



Intramural Flag Football Rules

1. Eligibility

- a. **ID's:** All participants must have a current Rec Sports membership to be eligible to participate. Players are required to show the Intramural Staff your NMU/Membership ID in order to participate. Community members are eligible to participate but must be 16 years of age, and must purchase a Rec Sports membership.
 - i. *Note:* Participants who are found to be playing without a current membership will have three business days to purchase their membership. Community members/students with less than six (6) credits may purchase their membership through the Recreational Sports office in the PEIF. For students that are taking 6 or more credits, they may add the student recreation fee to their account by emailing the Student Services Center (ssc@nmu.edu). If students do not opt-in for the fee, a \$25 fee will be charged to their student account for participating illegally.
- b. **Varsity Athletes:** Varsity athletes are eligible to play, provided they are not a varsity football player, a current red-shirt, a practice player, or a varsity football letter winner who has not sat out for one full academic year.
- c. **League Rules:** Due to multiple leagues in Flag Football (Only if Men's Class A and B are offered), you can only have two players on a Class A and Class B roster play together. If we identify that more than two people are playing on a team for Class A and Class B Men's Flag Football, one of the teams will be dropped.
 - i. Players are also allowed to play on a Men's team and a CoRec team.
- d. **Playoff Eligibility:** Teams must average a 3.0 sportsmanship rating in order to qualify for the playoffs.
 - i. Players must play in at least one regular season game in order to be eligible to participate in the playoffs.
- e. **Concussion:** Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be removed from the game and will not be able to return to play until

cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional. A copy of approval must be submitted to the Rec Sports Office prior to returning to play.

- f. **Blood Rule:** Any player who starts to bleed will not be able to re-enter the game until the bleeding has stopped. If the player's clothes have blood on them, the player must change clothing in order to re-enter the game.

2. Equipment

- a. Shirts and close-toed shoes are required. It is recommended that shirts are tucked in at all times.
- b. **Cleats are not allowed.** Multi-purpose shoes are recommended. Basketball, tennis, and turf shoes are permitted.
- c. Shorts with pockets may be used, but shorts without pockets are preferred.
- d. Flags, balls, and pinnies will be provided.
 - i. A junior size ball will be used for women/co-rec games.
- e. Billed hats, metal bracelets, necklaces, rings, earrings, or watches are not allowed. Jewelry may be taped in the case that the jewelry cannot be removed.
- f. No padding or protective equipment may be worn; i.e. hip pads, headgear, casts, etc.
- g. Players may wear a face shield molded to the face with no protrusions to protect against a facial injury.
- h. Mouthpieces are not required, but are highly recommended.
- i. Any player who must wear a necessary metal brace must cover all metal parts of the brace before playing.
 - i. *Note:* The head referee reserves the right to allow/disallow any piece of equipment in which they deem unsafe towards the participants.

3. Playing Area

- a. Games will be played at the Superior Dome.

4. General Guidelines

- a. Please arrive 10-15 minutes before your scheduled game to sign in.
- b. Each player must provide their valid NMU ID to the scorekeeper/supervisor and sign in next to their name.
- c. All players must be on the roster. No write in names are allowed.

5. Captains Responsibilities

- a. The captain is responsible for passing rule information on to their team.
- b. All players must be on the official roster on IMLeagues.com.
- c. Late arrivals must sign in before they can play.
- d. Captains are responsible of informing their teammates of the time and location of all scheduled contests.
- e. Captains are held responsible for their team and fan control.
- f. Discussion with officials may only take place between the designated team captain and the officials. These discussions must be made in an appropriate manner.

6. Forfeits

- a. If a team is unable to provide the minimum amount of players allowed (6) at their scheduled game time, they will be given 10 minutes to arrive. When a team is late, the clock will start and the team that was on-time will be awarded 7 points. The on-time team will get an additional 7 points every 5 minutes the opposing team is late until a forfeit occurs. If a team is more than 10 minutes late, a forfeit will be declared and a \$25.00 fee will be charged to the captain's student account. Certain circumstances may apply.
- b. Teams who forfeit twice during the regular season will be dropped from further competition and will be charged a total of \$50.00.
- c. Teams that are unable to attend their scheduled game time must contact the Intramural Sports Manager by emailing Chrsmith@nmu.edu or calling 906-227-1561 at least 48 hours prior to their game time in order to avoid the forfeit fee.

7. Tobacco/Alcohol Policy

- a. Alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and/or drugs are not permitted on or around the playing area. Contests will not be played and will be forfeited if alcohol, tobacco, and/or drugs are present. Any NMU Rec Sports employee reserves the right to remove participants and/or forfeit games if substance abuse occurs.
- b. A player that is removed for substance abuse will be indefinitely suspended, pending a meeting with the Intramural Sports Manager.

8. Protests

- a. All protests must be filed by the team manager at the time the question occurs.
- b. Protests concerning rule interpretations will be settled at the game site by the officials or sport supervisor.
- c. Matters involving the official's judgment will not be subject to protest.
- d. A protest concerning eligibility can be made before, during, or after a contest.
 - i. Eligibility protest:
 1. If an eligibility question is before or during a contest, the player and team manager will be notified and given the choice of whether or not the player will play.
 2. If the player chooses to play and is found ineligible, the contest will be forfeited and that player will be suspended from Intramural Sports participation.
 3. If the player leaves the contest and is found to be ineligible, the contest may be subject to review by the Intramural Sports Manager.
 4. A protest regarding the eligibility of players must be made within 24 hours.
 5. The Intramural Sports Manager will investigate all eligibility questions. Participants found ineligible will be penalized accordingly.

9. Game Play

- a. Teams shall consist of seven (7) players.

- i. Teams can play with a minimum of six (6) players.
- b. **CoRec Rules:**
- i. A team of seven players shall consist of four (4) women and three (3) men.
 - ii. A team may begin with a minimum of six (6). Of these six players, three must be women, and three must be men. Four women and two men is also acceptable.
 - iii. Substitutions shall be permitted on a male for male or female for female basis only.
- c. **Length of game:**
- i. Two (2) twenty (20) minute halves shall constitute a game. Time will be continuous, except when a timeout is called or after a defensive penalty with less than two minutes remaining in a half.
 - ii. After the two (2) minute warning of the 2nd half, the clock will stop for time-outs, incomplete passes, out of bounds, scores, a defensive penalty, and after a change in possession.
 - iii. There will be a five (5) minute halftime.
 - iv. Each team will be permitted two time-outs per half, each lasting 30 seconds.
 - 1. Unused time-outs may not be carried over.
 - v. Once the bags or ball is spotted, the offense will have a 25-second play clock. Up to official's discretion.
 - vi. No overtime will take place in the regular season. Games will end in a tie.
 - vii. In the postseason, if a tie occurs at the end of regulation, each team will get a possession starting on the 20-yard line with four downs to score. Multiple overtimes may be played until an advantage has been given to a team (Similar of college football OT rules).
- d. **Mercy Rule:** If a team is losing by 35 or more when ten (10) minutes or less are remaining in the second half, the game will be called with victory going to the leading team.
- e. **Substitutions:**
- i. Players may leave and re-enter at will as long as the ball is not in play. Players must be completely out of bounds before the ball is snapped.
 - ii. Co-Rec: Substitutions shall be permitted on a male for male or female for female basis only.
- f. **Starting the game:**
- i. Rock, paper, scissors or a coin toss shall be conducted prior to the start of the game. The winner will choose either to begin on offense or defense. The loser will select which side they would like to defend. Teams will flip at halftime.
 - ii. The offense will start on their 20 yard line.

g. **Signing In:**

- i. Players must have their name on the scoresheet in order to play. Players must sign in and provide their ID. IDs will be returned to the team captain once the game has concluded.

h. **Minimum on the line of scrimmage (LOS):**

- i. There must be a minimum of three players on the line of scrimmage at all times for both offense and defense. The three players must be lined up on the LOS, within arms distance of the center/nose tackle.

i. **Scoring:**

- i. Touchdowns – six (6) points
- ii. Three yard extra point – one (1) point
- iii. Five yard extra point – two (2) points
- iv. Safety – two (2) points
- v. **Extra Point Clarification:** Returning an extra point: In the case that the defensive team returns the PAT to the opposing end zone, they will be awarded the points corresponding to the attempted PAT.

j. **First Down/Ball Advancement:**

- i. Four (4) downs shall be allowed in which to advance the ball into the next zone (20 and 40 yard lines on each side of the field). The next zone shall be considered reached when the forward part of the ball, in its position when declared dead on the field, touches or is advanced farther than the first down line.
- ii. The ball must be snapped from between the centers legs. No under-center snaps will be allowed.
- iii. The quarterback must be at least 3 yards from the LOS to receive the snap.
- iv. When catching a pass, one foot must be in bounds for it to be a legal catch.

k. **Deflagging the Ball Carrier:**

- i. A player will be declared down when in the official's judgment a flag belt is removed as a result of the defense's attempt to deflag the ball carrier. The player will also be declared down if any part of their body, excluding the feet and hands, touches the ground or the ball carrier steps out of bounds.
- ii. If the flag belt accidentally falls to the ground, the player will be marked down where the belt fell off, or where they received the ball, at the official's discretion.
- iii. The defender may not grab the ball carrier or impede their progress by grabbing shirts or shorts/pants of the ball carrier prior to deflagging the ball carrier or to assist in deflagging the ball carrier. A 5 yard penalty will be enforced if this occurs.

1. Players cannot strip the ball from the opposing player. A five yard penalty may be assessed.
- iv. When removing the flag belt from the ball carrier, the defender should immediately hold the flag above their head.
- v. Holding, pushing, or knocking the ball carrier down while attempting to remove the flag will result in a 15-yard penalty for unnecessary roughness, and if considered flagrant, the player may be ejected from the game.
- vi. Tackling is prohibited and will result in immediate ejection.
- vii. A player will be considered down where the flag belts are pulled away from the body, not where the deflagging player reaches and pulls from, but where the belt comes off the body.

I. Punts:

- i. Prior to punting, the offense must notify the referee prior to the snap of the ball that they are going to punt.
- ii. All players, except the punter and returner, must line up on the LOS on their respective sides.
- iii. No players are allowed to cross the line of scrimmage until the ball has been punted. A five yard penalty will be assessed if a team crosses the line before the ball is put into play.
- iv. A punt may take place at any time during the game as long as it is announced.
- v. If punt crosses the receiving team's goal line, it will result in an automatic touchback. A punt in the end zone cannot be returned.
- vi. If the punt returner calls for a fair catch, at that time, all players must stay at least 5 yards away from the returner.
- vii. If the ball hits the ground at any time during the punt, that is where the ball will be placed. The ball will be "dead".

m. Blocking:

- i. An offensive screen/block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have their hands and arms at their side or being their back when screen blocking.
- ii. Any use of hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to imitate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal.
- iii. Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. Defensive players cannot use their arms/hands to get around a player.
- iv. A player who screens shall not:
 1. Take a position closer than a normal step when behind a stationary opponent.
 2. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that their opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction (downfield blocking).

n. Blitzing:

- i. There will be a 3 apple count before players are allowed to go inside after the snap.
 - 1. A member of the defense must count 3 apple out loud. The officials must hear the defense count out loud.
- ii. Only the three players on the defensive line can blitz the QB.
- iii. The defensive line can blitz outside of the offensive line whenever they want, but must wait the “3 apples” prior to blitzing inside.
- iv. If an offensive line player goes out to receive a pass, no 3 apple count is required to blitz up the middle.
- v. Players may jump up to deflect the quarterback’s pass with no penalty, however, if they come in contact with the quarterback during a throw, they will be assessed a roughing the passer penalty.

o. Fumbles:

- i. If the offense fumbles into their end zone, a safety will be awarded to the defense. If the offense fumbles into its opponent’s end zone, a touchback will be called and the defensive team will take over possession at the 20.
- ii. The ball is dead when it hits the ground on a center snapping, incomplete pass, punt, or fumble.

10. Penalties:

- a. Line = Line of Scrimmage.
- b. Spot = Spot of the foul.
- c. End = From the end of the play.
 - i. **Five Yard Penalties:**
 - 1. (Line) Delay of game.
 - 2. (Line) Encroachment.
 - 3. (Line) False Start.
 - 4. (Spot) Forward lateral.
 - 5. (Line) Offense – Less than 3 players on the LOS.
 - 6. (Line) Defense – Less than 3 players on the LOS.
 - 7. (Spot) Aiding the runner.
 - 8. (Line) Crossing the LOS prior to the punt being put into play.
 - 9. (Line) Too many players on the field.
 - 10. (Line) Illegal motion.
 - 11. (Line) Illegal forward pass + loss of down.
 - 12. (Line) Illegal blitz.
 - 13. (Spot) Flag guarding.
 - 14. (Spot) Diving or hurdling with the ball.
 - 15. (Line) Holding.
 - 16. (End) Holding the ball carrier in order to deflag.

ii. **15 Yard Penalties**

1. (Line) Pass Interference on offense or defense. No such thing as an uncatchable ball.
 - a. Offensive – loss of down.
 - b. Defensive – automatic first down.
2. (Spot) Illegal block (screen blocking) + loss of down.
3. (Spot) Fair catch interference.
4. (Spot) Contact with person making the fair catch.
5. (Spot) Striking head or neck. Includes ejection.
6. (Line) Clipping.
7. (Line) Tripping.
8. (End) Diving in an attempt to deflag.
9. (End) Pushing or knocking ball carrier out of bounds.
10. (End) Tackling. Includes ejection.
11. (Spot) Ball carrier deliberately “trucking” into a defensive player.
12. (Line) Unsportsmanlike conduct. Two unsportsmanlike conducts will result in an immediate ejection.
13. (End) Roughing the passer
14. (Line) Unnecessary roughness.

The NMU Recreational Sports Office reserves the right to modify and/or remove any of these guidelines or rules for the improvement of the sport. All participants are expected to comply with these rules and policies that are stated within this publication.