

# **S.F.F.F.A FLAG FOOTBALL RULES**

## **RULE 1**

### **THE FIELD**

**SECTION 1: Dimensions** - The game shall be played upon a rectangular field 100 yards in length and 40 yards in width.

**SECTION 2: Markings** - First down markers are positioned at the 20, 40, 40, and 20- yard lines. First downs are achieved by crossing these markers.

**SECTION 3: Players' area** - Players must position themselves within the two 20 yard lines when not on the playing field.

## **RULE 2**

### **THE BALL**

**SECTION 1:** Each team must provide either an NFL or NCAA regulation size ball fully inflated. **The referee shall be the sole judge as to whether all balls offered for play comply with these Specifications.**

## **RULE 3**

### **FLAG BELTS**

**SECTION 1:** TRIPLE THREAT flag belts are the only flag belt used in the S.F.F.F.A Football games

**SECTION 2:** All players except ineligible linemen are required to wear a TRIPLE THREAT flag belt.

**SECTION 3:** All flag belts must be a different color from pants worn by team. Three flags must be the same color.

**SECTION 4:** Game jerseys cannot cover flag belts. Jerseys must either be tucked in pants, or 4 inches above flag belt

## **RULE 4**

### **BLOCKING**

**SECTION 1: Open hand** - During a legal block, contact can be made with only the open hands. Open hands can be thrust forward initially to contact an opponent inside his body Frame. Hands cannot be thrust forward above the shoulders to contact an opponent on the neck, face, or head. As the play develops, a blocker is permitted to work for and maintain position on an opponent as long as he does not push from behind or clip. Open hand blocking is allowed on all portions of the field and is not restricted to the line of scrimmage. **You may not use your shoulder or forearm to block.**

## RULE 5

### TACKLING AND RUNNING

SECTION 1: Tackling - Tackling a ball carrier is illegal. A legal tackle is defined as pulling off the ball carriers flag without impeding his forward movement. Incidental contact does not constitute a penalty against the offense or defense.

SECTION 2: Flag shielding - A ball carrier cannot shield his flags from the opponent with his free hand when attempting to allude tacklers. **Penalty is 10 yards from spot of foul.**

SECTION 3: Stiff arming - Stiff arming is illegal and will draw an unnecessary roughness penalty. **Penalty is 15 yards from spot of foul**

SECTION 4: Ball carrier inadvertently losses his flag belt or flags, single hand touching of the ball carrier will constitute a legal tackle (or any type of contact). If the player is not wearing a flag belt then the player is automatically down at the spot of touching the ball.

SECTION 5: Ball carrier inadvertently falls to the ground he can get back up and run, a defender has to touch him when he's down.

SECTION 6: Fumbles - There are no fumbles. When the ball carrier losses control of the ball and it touches the ground the play is ruled dead and the ball is spotted at the point it touched the ground as long as the spot is at or behind the ball carriers forward progress.

SECTION 7: Diving and jumping - Ball carriers may not dive or jump in an effort to gain extra yardage. Diving and jumping is defined as a player clearly leaving both feet in an aggressive attempt to gain extra yards.

SECTION 8: One foot must be "**in-bounds**" to constitute a legal pass reception.

SECTION 9: Ball stripping - Illegal and will result in a **fifteen yard penalty enforced at the spot of the infraction.**

## RULE 6

### GAME TIMING

SECTION 1: Length of the game - The length of the game is 25 minutes, divided into two half. Running time with no clock stoppage is used for each half the clock will stop at the final 2:00 minutes of second half and will restart at the snap of the ball. During the final 2 minutes of half traditional clock stoppage is used only when the ball carrier steps out of bounds incomplete pass, a change in ball possession, or a score is achieved.

SECTION 2: Half-time - Between the first and second half's, there shall be an intermission of no more then **five minutes**. During the intermission play is suspended and the teams may leave the field.

SECTION 3: Starting Each Game - Not more than five minutes before the kickoff, the referee, in the presence of both team captains, shall toss a coin at the center of the field. The toss shall be

called by the captain of the visiting team. The winner of the toss must choose one of four privileges.

- A) Kick
- B) Receive
- C) Direction
- D) Defer to second half.

**NOTE:** Officials fee must be paid before coin toss (\$40 each team)

**SECTION 4: Second Half** - For the second half, the captain who lost the pre game toss is to have the first choice of the two privileges listed in Section 3. Immediately prior to the start of the second half, the captains of both teams must inform the referee of their respected choices.

**SECTION 5: Time outs** - Each team is allowed three time outs per half. Charged time outs can be used at anytime. The time clock will begin at the snap of the next play.

**Exception:** The referee may allow:

- A) Necessary time to attend to an injured player. That player must sit out for next play.
- B) Repair legal equipment.

**SECTION 6: Time between plays** - The offensive team has **30 seconds** in which to snap the ball once the referee has spotted the ball after the previous play has been ruled dead. It shall be the responsibility of the **offensive** team to retrieve the ball and hand it to the referee after each play. The referee will indicate by signaling to the offensive team when 10 seconds remain on the 30 second clock.

**SECTION 7:** **After a team scores, both teams have 45 seconds to set up for the kickoff.**

**SECTION 8: Mercy rule** - Should a team be trailing by 30 or more points in the second half or trailing by 18 or more points at the final "Two-Minute Warning", the referees shall end the game immediately. (There will be no exception to this rule).

## RULE 7

### **PLAYERS**

**SECTION 1: Number** - The game is to be played by two teams of nine players each. In the event a team only has 8 players in attendance they will be required to play 9 on 8 (Power Play). Less than 8 is a forfeit. Team with 9-players gets choice at coin toss. More than nine players on the field are illegal, while less than nine players is legal.

**SECTION 2:** At the coin toss, each team must designate its captains, one for the offense and one for the defense. Captain's act as sole representatives of there team in all communications with the officials. (No other players may question the officials)

**SECTION 3: Rosters** - Team rosters will make from the waiver forms that are filed. If a player doesn't fill out and file the form he is an illegal player. Any team using an illegal player will forfeit the game and will be charged for such any action. Players cannot switch teams unless the player gets league approval first. This will be the official roster for the playoffs.

SECTION 4: **Rosters - Teams may carry up to 20 players on their roster.**

SECTION 5: **Teams must be in matching jerseys (color) by week 3.**

## RULE 8

### KICKOFFS

SECTION 1: **Kickoffs - Kickoffs are from the kicking teams own 40-yard line and must travel to at least the receiving teams' 40-yard line or the ball is ruled dead at the point it touches a player and the ground with the receiving team taking possession at this spot.**

SECTION 2: **Kicking tees - Legal on all kickoffs.**

SECTION 3: **On-Side Kicks - Illegal.** However, Should a kickoff that travels past the receiving teams 40-yard line be recovered by the kicking team prior to the receiving team touching the ball, possession will be awarded to the kicking team.

SECTION 4: **Out of bounds kickoffs - Out of bounds kickoffs will be spotted at the 40 yd line. Out of bounds kickoffs that do not travel to the receiving teams' 40-yard line will be spotted at the point the ball went out of bounds.**

SECTION 5: Dropped kickoffs in the end-zone will result in the ball being spotted at the 20 yard line. All other "Dropped" kickoffs will be ruled dead at the spot.

## RULE 9

### PUNTS

SECTION 1: **Punts - The offensive team has two (2) choices.**

**1. Declare a punt: (Informing the referee)**

A. Offense must punt the ball (NO FAKING). If a team performs a play other than a punt there will be a **15 yard penalty** a the ball is turned over to other team

**2. Undeclared punt**

A. Offense can punt, fake, or set up in an offensive formation

B. Defense can fully rush the punter or QB on the snap of the ball.

SECTION 2: **Formation - Punting team must have five men on the line of scrimmage. Ball must be snapped to the punter from the center on a declared punt. Defensive team must have at least five players on the line of scrimmage.**

## RULE 10

### FIELD GOALS AND EXTRA POINT KICKS

SECTION 1: **Extra point the offensive team has (3) choices.**

**1. Declare extra point: (Informing the referee) 1 point, 2 points and 3 points.**

**1 point from the 3 yard line.**

**2 point from the 10 yard line.**

**3 points from the 20 yard line.**

## RULE 11

### **OFFENSIVE FORMATION**

SECTION 1: Line of scrimmage - Offensive team must have at least three players on the line of scrimmage spaced no more than one-yard apart (tackle-center-tackle). All three linemen are ineligible to catch passes and are prohibited from running down field until the pass is thrown. (Lineman cannot catch a pass even if the ball has been tipped).

SECTION 2: Eligible receivers - With the exception of the three linemen, all other players are eligible to run down field and catch passes. Receivers can all line up on one side-there does not have to be a balanced wide receiver set, however at least five players (counting the lineman) must be on the line of scrimmage prior to the snap.

SECTION 3: Tackle eligible - Not legal. The Center and Tackles are ineligible during all plays.

SECTION 4: Motion - Only one player can be in motion at the snap of the ball and must be running parallel to the line of scrimmage. Please note that more than one player can initially go into motion (shift), but only one at the snap of the ball.

SECTION 5: A bad snap from center - The Quarterback has one chance to recover the ball cleanly if it falls in front of him. If the ball goes over his head the ball is dead at the spot it touches the ground.

## RULE 12

### **DEFENSIVE & DEFENSIVE FORMATION**

SECTION 1: Full rush is allowed on every down except punts.

SECTION 2: Formation - Defensive team can line up in any formation they choose.

SECTION 3: Bump and run - One bump is allowed on a receiver within five (5) yards of the line of scrimmage by only one defensive player.

## RULE 13

### **SCORING**

SECTION 1: Touchdowns = 6 points  
Safety = 2 points

SECTION 2: Extra points - From the 3 yard line = 1 point  
From the 10 yard line = 2 points  
From the 20 yard line = 3 points

SECTION 3: Overtime - Tie games at the end of regulation will be decided in a "shoot out" format. Each team will take possession at the opposing teams' 10-yard line and will be given four downs in which to score a touchdown. The opposing team shall be given the same opportunity.

If at the end of 3 consecutive Shoot outs the score remains tied the shoot out will continue as sudden death (next team to score wins). **(This is for Play-offs only)**

## RULE 14

### **FIGHTING AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

**SECTION 1: Unsportsmanlike conduct** - Fighting and unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Players ejected by the referees for striking an opponent or official faces **criminal charges**. Verbal abuse also will not be tolerated. Such abuse when deemed inappropriate will be automatic game ejection and one to three game suspension. If player is involved in a second infraction during the season that player will be suspended for the rest of the year. (No questions asked).

***In certain cases if the commissioner sees fit a player may be suspended for the year or life.***

**SECTION 2:** In the event there is a bench clearing fight the game will be called. After a review with the officials post game report a judgment will be made on win, loss, double forfeit. Judgment will be final.

**SECTION 3:** Two unsportsmanlike penalties in a game at anytime will call for automatic ejection.

**SECTION 4:** **No profanity at anytime. To anybody! (Players, fans, friends, teammates, officials) No using Gods name in vein.**

## Rule 15

### **REFEREE FEE and BOND**

**SECTION 1:** At the start of each game before the coin toss each team is responsible to pay the referee fee of **\$40.00**.

**SECTION 2:** **The referee bond is \$100.00 which is paid before the season starts. This bond is used in the event a team forfeits a game. Team that forfeits will not be allowed back until another bond is paid. If a team does not use its bond it will be returned at the end of the season via mail.**

## Rule 16

### **FORFEIT GAME BOND & TEAM ELIMINATION FROM SCHEDULE/LEAGUE**

**SECTION 1:** Each team is required to submit a referee forfeit bond in the amount of \$100.00. If you do not forfeit a game, the bond will be returned. If you do forfeit a game you will not be eligible to play until you reenter another forfeit bond of **\$100.00**.

**SECTION 2:** If a team forfeits a game before week 3 they will be eliminated from the schedule with no refund of registration fee and bond. After week 3 if a team forfeits

two games they will be eliminated from the schedule with no refund of registration fee and bond

#### RULE 17

#### **FORFEIT OF A SCHEDULED PLAYOFF GAME**

SECTION 1: If you forfeit a scheduled playoff game by not showing up, or you do not have enough team members to field a team for a scheduled game after 15 minutes of scheduled game time, your team will be charged with a loss for that scheduled game. There will be no refund of bond, or registration.

#### RULE 18

#### **SCHEDULE / SCHEDULE CHANGES FOR THE REGULAR SEASON & PLAYOFFS**

SECTION 1: Schedules will be given for the first 3 weeks of a season any team that forfeits a game will be eliminated from the schedule. After week 3 the remainder of the schedule will be given out for the rest of the season.

SECTION 2: A scheduled regular season game or playoff game can be rescheduled with 5 days notice.

SECTION 3: Game days are Saturday for both regular season and playoff games.

SECTION 4: If canceled (weather, etc.) games cannot be rescheduled there is no refund for said game.

#### RULE 19

#### **CHOICE OF SIDE LINE**

SECTION 1: During the regular season its first come first serve for choice of side line.

SECTION 2: During the playoffs its home teams choice for side line.

#### RULE 20

#### **ALCOHOL & DRUGS**

SECTION 1: Alcohol & Drugs are strictly prohibited from the playing field, and parking lots. Any team that does not comply with this rule will be ejected from the league with no refund.

Rules not covered in the S.F.F.F.A official rules and regulations book will judged by the officials. Commissioner has finals say on all rulings and that is the final authority.

*S.F.F.F.A Flag Football Association*