



# TEXAS AMATEUR ATHLETIC FEDERATION

## *ADULT 5/5 Flag Football*

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The following rules and regulations apply to all sports and all participants must meet these requirements. Unless a rule specifically names an exception for one of the divisions (member city, independent, affiliate, etc.), the following Sports General Regulations pertain to all teams and participants. See the specific sports sections for any special regulations that may exist.

**ARTICLE 1      RETURNING TEAMS**

1.1 All T.A.A.F. team champions (except youth basketball) shall be eligible to return to state tournament as defending champions provided they have not been reclassified and have the following minimum returning players:

SOFTBALL SLOW PITCH	10 PLAYERS
SOFTBALL FAST PITCH	9 PLAYERS
FLAG FOOTBALL	6 PLAYERS
BASKETBALL	4 PLAYERS
VOLLEYBALL	4 PLAYERS

**ARTICLE 10      FLAG FOOTBALL 5/5**

**RULE 1: THE GAME, FIELD, PLAYERS, & EQUIPMENT**

Section 1 – The Game

- Games consist of two 14 minute halves. Halftime will consist of 1 minute. Teams will flip sides at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half.
- A coin toss determines first possession. The team who wins the toss can elect to have offense, defense, or choice of goal to defend. There are NO DEFERMENTS. Loser of the coin toss can choose one of the remaining options. The team that started the 1<sup>st</sup> half on offense will begin the 2<sup>nd</sup> half on defense.
- The game clock will continuously run except for injuries or time-outs. The clock will stop in the last minute of the game for all dead ball situations (out of bounds, incomplete pass, a scoring play, etc.).
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has 3 plays to cross mid-field. Once a team crosses mid-field they have 3 plays to score.
- If the offensive team fails to cross mid-field or score, the ball changes possession and the opposite team starts their possession from their 5-yard line.
- All possession changes start on the offenses 5-yard line except on Interceptions. Interceptions may be returned and the ball will be marked where the play ends.
- Each time the ball is spotted a team has 25 seconds to snap the ball. Officials will warn the offense when there are 10 seconds to snap the ball. Teams must wait until the referee is set or a referee acknowledges they are prepared to start the play.
- No contact allowed.
- Blocking/Screening is allowed behind the line of scrimmage but it is NOT allowed at any time down the field.
- Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 28 points or more at any time during the game then it will be deemed over.

Section 2 – Fields

- The field dimensions will be 25 x 64 yards (two – 7 yard end zones).

Section 3 – Attire

- Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections will take place before every game by the officials.
- Shirts must be tucked in shorts, pants, etc.
- All shorts, pants, etc. must not have any pockets of any kind.
- No headgear with an extended bill may be worn (ex: caps, visors, etc.).
- Flags – The “Sonic” belts will be the only flags allowed. Flags must be a minimum of 12 inches in length and 1.5 inches in width and must be a different color than the player’s shorts, pants, etc.

#### Section 4 – Rosters

- Official Rosters must be approved by a T.A.A.F. representative and turned into the tournament director 48 hours prior to a team’s first game.
- Team rosters are not to exceed 10 players in tournament play.

### RULE 2: PLAYERS/GAME SCHEDULES, SCORING, & TIME OUTS

#### Section 1 – Players/Game Schedules

- Teams must field a minimum of 4 players at all times.
- If a team or teams are not “ready for play” at the scheduled game time the game will be forfeited.
- T.A.A.F. reserves the right to reduce, shorten, or reschedule games due to inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances.
- All players must carry I.D. for proof of age and identity.

#### Section 2 – Scoring

- Any touchdown scored is worth 6 points.
- Any safety scored by a defensive team is worth 2 points.
- Any extra point scored from the 5-yard line is worth 1 point.
- Any extra point scored from the 12-yard line is worth 2 points.

#### Section 3 – Time-Outs

- Each team has 1 time-out per game. This time-out will last 60 seconds once the clock is stopped.
- Officials can stop the clock at their own discretion at any time.

### RULE 3: RUSHING THE QB, CENTER SNAP, RUNNING, PASSING, & RECEIVING

#### Section 1 – Rushing the Quarterback

- All players that rush the passer must be a minimum of 7 yards and 1 yard over from the center position (either side) from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the QB.
- Players that are not 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped may not enter the backfield until there has been a change of possession.
- The rusher is allowed a direct line to the quarterback as long as they rush from either side of the center or a bunch formation. The offense must avoid interfering with the rusher if they have established a lane.
- A special marker, or the referee, will designate 7 yards from the line of scrimmage.

#### Section 2 – Center Snap

- A center snap may touch the ground before it gets to the quarterback and remain playable if the quarterback fields it cleanly off the bounce (one or more) from the ground. However, if the quarterback muffs the ball to the ground or the ball goes past the quarterback it is dead where the ball touches the ground.
- All center snaps must be made between the center’s legs. A false movement of the football by the center after they are set shall constitute an illegal snap. At all times the ball shall be snapped from the spot marked by the official ball marker.

#### Section 3 – Running

- The quarterback may not run unless the ball has been thrown back, handed, or pitched to the quarterback in the backfield.
- Teams may handoff, pitch, or throw back the football in the backfield.

- The player who receives the pitch or handoff may throw the ball as long as they are not beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Multiple handoffs are allowed behind the line of scrimmage but only one pitch or throwback is allowed before a forward pass.
- Pitching (backward) is allowed downfield.
- “No running zones” are located 5 yards before mid-field and 5 yards before the end zone in each offensive direction. You may not run the ball in these no run zones, only forward passes. “No running zones” are designed to avoid short yardage power running situations.
- Spinning is allowed but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player.
- Players may screen block behind the line of scrimmage but are not allowed to block down field.
- The ball is spotted where the ball carriers belt is when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is. Ball and flags must break the plane for a 1<sup>st</sup> down and touchdown.

#### Section 4 – Passing

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage. A forward pass/lateral is defined as a live ball thrown towards the opponent’s goal line.
- Shovel passes are allowed, but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback has 5 seconds to pass the ball if there is no rush (“pass clock”). If the pass is not thrown within the 5 seconds, the play is dead, it will be a loss of down, and the ball returns to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off or pitched the “pass clock” rule is no longer in effect.
- Interceptions may be returned. Interceptions during extra point attempts may be returned for 2 points. Interceptions that occur in the end zone will be brought out to the 5-yard line.
- The rusher may not hit the quarterback’s arm or knock the ball out of the quarterback’s hand. The rusher must play the flags.

#### Section 5 – Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive a pass, including the quarterback, if the ball has been pitched back or handed off behind the line of scrimmage.
- Only one player is allowed to be in motion at the same time.
- Players must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.
- Players that run out of bounds during a play cannot be the first player to touch a ball when attempting to make a catch.
- A pass may not be intentionally tipped in any direction to another teammate.

### RULE 4: DEAD BALLS, OVERTIME, & SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING

#### Section 1 – Dead Balls

- Play is ruled “DEAD” when:
  - Offensive player’s flag is pulled.
  - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - Touchdown is scored.
  - Ball carrier’s knee or ball hits the ground.
  - Incomplete Pass.
  - If an offensive player loses a flag unintentionally, the defense only has to touch the ball carrier to be deemed a dead ball.
  - Players may not start a play without a flag.
- There are no fumbles. Ball is spotted where it hits the ground. Anytime the ball touches the ground it is deemed dead. Exceptions:
  - Any ball dropped in a forward motion will be brought back to last point of contact.
  - Quarterback may field the ball off of a bounce cleanly.

#### Section 2 – Overtime

- If the score is tied at the end of regulation, teams move directly into overtime.
- Teams will follow the same coin toss procedure as they did at the beginning of the game to determine possession.
- Each team receives the ball at the 5-yard line with one possession. If a team scores they can choose to go for a 1-point or 2-point extra point attempt. This will continue until a winner is declared.
- Interceptions will end the series.

#### Section 3 – Sportsmanship/Roughing

- If the field monitor or officials witness any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player can be ejected from the game. The tournament director may decide to eject players for the remainder of the tournament. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
- Trash talking is illegal. The officials have the right to determine language that is offensive (Trash talk is that which may be offensive to an official, opposing team, or spectators). The officials can eject players from the game for trash talking.

### RULE 5: OFFENSIVE & DEFENSIVE PENALTIES AND PROTESTS

#### Section 1 – Offensive Penalties

- Pre-Snap Penalties:
  - Illegal Snap: 5 yards, repeat the down
  - Illegal Motion: 5 yards, repeat the down
  - False Start: 5 yards, repeat the down
  - Delay of Game: 5 yards, repeat the down
  - Illegal Equipment Violation: 5 yards, repeat the down (player not starting with a flag)
- Impeding the Rusher: 5 yards, loss of down (player must avoid the rusher)
- Flag Guarding: 5 yards from the spot, loss of down (players must keep hands above their waist)
- Charging: 5 yards (LOS), loss of down (the offensive player must avoid the defender who is set)
- Blocking/Screening Downfield: 5 yards (LOS), loss of down
- Pass Interference: 5 yards (LOS), loss of down (illegal pick, pushing off defender)
- Illegal Forward Pass: 5 yards (LOS), loss of down
- Intentional Grounding: 5 yards (LOS), loss of down

#### Section 2 – Defensive Penalties

- Off-sides: 5 yards, repeat the down.
- Delay of Game: 5 yards, repeat the down.
- Illegal Flag Pull: 5 yards (LOS), automatic first down.
- Illegal Contact: 5 yards, automatic first down.
- Holding: 5 yards from the end of the play, automatic first down.
- Pass Interference: Spot foul, automatic first down.
- Roughing the Quarterback (Minor): 5 yards, automatic first down.
- Roughing the Quarterback (Major): 15 yards, automatic first down.

#### Section 3 – Protests

All protests will be resolved immediately. Only managers may protest. Judgment calls by officials may not be protested. Upon protest, a manager shall remit a \$50 protest fee. If the protest is upheld, the \$50 shall be immediately refunded. If the protest is denied, the deposit shall be forfeited. The tournament director and their designees, in consultation with the officials of that game shall resolve the protest.

# T.A.A.F. Manual of Procedures

## ARTICLE 2 GENERAL PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

No player shall be eligible to play in any T.A.A.F. sport unless the player meets all of the following rules:

- 2.1 Must be an amateur in said sport and shall receive no pay to play for any team. An amateur is defined as “one who engages in sport for pleasure and for the physical, mental or social benefits, which he or she derives from that sport and to whom the sport is nothing more than an avocation.”
- 2.2 Any player who has played professional sports shall be ineligible to participate in that sport for one (1) year after his last day as a member of a professional team. This rule shall not conflict with the AABC rules in baseball.

Note: The protesting individual(s) bear the entire burden of proof regarding a player’s participation as a member of a professional team. The T.A.A.F. state commissioner has the final authority to accept or reject the protesting individual(s) proof.

- 2.3 Meets all team qualifications in MOP Article 4.
- 2.4 Does not play under an assumed name.
- 2.5 In order to compete in any T.A.A.F. play, a foreign player must reside in the state of Texas continuously for a minimum period of one (1) year prior to being eligible to play.

Exception: Men’s and women’s fast pitch foreign softball players’ eligibility will be determined by the national governing body of softball. To be eligible to participate in T.A.A.F. softball, a copy of any document required to be on file by the NGB for softball must also be filed with the T.A.A.F. state office. The same filing deadline applies for the NGB and T.A.A.F.

- 2.6 An adult player may play on more than one team within a region, but must choose one team as his/her own prior to T.A.A.F. championship play.
  - .01 No player may be on more than one roster, in a T.A.A.F. division, during T.A.A.F. championship play (region and state tournaments).
  - .02 A player must be on the sports roster by the deadline state in the participant guide.
- 2.7 A player forced to transfer from one region to another by his employer may participate in the new region providing the player has been employed by the firm for at least one (1) full year prior to the transfer and the player remains employed by the same firm.
- 2.8 Individual sport participants must reside in the state of Texas.
- 2.9 The team or individual attempting to qualify for state competition must attempt to qualify through the regional qualifier of the region in which they are registered. No participant in an individual sport or a team in team sports may attempt to qualify through more than one city, region or affiliate. Should any team or individual be discovered in violation of this rule, he/she/they shall be disqualified from that sport for that year.
- 2.10 Any region competition must take place within the established boundaries of the assigned region. If it becomes necessary to host a region competition outside of the designated boundary, prior written consent is required by the region in which the event is being held.
- 2.11 Player identification:

- .01 A player must be prepared, at all times, to provide proof of identification. A driver's license or comparable identification, which includes a current photograph and signature, is acceptable.
  - .02 A player must be prepared, at all times, to provide proof of age when participating in T.A.A.F. sports categorized by age classifications or divisions. A driver's license or copy of a birth certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics is acceptable.
  - .03 A player failing to provide appropriate proof of age or identifications, when requested by a meet director, tournament director or state commissioner, may be declared ineligible and the team/player subject to disqualification.
- 2.12 All teams must wear like colored, non-duplicated numbered jerseys for regional and state tournaments.
- 2.13 All participants in adult team sports must have attained the age of sixteen (16) prior to the registration date for teams in that sport, unless specific sport regulations provide otherwise.
- 2.14 Age determination for youth sports

Sport	Age Determining Date
Basketball (Boy's & Girl's Winter)	September 1 of current school year
Basketball (Boy's & Girl's Summer)	September 1 of current calendar year
Boxing	Based on age as of the Games of Texas
Cheerleading	September 1 of current year
Flag Football – youth	September 1 of current year
Golf – youth	September 1 of current year
Gymnastics	January 1 of the year of competition
Inline Hockey	September 1 of current year
Kickball – Youth	September 1 of the current school year
Softball – Youth	December 31 of current year
Swimming – Summer	June 1 of current year
Swimming – Winter	Age as of the Winter Games of Texas swim meet
Tennis	Age as of Games of Texas dates
Track and Field	Based on year the athlete was born
Volleyball – Youth	September 1 of current school year

**ARTICLE 4 TEAM SPORT REQUIREMENTS**

4.1 Team Sports

.01 Deadline for T.A.A.F. Registration:

Sport	Deadline
Basketball - Adult	One Business Day after the State Tournament Entry Deadline
Basketball - Winter - Youth/High School	January 15
Flag Football - 8 on 8	November 1
Flag Football - 4 on 4	March 1
Flag Football - Youth	November 1
Hockey - In-line	Register at State Tournament
Kickball	Register at State Tournament
Soccer	Register at State Tournament
Softball - Spring/Summer - Adult/Youth	June 1

Softball - Fall	Register at State Tournament
Volleyball - Adult	Register at State Tournament
Volleyball - Sand	Register at State Tournament
Volleyball - Youth	April 15

4.2 Team Fees:

- .01 Member Cities and Affiliate Members will pay the following registration fees to T.A.A.F.:
- All Sport Fee: \$15 per team if all teams within that given sport are registered. (Example: Youth Basketball, Adult Flag Football.)
  - Unattached Sports Team Fee: \$25 per team if not all teams within a given sport are registered, those teams are considered unattached and will not be eligible for the lowest level of play in that sport if multiple levels of play are offered.

\*Region registration fees may be added to the state team registration fees up to \$2.00 per team

.02 REGION MEMBERSHIP FEES:

- a. Regions that charge a fee in excess of the state fee may not exceed that fee by more than \$2.00 / team.
- b. Regional membership fees may not exceed \$25.00
- c. Any fee proposal exceeding the above limits must be approved by the executive board.
- d. Any region charging a regional fee must provide the T.A.A.F. State Office proof that they have a federal tax identification number by January 2nd of the current year.
- e. Regional fee schedule must be submitted to the T.A.A.F. State Office seven (7) days prior to the January 2005 board meeting and at the annual meeting in 2006 and thereafter.

.03 Insurance may be purchased for an additional fee. Contact the T.A.A.F. state office for fees and enrollment information.

.04 A late fee of five dollars (\$5.00) per team may be charged to any registration after the deadline date.

4.3 Unattached Teams (adult and youth sports only):

The fee for an unattached team are fifty (\$50) per year. This fee allows the unattached team to participate in the highest division of adult and youth team sports

.01 Teams playing in a T.A.A.F. league cannot register as an unattached team.

4.4 Registration Requirements

.01 Member Cities/Affiliate Members/Unattached Teams must furnish the following to the T.A.A.F. State Office by the registration deadline date:

- f. One (1) copy of the league registration form, including division codes
- g. One (1) copy of the team registration form
- h. All registration fees

.02 Team registrations must be certified by the city where they compete, if a Member City. Affiliate Member will mail their registrations directly to the T.A.A.F. State Office.

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#### 4.5 Team Roster Requirements

- .01 To advance in T.A.A.F. championship play, each team will be required to submit a complete team roster as follows:
- a. It must be written or typed on an approved T.A.A.F. team roster form. Exception: Softball rosters may be submitted on the official roster from the national organizations whose rules are governing the state tournament (i.e. ASA, USSSA)
  - b. Each individual listed on the roster must sign it in ink.
- .02 Member Cities and Affiliate Members are required to submit team rosters for those teams advancing to championship play.
- .03 It is recommended that all youth teams advancing to a state tournament have a minimum of one (1) T.A.A.F. approved national certified coach, to be listed on the team roster.

#### 4.6 Returning Teams

- .01 All T.A.A.F. team champions (except youth basketball) shall be eligible to return to the state tournament as defending champions, provided they have not been reclassified and have the following minimum returning players:

SOFTBALL SLOW PITCH	10 PLAYERS
SOFTBALL FAST PITCH	9 PLAYERS
FLAG FOOTBALL	6 PLAYERS
BASKETBALL	4 PLAYERS
VOLLEYBALL	4 PLAYERS

#### 4.7 Region/State Tournament Participation

- 01 Sport Penalty
- a. Gymnastics only: Failure to register a gymnast with T.A.A.F. prior to competition will result in a fine of \$100 assessed to the gym for each unregistered gymnast
  - b. Gymnastics only: Failure to have a gymnast ranked by the January 1 deadline will result in a late fee of \$25.
- .02 In order to be eligible to compete for state honors, each team must have:
- a. Registered with T.A.A.F. by the deadline date.
  - b. Fulfilled all roster requirements as specified by the Member City, or, if an Affiliate or Unattached Team, by the Regional Director.
- .03 To enter a regional tournament, the local T.A.A.F. Member City representative must certify the roster. The roster must be submitted to the regional tournament director (adult men's basketball and flag football only) prior to the deadline established by the region.
- .04 To enter a state tournament, the regional director must certify the roster, including if from another organization (i.e. ASA, USSSA). Note: this is NOT the regional tournament director. The roster must be submitted to the state tournament director prior to the state deadline.
- a. Affiliate and Unattached teams need to check with the T.A.A.F. state office for their requirements.

- .05 Each Member City will have the right to advance any team that has registered with T.A.A.F. in all team sports except the following sports/classifications:
- a. Men's 8 on 8 Flag Football
  - b. Youth Flag Football
  - c. Winter Youth Basketball
- .06 The state tournament director may or may not limit the number of teams that are accepted in the state tournament. The state tournament director must accept a minimum of 20 teams in each division of youth and adult basketball and youth or adult volleyball. The state tournament director must accept a minimum of 32 teams in each division of adult or youth flag football and adult or youth softball.
- a. In the Men's and Youth Flag Football State Tournaments and Girls Fast Pitch Softball Tournaments each Member City member will have the right to advance one (1) T.A.A.F. registered team to participate in the T.A.A.F. State Championship Tournament. The state tournament host city will have the authority to accept additional teams, if team registrations for the state tournament from the "automatic berths" do not fill the tournament.
  - b. The teams in the Winter Youth State Basketball Tournament must qualify through regional tournament. The Winter Boys and Girls State Basketball Commissioners will set the number of teams that qualify for the Winter Youth State Basketball Tournament. The State Commissioners and State Tournament Directors will determine the total number of teams accepted in the Boys and Girls Winter State Basketball Tournaments.
- .07 In a regional or state T.A.A.F. tournament, any team that fails to show up may be suspended from T.A.A.F. play for one year unless the team notifies their regional director and the state tournament director of their intent to be a no show. This notification must be made prior to the start of the tournament. This rule applies to every participant; all team members and all coaches, on the official team roster.