



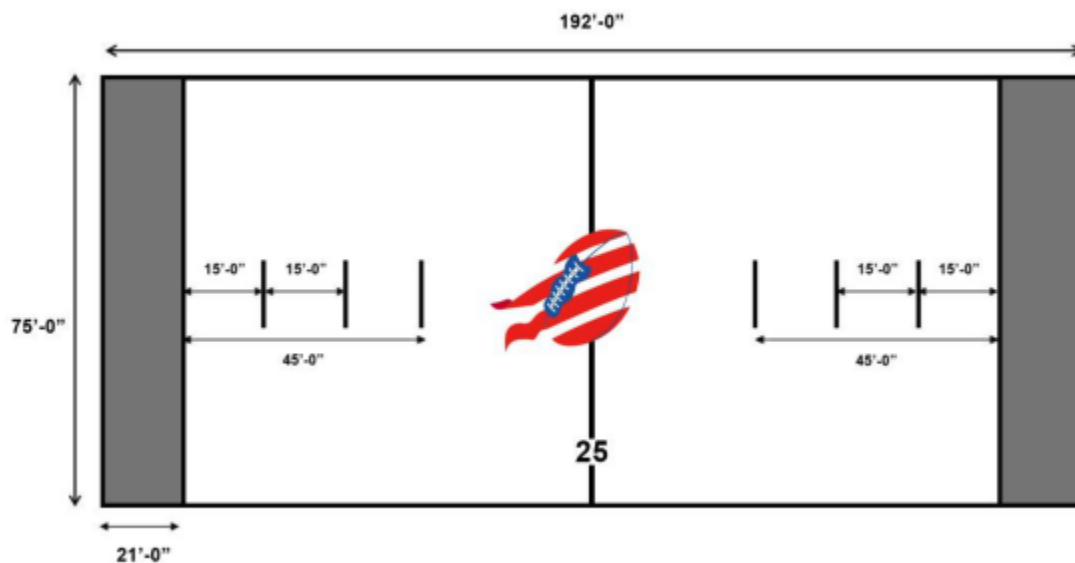
AFFL Youth Rulebook 2024

AFFL Youth games consist of boys, girls, and co-ed teams. 5 vs. 5 and 7 vs. 7 formats are options for AFFL Youth competition.

AFFL Youth flag football is a non-contact sport. There's no tackling, diving, blocking, screening, or fumbles.

The Field

1. The playing field shall be 64 yards long, 50 yards goal to goal, and 7-yard end zones with a width of 25 yards.
2. The four intersections of goal lines and sidelines must be marked by pylons at the inside corners of the end zone and the goal line. Pylons must be placed at the inside edges of white lines and should not touch the field of play. Pylons should also be placed at the 2 intersections of the sidelines and the 50-yard line.
3. All lines must be marked with a material that is not harmful to a person's eyes or skin and should be four inches wide, except for the goal lines, which should be eight inches wide.
4. All benches and other rigid features must be 10 yards or further from the out-of-bounds line. If space permits, these features may be placed further back.
5. The playing surface shall consist of grass or artificial turf.
6. All markings or decorations on the field must not hinder the players.
7. No additional markings are required on a field with traditional tackle football markings.
8. The field will be as represented in Figure 1.



The Ball

1. All balls will be provided by AFFLYouth. No other balls are authorized for use.

Rosters

5 vs. 5 Format (6 - 18 years old)

1. Each team will have 5 Players on the field; 4 players are acceptable, and the opposing team can play with 4 or 5 when the opposing team has 4 players. A minimum 4 players are required to start a game.
2. Roster sizes are a maximum of 12 Players.

7 vs. 7 format (14 - 18 years old)

1. Each team will have 7 Players on the field; 6 players are acceptable, and the opposing team can play with 6 or 7 when the opposing team has 6 players. A minimum of 6 players are required to start a game.
2. Roster sizes are a maximum of 12 Players.

Uniforms

1. Player jerseys must have numbers on the front and back of shirts. AFFL Youth will supply jerseys.
2. Players must wear shorts with no pockets.
3. Wearing jewelry of any type is prohibited.
4. Face coverings, billed hats & visors are prohibited. Beanies can be worn during cold weather.
5. All players are required to wear a mouthpiece.

Flags

1. Flags must be a minimum of 14" in length.
2. Flags must be aligned with the player's hips.

THE GAME

Formations

1. The offense can line up in any formation, with any number of players on the LOS or in the backfield. Players on the line of scrimmage must have at least 3 ft between each player, including the center (no bunch formations).
2. Any player in the backfield may take a handoff from the quarterback; the center is the only person who cannot take a direct snap from the quarterback. The center is not allowed to touch the ball first on a run; he may take a handoff from another player who gets a handoff from the quarterback first.
3. The ball must be snapped between the center's legs.
4. There is no required formation for the defense.

Scoring

1. Touchdowns are worth 6 points.
2. Conversions: After a touchdown is scored, the ball will be spotted in the middle of the field, and the scoring team will have the opportunity to earn extra points via a conversion.

Conversion Point Values:

5-yard line = 1 point

10-yard line = 2 points

15-yard line = 3 points.

3. A safety will earn 2 points for the defense if they pull an offensive player's flag in his own end zone while the offensive player has possession of the ball or if a quarterback is in the end zone. Flag guarding in the end zone also results in a safety.
4. If the defense intercepts the ball and returns it to the opposing end zone, they will be awarded 2 points.
5. A safety on a conversion – the appropriate team will be awarded 1 point.

Conversion Penalties:

1. If the Defense commits a penalty (other than DPI) during a failed conversion not starting at the 5-yard line (before a turnover) - the Conversion will be replayed with the ball spotted at the next closest Conversion spot while keeping the same point value.
2. If the Defense commits any penalty on a Conversion that starts at the 5-yard line (prior to a turnover) - the Conversion will be ruled successful.

EXAMPLE: A defensive penalty on a 3-point conversion will result in a replay of the 3-point conversion from the 10-yard line. The subsequent defensive penalty would result

in a 3-point conversion from the 5-yard line, and a subsequent defensive penalty would result in 3 points awarded to the offense.

3. Defensive pass interference in the end zone on a conversion: any point value attempt will result in the offense being awarded the ball at the 2-yard line with the same point value for the attempt.
4. Tackling or intentionally holding a player during a conversion results in an automatically successful attempt for the converting team. If this occurs on a defensive return, the defense is awarded 2 pts no matter where the conversion began.
5. Any penalty (other than tackling) committed by the converting team during a defensive return will result in the defensive team being awarded the ball with a new series of downs at the 25-yard line.
6. Any penalty by the converting team before a turnover or defensive return team after a turnover - will result in a failed conversion.

TIME

1. Unless tournament rules dictate otherwise, each game will be 40 minutes long, consisting of two (2) 20-minute halves.
2. **Running time:** the game will be played under running time. The game clock will stop only for injuries and referee timeouts. Running time will be suspended in the last 1 minute of the second half.
3. **Controlled time:** the last 1 minute of the second half will be played under controlled time.
4. Clock runs - the game clock will continue to run if the score difference exceeds 18 points during the last minute of the second half.

Starting and Stopping the Clock

1. The game clock will stop after any scoring play or penalty that occurs with 1-minute or less remaining in the first half.
2. If the game clock runs down to 1 minute after a scoring play or penalty, it will remain stopped during a Conversion.
3. The clock will restart on the throw-off when a person in the field of play touches the ball; if a player does not touch the ball, the clock will start on the snap of the next play.

1 Minute Warning

1. The Game Clock will not stop for a 1-minute warning in the first half but will stop for a 1-minute warning in the second half.
2. During controlled time, the game clock will stop if any of the following conditions are met:
 - a) A player in possession of the ball steps out of bounds.

- b) An attempted pass is incomplete.
 - c) Change of possession.
 - d) Scoring play.
 - e) Conversion play.
 - f) Penalty.
 - g) A team or referee timeout.
3. If a penalty is declined inside the final minute of a half, the game clock will start on the ready-for-play whistle.
 4. During running time, the game clock will stop at the beginning of all referee time-outs and resume when the referee starts the play clock.

Timeouts

1. Each team will get two timeouts per half.
2. Time outs not called in the first half ***will not*** carry over to the second half.
3. Time outs may be called by a player on the field and/or a designated sideline coach.
4. A team cannot call two consecutive timeouts without running a play. However, each team may call one time out before the same play.

Time out length:

- a) referee: 30 seconds or 1 minute
- b) team: 1 minute unless the referee chooses to extend
- c) between halves: 1 minute
- d) between regulation and overtime (or subsequent overtimes): 1 minute.

Injury Time Outs: Will last a minimum of 1 minute and will be called by the referee if they perceive that a player requires medical assistance.

Injury During Running Time: An injured player must leave the field of play, or their team forfeits one of their time outs.

Injury During Controlled Time: The injured player's team will automatically forfeit a time out unless the injury resulted from an act that resulted in a penalty to the other team. In controlled time, if the injured player's team has no timeouts remaining, the opposing team can run the game clock for 10 seconds, and the game clock will restart on the ready for play whistle.

The Play Clock: Will start when the Referee sounds the ready for play whistle, and the offense will have 30 seconds to start a new play. Failure to start a new play in the allotted time will result in a penalty for delay of game, resulting in loss of down.

10-Second Run-off: During controlled time, any penalty committed that stops the clock will be subject to a 10-second run-off at the option of the non-offending team. If the 10-second run-off is accepted, the game clock will start on the Referee's ready for play whistle. If the Game Clock

was stopped at the time of the penalty, there is no runoff, and the Game Clock will start at the ready for play whistle. If less than 10 seconds remain on the Game Clock and a run-off occurs, the game will be over.

Overtime

If the game's score is tied after two halves, Overtime will be played.

1. During overtime, team timeouts are not allowed.
2. The game clock will be turned off, and each team will have one possession to score a conversion from their opponent's 5, 10, or 15-yard line.
3. A conversion from the 5-yard line is worth 1 point. A conversion from the 10-yard line is worth 2 points. A conversion from the 3-yard line is worth 3 points.
4. The process is repeated if the score is tied after the first overtime attempt.
5. Teams can go for 1, 2, or 3 points on every overtime possession.
6. Both Teams will defend the End Zone that was the target of the game's initial throw-off.
7. Each team will receive 1 Blitz for the entire overtime period.

The team leading at the conclusion of overtime wins the game. If the score is tied at the end of the first overtime period, an additional overtime period will be played. After the second overtime period, if a winner has not been determined, each overtime period will consist of one conversion attempt of any value by each team until there is a winner. The alternating choice of possession order will continue.

Pre Game

1. Before the start time of the game, each team will send the team captain to the center of the field for a coin toss.
2. The away team chooses heads or tails before the referee tosses the coin into the air.
3. The team winning the coin toss can choose if they want to start the game by receiving or executing a Throw-Off.
4. The team that receives the First Half Throw-Off will Throw-Off to start the Second Half.
5. The team that loses the coin toss chooses which Goal Line they would like to defend on the initial possession.
6. After each Touchdown and Safety, the teams will change direction.
7. The Second Half Throw-Off will be in the opposite direction as the First Half Throw-Off.

The Throw Off

1. Before the Throw-Off, the receiving team can line up in any formation so long as none of their players are across Midfield before the ball is thrown.
2. Except for the Thrower, the Throwing Team is not permitted to run up as the ball is thrown and must keep one foot on the throw yard line until the ball is released.

3. The Throw-Off will occur at the beginning of the 1st and 2nd halves and after any Touchdown or Safety (Unless the team attempts an Onside Play).
4. A player from the Throwing Team will initiate a Throw-Off by throwing the ball from behind his team's designated yard line based on division. The Game Clock will be re-started, if necessary, when the Throwing Team releases the ball.

Throw-Off Yard Lines:

15U: Throw off from the 5-yard line

12U: Throw off from the 10-yard line

10U: Throw off from the 15-yard line

8U: Throw off from the midfield line

6U: The offense will start at the 5-yard line (no Throw-Offs)

5. The receiving team, either by catching the ball in the air or picking it up off of the ground, may advance any throw-off.
6. If the ball is caught by the receiving team and the receiving player elects to place a knee on the ground in the receiving team's end zone, or the ball bounces from the end zone beyond any sideline or the end line, the receiving team will start with a first down at its 5-yard line. They must cross the 25-yard line to receive a new set of downs. If the receiving team fails to pass the 25-yard line, they will not receive a new set of downs unless they can pass midfield. This remains even after a penalty that results in an automatic first down or free down.
7. If the throw-off initially hits the ground before the receiving team's goal line, the ball may either be picked up and returned by the receiving team or downed by the throwing team.
8. Once the throw-off is downed by the throwing team, the result is a dead ball with the ball spotted where it was first touched.
9. If the receiving team muffs the ball on a fly or bounce, the ball will be spotted where it first made contact with the receiving team.
10. If a player makes a catch outside the endzone and runs into the endzone, and his flag is pulled, that's a safety.
11. If the throwing team throws the ball out of bounds and is untouched by the receiving team, the receiving team will be awarded the ball at the opposing team's 15-yard line. If the ball goes out of the endzone (back or side), it is a touchback, and the ball will be placed on the receiving team's 5-yard line.
12. **After a Safety:** If a team surrenders a Safety, the teams switch sides of the field, and the team that surrendered the Safety must execute a Throw-Off from the 5-yard line on the opposite side of the field from where the Safety occurred.
13. **Onside Play:** Instead of a Throw-Off, the Throwing Team can elect an optional play called an Onside Play. An Onside Play is equivalent to a Fourth Down play with Midfield as the line to gain for the Offensive Team and would start at the Throwing Team's 5-yard Line. There is no onside play allowed unless behind in the 2nd half in the last minute of the game.

SET OF DOWNS

1. The Offense will have one Set of Downs to advance the ball from one Box to the next. Once the Offense advances the ball from one Box into the next, they will receive a new Set of Downs.
2. After the throw-off, the Offense must cross the 25-yard line to receive a new Set of Downs unless the return passes Midfield, in which case the team will have 4 downs to score.
3. Spotting the Ball: On plays that end in between the Hash Marks, the ball will be spotted where the play ends. If a play ends outside the Hash Marks, the ball will be spotted in line with the nearest Hash Mark. If the field does not have hash marks, the ball will be spotted in the center of the Field of Play.

OFFENSE

1. The first player to receive the snap from the center is considered the quarterback for that play.
2. This player has a maximum of 6 seconds to release the ball by executing a forward pass, handoff, or pitch.
3. The go clock is turned off when the quarterback releases the ball forward or backwards.
4. Failure to do so will result in a dead ball ending the play, and the next play will begin at the original line of scrimmage with a loss of down.
5. The referee and/or the go-clock official will blow the whistle to signal the end of the play, and the result will be treated as the equivalent of a sack.
6. There is no intentional grounding.

QB Advance: the quarterback is not allowed to advance the ball past the line of scrimmage without another offensive player having possession of the ball first. The exception is if a defense player crosses the line of scrimmage (blitz).

Motion: The Offense is allowed to have 1 player in motion at any time, including when the ball is snapped, so long as that player's motion is not toward the Line of Scrimmage.

Eligible Receivers: All offensive players are eligible receivers.

Diving: An offensive player may dive to catch a ball, but they can not dive forward to advance the ball. The ball will be spotted where the offensive player initiated the dive.

Falling on the Ground: regardless of whether it was due to incidental contact from other players, a player in possession of the ball and on the ground is considered down and the possession over.

Laterals:

1. On Throw-Offs, one (1) lateral is allowed during the receiving team's return.
2. On Scrimmage Plays, one Lateral per team per play is allowed downfield, two behind the line of scrimmage.
3. After the snap, the first handoff behind the line of scrimmage from the QB to another player will not be considered a lateral.
4. Forward passes are permitted after handoffs and laterals as long as the ball and the passer have not crossed the Line of Scrimmage.
5. Laterals can be intercepted and advanced by the defense.

PUNTING

1. Teams can punt the ball on 4th down regardless of position on the field.
2. If a team elects to punt on Fourth Down, they are electing to forfeit the play, and the opposing team will start at their 5-yard line.

DEFENSE

1. There is no required formation for the Defense.
2. There is no tackling allowed in flag football. A defensive player must pull a flag from the offensive player in possession of the ball to end the play.
3. Defensive players may dive to pull flags or attempt to catch the ball, but the offense may not dive to establish forward progress. The Referee will determine where the player started to dive and spot the ball there.
4. **Early Flag Pull:** If a Defensive Player removes an Offensive Player's flag before that Player possesses the ball, the Referee should say "Early Pull," and play continues. The Defense will still need to pull a flag to end the Play. (See Unsportsmanlike Conduct for additional rules.)
5. A defensive player is only allowed to cross the line of scrimmage under the following circumstances:
 - a) Executing a blitz. A blitz occurs when a defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the Go-Clock reaches 3 seconds.
 - b) Crossing the line of scrimmage when the Go-Clock to count reaches 3 seconds.
 - c) If the Go-Clock is turned off due to a handoff or lateral by the offense.
6. Each Defensive Team can Blitz 2 times in each Half. If there is an offensive penalty when a blitz is used, the defense will not be charged a blitz; if there is a defensive penalty when a blitz is used, the defense will still be charged their blitz.
7. **ENCROACHMENT:** If the Defense is not Blitzing, they must wait 3 seconds to cross the Line of Scrimmage. An encroachment penalty occurs when a team crosses the Line of Scrimmage before 3 seconds with no remaining Blitzes.
8. In all cases where the Defense has no remaining Blitzes and is penalized for Encroachment, the Offense may accept the result of the play or replay the down. If the

Defense continually Blitzes with none remaining, an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty may also be called on the Defense, with the appropriate remedy enforced.

POSSESSION

A Catch:

A catch is defined as an instance where a player gains control of a forward pass by:

- a) securing control of the ball in their hands or arms before the ball touches the ground
 - b) one foot touches the ground inbounds while the ball is secure in their hands and/or arms
 - c) After (a) and (b) have been fulfilled, performs any act common to the game (e.g., tuck the ball away, extend it forward, take an additional step, turn upfield, or avoid an opponent), or maintain control of the ball long enough to do so.
 - d) If another part of the player's body hits the ground before his feet (not including hands), then the initial contact with the ground from that body part must be completely inbounds.
- As soon as the player is ruled out of bounds, the play is over, and a catch or interception shall be ruled complete if the above requirements are met.
 - Simultaneous possession of a forward pass will be ruled to be a catch for the offense regardless of the order of whose feet touch the ground first. Both players must complete the catch in bounds; otherwise, the pass will be ruled incomplete.
 - If one player controls the ball in their hands before another player, whether in the air or on the ground, the catch will not be considered simultaneous possession.

PENALTIES & REMEDIES

If not implicitly or explicitly stated below, all penalties can be declined by the non-offending team, and the result of the play will stand. If one team commits multiple penalties on the same play and the other team commits zero, the non-offending team can pick which penalty to enforce. All penalties that occur on an interception, throw-off, or punt return by the return team will result in first down where the return began.

BLOCKING

Blocking is defined as an offensive player forcing a defensive player to change his position on the field through physical contact initiated by the offensive player's hands, arms, shoulders, or head. Holding, defined as an offensive player grabbing or holding onto a defensive player to impede his motion, is also considered illegal blocking. A pick set before possession of the ball

by a receiver or prior to the quarterback's crossing the line of scrimmage in possession of the ball will be treated as a block.

1. The remedy is Loss of Down, and if the foul is beyond the end of the run, the ball is placed at the end of the run.
2. If behind the end of the run, the ball is placed at the spot of the foul.
3. At the Referee's discretion, a Player committing a Block may be sent off the field, thus putting his team a Man Down for 3 plays.

CHARGING

The remedy for charging is the same as for blocking, including the referee's discretionary ability to send a player off the field, putting his team a man down for 1 play. Charging occurs when an offensive player running with the ball makes significant physical contact with a defensive player who has established a stationary position on the field, where the offensive player has the opportunity to recognize that the defensive player has established position. Generally, an offensive player running with the ball has the right of way and will not be called for charging if the defensive player is in motion or established his position in a manner that gives the offensive player no opportunity to avoid contact.

DEFENSIVE HOLDING

Defensive Holding occurs when a Defensive Player holds onto a part of the body or uniform of a ball carrier where the Offensive Player's progress is impeded in a meaningful way. The remedy is an automatic First Down at the spot of the Foul.

INTENTIONAL DEFENSIVE HOLDING

It occurs when a Defensive Player holds onto a part of the body or uniform of a Free Runner. A Free Runner has possession of the football with no defenders in front of him and would be deemed likely by the Officials to have scored in the absence of the tackle or intentional defensive hold. This will follow the same rules as Tackling a last man (free runner).

DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE (DPI)

DPI occurs when bodily contact initiated by a Defensive Player prevents an Offensive Player from attempting to catch a likely catchable Pass.

1. DPI can also occur when a defensive player holds onto a part of the body or uniform of an offensive player 5 yards or more from the line of scrimmage before a pass is thrown, where the offensive player's progress is impeded in a meaningful way.
2. DPI also occurs when a defensive player forces an offensive player out of bounds before a pass is thrown where the offensive player would otherwise be deemed ineligible.
3. DPI penalties in the field of play – are an automatic 1st down at the spot of the foul.
4. DPI penalties in the End Zone - the offense is awarded first down at the opposing 2-yard line or the previous line of scrimmage, whichever is closer to the end zone.
5. A force out by a defensive player has the same remedy as DPI unless it occurs in the end zone, in which case, the offense will be awarded a touchdown.
6. If the pass is uncatchable, no penalty will be called.

DELAY OF GAME

Delay of Game occurs if the Offense does not start a new play before the Play Clock expires.

1. On a scrimmage play - the remedy is loss of down.
2. On a throw-off - the receiving team will start its possession at midfield.
3. On a punt - the previous spot.

THROW-OFF/PUNT OUT OF BOUNDS

If the Throwing Team (on a Throw-Off) throws the ball out of bounds and it is untouched by the receiving team, the receiving team will be awarded the ball at the opposing team's 15-yard line.

1. Throw-Off Out of Bounds – spotted at the throwing team's 15-yard line unless the ball goes out of the endzone (back or side) is a touch back to the 5-yard line.
2. Punt Out of Bounds - at the previous spot.

FALSE START

If any offensive team member crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped, it is a dead ball, and the offense is penalized with a loss of down. This also applies to onside plays.

OFFSIDE

An offside violation occurs when:

1. Throwing teams crossing the line of scrimmage before a throw-off or punt. On a throw-off or punt, the receiving team will have the option of keeping the result of the play or getting the ball on the 25-yard line on a throw-off and getting the ball at the previous spot for a punt.
2. If any member of the defensive team crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped, the play continues, and the remedy for the offensive team is that they may accept the result of the play or replay the down. If the result of the play is accepted, the defense will lose one of its blitzes. The defensive team will not lose one of its blitzes if the down is replayed.

FLAG DELAY

The Defender who pulls a flag must immediately drop it on the ground or hand it to an Official or the Player it was pulled from.

1. If the Defensive Player carries the flag away or throws the flag away from the Offensive Player and causes an undue delay of the game, the Officials may reset the Game and Play Clocks accordingly.
2. An Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty may also be called on the Defense, with the appropriate remedy enforced.

FLAG-GUARDING

The remedy for Flag-Guarding is a spot foul and Loss of the Down.

1. Flag-Guarding is deemed to have occurred when an offensive player in possession of the ball creates contact with a defensive player using his hands, arms, elbows, or the ball to prevent a defensive player from pulling his flag.
2. Flag-guarding after an interception or on a return will result in the ball being spotted where the infraction occurred.
3. Flag-guarding on fourth down will result in a spot foul and a turnover on downs.

FLAG TAMPERING

Any attempt to tamper with Flags that would make them more difficult to pull, including but not limited to using adhesives, knots, and stronger magnets, will result in an automatic game Disqualification and the offending team playing Man Down for the remaining duration of the game.

ILLEGAL CONTACT BY THE OFFENSE

The remedy for illegal contact by the offense is loss of down at the previous spot. Illegal contact occurs when an offensive player, running a passing route, uses his hands, arms, or shoulders to meaningfully alter the position or direction of the defender to gain an advantage.

ILLEGAL LATERAL

A Lateral that either goes forward or is the second Lateral on a scrimmage play ends that play. After any Illegal Lateral that travels backward and hits the ground or is caught, the ball will be spotted where it hits the ground or is caught. An Illegal Lateral that travels forward will be spotted where the ball was released. An exception is on Throw-Offs, where the Receiving Team is allowed one Lateral, and this penalty will be enforced on the second Lateral. The Play will be blown dead once possessed by the offense, or it hits the ground after an Illegal Lateral.

ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS

Any forward pass thrown where the entire body of the passer has been beyond the line of scrimmage within the down. The remedy is a loss of down at the previous spot.

ILLEGAL MOTION

The remedy for illegal motion is loss of down. Illegal motion is any motion by an offensive player behind the line of scrimmage that moves toward their line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped, or more than 1 player is in legal motion. This results in a dead ball, and play is stopped.

ILLEGAL QUARTERBACK RUN

The remedy for an Illegal Quarterback Run is Loss of Down and any yardage gained. An Illegal Quarterback Run takes place if the Quarterback runs across the Line of Scrimmage before any Defensive Players cross the Line of Scrimmage.

INELIGIBLE RECEIVER DOWNFIELD

No Offensive player may run Out of Bounds without the ball and then touch the ball on the current play. If an Offensive Player commits this foul and then catches a ball, the pass will be ruled incomplete. If he receives a lateral, the play will be blown dead at the spot of first contact.

INTERFERENCE WITH A THROW-OFF OR PUNT RETURN

Throwing teams must give the receiving player a half-yard buffer zone to catch any throw-off. The remedy for interfering with a throw-off is that the offensive team takes possession at the spot of the foul or where the return ends, whichever is further, and will receive an extra down in the next set of downs. The possession's first play will be labeled "free down," and the second play will be first down.

MISSING FLAG

A missing flag violation occurs when a player begins a play without either of their two flags attached, or it becomes unattached before possession of the ball but not from an early pull. The remedy for a missing flag is the player missing a flag is deemed to be down as soon as the player has possession of the ball.

MOVING PICK

The remedy for a moving pick is loss of down and the ball placed at the previous spot. A moving pick violation occurs when an offensive player without the ball is moving when he impedes the progress of a defensive player in pursuit. If a pick occurs during a throw-off by the receiving team, the play will be blown dead with the ball spotted at the progress spot when the play was blown dead, and the receiving team will start its possession on second down.

ROLLING

An offensive player who rolls on the ground to prevent his flag from being pulled will be deemed down at the spot where he first began to roll. Dipping, jumping, and spinning, not into a defender, are permitted evasive moves for offensive players.

ROUGHING THE PASSER

Roughing the passer occurs when a defensive player makes contact, intentionally or not, with the throwing arm or shoulder of any offensive player attempting a forward pass. The remedy is an automatic first down from where the play ended, and a free down will be awarded if the offense gained a first down on the play. The referee also has the discretion to send the player off the field for 1 play, starting for a man-down situation.

TACKLING

Tackling is defined as the intentional act of a defensive player disrupting an offensive player's progress through physical contact initiated by the defensive player, such that he loses significant momentum and/or falls to the ground. At the conclusion of the play, the offense will receive the yardage gained and a first down. If the play ends with a loss, the ball will be spotted at the previous spot with a first down. If a tackle occurs on a throw-off or punt, the receiving team will begin its possession with a free down. In addition, a player committing a tackle will be sent off the field, putting his team man down for 3 plays.

TACKLING A FREE RUNNER or INTENTIONAL DEFENSIVE HOLD

A free runner has possession of the football with no defenders in front of him and would be deemed likely by the officials to have scored in the absence of the tackle or intentional defensive hold. The team whose free runner is tackled will be awarded a touchdown.

TOO MANY PLAYERS

If the offense starts a play with more than 5 players on the field, the play is dead, and the offense loses the down. If the defense starts a play with more than 5 players on the field, the play continues as a free play, with the offense having the option to take the result of the play or replay the down.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Unsportsmanlike Conduct is when any of the following occurs:

1. A player/coach disrespects an official either verbally or physically
2. Taunting of players from the opposing team
3. Fighting/Punching
4. Illegal contact above the shoulders
5. Pretending or acting as if a penalty has occurred in an attempt to influence a Referee's decision-making
6. Intentionally blitzing when all team blitzes have been used
7. If a defender pulls a non-runner flag, including their own, during a play.

The remedy for a Player's first Unsportsmanlike Conduct is the offending Player is sent off the field for 2 plays, and his team plays Man Down. On a Player's second offense, he must be ejected, and another player from his team who was on the field at the time of the penalty must sit out 4 plays with the team Man Down (at the choice of the fouling teams' captain/designated head coach). At their discretion, officials can eject a player on their first Unsportsmanlike penalty and enforce a 4-play penalty similar to a second offense. Any player ejected from a game will be ineligible for the next game.

UN-TUCKED JERSEYS - BALL CARRIER/UNALIGNED FLAGS

Prior to a snap, whenever the referee observes any player with his shirt covering any part of his flags or his flags to be unaligned and not at his hips, the referee will warn the player. If the player does not comply before the play, the referee will yell the offending player's number and "one-hand touch." that player shall then be deemed down as soon as a defensive player touches him.

REFEREES AND STAFF

1. All Officials will be trained and credentialed by the League.
2. One official during league play will work each game.
3. The referee is the senior official and can overrule any other officials. he will start each play 5-10 yards behind the quarterback. Generally, the referee should defer to the judgment of the official with the best view of the play.

4. The linesmen will stand outside the sidelines on either side of the field near the line of scrimmage.
5. The field judges will be stationed on the defensive side of the line of scrimmage, on the sidelines in the vicinity of the furthest defensive player from the line of scrimmage.
6. The timekeeper will be responsible for operating the game, play, and go clocks.
7. All officials will wear uniforms purchased through the league.
8. One additional staff member will be responsible for keeping track of where the ball is spotted using a conspicuous pole placed on the sideline and can be the timekeeper.

DEFINITIONS

Ball Ready for Play – A Dead Ball is Ready for Play when the ball is placed down by an Official at the spot where the ball will next be put in play, and the Referee signals for the 30-second Play Clock to start.

Blitz – On a Blitz, the Defensive team may rush the Quarterback as soon as the ball is Snapped. All defensive players are eligible to Blitz. There is no limit to the number of Defensive Players that can Blitz on a given play.

Boundary Lines – The Boundary Lines are the End Lines and the Sidelines and enclose the field upon which the game is played.

Controlled Time – Controlled Time is the period of the game where Running Time is suspended

Conversion – A Conversion is a play that takes place after a Touchdown.

Dead Ball – A Dead Ball is not in play, where the runner is declared down, or a pass is declared Incomplete.

Defense – The team that starts the Down without the ball is the Defense.

Disqualified Player – A Disqualified Player is prohibited from further participation in the game. The Referee will disqualify a Player who has received two different penalties that put his team Man Down.

Down – A Down is a period of action that starts when the ball is Snapped and ends when the ball is declared Dead. The Offensive team has four Downs, a Set of Downs, to achieve a score or obtain a fresh Set of Downs by crossing the appropriate yard line.

End Lines – The End Lines are the lines at each end of the field and are perpendicular to the Sidelines.

The End Zone - is the rectangle formed by the Goal Line, the End Line, and the Sidelines. The Goal Line and the pylons are in the End Zone.

Field of Play – The Field of Play is the rectangle formed by the Goal Lines and the Sidelines.

First Half – The first 20-minute period of the game. (12 mins for tournament play)

First/Second/Third/Fourth Down – The initial Down in each Set of Downs is the First Down, the second is Second Down, etc. If the Offensive team fails to reach the Box, they must reach after Fourth Down. The Defensive team starts a new Set of Downs at the spot where the Offensive Player was ruled down.

Force Out – A Force Out occurs when a Player attempting to catch a ball lands Out of Bounds due primarily to the influence of contact with an opposing Player. A Force Out will be considered a catch where the Offensive Player left the Field of Play.

Forward Pass – A Forward Pass is a ball thrown by an Offensive Player that travels to a point that is closer to the Defensive Team's End Zone than the Offensive Team's End Zone. Forward passes are not permitted on returns of Throw-Offs or Punts.

Foul – A Foul is any infraction of a playing rule for which a penalty is prescribed.

Free Down – A Free Down occurs when the Receiving Team is not given an opportunity to catch the ball or is tackled on a return. It also occurs when the Defense commits a penalty whose remedy includes an automatic first down after the Offense has already gained a First Down on the play. The Free Down gives the Receiving Team a fifth opportunity to advance the ball to the next Box and is played prior to First Down.

Free Play – A Free Play is a play where the team in possession of the ball has the option to replay the Down or accept the outcome of the play.

Last man(free runner) – A Free Runner has possession of the football and would be deemed likely by the Officials to have scored in the absence of a tackle.

Fumble or Unintentional Stripped Ball – Any time a runner, on Offense or Defense, loses possession of the ball, either on his own or because the ball is stripped out, he will be considered down at the point where the ball hits the ground. In instances where a Defensive Player unintentionally strips the ball, and the ball does not hit the ground, only the team in possession of the ball can recover it. If recovered by the possessing team, they may continue the play fumble by the offense, and the ball does not hit the ground; the defense can recover the live ball in the air. Note: Intentional swiping at or stripping of a ball in possession is a tackling foul.

Game Clock – The Game Clock keeps time for the entire game, in both the Running and Controlled Time segments of the game, and is managed by the Time Keeper. Ideally, the Game Clock will be visible on all four sides of the field.

Go Clock – The Go Clock will start on the Snap at zero seconds (0), count to three seconds, and then count up to six seconds. The Go Clock should be visible at each end of the field and should be either the same device as or adjacent to the Play Clock. If a Go Clock is unavailable, the count can be communicated verbally by an Official or with a speaker through the AFFL Go app.

Goal Lines – The Goal Lines are the lines between the Sidelines that separate the End Zone from the Field of Play. The Goal Lines are vertical planes that are parallel to and 7 yards from the End Lines.

Handoff – A hand-to-hand transfer of the ball from one player to another.

Hash Mark – A Hash Mark is a mark of 4 inches x 2 feet and is used to measure each yard line.

Incomplete Pass – An Incomplete Pass is a Pass that is not caught.

Interception – A pass caught by the opposing team is an Interception. The Defense must obtain complete control of the ball to be ruled an Interception. Complete control is determined at the discretion of the Officials.

Lateral – A Lateral is a sideways or backward Pass or Pitch from one Offensive Player to another. Laterals are permitted on all plays and points on the field, including Throw-Offs and Punts. Laterals that are dropped are treated as Fumbles and dead where the ball lands. Two laterals behind the line of scrimmage and one downfield on each offensive possession. One lateral on throw-off returns.

League – The League refers these rules to the Commissioner's office of the American Flag Football League.

Line of Scrimmage – The Line of Scrimmage is the vertical plane of the yard line that passes through the forward point of the ball after it has been placed on the ground and made ready for play by the Officials.

Live Ball – The Ball is Live when it has been snapped from the Line of Scrimmage. The ball will remain Live until it is ruled Dead and the Down is over.

Loss of Down – Loss of Down is a remedy for various penalties in flag football. A team that is penalized for loss of down must start a new play with one less down remaining in the set of downs. For example, a team penalized for loss of down on 1st down would start the next play as 2nd down.

Man Down – A team is Man Down when one of their players has committed an infraction that causes the officials to send that player off the field for 1 play.

Midfield – Midfield is the 25-yard line.

Muff - A muff is an "uncontrolled touch" of the football by a player on the returning team after it is punted/thrown off and will be treated as a fumble. Therefore, the ball will be considered dead at the spot of the muff.

Offense – The team that starts the Down in possession of the ball is the Offense.

Opposing Territory – The field area between Midfield and the End Zone toward which a team's Offense drives.

Out of Bounds – A Player is Out of Bounds when he touches a Boundary Line or when he touches anything that is on or outside a Boundary Line, except a Player or an Official.

Out of Bounds Spot – Wherever an Offensive Player with the ball exits, the Field of Play will be the spot of the next Down. The spot will be established by the position of the football that is furthest from the End Zone at the point where the runner crossed the Sideline.

Overtime – Overtime is the third period of the game that is played only if the score is tied at the end of the Second Half.

Own Territory – The area of the field between Midfield and the End Zone away from which a team's Offense drives.

Pass – A Pass is an act by a Player directing the ball to a teammate in the air.

Play Clock – The Time Keeper will manage The Play Clock. Once the Officials put the ball in play and start the Play Clock, the Offensive team will have 30 seconds to snap the ball, or they will be guilty of Delay of Game. Ideally, the Play Clock will be visible on both sidelines.

Possession – A Possession is defined as a period where the Offense is awarded the opportunity to complete at least one Set of Downs.

Quarterback – The Quarterback is the Offensive Player who first touches the ball after the Center's Snap.

Receiving Team – The Receiving Team position themselves on their own side of Midfield until the Throwing Team initiates the Throw-Off.

Running Time – Running Time is the period of the game where the clock stops only on Time Outs.

Second Half – The second 20-minute period of the Game.

Sidelines – The Sidelines are the lines on each side of the field and are perpendicular to the End Lines. The Sidelines separate the Field of Play from the area that is Out of Bounds.

Simultaneous Possession – Simultaneous Possession occurs when a Forward Pass is caught by Offensive and Defensive Players at exactly the same time. If this is the case, the ball is awarded to the offense.

Snap – The Snap is the act of removing the ball from the ground and delivering it to another Player on the Offensive team. The Snap must go through the legs of the Offensive Player delivering the ball. The defense is not allowed to intercept the ball snapped from center to quarterback on a blitz, the quarterback must always be able to get the snap from center.

Stationary Pick – A Stationary Pick is permissible only on plays from scrimmage and not during Throw-Offs. A Pick is an act by a Player of using his body position to impede the progress of a defense Player without using his hands or arms. For a Pick to be legal, the Offensive Player must establish his position before he makes contact with a Defensive Player. Picks may only be set after a Player has possession of the ball.

Throw-Off – The Throw-Off rules are in Section 9 of the Rules. The Throw Off will start play at the beginning of each half and after each Conversion attempt.

Throwing Team – The Throwing Team throws the Ball to the Receiving team. The Player who is throwing the ball must throw the ball before he reaches the Line of Scrimmage. His teammates on the Throwing team must be touching the Line of Scrimmage when the Quarterback releases the ball. There is not a snap on Throwing plays.

Touchdown – A Touchdown is a scoring play. The scoring team receives 6 points for a Touchdown. Forward progress to determine a Touchdown is determined by the position of the front of the ball of the Player in control of the ball attempting to enter the End Zone. In addition, a receiver must have both feet down inside the Field of Play with control of the football to score a Touchdown.