

ADULT FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

475-5220

Escambia County

Ashton Brosnaham Sportsplex

Note: For any rule not outlined here, refer to NIRSA Flag Football Rules.

Rule 1. THE FIELD, PLAYERS, AND EQUIPMENT

A. The field shall be a rectangle 100 yards by 40 yards, including two 10 yard end zones. The width of the fields shall be lined at 20 yard intervals from goal line to goal line. The 3 and 10 yard try-for-point lines shall be 1 yard wide. Games will be played at the Ashton Brosnaham Sportsplex located at 10370 Ashton Brosnaham Drive in Pensacola, off of Ten Mile Road in Pensacola.

B. THE PLAYERS

1. All teams and players must be registered with Escambia County Parks and Recreation. All players must sign a waiver and pay all team and individual fees prior to playing the first game. No exceptions. Team captain is responsible for making sure that any and all individual fees they may apply are paid.
2. Players must play only for the team for which they are originally rostered. Seven players constitute a team. A team may play a game with a minimum of 5 players. If a team drops below 5 players anytime during the game for reasons other than injury the game shall be recorded as a forfeit. Players may be added to a team roster at anytime during the season, but must have played at least 1 game with that team prior to the postseason tournament to be eligible for the tournament.
3. A player may not play in two separate divisions. One team, one division.
4. A game will not start until all players have checked in with the site supervisor at the field, prior to the game.
5. Players must be at least sixteen years old.
6. Any player whose permanent residence is outside Escambia County must pay an individual non-resident fee of \$10.
7. Any team caught with a player in violation of the eligibility rules will forfeit every game in which that player has played.

C. EQUIPMENT

1. Each player on the field must wear a one-piece belt (provided by Escambia County Parks and Recreation) at the waistline with three flags permanently attached, one flag on each side and one in the center of the back. The flag belt must be free of any knots.
2. Shoes must be soft-soled soccer/football type cleats or cross-country, tennis, or AstroTurf shoes. **NO METAL IS ALLOWED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF CLEATS OR SHOES.** Wet turf soccer and football cleats (screw-in cleats) are permitted. Molded one-piece screw-ins with a cleat length of ½ or less are permitted.
3. **No belts, pockets, belt loops or drawstrings on pants. No exceptions – players will not be allowed to play.**
4. The use of headgear, jewelry, shoulder pads, body pads, or any unyielding or dangerous equipment is prohibited. Players may wear a knit or stocking cap and use soft, pliable gloves if they desire. No baseball style caps or bandannas maybe worn at anytime.
5. Tape or bandage on the hand, wrist, forearm, or any other part of the body is prohibited except to protect an injury. Under no circumstances will a player wearing a cast or splint be allowed to play. Braces with exposed metal parts must be covered.
6. Each team must wear team shirts for player identification. The jerseys need to be at least long enough so that they remain tucked in during each down, or cut at least 4 inches above the flag belt. Each team

must wear the same color jersey or shirt. If not, pinnies will be provided. The jersey must be tucked in to allow for grabbing the flag.

7. Teams provide their own footballs to be checked and approved by officials at game time.
8. The site supervisor on duty will make any decision on the legality of any equipment on or being used by a player, and his/her decision will be final.

Rule 2. TIMING

A. PLAYING TIME AND INTERMISSIONS

1. Each team will have a ten minute grace period at game time if needed. If grace period is used it will be taken from the game time and one point per minute used will be awarded to the opposing team. **THE GAME CLOCK WILL BEGIN AT GAMETIME!**
2. If a team forfeits two games, the team will be allowed to play out the remainder of the season, but will not be eligible to play in the end of season tournament.
3. Practice times are reserved through Escambia County Parks and Recreation at 475-5220. Calling to reserve a field is required. The cost of reserving a field is \$26.88 per 4-hour block.
4. The game will consist of two halves of 20 minutes. Approximately two minutes before the end of each half, the referee shall stop the clock and inform both captains of the playing time remaining in that period (two-minute warning). During this period, the clock stops for the following occurrences:
 - Time out by a team or an official – starts on the following snap
 - After a touchdown or a safety – starts on the following snap
 - During penalty enforcement – dependent on previous play
 - Ball or player out of bounds – starts on the following snap
 - Incomplete pass – starts on the following snap
 - First down – if out of bounds, starts on the following snap; if in bounds, on ready-for-play whistle
 - Touchback – starts on the following snap
 - Change of possession – starts on the following snap
 - Team attempting to conserve time illegally – starts on the ready-for-play whistle
 - Team attempting to consume time illegally – starts on the following snap
5. Halftime will be 5 minutes. The referee and/or site supervisor shall have discretion to reduce the length of the halftime if conditions warrant.
6. **Overtime:** The two captains will determine the options by a coin flip. The home captain will call the toss. The winner of the toss shall be given the option of offense, defense, or direction. The loser of the toss shall make a choice of the remaining option. Teams will alternate choices if additional overtime periods are played. **ALL OVERTIME PERIODS ARE PLAYED TOWARD THE SAME GOAL LINE.** The ball will be placed on the 20 yard line. Each team will be given a series of 4 downs to score as previously stated. If the defense intercepts the ball and returns it for a touchdown, they will win the game. If it is not returned for a score, the ball will placed at the 20 yard line. Each team has only one time-out for the entire overtime. The game will played until a winner is determined.
7. Each team will be permitted 2 time-outs per half. Time-outs shall be 1 minute in length and do not carry over to the second half or to overtime.

Rule 3. PRE-GAME AND KICKING

A. THE TOSS AND OPTIONS

Procedure: Three minutes prior to the start of the game, the referee shall toss a coin, and the visiting team captain shall call the toss (heads or tails). The captain winning the toss shall have choice of options for the first half or may defer their option to the second half. The options for each half shall be:

1. To choose whether his/her team will start on offense or defense.
2. To choose the goal his/her team will defend.
3. The captain not having the first choice of options for a half shall exercise the remaining option.

B. PUNTS

1. All punts must be announced prior to the snap.
2. No offensive player may pass the scrimmage line until the ball has been kicked.
3. The defense cannot rush during a punt.
4. Kick Catch interference: While a protected scrimmage kick (punt) is in flight beyond the kicking team's scrimmage line, no member of the kicking team (K) shall touch the ball, the kick receiver (R), or obstruct the R's path to the ball. This prohibition does not apply if the act is after the kick has been touched by R. K may catch, touch, muff, or bat a protected scrimmage kick in flight beyond K's scrimmage line if no R player is in position to catch the ball.

Rule 4. SNAPPING AND PASSING THE BALL

A. SNAPPING THE BALL

1. The player who receives the snap from the center must be at least 2 yards behind his/her scrimmage line. The snapper shall pass the ball back from its position on the ground with a quick and continuous motion of the hand(s).
2. The offensive team must have a minimum of 4 (5 for co-ed) players on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. A player in motion is not counted as one of the 4 (or 5) on the scrimmage line.

B. PASSING THE BALL

1. All players are eligible to touch a forward pass after it is thrown. The passer may catch his/her own forward pass provided it has been touched by another player first.
2. If a legal forward pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams, the ball is immediately dead upon returning to the ground and belongs to the offense.
3. A forward pass is a live ball thrown towards the opponent's goal line. A backward pass is a live ball thrown parallel to or away from the opponent's goal line. The initial direction of the pass will determine whether or not the ball is backward or forward.
4. Defensive players must not contact the passer at anytime during or after the throw. They may only attempt to pull the flag. Rushers may try to deflect the ball, and they may not contact the passer even if the ball is deflected. If the defender contacts the passer during the act of passing, it is considered roughing the passer.

Rule 5. SCREENING, RUSHING, AND CONTACT

A. SCREENING AND RUSHING

1. Screen-blocking is defined as legally obstructing an opponent without using any part of the body to initiate contact with him/her.
2. The offensive screen-block shall take place without contact. The screen-blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen-block is illegal. A screen-blocker may use his/her hands or arms to break a fall or to retain his/her balance.
3. 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. The application of this rule depends entirely on the judgment of the official. A rusher may use his/her hands or arms to break a fall or retain his/her balance.
4. These actions are judged similarly to the block/charge call in basketball.

Rule 6. FLAGGING

1. A ball carrier is down at the point where his/her flag is pulled.
2. If the ball carrier's flag belt falls without being pulled, he/she will be considered down if defensive player touches him/her with one hand between the shoulder and knees.
3. A defensive player may not tackle or charge into any member of the opposing team in an attempt to pull the ball carrier's flag belt.

4. A defensive player shall not remove the flag belt of any offensive player while that player does not have the ball. This is considered an illegal contact penalty.

Rule 7. SCRIMMAGE LINE/LINE TO GAIN SCORING

A. SCRIMMAGE LINE AND LINES TO GAIN

1. Teams will have four downs to cross each of the line to gain markers, located at twenty yard intervals. A first down may also be given to the offense as the result of certain penalties.
2. There will be a one-yard restraining line (neutral zone) for the defense.

B. SCORING

1. Touchdown = 6 points
2. Safety = 2 points
3. 3. Extra Points: 1 point from 3 yards
2 points from 10 yards
3 points from 20 yards
-If defense intercepts and scores on any try, they will be awarded 3 points

4. **A 19 point mercy rule will end the game at the two minute warning in the second half.**

Rule 8. PLAYER/TEAM CONDUCT AND LEAGUE EXPECTATIONS

- A. No foul language or unsportsmanlike conduct will be permitted before, during, or after any game. If unsportsmanlike conduct occurs before or after the game the player will be asked to leave the facility and will be suspended for ***at least*** one game. Officials will eject the player immediately from the game. If the site supervisor deems it necessary, they have the authority to eject a player from the game or to stop the game until order is restored. If a player is involved in a fight he will be immediately ejected and suspended for ***at least*** the next two full games.
- B. Two unsportsmanlike penalties in a game on one player will result in an ejection of that player. Three unsportsmanlike penalties in a game on one team will result in a forfeit for that team, regardless of score.
- C. If a player is ejected from a game due to unsportsmanlike conduct, he/she is allowed to remain on the bench. If the ejected player creates a problem for the game officials from the bench area, he/she will be required to leave the field area. The field area is defined as “out of sight, out of sound.” If the ejected player refuses to leave after a reasonable amount of time has passes, the referee will inform the captain that the game will be forfeited.
- D. Any player ejected from a game will serve at least a one game suspension (the next full game).
- E. **No alcoholic beverages allowed at the fields or in the parking lots. Any player who violates this rule will be suspended for at least one game. Subsequent violations will result in the team forfeiting the next game.**
- F. In case of rain or inclement weather, a game will be considered a complete game if at least half of the game has been played. If not, the entire game will be made up at a later date.
- G. A game will be suspended if lightning is seen, thunder is heard, or in the case of ***excessive*** rain. Play will resume after 20 minutes with no thunder or lightning. Site supervisors and officials have the authority to suspend a game in either case when their judgment deems necessary.
- H. No pets or animals on premises – game will stop until the animal has been removed. **No exceptions.**
- I. Each team is responsible for cleaning up their area.

Rule 9. PROCESS FOR APPEALS AND PROTESTS

A. IN-GAME APPEALS

1. **An appeal must only challenge rule enforcement/interpretation and may not call into question the judgment of any official.** If a team wishes to appeal a rule enforcement, they must inform the referee that they wish to appeal before the next snap.
2. Upon being notified of an appeal, the referee will take all appeals to the site supervisor. The site supervisor and the officials will work to come to the proper solution.
3. The site supervisor has the right to deny an appeal if the appeal is based on anything other than rule enforcement and interpretation.
4. **The site supervisor's decision is final!**

B. DECLARING A PROTEST

1. All protests will be settled by the Protest Committee and must be written and in the Escambia County Parks and Recreation office no later than 5pm the following business day.
2. If for any reason, a team is unsatisfied with the result of an appeal, they may play the rest of the game under protest.
3. If a team wishes to finish a game under protest, the team must notify the referee immediately, who will in turn notify the site supervisor and the opposing team captain.
4. The site supervisor will record game score, time on game clock, down, possession, protesting team, and captain's name.
5. FOR THE FORMAL WRITTEN PROTEST TO BE CONSIDERED, IT WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:
 - The date, time, and place of the game.
 - The rule under which the protest is made.
 - The decision and conditions surrounding the making of the decision.
 - All other essential facts involved in the matter protested.
 - A \$50.00 protest fee (will be returned if ruling is overturned).
6. THE DECISION RENDERED ON A PROTESTED GAME MUST RESULT IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:
 - The protest is found invalid, and the game score stands as played.
 - When a protest is upheld for misinterpretation of a playing rule, the game is re-played from the point at which the incorrect decision was made with the decision corrected.
 - When a protest for ineligibility is upheld, the offending team will forfeit the game in question, as well as any other game in which that individual played.
 - All protests must be accompanied by a \$50.00 protest fee and the \$50.00 will be returned only if the protest is upheld.