

City of Los Angeles  
 Department of Recreation and Parks  
 Municipal Sports Section  
 3900 West Chevy Chase Drive  
 Los Angeles, CA 90039  
 (818) 246-5613

E-Mail: [flagfootball.munisports@lacity.org](mailto:flagfootball.munisports@lacity.org)  
 Website: <https://www.laparks.org/sports/flagfootball>

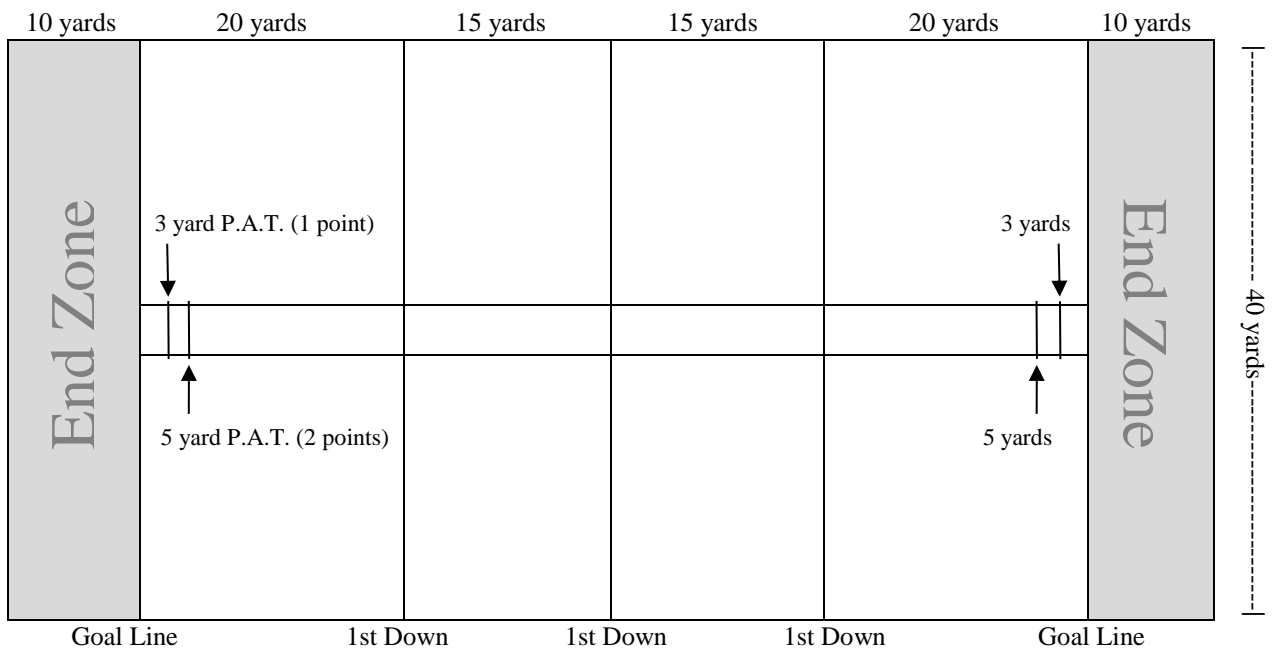
## ADULT FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE 2023-24 RULES AND REGULATIONS

### I. Rules Governing Play

The current High School Federation Rule Book will govern play in the 2023-24 Municipal Sports Flag Football League with the following being the exceptions or clarifications. The following is not an inclusive list of amendments and League Administration reserves the right to rule on issues that may arise during the course of the season.

### II. Description of the Game

- A. The game of flag football is played with seven players per team on the field. It is played similarly to regulation football with the exception that instead of the ball carrier being tackled their flag belt is removed by a defensive player. All players are eligible receivers. Any combination of players may be used for line or back field.
- B. At least six players are needed in order for the game to be considered official. If there aren't at least six players, the game will be a forfeit. Shorthanded team takes the forfeit regardless of the score.
- C. Teams will be allowed a five minute grace period from the game starting time to meet the minimum requirement of 6 players.
- D. Substitutions are unlimited.
- E. The regulation dimension for the field shall be **70 yards in length and 40 yards in width, plus two 10-yard end-zones**. Each line crossed results in a first down.



### III. Rosters and Player Eligibility

- A. All players must be at least 18 years old.
- B. Rosters are limited to a maximum of 18 players per team.
- C. Once a player has signed the official League Roster, that player may no longer play for any other team in the league for the same season.
- D. Each player must completely fill out the appropriate information on the team roster to be eligible for league play. Failure to comply shall result in forfeiture of the game(s).
- E. Rosters must be turned in prior to the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the season.
- F. Rosters will not be accepted after the 6<sup>th</sup> week of the season.
- G. Teams may add and drop players from their roster through the 8<sup>th</sup> week of the season.
- H. Teams that have not submitted a roster by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the season will only receive 1 point for a victory beginning the 4<sup>th</sup> week of the season. Once a legal roster is received they will get two points per victory from that day forward.
- I. Teams that don't turn in a roster are not eligible for playoffs.
- J. Players must have signed the official score sheet for at least 4 games in order to be eligible for playoffs.

### IV. Uniforms and Equipment

- A. All team members must wear jerseys of the same color. Each player must have identifying numbers on front and back. Two players may not wear the same number. Numbers on the back must be at least 8" in size. **Penalty: one point awarded to other team for each illegally uniformed player**
- B. All jerseys must be full length and must be tucked in.
- C. **Flag belts must be sized to fit the player, fastened in the front, and be a different color than the players' shorts/pants.** Note: pants may not have belt loops. League will provide the flag belts.
- D. In the event that a ball carrier hangs a towel from his waist, the ball carrier will be declared down if the defender should remove the towel instead of the flags.
- E. Tackle football equipment and pads are prohibited. Soft elbow/knee pads and gloves are allowed.
- F. **Jewelry is prohibited. Exception: Medical alert bracelets or necklaces must be taped to the body with the medical information visible. Religious medals must be taped and worn under the uniform.**
- G. A mouth piece is recommended for every player **and must be contained completely inside the mouth with no part hanging out of the mouth.**
- H. Glasses will not be allowed. Exception: Sports goggles will be allowed.
- I. All players must wear shoes. Shoes with rubber cleats are permitted. Detachable cleats are also permitted. Street shoes and metal cleats are not permitted.
- J. Uniform rule will be in effect starting with the 2<sup>nd</sup> league game.

### V. Game Ball

- A. The football may be no smaller than official high school and no larger than NFL dimensions.
- B. Each team is to provide their own ball.

### VI. Time of the Game

- A. There will be two 20-minute halves, with a three-minute halftime.
- B. The clock shall be stopped only for requested time outs, injuries, safeties, and after touchdowns. After a touchdown or safety the clock will resume with the ball placed on the **twenty-yard line**.
- C. During the last two minutes of the game, the clock shall stop as per federation stop time rules and on change of possessions. The clock will be stopped for placement of the first down, and then restarted by the referees whistle. Teams will be notified when they are within the last two minutes of the game. The clock will stop only for this notification and will be restarted immediately.
- D. Each team will be allowed two time outs per half. Any time outs remaining from the first half will not be carried over to the second half.
- E. During time outs, one coach will be allowed on the field to confer with the team.

- F. **Mercy Rule:** During the final two minutes of the second half, if a point differential of **17 points** or greater exists, the clock will not stop. The game will revert back to regulation timing if the point differential becomes less than **17 points**.

## VII. Scoring

- A. Safety = 2pts
- B. Touchdown = 6pts
- C. P.A.T. conversions from the 3-yard line are 1pt and from the 5-yard line are 2pts.
- D. **Once a team has made their choice on the conversion, they can only change their decision by taking a time-out or if a penalty is called before the play.**
- E. Tie scores
  - 1. In a regular season game, a tie score will be recorded as a tie.
  - 2. **During playoffs, if a game remains tied at the end of regulation, the following tie-break scenario will take place:**
    - a. **Officials will meet with team captains for a coin toss. Winner of the coin toss will have the option to have possession of the ball first or to defend.**
    - b. **The ball will be placed on the defensive team's 20-yard line. Each team will have one offensive series to score. Teams will alternate sides on change of possession.**
    - c. **Teams that score have the option to convert for either 1 or 2 points. If the 1<sup>st</sup> team scores, the opponent will have an opportunity to match or beat the score.**
    - d. **The ball will remain live if intercepted and may be run out of the end zone. A team that scores on an interception in overtime will win the game. If the intercepting team does not score they will have the option to place the ball at the dead ball spot (on opposite end of field) or revert it back to the 20-yard line.**
    - e. **If the game remains tied after each team has had their four downs, the process is repeated until there is a winner. During additional overtime periods teams will alternate who chooses to play offense or defense first.**
    - f. **Penalties are handled the same as during regulation.**
    - g. **No time outs are allowed.**
    - h. **No kicks of any type are permitted. Any kicks will be penalized as illegal kicks.**

## VIII. Rules of Play

- A. There will be a **coin toss** prior to the game by the referee:
  - 1. The captain winning the toss shall have the choice of options for the first half or shall defer their option to the second half. The options are:
    - a. To choose whether their team will kick or receive.
    - b. To choose the goal their team will defend.
  - 2. The captain not having the first choice of options shall exercise the remaining option.
  - 3. Before the start of the second half, the captain of the team that lost the pre-game toss is given their choice of kicking off or receiving. (Teams will change goals after halftime).
  - 4. In the scenario that scrimmage vests would need to be worn by one of the teams, the captain winning the coin toss shall have the option of his team wearing them or having the opposing team wear them.
- B. There are no kick-offs. Ball is placed on the **20 yard line** at the start of each half, after touchdowns, and after safeties.
- C. Punting
  - 1. **The offensive team must declare to the referee when they are going to punt. No quick kicks. Penalty: 5 yards**
  - 2. **The punting team must have 5 players on the line of scrimmage; the defensive team must have 3 players on the line of scrimmage.**
  - 3. **Neither team may move until the ball is kicked. Penalty: 5 yards**

4. Punts must originate within the center zone. **Penalty: 5 yards**
5. **The punting team must punt the ball before the play clock expires. Delay of game penalty: 5 yards.** Following a delay of game penalty on a declared punt the clock will not start until the ball is kicked.
6. If a punted ball touches a member of the receiving team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead and belongs to the receiving team. **The placing of the ball will be where the ball was last touched by the receiving team, not where it hits the ground.**
7. A ball punted into the end zone may be run out of the end zone.

#### D. Downs

1. If the offensive team fails to advance the ball to the next zone in four downs, they shall lose possession of the ball to their opponents at the spot where the ball is declared dead after 4th down.
2. The ball is declared dead and the down is ended when the officials sound their whistle.
3. **Inadvertently blown whistle:** The play is declared dead at the point the whistle was blown and the ball will be marked at the spot where the whistle was blown. The offensive team has the choice of playing the down over or accepting the play.
4. If any portion of the ball touches or the point of the ball is over a zone line, the next zone is played.
5. Referee must spot the ball before the offense may execute a legal snap.
6. All players must have their flags on prior to the ball being snapped. Delay of game: **Penalty: 5 yards**
7. Any player who **has possession** or gains possession of the ball while not wearing a flag belt will maintain possession of the ball. **The “inadvertent deflagging” reverts to a one-hand tag between the shoulders and knees.**

#### E. Running Plays

1. Running line plays, with or without a handoff or lateral, shall not be permitted within one yard of either side of the offensive center zone. Allowances will be made at the official’s discretion on “BrokenPlays”. **Penalty: 5 yards and loss of down.**
2. No flag guarding shall be made on the part of the carrier to prevent a defensive player from removing their belt. (Keeping their elbow locked over the belt, holding the belt, guarding the flags, **or jumping in the air to avoid a flag pull**).  
**Penalty: 10 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down**
3. The ball carrier may reach the ball forward, but may not dive in an effort to gain yardage or a touchdown. **Penalty: 10 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down**
4. The ball carrier may not butt, ram, straight-arm, or hurdle (jump over) another player.  
**Penalty: 10 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down**  
**Point of Emphasis: The ball carrier has the primary responsibility in trying to avoid contact. When there is violent contact between a ball carrier and a defender, the official must decide whether that contact is tackling, charging, or merely incidental contact.**

#### F. Passing

1. All players are eligible receivers.
2. The offensive team may throw as many forward passes as they wish, as long as the forward passes are thrown from behind the line of scrimmage. Once the ball crosses the line of scrimmage all future forward passes are illegal and will result in a penalty.  
**Penalty: illegal forward pass; 5 yards and loss of down.**
3. A forward pass may be completed behind the line of scrimmage, but the receiver may not run through the offensive center zone except in the case of broken plays (official’s discretion).
4. Pass interference shall be penalized as follows:
  - a. Interference by offense: Ten yards from line of scrimmage and **repeat the down**.
  - b. Interference by defense: Ball is placed at the spot of foul with a first down.

If foul occurs in the defensive team's end zone, offensive team's ball and first down at 1-yard line, or half the distance to the goal if the previous spot was inside the 2-yard line.

5. **Intentional grounding:** There must be an offensive player in the vicinity of where the ball is thrown. A passer may not throw the ball away to prevent loss of yardage. **Penalty: 5 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down**
6. **Roughing the passer:** it shall be a foul to make contact with the quarterback in any way other than in an attempt to pull their flag including making contact with the ball while it is in the quarterback's hand. Penalty: **10 yards and automatic first down.**

#### G. Huddles

1. The play clock is 30-seconds from the time the ball is set. **Penalty: 5 yards.**
2. No hideouts will be permitted. **From the time the ball is spotted by the official until the snap of the ball, all players at some point in that time must be at least 5 yards away from the sideline. Penalty: 5 yards and loss of down.**
3. Teams are not required to huddle

#### H. Snapping the Ball

1. The ball must be passed continuously from between the legs of the center to a teammate. **Penalty: illegal procedure - 5 yards**
2. **Encroachment:** no player shall encroach on the neutral zone after the ball is ready for play and before the snap by touching the ball or an opponent or by being in or beyond the neutral zone to give defensive signals and/or to hinder or deceive an opponent. After the snapper has made his final adjustment of the ball, it is encroachment for any player to break the plane or the line of scrimmage, except for the snapper's right to be over the ball. **Penalty: play immediately becomes dead, 5 yards**
3. The official must spot the ball before the offense can execute a legal snap.
4. **The center may adjust the ball but cannot cause the ball to leave the ground prior to the snap. Penalty: 5 yards**
5. **A snap from the center to the ground is a dead ball. Ball is spotted where it hit the ground.**

#### I. Fumbles

1. A fumbled or lateraled ball unless caught before it touches the ground, is dead and may not be advanced by either team.
2. A fumble in the end zone without crossing the goal line on a punt or kick-off is ruled a touchback.

#### J. Blocking

1. Blocking is only allowed with extended arms and **open hands.**
2. Blocking with shoulder and/or forearms is not allowed and is grounds for ejection.
3. **Players are restricted in the use of hands to push the shoulders and body of an opposing player.**
4. **The following blocks are illegal: cross blocks, chop blocks, flying blocks (offensive player leaves his feet), blocks below the waist, and clipping (offensive player blocks a defensive player from behind) Penalty: unsportsmanlike conduct, 15 yards & loss of down**  
Note: if flagrant, player will be ejected from the game.

#### K. Interceptions

Interceptions may be returned including interceptions that take place in the end zone.  
**Exception:** A ball that is intercepted during a PAT attempt is declared dead.

### **IX. Defensive Infractions**

- A. **Defensive players cannot rush up the middle. (1 yard on either side of the center, at the time of the snap). Penalty: Illegal procedure; 5 yards.**
- B. **Defenders shall not impede the progress of a ball carrier in an attempt to remove a flag belt (no holding, blocking, tripping, etc.). Penalty: 10 yards from the spot of the foul.**

- C. Intentional flag removal of a player without the ball by the defense. **Penalty: Unsportsmanlike conduct, 10 yards from the point of the infraction or end of the play; whichever is greater.**
- D. It shall be a foul to tackle, trip, push, hold, or rough another player. **Penalty: 10 yards from the spot of the foul.**
- E. Players must pull the ball carrier's flag for the ball carrier to be considered down. Pushing the ball carrier out of bounds will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct. **Penalty: 10 yards from the spot of the foul.**  
**Note: Players guilty of breaking this rule twice will be disqualified from the game immediately.**
- F. Enforcement of a penalty for a foul committed by the defensive team behind its goal line shall be: Opponent's ball, first down on the offensive 1-yard line or halfway between the previous spot and the goal line, if the previous spot was inside the 1-yard line.
- G. No distance penalty shall exceed half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offensive team's goal

## X. Sportsmanship

- A. Only the manager or captain are allowed to talk with the officials.
- B. Any player that is flagged for unsportsmanlike conduct must immediately substitute out of the game for a 2 minute cooling off period. Player must sit quietly on the bench for two (2) minutes of game time. The two (2) minutes starts when the player is seated on the bench and is quiet.
- C. Unsportsmanlike conduct violations may result in ejection from games. Any player ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct **must leave the facility grounds immediately**. Player will automatically be suspended from their next game and may face a longer suspension including expulsion from the league (pending severity).
- D. Any player(s) who engages in a physical altercation will be suspended from the league and will forfeit their team bond.
- E. Suspensions of a player for 1 year or less may not be appealed.
- F. Suspensions of a player for greater than a year or a suspension of an entire team may be appealed in writing within 1 week of suspension notice.
- G. City ordinance prohibits alcoholic beverages at city recreation centers. **Players may not consume or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol on/at facility grounds.**

## XI. Fighting

- A. This league has zero tolerance for fighting (instigator or retaliator), and it is cause for indefinite and immediate suspension from the league.
- B. Any player ejected for fighting will automatically lose their team's forfeit bond, which must be replaced by the Wednesday following the incident.
- C. The ejected player will be discharged from the league.

## XII. League Procedures

- A. Official's fees are **\$75.00 per game**. This fee must be paid in cash to the head official prior to the start of the game. If there are only two officials the fee is **\$50**.
- B. All games will be played on Sundays at **Jackie Robinson Stadium at Michelle and Barack Obama Sports Complex (formerly Rancho Cienega), 5001 Obama Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90016**.
- C. League standings will be determined by a point system:  
Win = 2 points, Tie = 1 point, Loss = 0 points, Forfeit = -1 point
- D. In the event of a tie in the standings, the following will be the means for breaking the tie:
  - 1) Head to head record.
  - 2) Divisional record if applicable.
  - 3) Record against teams with winning records of at least .500.
  - 4) Coin toss.

### **XIII. Forfeit Bond**

- A. Teams that forfeit a game will have their forfeit bond utilized to pay officials at a rate of **\$150.00** per game.
- B. Forfeit bond will be lost in its entirety if a team engages in a physical altercation. This applies to both instigator and retaliator.
- C. Forfeit bond balance must always be **\$300.00**. Teams must replenish any portion of the bond that is lost for whatever reason by 5:00pm of the following Wednesday. Failure to comply will result in forfeiture of next game and may result in team being dropped from the league.
- D. Forfeit bond will be refunded upon written request from Team Manager. NOTE: Forfeit bonds left dormant for a period of 3 years will be lost.

### **XIV. Protests**

- A. Protests of rule misinterpretations will be allowed.
- B. Protest procedure goes as follows:
  - 1. Team must notify the Head Official that they are playing the game under protest before the next play. EXCEPTION: Protesting a player's eligibility can be done at any point of the game.
  - 2. Written protest must be submitted to league office with 48 hours of the game in question.
  - 3. A check in the amount of \$25.00 must accompany the written protest.
  - 4. If protest is upheld, \$25.00 fee will be refunded and League Commissioner will advise as to the next steps.
  - 5. If protest is denied, \$25.00 fee will be deposited into the league's financial account.

### **XV. House Rules and Other Information**

- A. The city of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks does not provide insurance. All participants assume their own responsibility.
- B. All players must treat all other players, officials and league administrators with respect.
- C. No refunds of any sort unless league is canceled.
- D. League commissioner for this season is Eric Mellem, 818-246-5613;  
[flagfootball.munisports@lacity.org](mailto:flagfootball.munisports@lacity.org)
- E. For updated league information visit our web site [www.laparks.org/sports/flagfootball](http://www.laparks.org/sports/flagfootball)
- F. Changes to schedule will not be allowed unless deemed necessary by the league administration.
- G. It is the manager's responsibility to inform their entire team about the league's rules & conduct.
- H. Individual awards will be given to 1<sup>st</sup> place teams.
- I. Failure to comply with any of the rules may result in forfeiture of game.

Good luck to all teams!