



Flag Football Rule Book 2018

Our program is a minimal contact run and pass league that teaches players the fundamentals of flag football. We emphasize teamwork, dedication, and confidence. No game scores or standings will be recorded for the 1st / 2nd grade and 3rd / 4th grade leagues. Scores will be recorded for 5th / 6th and 7th / 8th grade leagues which may lead to playoff implications.

Our Coach/Official team have three over-riding objectives: Be Safe, Be Fair and Teach the Principals of the Game and Sportsmanship.

PenMet uses the *NIRSA (National Intramural Recreational Sports Association) Flag & Touch Rules Book & Officials' Manual* as our base document and modify it as needed for our program.

While our program is a minimal-contact league, contact does occur on occasion. The vast majority is unintentional and insignificant. Players, Coaches and parents must understand that contact is impossible to avoid and usually is a result of bodies moving in space simultaneously. It is the job of each player, Coach, team captains and the Officials to keep contact and collisions to a minimum through self-control, training and officiating. Any significant contact may result in a penalty.

This document uses the pronouns 'he', 'his' and 'him' for readability and is not an act of gender bias, the program seeks and encourages female participants.

PRE-GAME AND EQUIPMENT

- Coaches are encourage to conduct pre-game checks to assist Officials, expedite play and ensuring all players are safe and ready to play: no watches, wrist bands or other hazards described below.
- Officials will conduct a pre-game safety check of the field and player equipment. Players deemed to be a safety risk to themselves or others will not be allowed to participate.
- Every member of a team must wear a flag belt provided by PenMet Parks.
- Flags must worn so there is one on each hip and one in line with the tail bone.
- Each player must ensure they are wearing a differently colored flags set to the pants they are wearing.
- Some type of team jersey is required (minimal: like-colored shirts).
- Shirts must stay tucked while on the field and a flag belt worn on top of the tucked shirt (this is so the shirt does not interfere with Defensive players having access to the flags).
- All players must wear his team jersey as an outer garment. It is not permissible to wear jackets, rain gear, etc., over the team jersey while on the field of play. It is permitted while in the team box area.
- Hard helmets, shoulder pads, thigh pads, or the use of an unyielding hard substance is prohibited.
- Soft-shelled protective helmets may be allowed. These type are typically made of PVC, rubber or foam.
- Soft beanie type hats are allowed. No hard billed hats allowed.
- Shoes must be worn. Cleats must be plastic, nylon or molded rubber. No metal cleats allowed.
- Players will not be allowed to play in games without a mouth guard in their mouth (no exceptions).
- Players must remove all jewelry for safety reasons. If jewelry must be worn for religious reasons we highly recommend the item is padded and taped to the player's body to help avoid injury.

- For safety reasons we suggest that players wear pants or shorts that do not have pockets, belt loops or exposed draw strings.
- We recommend players do not wear hoodies to avoid injuries resulting from pulls (if so, they must be tucked while on the field).
- Players may tape forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pad, shin and knee pads but they must not be made of unyielding substances.
- Exposed metal and hard plaster-type casts are not allowed. Modern soft-cast may be allowed.
- It is permissible for teams to provide their own game ball as long as the opposing Coach approves it.
- Game balls must be made of leather or leather-grained material. Sizes: 7th / 8th grade: *Full Size (11-12" L)*, 5th / 6th grade: *Youth Size (10 - 11" L)* and 3rd / 4th grade: *Junior Size (9.5" – 10.5" L)*
- 1st / 2nd grade level leagues may use a leather, leather-grained or Nerf-styled ball. No other leagues may use Nerf-styled balls.
- Failure to adhere to uniform and equipment rules outlined above may incur a variety of penalties to include warning, penalties, negate of plays or exclusion from the game.

GAME FLOW

- Format for all leagues: Seven vs. Seven (all grade level leagues). No team will be designated 'Home' or 'Away'. The choice of first possession in the first half or first possession the second half will be decided using the traditional game of 'rock, paper, scissors' or a coin toss at the Head Official's discretion.
- Officials are encouraged to use the 'preventative style' of officiating. The preventive style allows Officials to talk to, remind and help players and Coaches avoid violations. Coaches are asked to respect that Officials are trying to assist both teams evenly and have no bias.
- The length of the field of play is the length of a regulation field played sideline-to-sideline plus marked End Zones and 35 yards wide.
- Non-playing team members must remain inside their designated Team Box.
- At the end of a play the Offensive team is responsible for returning the ball to an Official promptly. Players are not allowed to throw or kick the ball back to an Official (*Safety First*). Players must hand the ball back to an Official. Players that throw or kick the ball back may receive a dead ball penalty for Unsportsmanlike Conduct as throwing or kicking the ball back puts other players in danger.
- After the ball becomes dead it will be re-spotted on the nearest hash mark (right side or left side of the field). If the ball becomes dead between the two center hash marks the ball will be placed where the play became dead.
- There are no physical kickoffs or punts in our leagues. To begin the game the ball will be placed at the Offensive team's seven yard line.
- First Down markers: Five different colored markers spaced evenly spaced apart. Teams must pass two colored markers to earn a 1st down.
- Each team will have four downs to advance the ball past the Zone Line-to-Gain (i.e. First Down).

- If a team arrives at Fourth Down prior to earning a 'new set of downs' the Team Coach must decide whether his team would like to 'go for it' or to 'punt'.
- There is no *physical punting* in this league. However, we do have 'simulated punting'. When a Team Coach decides upon a 'punt' versus 'going for it' it means he has chosen to turn the ball over on Fourth Down to the Defense on the Defense's seven yard line (i.e. this simulate a well-kicked punt on Fourth Down and a Touchback. Coaches at any level of league may elect to 'punt' on any down.
- If the Team Coach decides to 'go for it' on Fourth Down and his team fails to achieve the Line-to-Gain the ball will be surrendered to the Defense wherever the ball became dead (as in traditional football).
- This simulated 'punting' is not an option at the 1st / 2nd and 3rd / 4th grade level leagues. Those teams have four downs to achieve a First Down or the Official or will surrender possession to the Defense on the Defenses seven yard line after the completion of the Fourth Down play.
- To determine if a First Down was achieved the Official will mark off any un-administered penalty yards prior to making that determination.
- On live ball fouls, the penalty yardage will be marked off first, then the next Line-to-Gain (first down marker) will be established.
- If a mouth guard violation is discovered against the Offensive after a play, Officials will return the ball to Scrimmage, assess the penalty and repeat the down. Note: This violation would negate a Touchdown even if the Offensive player missing the mouth guard was not integral to the score. (Safety First)
- If a mouth guard violation is discovered against the Defense, the Offense will have the option of taking the result of the play OR the penalty and repeat the down.

COACHES

- 1st / 2nd and 3rd / 4th grade league Coaches may stand in the huddle and on the field to call the plays. Coaches may be on the field for the 5th / 6th and 7th / 8th grade leagues if both coaches agree.
- Coaches who elect to be on the field cannot interfere with a play in any way (examples may include: inadvertent Screening or Blocking, Blocking the lines-of-sight, impeding a player or Official or otherwise becoming entangled in the play). If they do, his team will incur the normal penalty associated with the infraction.
- Each Coach is accountable for the actions of Spectators on their sidelines. After an Official has issued a caution to the Coach, further actions could be taken by the Official or the Onsite Supervisor if the problem is not resolved.

THE CLOCK

- The game has two 20 minute halves.
- Each team has two team time outs per half. Time outs are 30-seconds. After 30-seconds the Official will audibly place the Offense on a 30-second Play Clock.
- Time outs do not roll over from the 1st half.
- The clock will run continuously during the 1st half unless a 'team time out' is used or play is stopped by an Official (normally to deal with an injury, assess a penalty or other administrative issue) and the clock will start again immediately. The clock will run during point after touchdown attempts (PATs) in the 1st half.
- Half time will be three and a half minutes.
- In the 2nd half, the clock will stop as near as possible to the two-minute warning. Officials will use 'stop clock' procedures from the two minute warning through the end of the game.
- PenMet's 'stop clock' procedures requires the clock stops for plays that end out of bounds, incomplete passes, scores, PATs, penalties, first downs and changes of possession. Note: Plays that end in the field of play will not stop the clock (except First Downs) but Coaches may use any unspent timeout to do so.
- As the Official starts the Play Clock the Official will announce 'Ready-to-Play' with a short whistle blast.
- After the Ready-to-Play signal the Offense has a 30-second Play Clock to snap the ball before a Delay-of-Game penalty is assessed.
- Officials will endeavor to, but are not required to, announce "15 to Snap, please" and "10 to Snap, please". Officials will not verbally announce anything after the "10 to snap, please" notice as not to interfere with the QBs commands. It is the responsibility of the Offense to get the play off in time.
- Coaches are asked to help Officials avoid confusion by shouting the word "Clock" versus "Time" when they would like to know how much time is on the Game Clock and use "Time" is signal for a timeout.

SCORING

- Touchdown: Six points and the opportunity to attempt a Point-After-Touchdown (PAT) conversion.
- In the 1st / 2nd and 3rd / 4th grade leagues the PAT line will be the two yard line and must be a pass play.
- PAT Attempt choices for 5th / 6th and 7th / 8th grade level leagues are:
 - 1 point = From the 5 yard line (must be a pass play)
 - 2 points = From the 10 yard line (may be either pass or run play)
 - 3 points = From the 20 yard line (may be either pass or run play)
- Interceptions on any PATs can be returned by the Defense for two points.
- Safeties (two points) occur anytime the ball becomes dead in their (Offense) End Zone. Examples include: fumbles, muffed snaps, player flag is pulled inside the End Zone, ball is snapped or fumbled out of the End Zone, Offensive penalties inside of End Zone (flag guarding, stiff arm, intentional grounding, ball carrier stepping on the back or sideline etc.)
- If any part of the ball carrier's ball is inside the Endzone, (i.e. if a tip of the ball is still on the other side of the imaginary plane of the Endzone) when the ball becomes dead it will be called a Safety.
- Following a safety, the team scored against must turn the ball over at the receiving team's seventeen yard line (*i.e. just short of the receiving team's second colored cone*). This simulates the disadvantage of having to 'free kick' as in traditional football and creates a short First Down opportunity.

DEFENSE

- The player who removes the flag from the ball carrier is encouraged to show good sportsmanship and immediately hold the flag above his head to assist the Officials in locating the spot where the capture occurred. Failing to do so only slows the game and the Defender may be penalized for Delay-of-Game.
- The player who removes the ball carrier's flag is encourage to show good sportsmanship and hand the flag back to the player. Failing to do so only slows the game and the Defender may be penalized for Delay-of-Game for throwing, spiking or obscuring the flag.
- There is no prescribed 'stand-off' distance from Scrimmage for the Defense. However, the Defense may not line up in the neutral zone. Officials will endeavor to, but are not required to, assist Coaches and players by using 'preventive officiating' by announcing things like "back up D". Since there are few definitive markings on our fields, Officials will favor a 'no harm, no foul' approach to Offsides / Encroachments.
- 'Bump-and-run' or 'chucking' type defense coverages are not allowed (Illegal Contact).
- Face Guarding- A Defensive player may not use their arms and hands to obstruct the receiver's view of the ball without turning his own head to play the ball. (i.e. Offensive Pass Interference). *(This often happens when a taller kid tries to dominate a shorter kid's vision without playing the ball).*

DEFENDERS CROSSING SCRIMMAGE

- 1st / 2nd and 3rd / 4th grade league Defensive players are forbidden to cross the Line-of-Scrimmage to rush the quarterback. A 'simulated rush' will provided by the Official's verbal count. The simulated rush count is a verbal five count and the command 'SACK' if the ball is not out of the QB's hands.
- 5th / 6th and 7th / 8th grade leagues will be allowed to cross the Line-of-Scrimmage to rush the Quarterback after an verbal five count and the command 'GO!' is given by an Official (approximately 5 seconds). It is illegal for the Defense to cross the Line-of-Scrimmage before the 'GO!' call is made by an Official.
- Defenders may cross Scrimmage if the QB passes the ball either forward or backward, laterals or hands off prior to the '5' count. The Official will endeavor to, but are not required to, give a 'BALL IS AWAY!' or 'GO!' command (i.e. signal the Defense it is now OK to cross Scrimmage).
- All Defensive players may cross the Line-of-Scrimmage immediately after a handoff, lateral or pass occurs (they do not have to wait for a 'GO!' command, although the Officials will endeavor to, but are not required to, announce it anyway).
- If an Official sees the ball make contact with any other player other than the QB, no matter how slight, the Official will give the 'GO!' command and the Defense is eligible cross the Line-of-Scrimmage (think fake hand off).
- A Defensive player that insignificantly crosses the Line-of-Scrimmage early and immediately self-corrects and returns to his side of the Line-of-Scrimmage might not be penalized (unless the Official deems that the Defensive team benefitted from the early crossing).

DEFENDERS AND FLAG PULLING

- If an Offensive player elects to wear a hand towel or anything else around his waist, it will be considered part of the flag belt and is eligible to be pulled to end the play.
- When the flag is pulled, the position of the BALL shall determine placement of the ball, unless the ball has broken the plane of the goal line resulting in a touchdown.
- If an Offensive player's flag inadvertently falls off or is missing at the snap, they may be downed by a one-hand touch by the Defense. Note: The touch must be BELOW the shoulders and ABOVE the knees.
- Early Flag Pull / Running Plays- The Defense is not allowed to pull the ball carriers flag prior to him having possession of the ball. The ball carrier will be considered 'live' and downed by first touch when an early flag pull occurs. Five-yard live ball penalty added to the end of the run.
- Early Flag Pull / Passing Plays- (Defensive Pass Interference). If the receiver catches the ball after an early flag pull, the receiver is still 'live' and may continue the play until he is down by first touch.
- The Defense may not hold or run 'through' a ball carrier, but must 'play the flag' rather than hold the player.
- Clear Path Rule: If any Defensive player physically blocks or physically impedes a ball carrier from moving down field (example: think bear hugging the ball carrier) even while making an attempt to capture the ball carriers flag the Offensive team will be awarded two colored cone distance from spot of foul and automatic 1st down. This assessment can also result in a TD.
- Bumping-Out on the sidelines is not permitted unless the Defense was making a fair and reasonable attempt to pull the ball carrier's flag.

ROUGHING THE PASSER

- Defensive players are forbidden to 'crash' the QB's throwing arm, shoulder or general body (even if the ball is touched first). Defensive players must make a concerted effort to avoid charging into the passer. An insignificant '*brush-by*' may be allowed, but is not a guaranteed. Teaching point: Avoid the Passer. If a QB initiates contact with a Defender while in the throwing motion a Roughing penalty will not be assessed.

OFFENSE

- The Offensive team may have up to four players in the backfield at the snap (conversely, they must have at least three players on the Line-of-Scrimmage and stationary at the snap. (Illegal Formation). *This rule will not be enforced at the 1st / 2nd grade level leagues.*

Clarification: The 'line' is an imaginary zone running parallel to Scrimmage between the Snapper's hips and the ball prior to the snap (imagine the Snapper bent over to snap the ball through his legs). If any part of another player is in that imaginary zone, i.e. his head is leaning in or a foot is forward and in this imaginary zone, he is 'on the line' for our purposes. Remember, many players use a side-snap versus the traditional through-the-legs type snap. Our Officials will use an estimated space of where

the Snapper's hips would be IF he were using the traditional type snap to determine if the players are 'on the line'. Game Officials will attempt to use 'Preventive Officiation' to assist teams.

- The Snapper may adjust the ball or pick it up to dry off prior to the snap. However, the ball must be snapped off the ground in a one-part, fluid motion. Only the Snapper's hands may occupy the neutral zone.
- After the huddle and the Offensive players initially set, only one player may go in motion per play. A player in motion must move parallel to or away from Line-of-Scrimmage. He may *face* Scrimmage but may not advance toward it or be 'running in place' at the snap (*i.e. simulating the snap*).
- All players are eligible to receive a legal pass and are required to have a minimum of one foot inbounds and possession to be ruled completed pass. Once a player establishes possession they are not required to maintain it through the whistle (i.e. the Calvin Johnson rule in the NFL). Note: Simultaneous catches go to the Offense.
- Backward or lateral fumbles cannot be advanced and the ball will be considered dead when and where they hit the ground.
- In 1st / 2nd and 3rd / 4th grade leagues muffed snaps are dead where it hits the ground.
- In 5th / 6th and 7th / 8th grade leagues muffed snaps **CAN** be put into play but **only by the quarterback**. A snap to the QB at this level league that hits the ground can be played only by the QB and the rush count will carry on as normal. If the ball is snapped over the QB's head or the QB has to significantly turn his body to retrieve the ball from his side or behind him it will be called dead.
- If a lateral or fumbled ball is intercepted prior to it becoming dead, it remains a 'live ball'.
- Forward fumbles that become dead will be marked where the ball carrier's feet where when he lost control, not the spot where it hit the ground.
- No running plays are permitted when Scrimmage is less than five yards of the End Zone (it is a must pass play for safety reasons). Officials will endeavor to, but are not required to, remind Coaches in these situations. (Illegal Advancement)
- Teams will be given a verbal five count by the Official (*1, 2, 3, 4, 5*) (the verbal count takes between 4.5 and 5.5 seconds):
 - o In the 1st / 2nd and 3rd / 4th grade level leagues: If the QB is still holding the ball after the '5' count, the Official will announce 'Sack!' and the ball will be called dead. 'Sack!' will administered as an incomplete pass and being placed at the Line-of-Scrimmage and resulting in a loss of down.
 - o In the 5th / 6th and 7th / 8th grade level leagues: If the QB is still holding the ball after the '5' count, the Official will announce 'GO!' and the Defense is free to cross Scrimmage and attempt to capture the QB's flag.
- If the QB passes, laterals or hands off the ball prior to the '5' count, the Official will give either a 'BALL IS AWAY!' or 'GO!' command.

- The person initially receiving the snap from scrimmage, regardless of position he lined up in cannot run the ball through Scrimmage even if rushed.
- If a QB's flag is captured in the backfield, the ball will be marked where the ball was when the flag was captured (i.e. it will not be returned to Scrimmage).
- The ball must be snapped back to the QB to start play. Sideways or shotgun snap are recommended.
- The ball must be snapped off the ground in a one-part, fluid motion and only the Snapper hands may occupy the neutral zone. The rush count will begin when the snapped ball leaves the ground.
- A receiver is required to have one foot inbounds and possession to be a completed pass.
- The ball carrier will be allowed to spin to elude the Defense but may not significantly leave the ground with both feet (ex: hurdling, jumping, diving etc.) due to safety concerns. General guidance: One foot needs to stay on the ground at all times. The definition of 'significantly' is totally in the eyes of the Officials but they normally will err to the 'safety first' principal.
- A ball carrier running with the ball may not hurdle through or over, dive through or over or jump over another player in order to score or avoid having flags pulled. The ball carrier may 'stretch out' or hold the ball in front of them to advance the ball as long as there is no contact with another player while stretching out.
- The ball carrier may not run 'through' a Defensive player (and visa-versa) and they must an attempt to avoid contact whenever possible. If they fail to attempt to avoid they may incur an USC, Personal Foul or Bull Rush penalty (think 'charging' in basketball).

FLAG GUARDING

- Flag Guarding (including Stiff Arm)- The ball carrier shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove a flag. All flags must be accessible. Stiff arm and flag guards can be incidental and are up to the Official's judgment. We recommend you carry the ball with your hands held high on the body to avoid flag guarding (this is one of the most difficult transitions for traditional football players). Flag guarding shall not be called if there is no Defensive player within reasonable distance to capture the flag.

Examples of Flag Guarding:



Stiff Arming



Pinning the Flag



Swatting

- The Flag Guarding behind Scrimmage: The ball becomes dead at the spot of the foul. If Flag Guarding occurs in the Offense's End Zone it is a Safety.
- Flag Guarding beyond Scrimmage: 5 yard from the spot and a Loss-of-Down.
- Once the ball has crossed the Line-of-Scrimmage, it may not be brought back over and passed. (Illegal Pass, five yard and a loss of down).
- A forward pass that is received behind the Line-of-Scrimmage may not be passed forward again. However, backward passes behind Scrimmage may be passed forward but only one forward pass per play.

Note: It is an Official's discretion whether a pass was backward or forward. To assist teams Officials will endeavor to, but will not be required to, announce his decision during the live play by loudly announcing "back" or "forward".

- Screening / Blocking in the backfield or downfield is not allowed (one of the most difficult transitions for traditional football players).

Clarification: Illegal Screen / Blocking: When an Offensive player either makes contact with a Defensive player that impedes the Defender from getting to the ball carrier **OR** takes a position (less than two normal strides away from a Defender) that the Defender **COULD NOT AVOID** contact with the Offense in pursuit of the ball carriers flag (think pick-play).

- Offensive players must be aware that they might be flagged for Blocking or Screening by simply 'chasing the play' and providing an inadvertent Block or Screen. Best practice is to teach players to stop moving and let the ball carrier do his part.
- Players that clearly indicate their intent not to participate in the play are not normally flagged for Blocking or Screening (this would require the player to stop moving and take a non-aggressive stance ex: hands behind their back).
- Quarterbacks caught between a running back and a rushing Defender will not be considered to be Screening if there is no clear and obvious attempt to be doing so. Offensive players that remain in their initial positions after the Snap or do not leave their initial positions are not usually considered to be Screening.

- Offensive 'pick-plays' (the type often used to give Receivers space) during a receiver's pass route are not allowed. (Illegal Contact, five yards from the Spot or from Previous, whichever is more damaging).
- Between downs, any number of eligible substitutes may replace players, provided the replaced players are off the field before the ball is next snapped.

MISCELLANEOUS

Inadvertent Whistle:

When an Official blows an Inadvertent Whistle he will declare the ball dead where the ball was at the time the Inadvertent Whistle. The team against which the action offended may have the option of accepting the play (i.e., the yards gained) or replaying the down.

If the ball was in the air when the IW occurred it will be returned to Scrimmage and the down will be replayed. The Head Official also has the option of sorting the situation under the Unfair Acts Rule.

Challenge Procedure:

- Generally, The Head Official is happy to answer questions during the game, IF it does not impede the game. His priority is to spot the ball then address questions without impeding the Play Clock.
- If a Coach believes an Official has made a procedural error he may call for a 'time-out'. If the Head Official agrees that there has been a procedural error (ex: wrong down, incorrect penalty yardage etc.) the procedural error will be addressed and the time-out will not be charged.

Note: Only procedural issues may be addressed, not an Official's 'calls' or 'no-calls'. If the team did not possess a legal team time out, a five yard penalty will be assessed.

General Guidance about Contact in Flag Football:

On any given collision or physical contact, the Officials have six options:

- Make 'no call' if they think the contact was accidental or incidental
- Issue cautions to the team captain / Coaches in lieu of assessing penalties
- Penalize the Defense, if they feel the Defender is the aggressor
- Penalize the Offense, if they feel the Offensive player is the aggressor
- Call Off-Setting Penalties (the Officials cannot determine the aggressor)
- Disqualify or Eject a player, if the Officials feels the contact was intentional or egregious

Teaching Point: Normally the player that 'drops his shoulder' first is deemed the aggressor.

Personal Fouls Typically Encountered in Flag Football (Teaching Points):

- If the Defender commits a Personal Foul even while making a legal and fair play for the ball carrier's flag inside the 10-yard line, an automatic touchdown may be awarded and the penalty will be assessed on the PAT or the next possession (offended Coach's choice).

- If a Defender trips a ball carrier while pursuing the Offensive player from the rear and the ball carrier goes to the ground (typically seen in break-away plays), even if the Defender is making a fair and reasonable attempt to capture the ball carrier flag, the Defender will be called for a Personal Foul (15 yards or half the distance to the goal).
- If an Official deems an Illegal Contact, Unsportsmanlike Conduct or Personal Foul is particularly aggressive, purposeful or egregious he may Disqualify or Eject the player.

Disqualification / Ejection / Forfeiture:

- If a player or spectator is Ejected, he must leave the facility immediately. If they fail to comply within a reasonable time and manner the Head Official may decide to forfeit the game. Our fields are scheduled and rented thus they are not public spaces during our scheduled times.
- If a player is Disqualified, he may be allowed to remain at the facility at the Head Official's discretion. The Official's decision will be largely based on the player's demeanor.
- Ejections or Disqualification may occur for but are not limited to:
 - A second Unsportsmanlike and / or Personal Foul on a single player.
 - Any act deemed egregious by the Head Official.
 - Fighting.
 - Disrespectfully addressing or intentionally touching a game Official.
 - Four Unsportsmanlike and / or Personal Fouls by one team (forfeiture).

*** Unsportsmanlike Conduct, Disqualification, Ejections and Forfeiture are the only penalties the opposing team cannot decline. They are totally the prerogative of the Officials.*

Unfair Acts:

- *The Head Official on each field may enforce any penalty, or remedy any situation, with anything he considers equitable (including the award of a first down, a replay, a score, forfeiture etc.) for any situation not specifically covered in these rules.*

Administrative:

- All participants must be registered with PenMet Parks, completed a concussion form and play only for the team they were assigned. Team rosters are limited to twelve players to ensure players get reasonable game-day field time.
- PenMet is continuously interested in people that would like to become Officials and Coaches. No experience required, we will train. Contact us at (253) 530-6635.
- Regardless of *actual* score in the 5th / 6th and 7th / 8th grade leagues, the record will not reflect anything more than a 21 point differential (i.e. teams are capped to winning *by no more than 21* points).
- The Onsite Supervisor and the Head Official have the authority to make rulings on anything regarding this league.

- Most of our high school-aged Officials are 'in training' and we ask your patience and understanding. It is best to take any issues to the adult Officials and avoid debating or pressuring our junior staff.
- Because our fields have very few fixed markings and we have no replay capabilities, on extremely close calls Officials will generally give the benefit of the doubt to the Offense (first downs, sacks, safeties etc.).
- Our adult referees have been with PenMet Parks and other organizations for multiple seasons and have officiated hundreds-and-hundreds of football games between them. Their certificates, training, membership and experience include:



Spectator Code of Conduct: *(Please remind yourselves and others often)*



Your Volunteer Coaches are worthy of your respect and thanks !!

Without them, this does not happen !!

PENALTY ASSESSMENTS:**Loss of Down and Yardage:**

- Illegal Pass (from Scrimmage) 5 yards + LOD
- Illegal Advancement (QB running, hurdling, inside 5 yard line) 5 yards + LOD
- Flag Guarding (spot foul) 5 yards + LOD
- Illegal Screen (spot foul) 5 yards + LOD
- Offensive Pass Interference (from Scrimmage) 5 yards + LOD

5 yards (dead ball fouls):

- Delay of Game (no loss of down after penalty enforcement)
- Offsides / Encroachment / False Start / Snap Infractions
- Failure to Return the Ball to an Official Safely
- Team box violation- 1st Offense (no loss of down after penalty enforcement)

5 yards (live ball fouls):

- Minor Holding (where there was an immediate release and the ball carrier suffered no disadvantage) (Added to the end of the play, down will count)
- Early Flag Pull (Offense can accept yards gained, and down will count or five yards and repeat the down)
Exception is on pass plays, it will be treated as Offensive Pass Interference (10 yards and Auto 1st)
- Illegal Contact (Offense can accept yards gained or five yards and repeat down)
- Early Rush (Offense can accept the yards gained or five yards and repeat the down)
- Ball carrier significantly leaving the ground (ex: hurdling, jumping) (5 yards from the spot)

Fouls Simultaneous to the Snap (i.e. play will not be stopped): potential Loss of 5 yards:

(The play will be allowed to continue so not to deprive the Defense the chance to intercept etc., afterwards the Defense will have a choice to accept a five yard penalty and repeat the down or decline and the Offensive takes the result of the play:

- Illegal Motion
- Illegal Shift
- Illegal Formation (i.e. not enough players on line)
- Encroachment (*if unabated to the QB, stop the play. Otherwise 'free play' for the Offense*)

Loss of 10 yards:

- Major Holding (where there was not an immediate release and the ball carrier suffered a disadvantage)
- Bull Rush (either an Offense or Defense player makes significant contact while making no attempt to avoid contact, think charging in basketball)
- Defensive Pass Interference (plus Automatic First Down) unless DPI occurs in the End Zone (ball placed on the one yard line).
- Roughing the Passer (10 yards and an Automatic First Down)
- Team Box Violation- 2nd Offense

Loss of 15 yards:

Unsportsmanlike Conduct (possible Disqualification or Ejection)

Personal Fouls (possible Disqualification or Ejection)

Ejection (the yardage will be administered after the penalty that got the player ejected)

*** Unsportsmanlike Conduct, Disqualification, Ejection and Forfeitures are the only penalties the opposing team cannot decline. They are totally the prerogative of the Officials.*

