

# TVWFF Flag Football Rules

## 1. Team Requirements

- a. A team may only have eight players on the field during game play.
- b. The offense may have up to 7 players on the line of scrimmage (LOS) at the time of the snap (Min 4 Players of the LOS).
- c. Substitutions are allowed between plays and during timeouts.
- d. All players must be listed on the official roster prior to participation.
- e. All players **must play a minimum of 2 games to participate in the playoffs. This is tracked on the roster check in each game.**
- f. All players must be 18 years or older by the start of the season.
  - i. 17-year-olds may participate only with signed parental consent and waiver submitted prior to the first game.
- g. Each team is allowed to have a roster of 25 eligible players.
- h. After roster lock date, no roster changes may be made without board approval.

## 2. Equipment and Facilities

- a. Flags
  - i. All players must wear Sonic Boom flags with one flag securely attached on each hip.
  - ii. Flags must be different color than the players' shorts.
  - iii. Flags must be worn outside the uniform and fully visible.
  - iv. Tampering with a flag's operation is unsportsmanlike conduct (15-yard penalty; repeat offense = ejection).
- b. Uniforms
  - i. All team members must wear matching jerseys.
  - ii. Jerseys must be tucked in and may not contain pockets. A player may **not** turn their shorts inside out or tape her pockets in order to play.
  - iii. Shorts/pants with pockets or belt loops are prohibited.
  - iv. Towels, hand warmers, or items hanging from the waist are prohibited. If worn and removed, they will be treated as a flag.
  - v. Uniforms must contrast with the opposing team. The away team must change if colors conflict.
  - vi. Some uniforms are made with hoods. Grabbing of the hood will result in a holding call.
- c. Footwear
  - i. Cleats are permitted (no metal cleats).
  - ii. Players without proper footwear may not participate until corrected.
- d. Footballs
  - i. Each team must provide a composite leather football (Junior size 7–9).
  - ii. The referee has final approval authority.
- e. Protective Equipment
  - i. Soft protective headgear is allowed.
  - ii. Face protection is permitted.
  - iii. Pads, wraps, and braces are allowed.
  - iv. No hard, unyielding protective gear.
  - v. Mouthguards are recommended.
    1. Must be smooth and not have anything hanging on then that can cause harm to another person.
      - a. Ex. Mouthguards shaped like a pacifier with ring hanging are prohibited.
      - b. Ex. Raised teeth on the outside are prohibited.

## 3. Game Timing and Procedures

- a. Toss of the Coin: Before the start of the game, the referee will conduct a captain's meeting where the home team captain will call the toss of the coin. The captain

winning the toss will have a choice of options for the first half or defer to the second half:

- i. To choose whether her team will start on offense or defense.
  - ii. To choose the goal their team will defend.
  - iii. During this time the discussion and decision of changing sides after halftime will happen.
- b. Games will consist of two 20-minute halves with a 5-minute half time.
- c. First half: running clock.
- d. Second half: running clock until the two-minute warning.
- i. Approximately two minutes before the end of the second half the referee will call the two minute warning time out. The clock will restart on the snap.
- e. Only team time out, injury, and official time-outs can stop the clock.
- f. 3 time-outs per half are allowed per team.
- i. Teams may not call back to back timeouts or 2 timeouts within the same dead ball time. If a team calls a time out and the other team calls a timeout, a 3rd timeout cannot be called within that same dead ball time.
  - ii. If a team attempts to call a time out, stopping the clock, when they do not have one to use, an unsportsmanlike penalty will be assessed and play will begin on the whistle.
    1. If the clock is already stopped when the illegal timeout is called, no penalty will be assessed and the refs will ignore the request, reminding the team they do not have a timeout to call. If the team persists, an unsportsmanlike penalty will be enforced.
- g. Play Clock
- i. The ball must be put into play no more than 25 seconds after the official has placed the ball. (Delay of game, 5-yard penalty)
  - ii. Upon a change of possession, the referee will spot the ball. The referee will allow up to ten (10) seconds for defensive substitution and transition. The game clock will not stop during this period, but the play clock does.
    1. The ball will not be considered ready for play until the referee signals with a whistle.
    2. The twenty-five (25) second play clock begins on the referee's whistle.
    3. Snapping the ball prior to the referee's whistle is prohibited. The play will be ruled dead immediately. At the referee's discretion, a penalty may be assessed for Delay of Game or Unsportsmanlike Conduct if the action is deemed intentional or repeated.
- h. 2-Minute Warning
- i. Clock will be stopped after:
    1. Incomplete legal or incomplete illegal forward pass – clock starts on the snap.
    2. Out-of- bounds – clock starts on the snap.
    3. Safety – clock starts on the snap.
    4. Team time-out - clock starts on the snap.
    5. First down – the clock will stop temporarily for a first down and restart on the ready for play unless otherwise specified by rule.
    6. Touchdown - clock starts on the snap (after the PAT try).
    7. Penalty and administration – dependent on the previous play. (EXCEPTION: Delay of game – clock starts on the snap).
    8. Referee's time-out – clock starts at their discretion.
    9. Touchback – clock starts on the snap.
    10. Defense creates a turnover – starts on the snap. (ie. Interception)
    11. Either team is awarded a new series following a legal punt - clock starts on the snap.

12. Team attempting to conserve time illegally – clock starts on the ready.
13. Team attempting to consume time illegally (Penalty 10-yards) – clock starts on the snap.
  - a. **PLAY:** *During the second half, Team A leads Team B 14-12 with the game clock running. Player A false starts with 50 seconds remaining on the game clocks. **RULING:** Enforce false start, if accepted. The Referee will order the game clock to start on the snap due to Team A attempting to consume time.*
14. Inadvertent whistle – clock starts on the ready.
  - a. If an inadvertent whistle occurs during a play, the team with possession has 2 choices: either take the ball where the whistle was blown dead or replay the down.

#### 4. Game Rules

- a. Field and Basic Rules
  - i. 100 yards x 54 yards, 10-yard end zones.
  - ii. First down yard markings every 20 yards.
  - iii. All coaches and players must stay within the 20-yard lines of their respective sidelines.
    1. Exception: a coach may enter to get the attention of a sideline judge to call a timeout only.
  - iv. The ball will be placed on the 20-yard line after every touchdown and touchback.
  - v. Teams shall have four consecutive downs to advance to the next first down line to gain (and earn a first down).
  - vi. A new series of downs will be awarded when a team moves the ball past the first down line.
- b. Motion and Formation
  - i. All offensive players must be set for at least two (2) full seconds before the snap.
  - ii. One player may be in motion at the time of the snap
    1. Motion must be lateral or backward at the snap.
    2. No motion toward the line of scrimmage.
      - a. Illegal shift - 5-yard penalty and replay down
  - iii. Defensive players must align at least one (1) foot off the line of scrimmage. This is the neutral zone.
    1. No defensive player may line up directly over the center, rather one (1) yard in any direction away. This is true even when the offensive team is less than one yard from the end zone.
  - iv. The center, after assuming the position for the snap and adjusting the ball, may not move nor change the position of the ball in a manner simulating the beginning of a play. The ball must be snapped in one continuous motion, from the spot designated by the ball marker. The ball may be moved with approval by the official due to poor field conditions.
  - v. Ball cannot be swatted, nor intercepted, from under center during the hike.
  - vi. Each member of the offense is eligible to receive a pass unless the player voluntarily goes out of bounds during the play.
  - vii. Legal catch = receiver must come down with possession with at least **one foot** in bounds.
- c. Dead Ball When:
  - i. Legal de-flagging occurs.
  - ii. Ball carrier touches the ground (other than the hands or feet).

- iii. Fumble hits the ground.
  - 1. The ball is put into play at the point where the ball first touched the ground.
  - 2. A fumble that becomes dead in the offensive team's end zone results in a safety.
- iv. Snap from the center touches the ground. Officials make the call.
- v. Inadvertent whistle
- d. Flag Removal
  - i. Down ends when the flag detaches.
  - ii. If both flags fall unintentionally: one-hand touch rule applies.
  - iii. No tackling, pushing, tripping, diving into, or excessive contact. Contact to the ball carrier's body may be made by the opposing team's hands, but no holding.
    - 1. Personal fouls: 15 yards. Flagrant offenders will be ejected from the game and possibly suspended for the remainder of the season. This is further outlined in the code of conduct.
- e. Jumping and Diving
  - i. No jumping to evade a flag pull.
  - ii. No diving into the end zone.
    - 1. Penalty: 5 yards, replay down.

#### **5. Extra Point Attempts**

- a. 1-point try: 5-yard line
- b. 2-point try: 8-yard line
- c. Defensive return of try = 2 points, no matter the value of the attempt by the offense

#### **6. Overtime**

- a. Coin toss determines first possession.
- b. All OT periods
  - i. Each team receives four (4) plays to score
  - ii. Must attempt 2-point conversion.
  - iii. One timeout per team
- c. First OT: ball at 20-yard line.
- d. Second OT: ball at 10-yard line.
- e. Third OT: ball at 5-yard line, sudden death.
  - i. True sudden death until score. Teams are not guaranteed the same number of possessions after 2 each.
- f. If multiple overtime's are necessary, captains will alternate choices.

#### **7. Coach's Challenge**

- a. Each team is permitted one (1) coach's challenge per half. Challenges do not carry over.
- b. A team may not challenge a judgment call (e.g., spot of the ball unless clearly misapplied, unsportsmanlike conduct discretion, etc.), only rule misapplications or objective rulings.
- c. A challenge must be declared immediately following the conclusion of the play and before the next snap.
  - i. May not call a timeout and then challenge the play.
- d. The head coach must clearly notify the referee of the intent to challenge.
- e. A team must have at least one (1) timeout remaining to initiate a challenge.
  - i. A coach's challenge will result in the use of one (1) timeout.
    - 1. If the challenge is upheld (the call is overturned), the team will retain their timeout.
    - 2. If the challenge is denied (the call stands), the timeout is charged and not restored.

#### **8. Blocking**

- a. Hands-only blocking.
- b. Full extension of arms is allowed
- c. Contact must be between shoulders and waist.
- d. No shoulder charges.

- e. No blindside blocks.
- f. No stiff arms.
- g. No driving opponent to ground.
- h. No blocking in the back.
  - i. Exception to this rule: If offensive players make contact with a defensive player initially in the front and defensive player turns, without breaking contact, the offensive player can proceed to block.
  - ii. If offensive players hands are released (either by offensive player or broken by defensive player who made a move) offense may not reset hands on the defensive players back. This would be considered a block in the back.
- i. Illegal block: 10-yard penalty.

## 9. Punting

- a. Both teams must have 4 players on the line until the ball is kicked.
- b. The offense cannot cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. If they do, a false start penalty will be assessed and the down will replay.
- c. Linemen on the defensive line may raise their arms, and or jump to distract, or try to block the kick but may not cross the line of scrimmage. Defenders may not move laterally along the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.
- d. Punter must be at least 5 yards behind center.
- e. Ball must be punted immediately. Penalty is 5 yards and replay down.
- f. If snap hits ground: ball dead. Opposing team starts their possession from that spot.
- g. Protected punt requires declaration.
  - i. If a protected punt has been announced and a timeout is called, the team must re-declare their intention for a protected punt.
  - ii. If a protected punt has been announced and then the kicking team runs an offensive play, the penalty shall be an immediate dead ball foul for unsportsmanlike conduct (15-yard penalty applied).
    - 1. If the team is behind the 20-yard line the ball would start on the 10-yard line.
- h. No fake punts.
- i. All touchbacks placed at 20-yard line.
- j. Mercy Auto-Punt
  - i. If trailing by 18+ points:
    - 1. Offense may elect to punt or declare an automatic punt.
      - a. Ball placed at opponent's 30-yard line.
      - b. No live punt.

**10. Penalties:**

<b>Penalty</b>	<b>Yardage</b>	<b>Penalty Assessment</b>	<b>Result</b>
<b>Flag Guarding</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Spot of Foul</b>	<b>Loss of Down</b>
<b>Illegal Motion/Shift</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Spot of foul</b>	<b>Replay of Down</b>
<b>Illegal Forward Pass</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Spot Foul or Previous spot if behind LOS</b>	<b>Loss of down</b>
<b>Intentional Grounding</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Spot of foul</b>	<b>Loss of down</b>
<b>Offensive Pass Interference</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Previous spot</b>	<b>Loss of down</b>
<b>Defensive Pass Interference</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Previous spot or spot foul (less than 15 yards available)</b>	<b>Automatic 1st down. Less than 15 yards = spot foul</b>
<b>Personal Foul/Unnecessary Roughness</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>End of the play or previous spot</b>	<b>By the Offense: Loss of down By the Defense: Automatic 1st down</b>
<b>Unsportsmanlike Conduct</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>End of the play or previous spot if ball is an incomplete pass/handoff</b>	<b>By the Offense: Loss of down By the Defense: Automatic 1st down</b>
<b>Roughing: Passer/Kicker/Holder/Center</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>End of the play or previous spot</b>	<b>Automatic 1st Down</b>
<b>Delay of Game</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Previous spot</b>	<b>Replay down</b>
<b>False Start</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Dead ball - Previous spot</b>	<b>Replay down</b>
<b>Offsides</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Dead ball - Previous spot</b>	<b>Replay down</b>
<b>Encroachment</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Dead ball - Previous spot</b>	<b>Replay down</b>
<b>Cool Down Period</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>No Foul</b>	<b>Player must sit out 5 plays for 1st offense. See code of conduct*</b>
<b>Illegal Substitution (too many players on the</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Dead ball - Previous spot</b>	<b>By the Offense: Loss of down – live ball penalty Defense: Replay the down or decline to take result of</b>

field)			play
<b>Stripping or Attempted Stripping</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Spot of the foul</b>	<b>Automatic 1st down</b>
<b>Illegal Contact</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Previous spot or spot of the foul</b>	<b>By the Offense: Replay down Defense: Automatic 1st Down</b>
<b>Early Flag Pull</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Previous spot</b>	<b>Automatic 1st Down</b>
<b>Illegal Block</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Spot foul or previous spot if behind LOS</b>	<b>Replay Down</b>
<b>Holding</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Spot Foul, previous spot if behind LOS or end of play if holding ball carrier</b>	<b>Replay Down</b>
<b>Illegal Formation</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Previous Spot</b>	<b>Replay Down</b>
<b>Charging and Bullrush</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Previous Spot</b>	<b>Replay Down</b>
<b>Illegal QB Contact (all other rules plus hitting arms/hands while ball in hand)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>End of play or previous spot</b>	<b>Defense: Automatic 1st down</b>
<b>Taunting (coaches, sidelines, or extensive on field taunting)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>End of play or previous spot</b>	<b>By the Offense: Loss of down Defense: Automatic 1st down</b>
<b>Jumping (to elude flag pull or into the end zone)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Previous Spot</b>	<b>Repeat Down</b>
<b>Diving into the end zone</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Previous Spot</b>	<b>Repeat Down</b>

## 11. League Conduct and Discipline

### Culture Statement

The Treasure Valley Women's Flag Football League exists to empower women, foster competitive excellence, and build community through sport.

We compete hard. We protect one another. We lead with accountability.

Our league will not tolerate physical violence, intimidation, or behavior that compromises the safety and integrity of the game. Every athlete and coach is responsible for upholding a standard of sportsmanship that reflects positively on their team, their competitors, and the league as a whole.

Championship culture is built on discipline, respect, and emotional control. Our expectations are clear: play fierce, play fair, and protect the game.

### Coach Responsibility and Sideline Conduct

Head coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players, assistant coaches, and sideline personnel (not including fans).

Coaches are expected to:

- Model sportsmanship and emotional control
- Promote respect toward officials, opponents, and teammates
- Prevent escalation of sideline disputes
- Ensure substitutes and sideline personnel remain compliant with league rules

The referee has authority to issue warnings, enforce a cool-down removal, or eject a coach for behavior deemed unsportsmanlike, aggressive, or detrimental to the integrity of the game.

If a coach is ejected:

- The coach must leave the playing area and have no further contact with players or officials for the remainder of the game.
- The coach will be subject to the same automatic suspension and board review process outlined in the Physical Violence & Ejection Policy.

Failure of a coach to maintain control of their sideline may result in:

Repeated violations by a team's coaching staff may result in additional disciplinary action, including probation, suspension, or forfeiture at the league's discretion.

### Cool Down Rule

To ensure player safety, sportsmanship, and emotional regulation during competition, a referee has the authority to enforce a mandatory cool-down period for any player or coach whose behavior is deemed escalated or unsportsmanlike. Behaviors that would warrant a cool down rule to be enforced would be: unsportsmanlike conduct, verbally abusive or inflammatory behavior, as well as a non-flag contact or overly aggressive play if deemed avoidable by officials.

- Players
  - First offense: Removal from play for a minimum of five (5) plays or up to the remainder of the half, as determined by the referee.
    - A player serving a cool-down may not enter the field for any reason during the designated removal period.
  - Second offense: Ejection for the remainder of the game.
- Coaches
  - First Offense: Removal from active coaching for a minimum of five (5) plays or up to the remainder of the half,

as determined by the referee.

- Coach must remain behind the team bench area
- Coach may not approach officials
- Coach may not call plays or communicate to team
- Assistant coach or designated captain assumes communication role
- Second Offense or Violation of Cool Down Protocol: Ejection for the remainder of the game.
- All cool-downs will be documented by the officiating crew and reported to the board.
- Accumulation of two (2) cool-downs during the season (regular season or postseason) will result in an automatic one (1) game suspension in the next scheduled game.
- Accumulation of three (3) cool-downs during the season will result in further disciplinary review, including additional suspension at board discretion.
- Suspensions carry over into playoffs and championship games **as well as the following season if suspensions were not served in their entirety.**

### Physical Violence & Ejection Policy

- Any act of physical violence that exceeds normal flag football contact will result in an **immediate dead ball, immediate ejection, and a suspension for a minimum of one (1) scheduled game.** (regular season or playoffs). Physical violence includes, but is not limited to:
  - Throwing punches
  - Slapping or striking
  - Intentional hair pulling
  - Shoving in an aggressive or retaliatory manner after a play is dead
  - Kicking
  - Any deliberate act intended to cause harm
- A suspended individual may not participate in any capacity (player or coach) during the suspension period
- The board reserves the right to extend the suspension based on the severity of the act. Severe violations (including fighting, repeated violent behavior, or actions resulting in injury) may result in:
  - Suspension for two (2) games
  - Suspension for the remainder of the season, including playoffs and championship eligibility.
  - As stated above, **suspensions will carry over from one season to the next in the case that a player did not serve their full suspension in the active season.**