



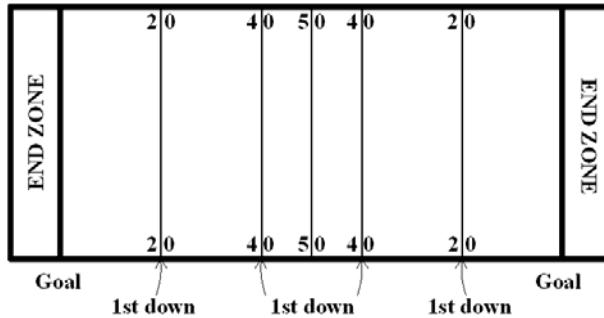
**7 & 8 Man Flag Football Rules and Regulations – Revised June 2008**

These rules are a copyright of the M.F.F.A., any unauthorized use or reproduction of these rules is illegal.

***THE PLAYING FIELD***

**DIMENSIONS** - The game shall be played ideally upon a rectangular field, which measures 80 - 100 yards in length (outdoors) or roughly 60 – 80 yards in length (indoors) with two 10-yard end zones. The width of the field shall be 35 – 53 1/3 yards depending on playing location.

**MARKINGS** - First down markers are positioned in set locations every 20 yards. Some facilities may use 15 yards depending on the size of its field. First downs are only achieved by crossing these markers.



**PLAYERS AREA** - There will be a designated area for players and coaches located on each side of the playing field, between the 20-yard lines. This is a mandatory location during games for teams. It is ideal that home and away teams set up on opposite sides of the field. However, if only one side can be used, then midfield will be the divider that will separate teams. Meaning, your team must stay between the 20 and 50-yard line.

***EQUIPMENT***

**THE BALL** - Each team must provide an N.F.H.S., NCAA, or Pro Type Football fully inflated. The Referee shall be the sole judge as to whether all balls offered for play comply with these specifications.

**FLAG BELTS** - Each team will be provided M.F.F.A. sanctioned flag belts, which must be returned after the game. In the event they are lost or stolen, a **belt-restocking fee** may be charged to the team. A player caught with a "tied" or illegal flag belt will be ejected from the game and an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty assessed to their team.

**CLEATS** - Only molded cleats will be allowed for outdoor play. Screw-ins, metal or metal tipped cleats will not be permitted. Each indoor facility will have their own policy regarding the use of cleats.

**ATTIRE** – **No billed hats** will be allowed on the field of play. **No jewelry** will be allowed including but not limited to necklaces, watches, bracelets, or hooped earrings). **No pants or shorts with pockets will be allowed at all no exceptions!!**

**UNIFORMS** - Teams will be required to wear like color shirts or jerseys. Opposing teams may not wear similar colored shirts. The home team wears dark jerseys and visitors wear light jerseys. In same jersey color situations, the home team gets their choice. Numbers are mandatory.

## ***PLAYERS***

**AMOUNT** - The game is to be played by two teams of seven players each. More than seven players on the field is illegal, while less than seven (7) players is legal with a **minimum of five (5) players** needed to play. Penalty for too many players: 5 yards for illegal substitution or 10 yards for illegal participation

Note: Eight (8) player leagues still need a minimum of 5 players to play or continue to play.

**CAPTAINS** - At the beginning of the game, each team must designate a captain. The captain will act as sole representatives of their team in all communications with the officials.

**ROSTERS** - Teams may carry up to 16 players on their roster. Team rosters are frozen after the third game. Players cannot switch teams after this game. Players must sign the "waiver" form prior to participating in each game. Players can be added throughout the season but must have participated in at least **four (4) games** to be eligible for the playoffs. **No Exceptions ever!!!**(Unless needed to finish game but other team has choice to except the win regardless thru forfeit!!

**SPITTING** – No spitting on the field (indoor). If you are caught doing so, a 5 yard penalty will be accessed.

## ***WAIVER FORMS***

**SIGNED "WAIVER" FORM** - Each captain is to present to the referee (**before the start of each and every game**) a completed, signed waiver form by all of the players, which will enter the field. The game will not start unless all players have signed the waiver and the clock will continue to run until this is done so. Late arriving players cannot play unless a **charged time out** is used to sign the Waiver Form.

## ***GAME TIMING***

**LENGTH OF THE GAME** - The length of the game is 44 minutes, divided into two halves of 22 minutes. Running time with no clock stoppage is used in the first half. During the **final 2 minutes of the second half**, traditional clock stoppage is used only when the ball carrier steps out of bounds, there is an incomplete pass, a change in ball possession, a score is achieved, and when there is a penalty only if the score is within one score eight (8) points. The clock will start as soon as the penalty has been accessed.

Note: Tournament games may be shortened due to weather, darkness, or unusual circumstances.

**HALFTIME** - Between the first and second halves, there shall be an intermission of **two (2) minutes**. During the intermission, play is suspended, and the teams may leave the field.

**STARTING EACH GAME** - A coin toss will determine the call. One of three choices may be called. You may DEFER until the second half. Meaning you can have the right to choose at that time. You may choose to receive the ball or you may choose which goal your team will defend.

**TIME OUTS** - Each team is allowed two time outs per half. Timeouts will not carry over into the second half. Charged time outs can be used at anytime. The time clock will begin at the snap of the next play.

**EXCEPTION:** The Referee may allow necessary time to attend to an injured player; or repair legal equipment in which the clock will **NOT STOP**.

**TIME BETWEEN PLAYS** - The offensive team has **25 seconds** in which to snap the ball once the referee has spotted the ball after the previous play has been ruled dead. It shall be the responsibility of the offensive team to retrieve the ball and hand it to the referee after each play. The referee will indicate by signaling to the offensive team when 10 seconds remains on the 25-second clock.

**MERCY RULE** - Should a team be trailing by **17 or more** points at the final "Two-Minute Warning" or by **25** points any time within 5 minutes left of the second half, the referees could **end the game** immediately.. Tournament play only: 35 pt. differential ends the game. It is up to the losing team if they want to finish the game, they pay to play.

## ***OFFENSE***

**LINE OF SCRIMMAGE** - Offensive team must have at least **four (4) players** on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. 2 on 1 blocking is allowed as long as it is open hand. They can be anywhere as long as on the line of scrimmage.

**MOTION** - Only **ONE PLAYER** can be in motion at the snap of the ball and must be **running parallel to or away from** the line of scrimmage. **Please note that more than one player can initially shift**, however all players must be set for one second before the player goes in motion.

**CHARGING** – All offensive players once receiving the ball must make an attempt to avoid contact with the defense. If an offensive player lowers their shoulder, or attempts to bull through a defensive player, a 10 yard person foul penalty will be assessed from the spot of the foul.

**OPEN HAND** - During a legal block, contact can be made with **OPEN HANDS ONLY**. Open hands can be thrust forward initially to contact an opponent inside their body frame. Hands cannot be thrust forward above the shoulders to contact an opponent on the neck, face, or head. As the play develops, a blocker is permitted to work for and maintain position on an opponent as long as they do not push from behind or clip. Open hand blocking is allowed on all portions of the field and is not restricted to the line of scrimmage. Two on one blocking is allowed.

**ELIGIBLE RECEIVERS** – All 7 players, **including the linemen**, are eligible to run down field and catch passes. Receivers can all line up on one side -- there does not have to be a balanced wide receiver set.

**FORWARD PASSES** – The offensive team is only allowed one forward pass, which is to occur behind the line of scrimmage.

**DIRECT SNAPS** – No direct snaps will be allowed. The quarterback must be at least 2 yards from the center when receiving the snap.

**FLAG GUARDING** - A ball carrier cannot guard their flags from the opponent while attempting to elude tacklers. Play will be dead at the spot of the foul and will result in a 5-yard penalty and loss of down, unless the ball carrier exceeds the 1<sup>st</sup> down mark by more than 5 yards.

**STIFF ARMING** - Stiff-arming is **illegal** and will draw an unnecessary roughness penalty. This will result in a penalty 10 yards from the spot of the foul

## ***DEFENSE***

**NEUTRAL ZONE** – A one-yard neutral zone has been established between the offensive and defensive lines.

**RUSHING** - Full rush is allowed on every down except for extra points or punts. The defense may not make contact with the center until the **center raises his/her head AND takes a step in any direction.**

**BUMP AND RUN** – Only one defensive player allows Bump and Run on a receiver within five (5) yards of the line of scrimmage. Penalty: 5 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.

**TACKLING** - A legal tackle is defined as pulling OFF the ball carrier's flag belt, without impeding his forward movement. **Incidental contact does not constitute a penalty against the offense or defense.** Tackling a ball carrier is illegal, as is aggressively shoving or pushing the ball carrier to the ground or out of bounds, which will result in a 10-yard penalty plus automatic first down.

**PUNTS AND FIELD GOALS** – Defensive players cannot leave their feet or cross the neutral zone in an attempt to block a punt or field goal. Note: Provided facilities allow punts and field goals.

**STRIPPING THE BALL** – Players attempting to strip the ball and not attempting to pull a flag are subject to a personal foul penalty: 10 yards from the end of the run.

### ***FIELD & BALL POSITIONING***

**SPOTTING THE BALL** - The ball will be placed according to the **position of the ball** at the time the flag was pulled.

**BALL CARRIER IS NOT WEARING OR INADVERTENTLY LOSSES HIS FLAG BELT** - In the event a ball carrier is not wearing or inadvertently loses their flag belt, single hand touching of the ball carrier will constitute a legal tackle.

**BALL CARRIER INADVERTENTLY FALLS TO THE GROUND** - A ball carrier who falls to the ground is considered down and will not be allowed to get back up to play.

**FUMBLES** - There are no fumbles. When the ball carriers loses control of the ball and it touches the ground the play is ruled dead and the ball is spotted at the point it touched the ground as long as the spot is at or behind the ball carriers forward progress.

**BAD SNAPS FROM CENTER** - Any center snap that falls and touches the ground will be ruled dead at the spot of the ball hits the ground. **Unless it lands behind the QB then placed at the spot of the QB.**

**BALL PLACEMENT**- The team that is receiving the ball at the start of the game or after any touchdown will start the ball at the equivalent to the **20-yard line (Outdoor) or the closest available marking to the end zone (Indoors)**. There will be **NO KICKOFFS** to start play.

**PUNTING**- The offensive team is allowed to punt the ball on 4<sup>th</sup> down to better their field position. On 4<sup>th</sup> down the referee will ask the offense what they wish to do. The offense must declare what they will do i.e. go for 1<sup>st</sup>, or punt. The offense may not change their mind on 4<sup>th</sup> down unless they use a timeout. **If the offense is inside the opponent's side of the 50 the punt goes to the ten yard line.**

**BALL HITTING CEILING** - Any ball that hits the dome ceiling (pass) will remain in play until the ball touches the ground. Where as if it hits the ceiling then touches the ground it is ruled a dead ball and is spotted at the point it touches the ground.

**OVERTIME** – If both teams are tied after regulation the game will go into overtime. The format will follow the High-School/College system of each team getting 4 downs to score from the 10-yard line. Both teams get equal chances to score, if **no winner is determined after 2 overtime periods the game will be considered a TIE (league play only)**. In tournament play or playoffs this will be repeated until we have a winner. Teams must go for 2 pts. after the 2<sup>nd</sup> overtime.

## **SCORING**

**TOUCHDOWNS** = 6 points

**FIELD GOALS** = 3 points Offensive team has option to kick for a field goal, which will not be rushed by the defense which also cannot leave their feet. Once the offense declares they will attempt a field goal, they may not change their mind unless they are willing to be charged with a timeout. A missed field goal will be returned to the spot of the snap.

**EXTRA POINT** = 1 point (from the 5-yard line) or = 2 points (from the 10-yard line)

You may run, pass, or kick for an extra point attempt. If you attempt to pass for the extra point and your pass is intercepted, the ball may be returned for the value of the extra point you are attempting.

**SAFETY** = 2 points

## **OFFENSIVE & DEFENSIVE PENALTIES**

**ENCROACHMENT/OFFSIDE** - A lineman will be considered offside when he/she breaks the neutral zone prior to the snap, even if there is no contact made with the opponent. You are not allowed to jump back. 5 yard penalty and replay the down.

**ROUGHING THE PASSER** – When the defender makes contact with the quarterback in a manner that is not deemed an attempt to go after the flag belt, **any contact at all with the QB's arm..** This includes when a defender tries to deflect the pass and makes contact with the quarterback's arm or hand. **10-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and an automatic first down. If the pass is completed, then the penalty will be assessed from the end of the play.**

**NOT ENOUGH PLAYERS ON THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE** – The offense and defense are both required to have at least four (4) players on the line of scrimmage. If the either fails to have four players on the line at the start of the play, a penalty will be called. 5 yards and replay the down.

**DEFENSIVE HOLDING** – This occurs when a defender grabs the ball carrier and impedes his forward progress. This includes when the defender is attempting to pull a flag and misses and grabs the ball carriers shorts or shirt. 10-yard penalty from the spot of the foul or end of the run. **Or when a defensive player grabs and holds an offensive player to gain an advantage rushing or covering.**

**PASS INTERFERENCE** - Defensive pass interference will result in an automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down and 10 yd. penalty from line of scrimmage. Offensive pass interference will result in a loss of down and 10 yd. Penalty from line of scrimmage.

**FLAG GUARDING** – Flag guarding is defined as any attempt by the ball carrier to shield his/her flags from being pulled. This includes but is not limited to, swinging free hand, pushing an opponent's hand away, holding flags with free hand, lowering or dipping their shoulder, and using the ball to shield the flag. 5-yard penalty and loss of down (unless a first down is achieved after the penalty has been marked off).

**DIVING** – At no time may a ball carrier leave his feet to advance the ball. Diving will be at the sole discretion of the Referee. A 5-yard penalty (unless a first down is achieved after the penalty has been marked off) will be applied.

## **FIGHTING AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT – ZERO TOLERANCE**

**Fighting and unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated.** Players ejected by the referee for striking an opponent or official may face criminal charges. A player ejected for striking (i.e. throwing a punch) another player will be suspended for 1 calendar year **PERIOD**. There will be no exceptions to this rule. If you throw a punch, you are gone. If you leave the field or bench to get involved you will be suspended as well. Even if your intentions are good, it is not your job to get involved. The staff and officials of the DXFFL will handle this situation. Verbal abuse also will not be tolerated. **Such abuse will be handled in this manner: If a player yells at or swears at a ref they get a warning. If it persists they will get a 15 yard penalty. Next if it continues is ejection from the game immediately..** Taunting and over excessive celebration will also be grounds for a penalty or ejection. Penalty: 10 yards unsportsmanlike conduct

**Drinking/Controlled Substances** – Drinking of alcoholic beverages is **NOT** allowed before or during games. Player(s) found drinking prior to or during their game would not be allowed to play. A player believed to be under the influence of a controlled substance will not be allowed to play.

**ALL OTHER RULINGS (if applicable):** Rules not covered by the Michigan Flag Football Association rulebook, will automatically defer to MHSAA rules and procedures.

## **IN HOUSE RULES FOR TOTAL SPORTS COMPLEX:**

1. Recreational league teams may not roster more than **three** competitive league players on a team.
2. **Point System:**
  - Win: 3 points
  - Tie: 1 points
  - Loss: 0 points
3. **Tie Breakers**
  - Most wins
  - Winner of head to head competition  
(Tie between 2 teams Most wins)
  - Point Differential  
(Points for – Points against = Point Differential)  
(Max **25** per game)
  - Least points against (Max **25** per game)
  - Most points scored (Max **25** per game)