

DES MOINES PARK & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Leisure Sports Office

248-6310

3711 Easton Blvd, 50317

FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

I. GENERAL RULES

- A. Teams must comply with the rules and regulations established by the Des Moines park and recreation department to be eligible to participate. Entry fees and new rule additions are established on a yearly basis.
- B. It is the team manager's responsibility to make sure their team obeys all administrative and league rules. The manager's responsibilities also include: maintaining discipline and control over the team and spectators at all time.
- C. There are no entry fee refunds unless a team cannot be placed in a league.
- D. All games must be played as scheduled. Teams may not postpone games or reschedule league games. Only the Des Moines Park and Recreation Department may postpone games or reschedule games for any reason.
- E. The team manager must provide the Leisure Sports Office with a completed application and a legal team roster.

II. ELIGIBILITY

- A. All participants must be eighteen (18) years of age prior to the first scheduled game of the season.
- B. No person who is a current member of a high school, college, semi-professional or professional team will be allowed to participate. Players are legal if above teams are out of seasons schedule; an example would be "Barnstormer players" who would be legal.

III. ROSTERS

- A. Each team must submit a completed roster form, secured from the Leisure Sports Office, including name, address, phone numbers, birth date and signature of each player listed, **before the first game.**
- B. A player dropped by one team may not play for another team in the same league for a period of seven (7) calendar days from the date of official release. Rosters may be added to until game five (5) has been completed.
- C. Players may play on teams in other leagues, but only one team in each league.

IV. CONDUCT

- A. Players are expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner, displaying good sportsmanship at all times. The Park and Recreation Department shall have the authority to suspend any player, manager, representative or team for violations of these rules and for any action not contained in these rules that is determined to be detrimental to the good conduct of the program.
- B. The game officials will be in charge during play and their decisions will be final except in matters of protest that are submitted to the Leisure Sports Office. **Judgment calls cannot be protested.**
- C. Drinking alcoholic beverages is not allowed at any time on city or school property.
- D. Game officials have the authority to eject any program participant for violation of these rules; including unsportsmanlike conduct and offensive language. An ejected participant will leave the playing field and sideline area immediately or the game will be forfeited and the offending participant may be suspended from Leisure Sports programs for one calendar year.
- E. Any player, manager, coach or team representative ejected from a game will also be suspended from participation in their team's next scheduled game. A second offense may result in suspension for the remainder of the season.
- F. Any program participant who physically attacks, pushes, shoves or bumps an official in any manner will be suspended for a minimum of one calendar year, which includes all leisure sports activities conducted by the Des Moines Park and Recreation Department, including the season at the time of violation. Criminal charges will be filed.
- G. Game officials have the authority to eject spectators from the park for offensive behavior and/or language. Police officials will be called to remove any person unwilling to leave the premises when ordered to do so by a game official. **Managers are responsible for their spectators.**
- H. Fraudulent rosters or playing under another name will result in suspension.

V. PROTESTS

- A. Protests relating to rule interpretations must be made directly to the game officials and the opposing manager at the time of the violation and before play continues. Judgment cannot be protested.
- B. A decision will be made on a protest within seven days after it has been submitted to the Leisure Sports Office.
- C. Eligibility or roster violations will result in forfeit. These complaints may be made at any time to game officials. Call the Leisure Sports Office the next day.

VI. UNIFORM

- A. Opposing team must wear jerseys of contrasting color; all team members must wear jerseys of the same color and shade. Teams must indicate their color at the time of entry. An attempt will be made to reduce the necessity of teams purchasing two sets of jerseys.
- B. Pants of any type may be worn, except they must be of contrasting color to the flags used by the team.
- C. No hip, thigh or forearm pads will be allowed; metal braces are not allowed.
- D. Basketball type shoes or rubber soled and shoes with molded rubber cleats may be worn, **NO STEEL. Football cleats are allowed.**
- E. The flags to be used shall be a strip of canvas, twill cloth, plastic, or other strong material at least 2 inches wide and 18 inches long. Two flags will be a part of the uniform of each player and opposing teams must wear flags of contrasting colors. Colors shall be opposite. A commercial belt-type flag is required. (Inexpensive – at any sporting goods store.) Flags must be on side of hips. Sock and ball type flags are illegal.
- F. Wrapping, tying or securing the flag to the trousers and/or belt is unsportsmanlike conduct and will be penalized accordingly; 15 yards minimum.
- G. All shirts must be tucked in completely to expose both flags.

VII. PLAYING REGULATIONS – Iowa H.S.A.A. Rules, Except Following:

- A. **Putting the ball in play:** There is no kick-off. Play will start at the twenty yard-line. Teams must change directions at beginning of each quarter.
- B. **Kicks:** Any kicks going over the opponent's goal line without possession involved is a touchback and may not be ran out of end zone.
- C. **Fumbles and Muffs:** Any time the ball is fumbled or muffed during scrimmage after lateral passing, a kick, run or pass from center, it becomes dead at that spot. Opposing team cannot recover fumble. A ball passed from center that strikes the ground will be treated as a fumble or muffed ball. For the purpose of this rule, fumbling and muffing are considered the same. A forward fumble is dead where the player is and not where the ball lands.
- D. **Blocking:** In all instances, a blocker must be on his feet before and during contact with his opponent. The hands may be in any upright or semi-upright position with contact only against the opponent's torso, arms, or hands. Under no condition shall a high-low block be permitted. Personal foul penalty – 15 yards. (Approved ruling: In the event a blocker makes legal contact and then loses footing or balance and in the process of falling he makes contact below the opponent's hip, this will not be interpreted as a foul unless the blocker continues to drive forward into the opponent below the hips, in which case it is a foul.) **NO DOWNFIELD BLOCKING ALLOWED.** (See Rule X.B. under Fouls and Penalties.) No blocking is allowed beyond the line of scrimmage. A blocker **may not** drive the opponent down field. **Absolutely NO CRACK BACK BLOCKING.**

- E. Downed Ball:** The ball is downed and becomes dead when an opposing player pulls one of the flags from the runner. The player who removed the flag from the ball carrier should immediately hold the flag above his head at the spot where capture was made or when the player involved with the ball loses flag.
- F.** First downs shall be attained by advancing from one 20-yard zone in four downs.
- G.** On fourth down only, the offensive team must notify defensive team and officials if they are going to punt. If the ball is to be punted, all players must remain stationary until the ball is punted. Punter must punt the ball at least three yards behind the line of scrimmage and must punt within 25 seconds of the snap. It is a 15-yard penalty to change your mind.
- H.** On all punting plays there can be any number of players on the offensive line; defense must have at least three players on the defensive line. There is **NO RUSH!!!**
- I.** Receiver must have one foot in bounds for reception. (High School Rules.)
- J.** Once a player goes out-of-bounds, he is out of that particular play and not eligible to receive a pass.
- K.** If the ball is in the air and the defensive player pulls the flag too soon, it becomes automatic two-hand touch from the shoulders to the knees.
- L.** No runner may try to run over a defensive player or lower the head. Personal foul.
- M.** No offensive player may dive. **Exception:** Jump pass behind the line of scrimmage is allowed, ball is dead at that spot.

VIII. FOULS AND PENALTIES

- A. Illegal blocking:** It is a foul to leave the feet or to block below the hips in an attempt to block an opponent. Personal foul penalty is the loss of 15 yards.
- B. No downfield blocking:** It shall be a foul for the offensive or defensive team to block downfield. Bump and run only at line of scrimmage and then only one bump. Once the ball is across the line of scrimmage, offensive players must avoid contact. Personal foul penalty – loss of 15 yards.
- C. Tackling:** It shall be a foul to tackle, hold, or rough another player. Personal foul penalty – a loss of 15 yards by the offending player's team. A touchdown or point after touchdown will be awarded if the ball carrier is tackled or held when he is clearly in the open and in the judgment of the officials he otherwise would have scored. Standing blocks are illegal.
- D. No stiff-arming:** It shall be a foul to stiff-arm a defensive player. Personal foul penalty – 15 yards.
- E. No blocking out of bounds:** It shall be a foul for the defensive team to block or push a player out of bounds. No checking receivers beyond the line of scrimmage. Personal foul penalty – loss of 15 yards.

- F. No protecting flag:** It shall be a foul for the runner to brush away an opponent's hand when grasping for the flag. Personal foul penalty – loss of 15 yards.
- G. Personal Fouls:** The foul will be measured from the more severe spot on running plays. If the foul occurs behind the ball, the penalty will be enforced from the spot. On all running plays, fouls by defense will be penalized from where the run ends. On kicks, passes, etc., spot on enforcement will be from previous spot except when foul is by offensive player behind the spot of snap which will be from spot of foul.
- H. Cross Body-block:** It shall be illegal to cross body-block. Loss of 15 yards.
- I.** If offensive player with ball loses belt without other team touching it, the defender must touch the offensive player with both hands to down the ball.
- J.** Defensive man shall not block or hit offensive center until he makes a move to block or go downfield.

IX. LENGTH OF GAME

- A.** The game will be played in four periods, each 12 minutes long, with one minute between quarters and three minutes between halves. The last two minutes of the second half (only) will be timed if the score is within 8 points.
- B.** Game time is forfeit time – **No grace period!**
- C.** A 30-point **Mercy Rule** (game ends) is in effect after the 3rd quarter.
- D.** The 25 second play clock is always in force.

X. TIME OUT

- A.** Each team is entitled to two (2) thirty second time-outs per half.
- B.** The play clock will stop during all time-outs.

XI. PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

- A. Players:** A team shall consist of seven players. A team must have seven players to start and continue playing game or forfeit.
- B. Substitutions:** Unlimited substitutions may be made, except when the ball is in actual play.

XII. PLAYING FIELD

- A.** The official width of the football field shall be 40 yards and the length shall be 80 yards, with 10-yard end zoned on restricted fields.
- B.** Field lines shall be marked every 20 yards.

- C. The in-bounds shall be 15 yards from the sidelines on restricted fields. Iowa High School regulations will apply on other fields.

XIII. TIE GAME ONLY:

- A. Tie Game -In case of a tie game, each team will be given one series of downs in the same direction at the ten (10) yard line. If a tie remains, teams will repeat series until tie is broken.
- B. The referee shall toss a coin in the presence of the two captains. The captain winning the toss shall have the choice of putting the ball in play first or determining the direction of play-off period.
- C. Play for the overtime period shall start one minute after the end of the fourth period.
- D. A series interrupted by a change of possession, intercepted pass, or score will be considered a complete series.
- E. No yardage or score will be awarded the defensive team by a pass interception, the recovery of a fumble, or a kick, and the ball will become dead.
- F. Penalties shall be interpreted according to the regular rules under which the first four periods were played.

XIV. EXTRA POINT

- A. After touchdown; 3 yds = 1 point, 10 yds = 2 points, 20 yds = 3 points.
- B. During any extra point attempt ran back (all the way) by the defense, 2 points will be counted for the defense.

XV. SAFETY

- A. After a safety, the ball is placed on the opposite 20-yard line.

**Revised 09-03-09
GTD/JKP**