

EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA FLAG FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

FLAG FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Official Rulebook

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Copyright Notice

This rulebook is the official governing document of the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA). All league participants, including players, team captains, officials, volunteers, and spectators, are expected to familiarize themselves with the rules and policies contained within this document. The Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association reserves the right to revise, interpret, or update this rulebook as necessary to promote fair competition, player safety, and the overall integrity of the league.

Revision History

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ARTICLE 1

LEAGUE OVERVIEW

Section 1.1 – Purpose

The Eastern Pennsylvania Pro Style Flag Football League (EPPSFL) was founded to provide athletes throughout Eastern Pennsylvania with a competitive, organized, and professionally operated flag football experience that closely resembles traditional football while maintaining the safety and accessibility of a flag football environment.

The league is committed to delivering a fast-paced style of play built around teamwork, strategy, athleticism, and sportsmanship. By incorporating Pro Style rules and league operations, EPPSFL aims to provide players with a unique football experience that bridges the gap between traditional tackle football and recreational flag football.

Section 1.2 – League Philosophy

The league operates under four core principles:

Competition

Every game should be played with integrity, effort, and respect for the opponent. Players are encouraged to compete at a high level while demonstrating professionalism both on and off the field.

Safety

Although EPPSFL is designed to replicate many aspects of traditional football, player safety remains a priority. League rules are intended to minimize unnecessary risk while preserving the competitive nature of the game.

Sportsmanship

Players, captains, officials, and spectators are expected to demonstrate respect toward one another before, during, and after every game. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated and may result in penalties, ejections, suspensions, or removal from league participation.

Community

EPPSFL strives to build a strong football community throughout Eastern Pennsylvania by providing opportunities for former players, current athletes, and football enthusiasts to continue competing, developing friendships, and growing the game together.

Section 1.3 – League Authority

The Eastern Pennsylvania Pro Style Flag Football League is responsible for administering all league operations, including scheduling, rule enforcement, disciplinary actions, playoff procedures, and championship competition.

League officials and referees are authorized to enforce all rules contained within this rulebook during league-sanctioned events.

Section 1.4 – Participant Responsibility

Participation in EPPSFL is voluntary. By registering for the league, every participant acknowledges that they have read, understood, and agreed to abide by the rules, policies, and standards outlined within this rulebook.

Failure to comply with league rules may result in penalties, ejections, suspensions, forfeitures, or permanent removal from league participation.

Section 1.5 – League Objectives

The objectives of the Eastern Pennsylvania Pro Style Flag Football League are to:

- Provide a realistic and competitive Pro Style flag football experience
- Promote fair play, sportsmanship, and respect among all participants
- Maintain a safe playing environment through consistent rule enforcement
- Build a strong football community throughout Eastern Pennsylvania
- Deliver a professionally organized league experience for players, officials, and spectators
- Continue growing the sport of flag football through organized competition and community engagement

ARTICLE 2

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions shall apply throughout the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA).

Section 2.1 – Ball Carrier

The offensive player who is in legal possession of the football during a live play.

Section 2.2 – Blocking

The legal act of using open hands and chest-only contact to impede a defender in accordance with league rules.

Section 2.3 – Catch

A completed catch requires a player to:

- Secure clear possession of the football
- Have both feet in bounds
- Maintain possession of the football through contact with the ground

Failure to satisfy all three requirements results in an incomplete pass

Section 2.4 – Defensive Back (DB)

A defensive player responsible for covering eligible receivers during passing plays.

Section 2.5 – Down

One offensive play beginning with the legal snap of the football and ending when the official declares the play dead.

Section 2.6 – Eligible Receiver

A player who is legally permitted to catch a forward pass.

Under EPPSFL rules, only the center is an eligible receiver among the three required offensive linemen.

Section 2.7 – Encroachment

A defensive player entering the neutral zone before the football is snapped.

Section 2.8 – False Start

Any abrupt movement by an offensive player that simulates the start of the play before the football is snapped.

Section 2.9 – Flag Guarding

Any action by the ball carrier that prevents or obstructs a defender from legally pulling the runner's flag.

Examples include:

- Using the hands or arms to protect the flags
- Swatting away a defender's hands
- Holding or covering the flags with clothing or equipment
- Jumping while a player is trying to grab flags from the side or behind

Section 2.10 – Forward Pass

A pass thrown toward the opponent's goal line while the quarterback remains behind the line of scrimmage.

Section 2.11 – Fumble

The loss of possession of a live football by a player before the play has been ruled dead.

Under EPPSFL rules, live fumbles may be recovered and advanced by either team.

Section 2.12 – Hurdle

The act of jumping over another player.

Jumping is only legal when a player is making a legitimate attempt to hurdle an opponent. Jumping solely to avoid a flag pull is considered an illegal hurdle.

Section 2.13 – Illegal Contact

Any defensive contact that violates league rules, including contact beyond the legal five-yard contact zone or prohibited forms of physical contact.

Section 2.14 – Line of Scrimmage

The imaginary line extending across the width of the field through the forward point of the football before each play begins.

Section 2.15 – Live Ball

A football that remains in play and may legally be advanced or recovered until the official blows the play dead.

Section 2.16 – Motion

Movement by an offensive player prior to the snap.

EPPSFL permits up to two offensive players to be in motion immediately before the snap.

Section 2.17 – Neutral Zone

The area surrounding the line of scrimmage that neither team may enter prior to the snap without committing a penalty.

Section 2.18 – Offside

A defensive player crossing the line of scrimmage before the football is snapped.

Section 2.19 – Possession

Legal control of a live football by a player.

Section 2.20 – Simultaneous Possession

A situation in which both the receiver and defender maintain control of the football through the completion of the catch.

Under EPPSFL rules, simultaneous possession shall be ruled an interception.

Section 2.21 – Sportsmanship

Conduct that reflects respect for opponents, teammates, officials, league staff, spectators, and the game itself.

Section 2.22 – Team Captain

The designated representative of a team who serves as the primary point of communication with league officials before, during, and after games.

Only the Team Captain and the player directly involved in a penalty may respectfully discuss rulings with game officials.

Section 2.23 – Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Any behavior that violates the league's standards of respect, professionalism, or fair competition.

Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Excessive arguing with officials
- Taunting
- Threatening behavior
- Fighting
- Excessive profanity directed at opponents or officials
- Conduct detrimental to the league

Section 2.24 – Live Play

A play beginning with a legal snap and ending when the official declares the ball dead according to league rules.

ARTICLE 3

GAME RULES

The following rules govern all games played within the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA).

Section 3.1 – Length of Game

Each game shall consist of:

- Two (2) twenty-five (25) minute halves
- One (1) five-minute halftime

Games shall be considered official once play has begun under the supervision of league officials.

Section 3.2 – Timeouts

Each team shall receive:

- Two (2) sixty-second timeouts during the first half
- Two (2) sixty-second timeouts during the second half

Unused timeouts do not carry over into the second half or overtime.

Section 3.3 – Running Clock

The game clock shall run continuously during both halves except under the conditions outlined in this Article.

During the final four (4) minutes of both the first and second half, the clock shall stop when:

- A ball carrier goes out of bounds.
- A charged team timeout is granted.
- An injury timeout is declared.
- An official timeout is declared.
- A defensive delay of game penalty is enforced.

Section 3.4 – Number of Players

Each team shall have:

- Seven (7) players on the field at one time

A team that places more than seven players on the field shall be subject to the appropriate penalty.

Section 3.5 – First Downs

A first down shall be awarded after advancing the football twenty (20) yards from the original line of scrimmage.

The referee shall determine and spot the football after every first down

Section 3.6 – Halftime

Halftime shall last five (5) minutes.

Teams shall switch directions at the conclusion of halftime.

Section 3.7 – Overtime

If an overtime period is required:

- College-style overtime procedures shall be used
- Each team shall receive one offensive possession
- Each possession shall begin at the opponent's twenty-five (25) yard line
- Each offense shall have four (4) downs to score a touchdown

Additional overtime periods shall continue until a winner has been determined.

Section 3.8 – Live Fumbles

A live fumble may be recovered and advanced by either team.

If a live fumble exits the playing field, possession shall remain with the fumbling team at the location where the football crossed the boundary.

Section 3.9 – Flag Visibility

Player flags must remain completely visible throughout the game.

No towel, shirt, hoodie, equipment, or article of clothing may obstruct or cover a player's flags.

Violation of this rule shall result in the appropriate penalty.

Section 3.10 – Injuries

Whenever play is stopped because of an injured player:

- The injured player must leave the field for at least one play.

The player may remain in the game only if that player's team elects to use one of its charged timeouts.

Officials may stop play immediately whenever player safety is in question.

Section 3.11 – Coin Toss

Prior to the start of each game:

1. The home team shall call either **Heads** or **Tails**.
2. The winner of the coin toss may choose to:
 - Receive the opening possession or Defer
 - Choose which direction to defend
3. The opposing team shall receive the remaining option.
4. Teams shall switch directions at halftime.

Section 3.12 – Delay of Game

Offensive Delay of Game

The offense must snap the football within twenty-five (25) seconds after the official has spotted the ball.

Failure to do so shall result in a Delay of Game penalty.

Defensive Delay of Game

A defensive player or team commits Delay of Game by intentionally delaying the offense through actions including, but not limited to:

- Preventing the offense from quickly spotting the football.
- Throwing or kicking the football away after the play.
- Taking excessive actions intended to waste game time.

Such actions shall result in a Delay of Game penalty.

Section 3.13 – Ball Carrier Down

The ball shall be declared dead when:

- The runner's flag is legally removed
- The runner's knee contacts the ground
- The runner's elbow contacts the ground
- The runner steps out of bounds
- An official determines the runner's forward progress has been stopped

The football shall be spotted at the point where the runner is ruled down.

Section 3.14 – Conceding a Game

There shall be no mercy rule within EPPSFL competition.

However, a Team Captain may voluntarily concede a game by informing the game official.

Once the referee acknowledges the concession, the contest shall immediately end and the result shall be recorded as a completed game.

Section 3.15 – Authority of Officials

Game officials shall have the authority to:

- Start and stop the game clock
- Spot the football
- Enforce penalties
- Determine when the ball is dead
- Administer overtime
- Suspend play due to injury or unsafe conditions
- Enforce all rules contained within this rulebook

The referee's ruling on judgment calls during the game shall be final.

ARTICLE 4

TEAM RULES

The following rules govern team composition, roster requirements, and the responsibilities of each Team Captain participating in the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA).

Section 4.1 – Team Roster Requirements

Each team shall maintain a roster consisting of:

- A minimum of seven (7) eligible players
- A maximum of fourteen (14) eligible players

Teams failing to field the minimum number of players required to begin a game shall not be permitted to compete unless otherwise approved by league officials.

Section 4.2 – Team Registration

All teams must complete the official league registration process before participating in any EPPSFL competition.

Registration shall not be considered complete until:

- All required registration information has been submitted
- League entry fees have been paid
- League officials have approved the team's registration

Section 4.3 – Player Entry Fee

The player registration fee shall be:

\$20.00 per player

League registration fees are subject to change for future seasons at the discretion of league administration.

Section 4.4 – Team Captain

Each team shall designate one (1) official Team Captain prior to the beginning of the season.

The Team Captain shall serve as the official representative of the team during all league functions and competitions.

Section 4.5 – Team Captain Responsibilities

The Team Captain is responsible for:

- Serving as the primary point of contact between the team and league officials.
- Communicating league announcements to team members.
- Ensuring players understand and follow the Official Rulebook.
- Maintaining order and sportsmanship among team members.
- Respectfully communicating with game officials regarding rule interpretations or penalty enforcement.
- Reporting concerns or league-related issues to league administration.

Section 4.6 – Captain Attendance

The designated Team Captain is expected to be present for at least eighty percent (80%) of the team's scheduled games during the regular season.

Section 4.7 – Acting Team Captain

If the designated Team Captain is unable to attend a scheduled game, the team shall appoint an Acting Team Captain prior to kickoff.

The Acting Team Captain shall assume all responsibilities granted to the Team Captain for the duration of that game.

Section 4.8 – Authority of the Team Captain

Only the Team Captain, or the designated Acting Team Captain, and the player directly involved in a penalty may respectfully communicate with game officials regarding rule interpretations or penalty enforcement during a game.

Other players who repeatedly challenge officials may be penalized under the league's Sportsmanship and Code of Conduct policies.

Section 4.9 – Responsibility for Team Conduct

Each Team Captain is responsible for promoting good sportsmanship and ensuring that all members of the team conduct themselves in accordance with league rules.

Captains should make every reasonable effort to:

- Prevent unnecessary confrontations
- Calm teammates during disputes
- Encourage respectful communication with officials
- Promote fair play throughout each contest

Failure to maintain team conduct may result in disciplinary action as outlined elsewhere in this rulebook.

ARTICLE 5

OFFENSIVE RULES

The following rules govern all offensive play within the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA).

The offense is expected to compete in a manner that reflects the league's Pro Style philosophy while adhering to all safety standards outlined in this rulebook.

Section 5.1 – Offensive Formation

Each offensive play shall begin with a legal formation.

The offense must have:

- Three (3) offensive linemen positioned on the line of scrimmage

Failure to meet this requirement shall result in an Illegal Formation penalty.

Section 5.2 – Eligible Receivers

Only the center shall be an eligible receiver among the three required offensive linemen.

All other offensive linemen are ineligible to receive a forward pass.

Section 5.3 – Legal Blocking

The following blocking techniques are permitted:

- Open-hand blocking
- Chest-only contact
- Screen blocking

Blocking is intended to create legal running and passing lanes while maintaining player safety.

Section 5.4 – Illegal Blocking

The following actions are prohibited:

- Holding

- Jersey grabbing
- Hooking
- Chop blocks
- Blindside blocks
- Blocks in the back
- Hands to the face

Officials shall enforce the appropriate penalty whenever illegal blocking occurs.

Section 5.5 – Quarterback Play

The quarterback may:

- Remain in the pocket without a time restriction
- Run the football at any time
- Hand the football off
- Participate in legal trick plays

The quarterback must remain behind the line of scrimmage to throw a legal forward pass.

Any forward pass thrown after crossing the line of scrimmage shall be considered an Illegal Forward Pass.

Section 5.6 – Intentional Grounding

Intentional Grounding occurs when:

- The quarterback is inside the tackle box
- The quarterback is under defensive pressure
- No eligible receiver is within approximately fifteen (15) yards of the intended throw

Penalty:

- Ten (10) yards
- Loss of down

Section 5.7 – Motion

A maximum of two (2) offensive players may be in motion immediately before the football is snapped.

Any additional motion shall result in the appropriate penalty.

Section 5.8 – False Start

Any abrupt movement by an offensive player that simulates the beginning of the play before the football is legally snapped shall be ruled a False Start.

Penalty:

Five (5) yards

Section 5.9 – Running Plays

Designed running plays are legal.

Quarterbacks may run at any time.

Flea Flickers are legal.

Section 5.10 – Ball Carrier Restrictions

The following actions by the ball carrier are prohibited:

- Flag guarding
- Stiff arms
- Lowering the shoulder to initiate contact
- Jumping solely to avoid a defender attempting to pull a flag

A player may legally hurdle another player only while making a legitimate attempt to clear that opponent.

Illegal hurdling shall result in the appropriate penalty.

Section 5.11 – Completed Catch

A legal reception requires the receiver to:

- Secure clear possession of the football
- Place both feet in bounds
- Maintain possession through contact with the ground

Failure to satisfy all three requirements shall result in an incomplete pass.

Section 5.12 – Scoring

A touchdown is worth:

- Six (6) points

Following every touchdown, the scoring team may attempt one of the following:

- One (1) point from the five (5) yard line
- Two (2) points from the ten (10) yard line
- Three (3) points from the twenty (20) yard line

Section 5.13 – Offensive Responsibility

Offensive players are expected to compete within the spirit of fair play and player safety.

Actions that intentionally create unnecessary danger or violate league rules may result in penalties, loss of down, ejection, or additional disciplinary action as determined by league officials.

Section 5.14 – Enforcement

Officials shall have the authority to enforce all offensive rules contained within this Article.

Questions regarding rule interpretation shall be addressed by the Team Captain in accordance with the Sportsmanship and Code of Conduct provisions of this rulebook.

ARTICLE 6

DEFENSIVE RULES

The following rules govern all defensive play within the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA). The defense is expected to compete aggressively while maintaining player safety and adhering to all league rules.

Section 6.1 – Defensive Formation

There is no minimum or maximum number of defensive linemen required on any play.

Defensive players may align anywhere on their side of the line of scrimmage prior to the snap, provided they are not in the neutral zone.

Section 6.2 – Pass Rush

Any defensive player may rush the quarterback immediately after the legal snap of the football.

There are no designated rushing zones or mandatory rush counts.

Section 6.3 – Blitzing

Any defensive player may blitz on any down without restriction.

The defense is not required to declare or signal a blitz prior to the snap.

Section 6.4 – Legal Defensive Contact

Within five (5) yards of the line of scrimmage, defenders may legally:

- Jam an eligible receiver using open hands
- Maintain legal shoulder positioning while covering a receiver
- Make incidental contact while competing for position

All contact must be controlled and may not create an unnecessary safety risk.

Section 6.5 – Illegal Defensive Contact

The following actions are prohibited:

- Holding
- Hooking
- Grabbing an opponent's jersey or clothing
- Hands to the face
- Contact beyond the legal five-yard contact zone
- Unnecessary roughness
- Targeting the head or neck area

Officials shall assess the appropriate penalty for any illegal contact.

Section 6.6 – Pass Coverage

Defenders may cover any eligible receiver using legal techniques.

Once a receiver advances beyond the five-yard contact zone, continued physical contact that restricts the receiver's movement may result in an Illegal Contact or Defensive Pass Interference penalty.

Section 6.7 – Interceptions

Any defensive player may intercept a legal forward pass.

Following an interception, the ball remains live and may be advanced until the play is ruled dead.

Section 6.8 – Simultaneous Possession

If an eligible receiver and a defender simultaneously secure possession of a forward pass and both maintain control through contact with the ground, the play shall be ruled an interception.

Possession shall be awarded to the defense.

Section 6.9 – Fumble Recovery

All live fumbles may be recovered and advanced by the defense.

If a defensive player gains possession of a live fumble, play shall continue until the ball carrier is ruled down.

Section 6.10 – Stripping the Football

Defenders may legally attempt to dislodge the football by punching or stripping the ball from the ball carrier.

Defenders may not:

- Punch or strike the ball carrier
- Grab the facemask or head area
- Make unnecessary contact while attempting to strip the football

If the football is legally dislodged, it shall be ruled a live fumble.

Section 6.11 – Tackling Prohibited

Defensive players may not tackle, wrap up, push, throw, or intentionally pull a ball carrier to the ground.

A legal stop is made by removing one of the ball carrier's flags.

Violations shall result in the appropriate penalty and may result in disciplinary action depending on the severity of the contact.

Section 6.12 – Offside

A defensive player who enters or crosses the neutral zone before the football is snapped shall be guilty of Offside.

Penalty:

Five (5) yards.

Section 6.13 – Roughing the Passer

After the quarterback has released the football, defenders must make every reasonable effort to avoid unnecessary contact.

The following actions are prohibited:

- Late hits
- Head or neck contact
- Driving the quarterback into the ground
- Excessive or avoidable contact after the pass

Violations shall result in a Roughing the Passer penalty.

Section 6.14 – Defensive Responsibility

Defensive players are expected to compete within the spirit of fair play and player safety.

Any action that intentionally creates an unnecessary risk of injury or violates league rules may result in penalties, ejection, suspension, or additional disciplinary action.

Section 6.15 – Enforcement

Officials shall have the authority to enforce all defensive rules contained within this Article.

Questions regarding rule interpretation shall be addressed by the Team Captain in accordance with the Sportsmanship and Code of Conduct provisions of this rulebook.

ARTICLE 7

SPECIAL TEAMS RULES

The following rules govern all special teams play within the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA). The league utilizes a modified special teams format designed to maintain game flow while preserving strategic elements of football.

Section 7.1 – Kickoffs

Kickoffs shall not be used.

Each offensive possession shall begin at the team's own twenty (20) yard line unless otherwise determined by a turnover, penalty, overtime procedure, or league rule.

Section 7.2 – Punts

Teams may elect to punt on any down.

A team is not required to punt on fourth down and may instead attempt to convert for a first down or touchdown.

Once the offense declares its intention to punt, the decision is final and may not be changed unless a timeout is called prior to the snap.

Section 7.3 – Punt Formation

The punting team shall line up in a legal offensive formation prior to the snap.

The snap must be legal and follow all offensive formation requirements.

Section 7.4 – Live Punts

All punts are live.

The receiving team may catch the punt and immediately attempt to advance the football.

If the receiving team muffs or drops the punt after touching it, the football remains live and may be recovered by either team.

Section 7.5 – Downing a Punt

If a punt is caught cleanly and the returner elects not to advance, the ball shall be spotted at the point of the catch.

If the punt comes to rest without being touched by the receiving team, the ball shall be declared dead where it stops or where it is first touched by the kicking team.

Section 7.6 – Punts Out of Bounds

A punt that travels out of bounds shall be spotted at the point where the football crossed the sideline.

Section 7.7 – Touchbacks

If a punt enters the opponent's end zone and is not returned into the field of play, the result shall be a touchback.

The receiving team shall begin its offensive possession at its own twenty (20) yard line.

Section 7.8 – Blocked Punts

A punt that is blocked behind the line of scrimmage remains a live ball.

Either team may recover and advance the football until the play is ruled dead.

Section 7.9 – Field Goals

Field goal attempts are not permitted.

Following a touchdown, teams shall attempt an extra-point conversion in accordance with Article 5.

Section 7.10 – Extra Point Attempts

Following every touchdown, the scoring team may attempt one of the following:

- One (1) point from the five (5) yard line
- Two (2) points from the ten (10) yard line
- Three (3) points from the twenty (20) yard line

If the defense gains possession during an extra-point attempt, the play shall be ruled dead immediately, and no points shall be awarded.

Section 7.11 – Enforcement

Officials shall have the authority to enforce all Special Teams Rules contained within this Article.

Any situation not specifically addressed within this Article shall be governed by the applicable provisions of this rulebook or interpreted by the League Commissioner in accordance with Article 11.

ARTICLE 8

SPORTSMANSHIP & CODE OF CONDUCT

The Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA) is committed to providing a competitive, respectful, and safe environment for all participants. Every player, coach, team captain, official, volunteer, spectator, and league representative is expected to uphold the standards outlined in this Article.

Section 8.1 – General Conduct

All participants shall conduct themselves in a manner that reflects respect for:

- Opponents
- Teammates
- Officials
- League staff
- Spectators
- League facilities

Unsportsmanlike behavior that negatively affects the integrity of the league may result in penalties, ejections, suspensions, or permanent removal from league participation.

Section 8.2 – Authority of Officials

Game officials have the authority to:

- Enforce all league rules
- Assess penalties
- Issue warnings
- Eject participants
- Suspend play due to unsafe conditions
- Maintain order before, during, and after games

Judgment calls made by officials during competition are final.

Section 8.3 – Communication with Officials

Only the Team Captain (or Acting Team Captain) and the player directly involved in a penalty may respectfully discuss a ruling with an official.

Participants may not:

- Surround officials
- Yell at officials
- Follow officials after a play
- Use abusive or threatening language

Failure to comply may result in an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty.

Section 8.4 – Sportsmanship

Participants are expected to:

- Respect opponents at all times
- Respect the decisions of officials
- Display professionalism before, during, and after games
- Shake hands following each contest whenever practical
- Win and lose with dignity

Section 8.5 – Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Unsportsmanlike Conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Excessive arguing
- Taunting
- Delaying the game
- Throwing equipment
- Excessive profanity directed toward another participant or official
- Refusing to comply with an official's instructions
- Any conduct detrimental to the league

Officials may issue penalties, warnings, or ejections depending on the severity of the offense.

Section 8.6 – Illegal Trash Talk

Competitive communication is permitted; however, the following are prohibited:

- Personal threats
- Racist comments
- Hate speech
- Homophobic slurs
- Sexist remarks
- Harassment

- Comments directed toward another participant's family
- Repeated excessive profanity directed at an opponent

Violations may result in immediate disciplinary action.

Section 8.7 – Fighting

Any participant who:

- Throws a punch
- Starts a fight
- Leaves the sideline to join a fight
- Continues fighting after officials intervene

Shall receive:

- Immediate ejection
- A minimum one-game suspension
- Additional discipline at the Commissioner's discretion

Section 8.8 – Dangerous Conduct

The following actions are strictly prohibited:

- Spearing
- Head-first contact
- Blindside hits
- Unnecessary roughness after the whistle
- Intentionally pulling another player to the ground
- Attempting to injure another participant
- Kicking another player
- Spitting on another player
- Stepping on another player
- Tripping another player

Severe violations may result in immediate ejection and additional disciplinary action.

Section 8.9 – Respect for League Facilities

Participants shall:

- Dispose of trash properly
- Respect park and facility property
- Use designated parking areas

- Avoid damaging playing fields or equipment
- Leave all facilities in equal or better condition than they were found

Individuals responsible for property damage may be held financially responsible and subject to league discipline.

Section 8.10 – Social Media Conduct

Participants shall not:

- Harass league members online
- Threaten officials through social media
- Share another participant's personal information without permission
- Impersonate league officials
- Post content that damages the reputation of the league

The Commissioner may discipline participants for online conduct that significantly impacts league operations or participant safety.

Section 8.11 – Team Captain Responsibilities

Team Captains are expected to:

- Promote sportsmanship
- Communicate respectfully with officials
- Calm teammates during disputes
- Ensure team compliance with league rules
- Report concerns to league administration

Captains may be held accountable for repeated misconduct by their teams.

Section 8.12 – Responsibility of All Participants

Every participant represents the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association both on and off the field.

Participants are expected to uphold the values of competition, integrity, sportsmanship, and community at all league-sponsored events.

Section 8.13 – Enforcement

Officials and league administration shall have the authority to enforce all provisions contained within this Article.

Violations may result in penalties, ejections, suspensions, fines (if adopted by the league), or permanent removal from league participation.

ARTICLE 9

PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

The following procedures govern the administration and enforcement of all penalties within the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA).

Section 9.1 – Purpose

Penalty enforcement is intended to promote fair competition, player safety, and consistent application of league rules.

Officials shall enforce penalties in accordance with this Article and all other applicable provisions of the Official Rulebook.

Section 9.2 – Live Ball Fouls

A Live Ball Foul is any penalty committed while the football is in play.

Unless otherwise specified by league rule, enforcement shall occur after the play has ended.

Section 9.3 – Dead Ball Fouls

A Dead Ball Foul is any penalty committed after the official has declared the play dead.

Dead Ball Fouls shall be enforced before the next legal snap.

Dead Ball penalties shall not negate the result of the previous play unless specifically provided for by league rule.

Section 9.4 – Spot of Enforcement

Unless otherwise stated, penalties shall be enforced from one of the following locations:

- Previous Spot
- Spot of the Foul
- End of the Run
- Succeeding Spot

The appropriate enforcement spot shall be determined by the game officials.

Section 9.5 – Automatic First Down

The following defensive fouls shall result in an automatic first down:

- Defensive Holding
- Defensive Pass Interference
- Roughing the Passer
- Illegal Contact Beyond Five (5) Yards
- Defensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct during a live ball

Section 9.6 – Loss of Down

The following offensive fouls shall result in a loss of down:

- Intentional Grounding
- Flag Guarding
- Stiff Arm
- Lowering the Shoulder
- Illegal Forward Pass
- Illegal Hurdle

Section 9.7 – Automatic Ejection

The following violations shall result in immediate ejection from the game:

- Throwing a Punch
- Fighting
- Spitting on Another Player
- Physical Contact with an Official
- Racist or Discriminatory Language
- Threats of Violence
- Intentionally Attempting to Injure Another Player
- Leaving the Sideline to Join a Fight
- Possession of a Weapon

Additional disciplinary action may be imposed by the Commissioner.

Section 9.8 – Offsetting Penalties

When both teams commit live-ball fouls during the same play, and the penalties are of equal status, the penalties shall offset.

The down shall be replayed unless otherwise provided by league rule.

Dead Ball Fouls shall not offset Live Ball Fouls.

Section 9.9 – Multiple Fouls

If one team commits multiple fouls during the same play, the non-offending team may accept only one penalty unless league rules specifically allow multiple penalties to be enforced.

Section 9.10 – Declined Penalties

The offended team may decline any penalty.

If a penalty is declined, the result of the play shall stand unless another enforceable penalty applies.

Section 9.11 – Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalties may be enforced regardless of whether the ball is live or dead.

Repeated Unsportsmanlike Conduct by the same participant may result in ejection.

Section 9.12 – Distance Penalties

Penalties shall be enforced according to the following classifications:

Five (5) Yard Penalties

- Offside
- False Start
- Neutral Zone Infraction
- Illegal Motion
- Illegal Shift
- Delay of Game
- Illegal Formation
- Too Many Players on the Field
- Encroachment

Ten (10) Yard Penalties

- Offensive Holding
- Defensive Holding
- Illegal Block
- Block in the Back

- Hands to the Face
- Chop Block
- Blindside Block
- Illegal Contact Beyond Five (5) Yards
- Illegal Batting of the Ball
- Flag Guarding
- Stiff Arm
- Lowering the Shoulder
- Illegal Hurdle
- Illegal Forward Pass
- Intentional Grounding

Fifteen (15) Yard Penalties

- Offensive Pass Interference
- Defensive Pass Interference
- Roughing the Passer
- Unnecessary Roughness
- Taunting
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct
- Excessive Profanity Directed at an Opponent or Official
- Fighting
- Head-First Contact
- Spearing
- Targeting
- Pulling a Runner to the Ground by Jersey or Clothing

Section 9.13 – Half-the-Distance Enforcement

If the full yardage of a penalty cannot be enforced because the ball is near either goal line, the penalty shall be enforced for one-half the remaining distance to the goal line.

Section 9.14 – Authority of Officials

Officials shall have final authority regarding the administration and enforcement of penalties during all league contests.

Questions regarding enforcement shall be directed only through the Team Captain in accordance with Article 8.

Section 9.15 – Final Interpretation

Any penalty situation not specifically addressed within this rulebook shall be interpreted by the League Commissioner in accordance with the intent of the Official Rules and the best interests of player safety and competitive fairness.

ARTICLE 10

LEAGUE DISCIPLINE

The Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA) is committed to maintaining a safe, competitive, and professional environment. In addition to penalties assessed during games, the league reserves the right to impose disciplinary action for conduct that violates the integrity of the league.

Section 10.1 – Purpose

League discipline exists to:

- Protect the safety of all participants
- Promote sportsmanship and fair competition
- Preserve the integrity and reputation of the league
- Hold participants accountable for their actions both on and off the field

Section 10.2 – Authority

The League Commissioner shall have the authority to investigate incidents and issue disciplinary action when appropriate.

Disciplinary action may include:

- Verbal warnings
- Written warnings
- Probation
- Game suspensions
- Multi-game suspensions
- Team forfeitures
- Fines (if adopted by the league)
- Permanent removal from the league

Section 10.3 – Progressive Discipline

Unless the violation warrants immediate removal, disciplinary action may follow the progression below:

First Offense

- Verbal warning or written warning
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty, if applicable

Second Offense

- Possible game ejection
- Minimum one-game suspension

Third Offense

- League review
- Multi-game suspension or season suspension

Section 10.4 – Immediate Suspension

The following violations may result in immediate suspension pending league review:

- Fighting
- Assaulting another participant
- Assaulting an official
- Threats of violence
- Racist or discriminatory language
- Intentionally attempting to injure another participant
- Possession of a weapon
- Vandalism of league or facility property
- Any criminal conduct occurring during league events

Section 10.5 – Permanent Removal

Participants may be permanently removed from the league for:

- Repeated violent conduct
- Multiple ejections during a season
- Assault on an official
- Possession of a weapon
- Serious criminal behavior during league activities
- Conduct that significantly damages the reputation or integrity of the EPFFA

Permanent removal shall be determined by the Commissioner.

Section 10.6 – Team Responsibility

Teams are responsible for the conduct of:

- Players
- Coaches
- Team Captains
- Team representatives
- Spectators directly associated with the team

Repeated misconduct by a team's participants or spectators may result in:

- Team penalties
- Loss of home-field privileges (if applicable)
- Team probation
- Team suspension
- Removal from league competition

Section 10.7 – Ejections

Any participant ejected from a game must immediately leave the playing area.

An ejected participant:

- May not remain on the sideline
- May not communicate with officials
- May not interfere with the continuation of the game

Failure to leave promptly may result in additional disciplinary action.

Section 10.8 – Appeals

A Team Captain may submit a written appeal regarding a suspension or disciplinary action within seventy-two (72) hours of notification.

Appeals shall include:

- A description of the incident
- Any supporting evidence
- Names of witnesses, if applicable

The Commissioner shall review all appeals and issue a final decision.

Judgment calls made during games are not subject to appeal.

Section 10.9 – Conduct Outside of League Events

The Commissioner may discipline participants for off-field conduct when such behavior:

- Threatens another participant
- Harasses league members
- Damages league property
- Harms the reputation of the EPFFA
- Interferes with league operations

Section 10.10 – Reinstatement

A participant suspended or removed from the league may request reinstatement at the Commissioner's discretion.

Reinstatement is not guaranteed and may require:

- Completion of the suspension period
- Compliance with all league conditions
- Written acknowledgment of league policies

Section 10.11 – Final Authority

The League Commissioner shall have final authority regarding all disciplinary matters.

The Commissioner's decisions regarding suspensions, reinstatements, and disciplinary actions are final unless otherwise provided by league policy.

ARTICLE 11

LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION & COMMISSIONER AUTHORITY

The Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA) shall be administered by the League Commissioner and any appointed league staff. The purpose of league administration is to ensure fair competition, player safety, efficient league operations, and the continued growth of the organization.

Section 11.1 – League Commissioner

The League Commissioner serves as the chief administrator of the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association.

The Commissioner is responsible for:

- Overseeing all league operations
- Enforcing the Official Rulebook
- Maintaining competitive balance
- Protecting the integrity of the league
- Promoting player safety and sportsmanship
- Appointing league staff and officials when necessary

Section 11.2 – Commissioner Authority

The Commissioner has the authority to:

- Interpret and enforce all league rules
- Approve or deny team registrations
- Approve league schedules
- Assign officials
- Modify schedules due to weather or field conditions
- Suspend or remove participants when necessary
- Resolve disputes not specifically addressed by this rulebook
- Issue league announcements and official policies

The Commissioner's decisions regarding league operations shall be final.

Section 11.3 – Rule Interpretation

If a situation arises that is not specifically covered by this rulebook, the Commissioner shall interpret the rules in a manner that best promotes:

- Player safety
- Fair competition
- Sportsmanship
- The overall integrity of the league

Interpretations issued by the Commissioner may become official league policy and may be incorporated into future editions of this rulebook.

Section 11.4 – Rule Changes

The EPFFA reserves the right to amend, clarify, or modify league rules at any time when necessary to improve league operations, player safety, or competitive fairness.

Whenever practical, participants will be notified before rule changes become effective.

Section 11.5 – League Staff

The Commissioner may appoint additional league personnel, including but not limited to:

- Assistant Commissioners
- League Coordinators
- Officials Coordinator
- Scheduling Coordinator
- Media and Communications Staff
- Statistics Coordinator
- Volunteers

Each individual shall perform duties assigned by the Commissioner.

Section 11.6 – League Officials

Game officials are responsible for enforcing the Official Rulebook during all league contests.

Officials have the authority to:

- Assess penalties
- Issue warnings
- Eject participants
- Suspend play due to unsafe conditions
- Maintain order before, during, and after games

Judgment calls made by officials during games are final.

Section 11.7 – Official League Communications

Official league communications may be distributed through:

- The official league website
- Official league email addresses
- Official league social media accounts
- League-approved communication platforms

Team Captains are responsible for communicating important league information to their players.

Section 11.8 – Records and Statistics

The league may maintain official records including:

- Team standings
- Player statistics
- Individual awards
- Championship history
- League records

Official statistics shall be maintained by league staff and recognized as the official league record.

Section 11.9 – Appeals

Only Team Captains may submit written appeals regarding disciplinary actions or rule misapplications.

Appeals must be submitted within seventy-two (72) hours following the incident.

Judgment calls made during live play are not subject to appeal.

Section 11.10 – Conflict of Interest

League officials and staff shall conduct themselves impartially and avoid conflicts of interest that could compromise the fairness or integrity of league operations.

Any potential conflict shall be disclosed to the Commissioner.

Section 11.11 – Final Authority

The League Commissioner retains final authority over all administrative matters not specifically governed by this rulebook.

Any decision made under this authority shall be considered final and binding for all league participants.

ARTICLE 12

PLAYER REGISTRATION & ELIGIBILITY

The following rules govern player registration, eligibility, roster management, and participation in all Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA) competitions.

Section 12.1 – Player Eligibility

To participate in the EPFFA, a player must:

- Be at least eighteen (18) years of age on or before the first scheduled league game
- Complete the official league registration process
- Sign all required league waivers and agreements
- Pay all applicable registration fees
- Meet any additional eligibility requirements established by the league

The Commissioner reserves the right to verify player eligibility at any time.

Section 12.2 – Registration Requirements

A player's registration shall not be considered complete until the following have been received by the league:

- Completed Player Registration Form
- Signed Liability Waiver and Assumption of Risk Agreement
- Signed Code of Conduct Agreement
- Emergency Contact Information
- Payment of all required registration fees

Incomplete registrations may not participate in league activities.

Section 12.3 – Team Rosters

Each team shall maintain:

- A minimum roster of seven (7) eligible players.
- A maximum roster of fourteen (14) eligible players

Only players listed on the official league roster may participate in league games.

Section 12.4 – Free Agents

Players who do not register with an existing team may register as Free Agents.

The league will make every reasonable effort to place Free Agents on teams based on:

- Team needs
- Position availability
- Competitive balance
- Geographic location

Placement is not guaranteed.

Section 12.5 – Roster Deadline

The Commissioner shall establish an official roster deadline before each season.

Following the roster deadline:

- New players may only be added with Commissioner approval
- Removed players may not automatically be replaced unless permitted by league policy

Section 12.6 – Player Transfers

A player may not compete for more than one team during the same season unless approved by the Commissioner.

Transfer requests must be submitted in writing and approved before the player participates for another team.

Section 12.7 – Ineligible Players

A player shall be considered ineligible if they:

- Are not listed on the official team roster
- Have not completed registration
- Have not signed required league documents
- Are serving a suspension
- Have been removed from league participation

Participation by an ineligible player may result in:

- Player removal from the game
- Team forfeiture

- Additional disciplinary action

Section 12.8 – Registration Fees

All league registration fees must be paid by the deadline established by the league.

Failure to submit payment may result in:

- Suspension of player eligibility
- Removal from the roster
- Cancellation of team registration

Section 12.9 – Refund Policy

Registration fees are generally non-refundable once the season has begun.

Refund requests submitted before the season begins shall be reviewed by the Commissioner on a case-by-case basis.

Players removed from the league due to disciplinary action are not eligible for a refund.

Section 12.10 – Waivers

Every participant must sign all required league waivers before participating in any league-sponsored activity.

Required documents include:

- Liability Waiver and Assumption of Risk Agreement
- Code of Conduct Agreement
- Media Release (if applicable)

Failure to complete required documentation shall make the participant ineligible.

Section 12.11 – Team Responsibility

Each Team Captain is responsible for ensuring that all rostered players:

- Meet eligibility requirements
- Complete registration
- Sign required documents
- Remain in good standing with the league

Section 12.12 – Final Authority

The League Commissioner shall have final authority regarding player eligibility, roster approval, registration disputes, and interpretation of this Article.

ARTICLE 13

SCHEDULING, GAME OPERATIONS, FORFEITS & WEATHER POLICIES

The following policies govern league scheduling, game cancellations, weather procedures, forfeits, and other operational matters for all Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA) competitions.

Section 13.1 – League Schedule

The League Commissioner shall establish the official schedule for each season.

The schedule shall include:

- Regular season games
- Playoff games (if applicable)
- Championship game
- Makeup games, if necessary

The league reserves the right to modify the schedule at any time.

Section 13.2 – Game Times

Teams are expected to arrive at least thirty (15) minutes before their scheduled kickoff time.

Captains should use this time to:

- Check in with league officials
- Verify team rosters
- Ensure all players have legal equipment
- Warm up safely

Section 13.3 – Grace Period

A team shall have a fifteen (15) minute grace period following its scheduled kickoff time to field the required minimum of seven (7) eligible players.

If a team cannot field seven eligible players within the grace period, the game shall be declared a forfeit unless otherwise approved by the Commissioner.

Section 13.4 – Forfeits

A game may be declared a forfeit if a team:

- Fails to appear
- Cannot field the minimum number of eligible players
- Refuses to continue playing
- Is removed from competition by league officials due to misconduct

Unless otherwise determined by the Commissioner, a forfeited game shall be recorded as a **21–0** victory for the non-offending team.

League standings shall reflect the result as an official game.

Section 13.5 – Team Withdrawal

A team that withdraws from the league after the schedule has been released shall notify the Commissioner immediately.

The Commissioner may:

- Remove the team from league competition
- Adjust the schedule
- Declare forfeits for remaining games
- Deny future participation based on the circumstances

Section 13.6 – Weather Delays

League officials may delay or suspend games due to:

- Lightning
- Severe thunderstorms
- Heavy rain
- High winds
- Unsafe field conditions
- Any weather condition that threatens participant safety

Player safety shall always take priority over completing a scheduled game.

Section 13.7 – Lightning Policy

If lightning is observed or detected near the playing facility:

- Play shall be suspended immediately
- All participants and spectators shall seek appropriate shelter
- Play shall not resume until at least thirty (30) minutes have passed since the last observed lightning strike or thunder

The Commissioner or Head Official shall determine when play may safely resume.

Section 13.8 – Game Suspension

A game may be suspended for:

- Weather
- Field conditions
- Player safety concerns
- Facility emergencies
- Other circumstances beyond league control

The Commissioner shall determine whether the game will:

- Resume from the point of suspension
- Be replayed
- Be declared official
- Be canceled

Section 13.9 – Field Conditions

League officials may inspect playing fields before and during competition.

Games may be delayed, relocated, or canceled if field conditions create an unreasonable risk of injury.

Section 13.10 – Facility Rules

All participants shall comply with:

- Park regulations
- Facility policies
- Parking requirements
- Field usage guidelines

Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

Section 13.11 – Scheduling Changes

The Commissioner reserves the right to modify:

- Game dates
- Kickoff times
- Field assignments
- Season schedules

Teams will be notified as soon as reasonably possible of any scheduling changes.

Section 13.12 – Final Authority

The League Commissioner shall have final authority regarding scheduling, forfeits, cancellations, weather decisions, and all operational matters addressed within this Article.

ARTICLE 14

PLAYOFFS & CHAMPIONSHIP PROCEDURES

The following provisions govern playoff qualification, postseason competition, and the determination of the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA) Champion.

Section 14.1 – Purpose

The postseason is designed to determine the league champion through fair and competitive playoff competition. All playoff games shall be governed by the Official EPFFA Rulebook unless otherwise stated in this Article.

Section 14.2 – Playoff Qualification

The number of teams qualifying for the playoffs shall be determined by the League Commissioner before the start of each season.

Playoff qualification shall be based on regular season standings.

The Commissioner reserves the right to modify the playoff format based on league size.

Section 14.3 – Seeding

Teams qualifying for the playoffs shall be seeded according to regular season performance.

If two or more teams finish with identical records, the following tiebreakers shall be used in order:

1. Head-to-Head Record
2. Winning Percentage
3. Point Differential
4. Points Allowed
5. Points Scored
6. Strength of Schedule
7. Coin Toss (If needed)

Section 14.4 – Playoff Format

The playoff bracket shall be determined before the postseason begins.

Depending on league size, the playoffs may include:

- Single-Elimination Tournament
- Divisional Playoffs
- First-Round Byes for Higher Seeds

The Commissioner shall announce the official format before the first regular season game.

Section 14.5 – Home Team Designation

The higher-seeded team shall be designated as the home team unless otherwise determined by the Commissioner.

The home team shall:

- Call the coin toss
- Wear its designated home jersey if required

Section 14.6 – Championship Game

The winners of the semifinal games shall advance to the EPFFA Championship Game.

The winner of the Championship Game shall be declared the **Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association Champion** for that season.

Section 14.7 – Overtime

If any playoff or championship game ends in a tie at the end of regulation:

- College-style overtime procedures outlined in Article 3 shall be used
- Additional overtime periods shall continue until a winner is determined
- Ties are not permitted in postseason play

Section 14.8 – Player Eligibility

Only players listed on the official roster before the roster deadline shall be eligible to participate in playoff games unless otherwise approved by the Commissioner.

Suspended or ineligible players may not participate.

Section 14.9 – Awards

At the conclusion of the Championship Game, the league may present awards including:

- League Championship Trophy
- Championship Rings or Medals (if provided)
- Most Valuable Player (Championship MVP)
- Other league-recognized postseason awards

Section 14.10 – Championship Conduct

The standards of sportsmanship outlined throughout this rulebook remain in full effect during all postseason games.

Unsportsmanlike conduct, fighting, or actions detrimental to the league may result in immediate ejection and additional disciplinary action regardless of the importance of the game.

Section 14.11 – Final Authority

The League Commissioner shall have final authority regarding all playoff procedures, seeding, eligibility, scheduling, and postseason operations not specifically addressed within this Article.

ARTICLE 15

LEAGUE AWARDS

The Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA) recognizes outstanding individual and team accomplishments each season. League awards are intended to honor excellence in athletic performance, leadership, sportsmanship, and dedication to the game.

Section 15.1 – Purpose

The purpose of the League Awards Program is to recognize players, teams, coaches, officials, volunteers, and other individuals whose contributions positively impact the success and integrity of the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association.

Section 15.2 – Team Awards

The following team awards may be presented each season:

- League Champion
- League Runner-Up
- Regular Season Champion (Best Regular Season Record)
- Division Champion(s), if applicable
- Tournament Champion(s), if applicable

Championship awards may include:

- Championship Trophy
- Championship Rings
- Championship Medals
- Championship Banner
- Other league-approved awards

Section 15.3 – Individual Awards

The league may present the following individual awards at the conclusion of each season:

- Most Valuable Player (MVP)
- Offensive Player of the Year
- Defensive Player of the Year
- Rookie of the Year
- Team Captain of the Year

- Sportsmanship Award
- Most Improved Player
- Comeback Player of the Year
- Special Teams Player of the Year (if applicable)

The Commissioner may establish additional awards as the league continues to grow.

Section 15.4 – All-League Team

The league may recognize outstanding players by selecting an All-League Team.

Selections may include:

- Quarterback
- Running Back
- Wide Receiver(s)
- Center
- Offensive Lineman
- Defensive Lineman
- Linebacker
- Defensive Back
- Utility Player

The number of players selected at each position shall be determined by the League Commissioner based upon league size and participation.

Section 15.5 – Award Selection Process

League awards may be determined using one or more of the following:

- Official league statistics
- Team success
- Referee evaluations
- Commissioner evaluation
- Team Captain voting
- League committee voting

The Commissioner shall determine the final selection process for each award.

Section 15.6 – Award Eligibility

To be eligible for league awards, a participant must:

- Be listed on an official league roster

- Remain in good disciplinary standing throughout the season
- Participate in the minimum number of games established by the league
- Not be serving a suspension at the conclusion of the regular season unless otherwise approved by the Commissioner

Section 15.7 – Sportsmanship Award

The Sportsmanship Award shall recognize the participant who consistently demonstrates:

- Respect for opponents
- Respect for officials
- Leadership
- Integrity
- Professional conduct
- Positive representation of the league

This award reflects the core values of the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association.

Section 15.8 – Commissioner's Award

The Commissioner may annually present a Commissioner's Award to recognize an individual, team, official, volunteer, sponsor, or community member whose contributions have significantly advanced the growth, reputation, or success of the EPFFA.

This award is discretionary and is not required to be presented every season.

Section 15.9 – Presentation of Awards

League awards shall typically be presented following the Championship Game or at an official league awards ceremony.

The league may publicly recognize award recipients through:

- The official league website
- Official league social media accounts
- League press releases
- Awards ceremonies
- Other league-approved publications

Section 15.10 – League Records

The league may maintain historical records recognizing award recipients and statistical leaders for each season.

These records may include:

- League Champions
- MVP Winners
- Offensive and Defensive Player of the Year
- Championship MVP
- Individual statistical leaders
- Team records
- Career league records

Official league records shall be maintained by league administration.

Section 15.11 – Final Authority

The League Commissioner shall have final authority regarding all league awards, award eligibility, selection procedures, and official recognition.

The Commissioner's decisions regarding league awards shall be final.

ARTICLE 16

GENERAL PROVISIONS

The following provisions apply to all participants, teams, officials, volunteers, and league representatives participating in any Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA) sanctioned event.

Section 16.1 – Official Rulebook

This Official Rulebook shall govern all league-sanctioned games, tournaments, and events conducted by the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association.

All participants are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the provisions contained within this document.

Ignorance of any rule shall not be accepted as a defense for violations.

Section 16.2 – Amendments

The League Commissioner reserves the right to amend, revise, clarify, or interpret any provision of this rulebook whenever necessary to improve:

- Player safety
- Competitive balance
- League operations
- Administrative efficiency

Whenever practical, participants shall be notified before rule changes become effective.

Section 16.3 – Interpretation of Rules

If a situation arises that is not specifically addressed within this rulebook, the Commissioner or official shall interpret the rules based upon:

- Fair competition
- Player safety
- Sportsmanship
- The overall best interests of the league

Such interpretations shall serve as official league policy until incorporated into a future edition of this rulebook.

Section 16.4 – Severability

If any provision of this rulebook is determined to be invalid or unenforceable under applicable law, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 16.5 – Official League Documents

The following documents are incorporated into league operations:

- Official Rulebook
- Player Registration Form
- Team Registration Form
- Liability Waiver and Assumption of Risk Agreement
- Code of Conduct Agreement
- Media Release (if applicable)
- League Policies adopted by the Commissioner

Participants are responsible for complying with all official league documents.

Section 16.6 – Effective Date

This rulebook shall become effective on the date approved by the League Commissioner and shall remain in effect until officially revised or replaced.

Current Version: **Version 1.0**

Effective Date: **July 22, 2026**

Section 16.7 – Annual Review

The League Commissioner may review this rulebook following each season.

Recommendations from:

- Players
- Team Captains
- Officials
- League Staff

may be considered when preparing future editions.

Section 16.8 – Final Authority

The League Commissioner retains final authority over all matters relating to the administration, interpretation, and enforcement of this rulebook.

All decisions made under this authority shall be final.

Section 16.9 – Closing Statement

The Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association was founded to provide a competitive, organized, and professional football experience that emphasizes realistic gameplay, player safety, sportsmanship, and community.

Every participant plays an important role in helping the league grow and uphold these standards. By working together with respect, integrity, and a shared passion for football, we can continue building the premier Pro Style Flag Football organization in Eastern Pennsylvania.

APPENDICES

The following appendices are included as supplemental reference material for the Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association (EPFFA) Official Rulebook. While these appendices do not replace any provision contained within the Official Rulebook, they are considered official league reference materials.

APPENDIX A

Official Field Dimensions

Unless otherwise approved by the League Commissioner, all league games shall be played on a field meeting the following specifications:

- Field Length: 100 yards
- Field Width: 53 $\frac{1}{3}$ yards
- End Zones: 10 yards deep
- First Down Marker: Every 20 yards
- Hash Marks: Standard football field markings when available

League officials may approve modified field dimensions when necessary due to facility limitations.

APPENDIX B

Required Player Equipment

Every player shall wear the following:

Required Equipment

- League provided flag belt
- Athletic shirt or jersey
- Athletic shorts or pants without pockets (preferred)
- Athletic footwear

Permitted Footwear

- Molded football cleats
- Soccer cleats

- Turf shoes
- Athletic shoes

Prohibited Footwear

- Metal cleats
- Track spikes
- Any footwear deemed unsafe by officials

Prohibited Equipment

- Hard casts unless properly padded and approved
- Jewelry that may present a safety risk
- Sharp objects
- Clothing that covers the player's flags

Officials may require any unsafe equipment to be removed before participation.

APPENDIX C

Penalty Summary

Five-Yard Penalties

- Offside
- False Start
- Neutral Zone Infraction
- Illegal Motion
- Illegal Shift
- Delay of Game
- Illegal Formation
- Too Many Players on the Field
- Encroachment

Ten-Yard Penalties

- Offensive Holding
- Defensive Holding
- Illegal Block
- Block in the Back
- Hands to the Face
- Chop Block
- Blindside Block

- Illegal Contact Beyond Five Yards
- Illegal Batting
- Flag Guarding
- Stiff Arm
- Lowering the Shoulder
- Illegal Hurdle
- Illegal Forward Pass
- Intentional Grounding

Fifteen-Yard Penalties

- Offensive Pass Interference
- Defensive Pass Interference
- Roughing the Passer
- Unnecessary Roughness
- Taunting
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct
- Fighting
- Head-First Contact
- Spearing
- Targeting

APPENDIX D

Official Game Ball

Unless otherwise approved by the League Commissioner:

- Official Ball Size: Adult Official Football
- Inflation shall comply with manufacturer recommendations
- League will provide a ball but teams may use their own if they choose
- Officials shall determine whether a football is suitable for play

APPENDIX E

League Contacts

Official League Website - epffa.org

Commissioner - commissionerkrug@epffa.org

APPENDIX F

Revision History

Version	Effective Date	Description
1.0	July 22, 2026	Initial Rulebook Release

Future revisions shall be documented in this appendix.

APPENDIX G

Rulebook Acknowledgment

By participating in any EPFFA-sanctioned event, every player, Team Captain, official, volunteer, and league representative acknowledges that they have been provided access to the Official Rulebook and agree to abide by all league rules, policies, and procedures.

Failure to comply with the Official Rulebook may result in penalties, disciplinary action, suspension, or removal from league participation.

APPENDIX H

Future League Expansion

The Eastern Pennsylvania Flag Football Association reserves the right to establish additional divisions, tournaments, championships, and league-sanctioned events, including but not limited to:

- Women's Divisions
- Youth Divisions
- Co-Ed Divisions

- Recreational Divisions
- Competitive Divisions
- Regional Tournaments
- State Championships
- All-Star Games

Such additions shall be governed by future editions of the Official Rulebook or supplemental league policies approved by the League Commissioner.