receiver is level with him, or has run past him.
 - If the defender chooses to initiate contact, the offensive player may react to the contact with contact of his own, until contact has been broken. A defender who moves to block an offensive player's path is deemed to have initiated contact. Once contact has been broken, the players are once again prohibited from initiating contact.

FLAGS:

- Shirts may not hang over, the flag belt. Flags must be worn on the side of the body, with their plastic holders slanted down and away from the body.
 - A player wearing flags incorrectly (i.e. in a manner that makes it more difficult for the opponent to grab their flag) will be ruled down as soon as the defender is close enough in the vicinity of the ball-carrier to conceivably attempt a play.
- Players must use the designated league flags.

PROTECTING THE FLAG AND BLOCKING BY THE BALL-CARRIER:

- Any contact which the ball carrier makes with a defender must be entirely incidental to advancing the ball.
- The ball-carrier may not block an opponent's hands in order to prevent an opponent from pulling a flag (i.e. a swipe), and may not use any part of his body, nor the ball itself, to block for himself. This includes "throwing" his chest into the defender as he runs into him, using a stiff-arm, jumping into the defender, as well as running into the defender in the middle of a spin and thereby hitting the defender with his back or side. These actions result in the play immediately being called dead and the assessment of a 5-yard Protecting the Flag penalty.
- If the block or attempted block by the ball carrier is intended to physically displace a defender (e.g. throwing a block or lowering the shoulder, and not merely swatting at the defender's hand or using a passive stiff-arm to keep the defender from pulling the flag), there is a 5-yard Blocking by The Ball Carrier penalty, and at the discretion of the referee also a Personal Foul (10-yard penalty.)

PASSING:

- The offensive team may throw one forward pass per play. Once the ball-carrier's body has advanced completely beyond the line of scrimmage no forward pass is legal. **Note: Like most fouls, an illegal forward pass does not automatically or immediately end the play.**
- The following are ineligible receivers:
 - The Quarterback (i.e. the passer)
 - A receiver who has gone out of bounds, or remained out of bounds, except as a result of an illegal block. The exception to this rule is if the receiver is not the first player to touch the ball (i.e. the ball is deflected by a defender.)
- **NOTE:** A pass must be a **forward pass which cross the line of scrimmage.**
 - A pass which does not cross the line of scrimmage constitutes an illegal pass and is an automatic loss of down.
- Should an ineligible receiver be the first to touch an airborne pass, the play is dead. Such a player may touch, and take possession, of the ball only after it has been touched by any other player.
- An airborne receiver who catches the ball will be judged to have received the ball in bounds if both the last part of the receiver's body to become airborne was in bounds, and the first part of the any part of the receiver's body to land was in bounds.

INTENTIONAL GROUNDING:

- Intentional Grounding will be called if the offensive team, in order to avoid a sack, attempts a pass that does not reach the line of scrimmage and which is not intended for, nor playable by, an offensive eligible receiver. Intentional Grounding will result in a 5-yard penalty and a loss of down.
- Quick spikes are legal provided they are intended, in the referee's judgment, to stop the clock or are performed immediately after the defense calls "Blitz!"

SWITCHING QBs

- If an Offensive team elects to switch their QB in the mid-game, they must announce it to the Ref and the Defense.
 - If the switch occurs at the beginning of a possession, the team only needs to announce the switch.
 - If the team elects to switch in *middle* of a possession, they must use a timeout. (If the team does not have any timeouts remaining, they will be unable to switch until the next possession - unless an official timeout is called by the Refs.)

HANDOFFS

- Handoffs are **NOT** allowed. The only legal "run" plays are QB runs on a Blitz or after "5 Rush" when the defense has elected to rush.
- A handoff (or a backwards pass) will result in a loss of down.

RECEIVING

- A receiver only needs to get one foot (or any body part other than hands) in bounds while maintaining control of the ball for a legal catch. (This is consistent with college rules, as opposed to the NFL's two-foot requirement.)
 - **NOTE:** In a "one foot" scenario, it is only a legal catch if the receiver's first foot touches inbounds and THEN the second touches out-of-bounds. If the receiver's first foot touches out-of-bounds, it is an incomplete pass (even if their second foot touches inbounds.)

SPOTTING THE BALL:

- The referee will judge where the ball was when the play became dead, and the ball will be marked at that spot.
- If the ball is fully beyond the plane of the out-of-bounds boundaries when the play becomes dead, the spot will be the point at which the ball last crossed said plane – however, if the ball carrier is inbounds in the endzone and the ball is beyond the plane of the endzone, the ball will be marked as having advanced into the endzone (regardless of whether the ball is beyond the plane of the out-of-bounds boundaries).
- A ball-carrier **may** extend their arms with the ball in an attempt to gain additional yardage, cross the plane of the end-zone, etc. However, this is only permitted in a scenario where the ball-carrier is not extending the ball in a manner that initiates contact with the defense. Doing so may, at the discretion of the ref, result in a 5-yard penalty.

FALLEN BALL-CARRIER:

- If a ball-carrier is on the ground, the play is ruled dead when the player is touched by an opponent, or when the referee calls the play dead to prevent injury.

PULLING A FLAG:

- To pull a flag, a defender may “wrap up” the ball carrier **in the process of pulling the flag**. If an official deems that a defender purposely tackled/roughed a ball carrier without true intention **or the ability** to grab a flag, a 10-yard Illegal Contact penalty will be assessed. Referees will call roughing of a ball carrier conservatively.

PULLED FLAG:

- If a player’s flag is pulled off while he has possession of the ball and is not wearing two flags, the play is dead. The defender must remain at the spot where the flag was pulled and return the flag. If a defender is deemed to deliberately hesitate in returning an opponent’s flag or throws a pulled flag(s) in a manner that makes it more difficult for the ball-carrier to retrieve his flag, a 5-yard penalty will be assessed.

MISSING FLAG:

- If the player with possession of the ball does not have two flags, due to any reason besides the flag being pulled off while he has possession of the ball, the play will be called dead as soon as he is touched.
 - **Note:** this is regardless of whether the player lost the flag before the play, during the play before taking possession, or while already in possession loses a flag before he takes possession of the ball, the possession will count and the play will be called dead. (i.e. a receiver with only one flag can catch the ball but the play is dead once he is touched.)

IMPROPERLY POSITIONED FLAGS:

- If a ball-carrier’s flags are improperly positioned (e.g. facing up, or “slanted in”, not on the side of body, covered by shirt), the play will become dead when an opponent is close enough in the vicinity of the ball-carrier to conceivably attempt a play.
- The above notwithstanding, if the improperly positioned flags were the result of an opponent’s act (e.g. the opponent was attempting a pull and instead yanked the ball-carrier’s belt sideways or pulled out his shirt), the play will not be dead.

BLOCKING/ROUGHING THE BALL-CARRIER OR PASSER:

- A defensive player may attempt to pull the ball-carrier’s flag(s) or to block a pass or lateral. Any contact that is made with the ball carrier intentionally or due to disregard of the ball carrier’s or passer’s body, is a 5-yard penalty for Illegal Contact. Any such contact, which in the judgment of the referee inevitably resulted in the displacement or tackling of the ball carrier, is a 10-yard Illegal Contact penalty, and at the discretion of the referee is also a Personal Foul.

- A defensive player may not attempt to forcefully push a player out of bounds. However, if in the process of a defender cutting off a ball carrier's lane along a sideline, the ball carrier is forced out of bounds, this is not a penalty.

DIVING:

- Intentionally leaving one's feet and extending one's body forwards with intent to gain extra yardage is Diving. If a dive does not result in a collision with a defender, there is no penalty, but the play is dead and the ball is spotted at the point where the ball first touches the ground.
- If a dive results in a collision with a defender it is also a Blocking by the Ball Carrier penalty (see above), and at the discretion of the referee is also a Personal Foul.

FUMBLES:

- A fumble is a dead ball when it hits the ground. The ball is spotted at the point where the ball first makes contact with the ground with no change of possession. (If the player fumbles the ball **forward**, the ball is spotted down where the player fumbled the ball.)
- On a snap, when the snap is not caught, the ball will be ruled dead after it has hit the ground and the defensive team first touches the ball, or at the referees' discretion to prevent injury. (It is also up to the referee's discretion whether to keep the play active and allow the QB to pick up the ball and attempt a play.)
 - **Note:** A snap which has not yet touched the ground, (whether or not touched by the offensive team), may be intercepted in the air by the defensive team. Any lateral pass which has not yet touched the ground may also be intercepted by the opposing team.

SCORING

- A **TOUCHDOWN** is worth 6 points.
- A Touchdown is followed by a **POINT AFTER TOUCHDOWN** attempt even if there is no time left on the clock (but not if a team leads by 17 points or more, beyond the one-minute warning, which ends the game).
- The scoring team chooses to attempt the PAT from either the 3-or 6-yard line, for 1 or 2 points respectively.
 - Any defensive penalty on a PAT will result in points for the offense.
 - *Almost* every offensive penalty on a PAT will result in a turnover to the defense with no points awarded. (See the next rule for the exception.)
 - Should the defense gain control of the ball on a PAT attempt and run it back to their endzone, they are awarded the same number of points the offense was attempting. Likewise, if the attempting team turns over the ball, and on the return commits a foul which is not offset, the returning team is awarded the points.
 - In cases of offsetting penalties, the PAT is replayed from the previous spot, unless the defensive penalty occurred only after the turnover, in which case the PAT is no good.
- After the PAT attempt, the team which surrendered the Touchdown begins its next drive on the 10-yard line
- A **SAFETY** is worth 2 points. After a Safety, the team which scored the safety begins the next drive on the 20-yard line.

PUNTING

- On 4th down, the referees will ask the offense whether they will attempt an offensive play or if they wish to punt. If the Offense says “Punt,” there is no ability to later reverse it.
 - **Note:** No actual “Punt” will occur - in this context, it just means that the opposing team will now begin their offensive drive from the 10 yard line.
- If the ref hears an Offensive player say “Punt,” it is at the ref’s discretion to determine whether the team was indeed deciding to punt or whether they were in the process of making their decision.

PENALTIES:

- Penalties are assessed during or after the play involving the penalty, before the next snap, and not at any point thereafter. However, should a penalty with intent to deceive the referee (i.e. cheating) come to the referee’s attention beyond this point, Unsportsmanlike Conduct Personal Foul penalties may still be assessed (see below).
- After a foul, penalty yards will be assessed as follows:
 - If a foul (which is not declined) is committed before possession of the ball beyond the line of scrimmage – it is assessed from the line of scrimmage, and the down is repeated, unless otherwise noted.
 - If all fouls (which are not declined) are committed after possession of the ball beyond the line of scrimmage (or after a turnover) – it is assessed from the spot of the first foul, and the down counts, unless otherwise noted. However, in the case of a defensive penalty, the offense may choose to have the penalty assessed from the line of scrimmage, with repeat of down.
 - Each penalty is assessed no more than half the distance to the goal line.
 - Penalty yardage is assessed as part of the play (prior to determining whether a new first-down has been attained).
- If fouls (which are not declined) are committed by both teams, the penalty yardage offsets and the down is replayed from the original line of scrimmage. Exception: Personal Fouls (See below).
- The following is a list of fouls and their assessed penalties:

OFFENSIVE PENALTIES

- **Offsides/False Start:** No play, 5 yards.
- **Illegal Block:** 5 yards.
- **Offensive Pass Interference:** 5 yards
- **Delay of Game:** 5 yards. Intentionally committing penalties in order to repeat or nullify downs and thereby reset the play clock is Delay of Game, and at the discretion of the referee results in a Personal Foul, stoppage of the Game Clock, and loss of down.
- **Too Many Players on the Field at the snap:** 5 yards.
- **Intentional Grounding:** 5 yards from spot of foul and loss of down. If the intentional grounding is committed from inside the end zone: Safety.
- **Guarding the Flag/Blocking by the Ball Carrier:** Play is dead immediately, 5-yard penalty from the spot of the foul.
- **Diving resulting in contact with Defender:** Play is dead immediately, 5-yard penalty from the spot of the foul
- **Illegal Forward Pass:** Loss of down.
- **Handoff/Backwards pass:** Loss of down.

DEFENSIVE PENALTIES

- **Offsides:** 5 yards
- **Illegal Block:** 5 yards
- **Illegally Pulling Flag:** 5 yards from where the play was ruled dead due to the missing flag, and a potential first down (based on Ref's discretion). Intentionally pulling a flag of a player who is not the ball-carrier is illegal procedure, and at the discretion of the referee also a Personal Foul.
- **Pass Interference:** 10 yard penalty and automatic first down.
- **Pass Interference in End Zone:** *Line of Scrimmage Outside 2-yard line* – Ball spotted at 2-yard line and automatic first down; *Line of scrimmage at or within 2-yard Line* – Half the distance to the goal and automatic first down.
- **Too Many Players on the Field at the snap:** 5 yards.
- **Blocking/Roughing the ball-carrier or passer:** 5- or 10-yard penalty as described in rules above.
- **Holding the ball-carrier** – 5 yards

ILLEGAL PROCEDURES:

- **Calling a timeout when the team is out of timeouts:** 5 yards
- For a palpably unfair act, the referees may enforce any distance penalty as they consider equitable, including a score.
- *NOTE: a "palpably unfair act" occurs only when the rules are violated in a manner wholly inconsistent with fair play. An example is if a player were headed for an unimpeded Touchdown, and a player from the opposing team entered the field from the sideline and stopped him.*

PERSONAL FOULS:

- 10 yards, automatic first down if against the defense, and ejection from the game at the discretion of the referee. A player committing two personal fouls in one game will be automatically ejected for the remainder of the game. Any player ejected from a game is automatically suspended for the team's next game, subject to appeal.
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct is a Personal Foul.
- Should a violation with intent to deceive the referee (i.e. cheating) come to the referee's attention beyond the snap subsequent to the violation, Personal Foul penalties for Unsportsmanlike Conduct may be assessed effective immediately.
- Personal Fouls are considered part of the play, including acts committed in the referee's judgment as part of the "follow-through" of the play, (e.g. a violent late hit against a QB, even after the pass has fallen incomplete and the play has technically ended). Reactions to the outcome of a play itself are not "follow through".
- Personal Fouls are assessed on the ensuing drive if committed at any point after a play resulting in a score, up to the ensuing drive.
- On a play with a Personal Foul, penalty yardage is assessed only for the Personal Foul. Personal Fouls offset with all other Personal Fouls on the play, and eliminate any penalty yardage which would otherwise be assessed for other fouls.

Note: this does not mean that other fouls are entirely ignored. For instance, if a Personal Foul occurs, and Protecting the Flag occurs later in the play, Protecting the Flag foul would still be called and it would end the play - however, no additional penalty yardage would be assessed for the Protecting the Flag penalty. The Personal Foul penalty yardage would be assessed from the spot.

- Personal Fouls which are not part of a play offset with all other Personal Fouls that are, in the judgment of the referee, part of the same distinct event.

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE:

- The referees will enforce rules to ensure appropriate behavior. Unsportsmanlike Conduct, including league-related actions transpiring off the field, will subject the offender to possible expulsion from the game and will subject the offending player and/or his team to disciplinary action, including but not limited to fine, suspension, expulsion, and forfeit of past or future games, as deemed appropriate by league officials.
- The following minimum disciplinary penalties will be automatically enforced:
 - Abusive or offensive language or behavior **toward players, fans or officials**: Personal Foul.
 - Dangerous or threatening conduct, including fighting: ejection from the game upon first offense, and suspension for the team's next game.
 - Entering the field during a fight, or against the instructions of a referee or league official, whether before, during, or after the game: ejection from the game upon first offense, and suspension for the team's next game.
 - Illegal procedure with intent to deceive, ejection from the game upon first offense, and suspension for the team's next game. If, in the judgment of the referee, any illegal procedure was attempted or committed, with intent to deceive the referee (i.e. the team is attempting to cheat), an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty will be assessed against any and every individual player judged to have thus attempted to deceive the referee, by omission or commission. This penalty will be enforced when it comes to the attention of the referee (i.e. regardless of when it transpired).
 - Suspensions are subject to appeal, submitted in writing to the league commissioners (Dovi Ziffer and Shlomo Brodie) by the night after the game in which the incident occurred. The commissioner and co-commissioner will then submit the appeal to the arbitration committee, who will determine the appropriate action. **(Concerning the issue of addressing on-the-field/discipline/suspension-related incidents and appeals, the head ref has full jurisdiction.** All players must/will respect the judgment of the head ref.) The above penalties will apply regardless of the point in the season when they must be enforced, and regardless of the team's opponent in their upcoming game, and they do not preclude or affect any legal actions.
- **IMPORTANT - ESPECIALLY FOR PARENTS**
 - This is intended to be a fun, family-friendly environment. Parents and players who cannot abide by these rules risk being suspended from attending games. Please help us support an environment in which families can feel comfortable attending, bringing their children to watch, etc.
 - **Examples of behaviors to avoid:** Taunting opposing players/teams; Angrily raising your voice to argue a call with the refs; etc.

- DON'T TRY TO FIND LOOPHOLES in the rules! If you are uncertain about how a rule will be implemented due to vague language, use your common sense. If you need clarification, ask the league committee BEFORE you decide to implement it. The League should not have to be in the business of updating the rules on a yearly basis to account for teams who have tried to manipulate the system.

OVERTIME:

- In regular season games, a game may end in a tie.
- In playoffs or the championship, a game that is tied at the end of regulation is resolved in overtime.
- The winner of an overtime coin-toss will decide either which team will make the first attempt, or on which side of the field all attempts will take place.
- Teams will take turns making attempts. The first team to lead, when both teams have had an equal number of attempts, is the winner.
- In playoff games, the first two attempts of each team will be on first-and-goal from the opponent's 20-yard line, and penalties will be assessed on such attempts as during regulation time.
- Teams will make all subsequent attempts to score on one play from their opponent's 10-yard line. Penalties will be assessed on such attempts as during regulation time, with the following exception: defensive penalties which would normally result in an automatic first down will result in a repeat of down from the new spot.
- After a score in overtime there is no extra-point attempt.
- The play clock will function as usual during overtime. There will be no game clock. Neither team will have any time outs, however a 30-second official time out will be called at the end of every attempt.

STANDINGS

- For teams tied in the standings, seedings are determined as follows:
 1. Wins (i.e. as a tie-breaker, a win and a loss are worth more than two ties)
 2. Head to head record, only if any team or group of teams have defeated, or been defeated by, all other tied teams.
 3. Aggregate record of all opponents.
 4. Aggregate record of opponents defeated.
 5. Best record of opponent defeated.
 6. Record of 2nd-best opponent defeated, (etc).
 7. Least amount of points given up on defense throughout the season.
 8. Random method of choosing.
- If at any point in the tie-breaker process several teams are separated from others by virtue of a tie-breaking step, return the remaining group(s) of tied teams to step 1 in the process.

DECISIONS, APPEALS AND PROTESTS:

- The Line Referee is the final arbiter of all decisions, with the exception of disciplinary matters, and makes all officially binding announcements.
- Any appeal to the referee regarding matters besides logistical, scorekeeping and administrative decisions must be made before the next snap after the play being appealed, or immediately upon such time as the appellant knew or should reasonably have known of the subject of the appeal.

Only the team Coach may make such an appeal. Appeals not made by the Coach, or made disrespectfully by the Coach result in a warning to the team. Any additional offense results in a 10 yard penalty.

- As noted above, penalties are assessed during or after the play involving the penalty, before the next snap, and may not be assessed at any point thereafter, with the exception of Unsportsmanlike Conduct.
- Logistical, scorekeeping and administrative decisions (e.g. game time remaining, score) may be appealed, so long as the subject of appeal would not reasonably have affected any of the ensuing action or decision. (E.g. a 10-second timekeeping error would not reasonably affect the ensuing action while 20 minutes still remain in the game.)
- For the purposes of this rule, an appeal of the announced down may be made until the next snap; an appeal of the announced score may be made, before the game's one-minute warning, until the snap of the PAT attempt following the next TD; an appeal of the announced score may be made, at or beyond the game's one-minute warning, until the next snap.
- Any deliberation of the decision prior to resuming play, and any stop of the game clock or play clock, is undertaken solely at the discretion of the referee, and appeals do not preclude the possibility of incurring relevant penalties, including Delay of Game