



City of Scottsdale Parks and Recreation Division Adult Sports Flag Football League Rules

Team Managers are responsible for informing all team members of the contents of this manual. The League Coordinator reserves the right to make adjustments or rule changes for league continuity.

LEAGUE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ROSTERS

Player Eligibility

- All players must be 18 years or older.
- All players must complete the roster enrollment process before beginning participation.
- Players may only play for one team per league/bracket.
- Use of an illegal player will result in forfeiture of the game.

Roster Requirements

- Flag Football rosters must have between 8 and 15 enrollments.
 - Teams that fail to have a minimum of 8 players complete the roster enrollment process by the end of the regular season will not be scheduled for playoffs.
- Rosters will be frozen after the last regular season game. No roster changes will be allowed for playoffs.
 - Team Managers will be unable to add or remove players.
 - Players will be unable to complete the roster enrollment process.
- Intentionally falsifying roster information will result in a team being dropped from the league.

ROSTER CHALLENGE

Procedures

- Teams can request a roster challenge through the end of the first half of play.
- The Team Manager must request a roster challenge with the Site Supervisor.
- The game clock will not be stopped for a roster challenge.
- Challenged players will have 5 minutes to produce a photo ID. If the photo ID is not presented by the end of 5 minutes, the player will be declared illegal.
- Use of an illegal player will result in forfeiture of the game.
- Adult Sports staff or game officials can challenge a player's eligibility at any time.

Regular Season

- The Site Supervisor can check a player's photo ID to verify he/she is at least 18 years old.
- Team rosters are not available on-site during the regular season.
- To verify a player's eligibility, the challenging Team Manager must email a written roster challenge to adultsports@scottsdaleaz.gov no later than the close of the next business day. The challenged player's full name and team must be included.
- The League Coordinator will review the roster challenge and contact the Team Managers once a decision has been reached. The League Coordinator has the final decision over all player eligibility.

Playoffs

- Team rosters will be available on-site during playoffs.
- The Site Supervisor will check both a player's ID and the team's roster to verify the challenged player's eligibility.

FORFEITS

- Teams will be allowed a five-minute grace period at the beginning of the game if their team is unable to field the required number of players.
- If after five minutes a team still does not have the required number of players to play, the game will be declared a forfeit.
- No player may be picked-up to avoid a forfeit.
- Two or more forfeits may drop a team from the league without a refund and may prevent them from registering for future leagues.
- If you know in advance that you have forfeit, please call the Adult Sports Office at 480-312-0227 so the opposing team, staff, and officials can be notified.

PROTESTS

- All protests must be made at the time of the infraction, prior to the next start of play.
- The Team Manager must notify the official and the Site Supervisor, who will resolve the issue on site.
- Protests may only be made for rule interpretations; an official's judgement call will not be considered.
- If an issue is not settled on site, the Team Manager must submit a written protest to the Adult Sports Office no later than the close of the next business day. *Protest Forms* are available from the Site Supervisor.
- The League Coordinator will review the protest and contact the Team Manager once a decision has been reached. The League Coordinator has the final decision over all league issues.

OFFICIAL SCORE

The scoresheet that comes to the Adult Sports Office is the official score unless it can be proven otherwise. Each team is responsible for ensuring the final score recorded on the scoresheet is correct.

CITY OF SCOTTSDALE PARTICIPANT BEHAVIOR POLICY

Any form of discrimination, abuse, and/or unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Any violation of federal or state law, or city ordinance.
- Deliberate or reckless disruption of any park activities or programs.
- Failure or refusing to obey park ordinance or park rules as directed by city staff or sign.
- Threatening or intimidating others through verbal abuse, profanity, obscene gestures, or other means
- Intentionally or recklessly damaging or defacing any park property or equipment, or personal property of others
- Fighting or other assaultive behavior.

SCOTTSDALE ADULT SPORTS BEHAVIOR POLICY

Scottsdale Adult Sports seeks to promote and maintain a fun, safe, and family-friendly environment. As a result, all players, coaches, spectators, staff, and officials are expected to act in a respectful and courteous manner towards one another. This policy extends to anyone at an Adult Sports playing site either before, during, or after a game.

Team Manager's Responsibilities

While each individual is responsible for his/her own actions, Team Managers will also be held responsible for the conduct of their team members, coaches, and spectators. Team Managers are expected to assist the Adult Sports Staff and game officials to maintain a positive playing environment. To aid in this, only the Team Manager (or Acting Team Manager) is permitted to confer with game officials and Adult Sports Staff.

Prohibited Behavior

The following actions are grounds for ejection, game forfeiture, and/or suspension:

- Inappropriate behavior
- Obscene language or gestures
- Verbal abuse
- Physical assault
- Verbal threats
- Threatening behavior
- Other violations of the City of Scottsdale Participant Behavior Policy

Unsportsmanlike Behavior

The following actions are grounds for ejection, game forfeiture, and/or suspension:

- Two (2) unsportsmanlike conduct penalties received by a single player will result in that player's ejection from the game.
- Three (3) unsportsmanlike conduct penalties received by any combination of team members will result in game forfeiture.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

- Players or coaches found using or noticeably under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be ejected from the game and playing site.
- Attempts to hide the identity of individual(s) using alcohol and/or drugs will result in the ejection of the Team Manager and forfeiture of the game.

EJECTIONS, GAME FORFEITURES, AND SUSPENSIONS

The Adult Sports Staff and game officials have the authority to eject any individual from the playing site and/or forfeit a game in response to violations of Adult Sports policies. The League Coordinator will review each case and issue a warning or probation or levy additional suspensions against individuals and/or teams as deemed appropriate based on the severity of the violation(s) or if violation of Adult Sports policies is repeated. Suspensions may vary from one game to an indefinite ban from any Scottsdale Adult Sports Programs. Please be advised that engaging in physical assault, fighting and/or threatening violence can result in criminal prosecution.

Procedures

- Ejected individuals must leave the playing site (including playing area, facility/park, and parking lot) within 5 minutes.
 - If an ejected individual remains at the playing site after 5 minutes, the game will be forfeited, and the individual's suspension will be extended.
 - In the cases where the environment becomes hostile or the ejected individual refuses to leave, the Adult Sports Staff may call Scottsdale Police to assist in trespassing the individual from the playing site. Refusing to leave the premises is considered trespassing.
- Ejected individuals will automatically be suspended for a minimum of two games (the game they were ejected from, and the following scheduled game).
- Ejected individuals are not allowed to participate in any Scottsdale Adult Sports program while serving a suspension.

Suspensions

For any suspension beyond the automatic two-game ejection, the City Parks and Recreation Manager will send a letter notifying the Team Manager and Co-Manager in the case of a team suspension and the Team Manager and the suspended individual of the suspension. This letter will include details of the incident(s) leading to the suspension, the length of time of the suspension, the consequences of violating the suspension, and the process for requesting reconsideration. For an individual suspension, this letter will be sent to the suspended individual by certified mail, return receipt requested and a copy will be sent by email or regular mail to the suspended individual and Team Manager. For a team suspension, this letter will be sent to the Team Manager by certified mail, return receipt requested, and a copy will be sent by email or regular mail to the Team Manager and Co-Manager.

Request for Reconsideration of Suspension

An individual who has been suspended, or a Team Manager whose team has been suspended, from the Scottsdale Adult Sports Program beyond the automatic two-game ejection may, within 20 days of the date of the suspension letter, submit a written request for reconsideration with any applicable supporting documentation to the Parks and Recreation Director. The Parks and Recreation Director will review the request, any supporting documentation, and the facts and circumstances relating to the suspension and determine to uphold, modify, or overturn the suspension. The Parks and Recreation Director shall provide the individual or Team Manager, as applicable, with a written notice of the determination within five City business days after receipt of the individual's timely written request for reconsideration. The Parks and Recreation Director's determination regarding the request for reconsideration shall be final and shall constitute an exhaustion of the individual's or team's administrative remedies. Additionally, any administrative decision to uphold, modify or overturn a suspension, shall have no bearing on whether an individual is prosecuted or investigated for assault, fighting or other criminal conduct.

The request for reconsideration process does not apply and is not available to individuals who have been arrested for violating a suspension or trespass warning.

AMPLIFIED MUSIC

Loud music is not permitted while playing in any City of Scottsdale League. Any music that interferes with or disrupts the game, as determined by the officials or site supervisor, must be turned down upon request. All music must be family friendly and have clean language.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Injuries

- A player who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has excessive amounts of blood on his/her uniform shall be directed to leave the game.
- Players should be in good physical condition to participate in this league. The City of Scottsdale does not carry insurance for league participants. Players participate at their own risk.
- Site Supervisors will provide basic first aid supplies upon request to treat injuries received while participating in an Adult Sports league game.

Jewelry

- Exposed jewelry including, but not limited to, wristwatches, bracelets, earrings, neck chains, rings, and pins may not be worn during the game.
- Other items judged dangerous by the officials or Site Supervisor may not be worn during the game.
- Medical bracelets or necklaces and religious medals are not considered jewelry but must be taped to the body to avoid exposure.
- Players must remove jewelry or be removed from the game.

Non-Players

- For safety and liability purposes, any non-playing person (other than coaches and scorekeepers) must be at least five yards from the playing field.
- Pets and any children under 18 years of age must be supervised by non-playing adults.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If you have questions about inclement weather impacting your game, please call (480) 312-0227 or visit: <http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/sports/flag-football>

Generally, games are not cancelled unless the playing area becomes unsafe due to wet conditions, lightning, high winds, or poor visibility. To play as many games as possible, the Adult Sports Office will not cancel games based on forecasted conditions but will wait until a particular playing site is impacted.

If games have been cancelled due to inclement weather, the Adult Sports Office will post a notice on the sport website and send communication to the Team Manager. All efforts will be made to reschedule games. However, if cancelled games are unable to be rescheduled, teams will receive a partial refund at the end of the season. Team Managers will be notified of all schedule updates, including rescheduled games.

FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **DIMENSIONS:** The field shall be a rectangular area, 40 x 80 yards, with ten-yard end zones and divided into four playing zones of 20 yards each.
2. **THE BALL:** Adult Sports will provide footballs for league play. Teams may choose to use their own footballs.
 - a. If teams use their own football, both teams must agree on each ball used. Teams are responsible for getting their own football in and out of play.

3. UNIFORMS/EQUIPMENT:

- a. Shirts of the same color must be tucked in and may not interfere with a player's flags.
- b. Pants/shorts with pockets or belt loops are not allowed.
- c. Players may NOT wear jewelry.
- d. No metal, detachable, or long cleats may be worn.
- e. Bare feet and street shoes are not permissible.
- f. Players are encouraged to wear a mouthpiece for protection.
- g. Each player on the field will wear a flag belt on his waistline with three flags attached. Adult Sports will provide the belts.
- h. No player shall wear helmets, padded uniforms, sole leather, or other hard or unyielding substance no matter how covered or padded. No pads may be worn except for elbow or kneepads of a soft and pliable substance.
- i. No hats/caps may be worn.
- j. Sunglasses, if worn, must be made of pliable material, and worn at the player's own risk.

4. **GAME SUPERVISION:** Two to three officials will be provided for each game. A Site Supervisor will be on hand to assist with monitoring the games and distributing information to players and spectators. The Site Supervisor has final decision in player ejection from field.

5. **BALL RESPONSIBILITY:** The offensive team is responsible for retrieving the ball after each play from scrimmage. Teams must take the ball back to their huddle and should not give it to the officials or place it on the field.

GAME FORMAT

1. NUMBER OF PLAYERS:

- a. **(7-on-7)** Teams will consist of seven players for both offense and defense. 5 players are required to avoid a forfeit.
- b. **(8-on-8)** Teams will consist of eight players for both offense and defense. 6 players are required to avoid a forfeit.

2. **SUBSTITUTION:** There will be no limit to the number of substitutions a team can make, providing each substitute remains in the game for at least one play and the substitution does not delay the game.

3. **GAME LENGTH:** Each game will consist of two 20-minute halves. The 2nd half will utilize a two-minute stop clock. During regular game time, the clock will only stop for timeouts and injuries. **For the last 2 minutes of the 2nd half, the clock will only stop for the following: penalties, out of bounds, timeouts and incomplete plays (see Rule 10 for Mercy exception).** The clock does not stop on first downs, muffed snaps, or completed plays.

4. **OFFICIAL GAME:** In the event of a disruption, one complete half of play will constitute an official game.

5. **STARTING THE GAME:** A coin flip will determine choice of offense, defense, or direction of play. The ball will be placed at the 14-yard line to begin play at the start of each half.

6. **TIMEOUTS:** Each team will start the game with 4 timeouts. Only 3 timeouts will carry over into the 2nd half for each team. Teams will only get the use of 1 timeout for each overtime period.

7. **TIME LIMIT FOR PLAYS:** There will be a time limit of twenty-five seconds between plays, from the time the ball is declared ready for play by the referee.
8. **SCORING:** After scoring, the ball will be placed at the 14-yard line.

Touchdown	6 points
P.A.T (from 3-yard line)	1 point
P.A.T (from 10-yard line)	2 points
P.A.T (from 20-yard line)	3 points
P.A.T (from 40-yard line)	5 points
Safety	2 points
Interception returned for a TD on a P.A.T.	Point(s) attempted

9. **TIE GAMES:** If a tie exists at the end of regulation, a coin flip will determine which team chooses the options (offense/defense, direction of play). The home team captain will call the flip. Both teams play in the same direction and the ball will be placed at the 10-yard line. With alternating possessions, each team has four downs to score a touchdown. **Extra points will be attempted in overtime.** If the first team scores, the second team will also have four downs to duplicate or surpass that score. Teams will alternate possessions until one team emerges the winner, or until **sudden death (see sudden death play)**. If either defense intercepts the ball and returns it for a touchdown, their team wins the game. If they are unable to return the interception for a touchdown and the game is still tied, the ball will be placed at the 10-yard line to begin the next series of four downs.
10. **SUDDEN DEATH** (*Used if teams remain tied after 2 series of overtimes*) The team scoring in the fewest number of downs from the 10-yard line will win the game. If each team scores on the same down, the game will end in a tie. For tournament games, (that have exhausted the overtime procedure) games will be played using the sudden death procedure until a winner is determined.
11. **MERCY RULE:** Any time during the second half, once a team is behind by 24 or more points, that team has the option to end the game or play the allotted time. If the team chooses to play the allotted time, they will have the next possession to attempt to score to keep the game going. If the team fails to score, the game is over. Once the 24-point differential has been reached in the 2nd half, there will be no stop clock utilized for the last 2 minutes of the 2nd half regardless of the score.

STANDINGS AND TOURNAMENT SEEDING

Below is the list of tiebreakers that will be used to determine league standings and seeding for tournament brackets.

1	Winning Percentage
2	Head-to-Head
3	Head-to-Head Differentials
4	Common Opponents
5	Total Points Differential
6	Lowest Number of Forfeits

When creating tournament brackets, the League Coordinator reserves the right to move teams up or down a division to promote more balanced tournament play.

PLAYING RULES

1. **P.A.T.** “Point after touchdown” attempts will not be counted as a play.
2. **PLAY AFTER SAFETY/ TOUCHBACK:** After a safety is scored, the ball belongs to the defending team at its own 14-yard line. Following a touchback, the receiving or defending team begins play at its own 14-yard line.
3. **FLAGGING/TACKLING:**
 - a. A “tackle” occurs when an opponent pulls a ball carrier’s flag (the clip must break free of the belt). The ball shall be declared down at the spot of the ball.
 - b. Anytime a player carrying the ball has inadvertently lost his flags, he may continue to advance the ball until he is touched below the head (by one hand), or until the official blows his whistle.
 - c. A ball carrier shall not be allowed to interfere with the defensive team’s attempt to “tackle” the runner. However, the ball carrier is allowed to spin when running.
 - d. When any part of the ball carrier, other than the hands and feet, touches the ground, the ball is dead at the spot.
 - e. Pulling a flag from a player without the ball is prohibited and constitutes unsportsmanlike conduct and may result in player ejection from the game.
4. **OFFENSIVE SCREEN BLOCKING (7-on-7):** The offensive screen block, **the only legal blocking technique**, shall take place **without** contact. The screen blocker shall have his hands and arms at his side or behind his back. Any use of the arms, elbows, or legs, to initiate contact during an offensive player’s screen block is illegal. A player may use his hand or arm to break a fall or to retain his balance. A player must be on his feet before, during, and after a screen block.
5. **BLOCKING-CHECKING-RUSHING (8-on-8):** **Push blocking only**-arms fully extended forward and hands open to defensive player. Blocking is allowed to the portion of the defender’s body between the shoulders and waist. The blocker’s arms and hands may be no wider than shoulder width. Blockers cannot leave their feet to block, nor can they block from the back.
6. **PASSING:**
 - a. The offensive team is allowed one forward pass per down from anywhere behind the line of scrimmage. The quarterback/passer may cross the line of scrimmage, then cross back to throw a forward pass. There is no limit to the amount of lateral and /or backward passes made during a down.
 - b. A receiver must have one foot in bounds for a completed pass.
 - c. The passer may cross the line of scrimmage, throw a backwards pass to an offensive receiver behind the line of scrimmage, and that player can throw a forward pass from behind the line of scrimmage.
7. **DEFENSIVE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE:**
 - a. The defense may play either man-to-man or zone defensive coverage.
 - b. **(7-on-7)** Use of hands or arms by the defense is illegal. Defensive players must go around the offensive player’s screen block. A player may not use his arms or hands as a wedge to contact the opponent. A blocker may use his hands to break a fall or retain his balance.
 - c. **(7-on-7)** During a scrimmage kick, at least four defensive players must be within one yard of their line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked.

- d. **(8-on-8)** During a scrimmage kick, at least five defensive players must be within one yard of their line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked.

8. **OFFENSIVE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE:**

- a. The offense must be set a full second before the ball is snapped.
- b. Any foot movement by an offensive player (except a legal man in motion) after being set and before the snap is illegal procedure.
- c. **(7-on-7)** The quarterback must be two or more yards behind the center, and receive an airborne snap.
- d. **(8-on-8)** The quarterback can take a direct snap. The center must snap the ball between his legs.
- e. Only one offensive player may be in motion at one time. He must run parallel to the line of scrimmage and may not run toward the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped.
- f. All offensive players must be within 15 yards of the ball when it is declared ready for play.
- g. All players are eligible to receive a forward pass.
- h. At least four offensive players shall be on the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball.
- i. **(7-on-7)** During a scrimmage kick, at least four offensive players must be within one yard of their line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked.
- j. **(8-on-8)** During a scrimmage kick, at least five offensive players must be within one yard of their line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked.
- k. Offensive teams have a 25 second huddle clock that begins on the whistle after the placement of the pucks or the lead official has reported the down.

9. **FUMBLES:** Any ball that is fumbled or muffed and touches the ground will be called dead immediately.

- a. **(8-on-8) EXCEPTION:** Center snap cleanly fielded by the quarterback.

10. **DEAD BALL:** The ball is dead when:

- a. It goes out of bounds
- b. An opponent legally flags the ball carrier
- c. A touchdown or safety occurs
- d. A fumbled ball touches the ground. Clock stops inside 2 min./2nd half
- e. **(7-on-7)** The snap from center touches the ground before being fielded by a player
- f. **(8-on-8)** The snap from center lands behind the quarterback or is not cleanly fielded by the quarterback.
- g. A pass falls incomplete
- h. The referee rules the ball "not in play"
- i. Any part of the ball carrier, other than his hands or feet, touches the ground. **(THE BALL IS CONSIDERED AN EXTENSION OF THE HAND)**

SUMMARY OF PENALTIES

1. **LOSS OF DOWN:**

- a. Illegally handling the ball forward (also loss of five yards)
- b. Illegal forward pass by possession team (also loss of five yards)
- c. Offensive pass interference (also loss of ten yards)
- d. Illegally secured belt on touchdown (also loss of ten yards)
 - i. *Official's judgment on player ejection*

2. LOSS OF FIVE YARDS:

- a. Illegal delay of game/exceeding 25-second play limit
- b. Putting the ball in play before declared ready
- c. Illegal snap
- d. Infraction of scrimmage formation
- e. Offensive player illegally in motion of the snap
- f. False start
- g. Illegal kick
- h. Illegal shift
- i. Infraction of kick formation
- j. Helping the runner

3. LOSS OF TEN YARDS:

- a. Team not ready to play at start of half.
- b. Striking, kicking, kneeling, elbowing, etc.
- c. Persons illegally on the field.
- d. Hurdling.
- e. Tripping.
- f. Running into opponent.
- g. Clipping.
- h. Illegal use of the hands or arms by the offense or defense.
- i. Flag guarding/ stiff-arming.-Spot Foul
- j. Illegal removal of flag.
- k. Obstructing ball carrier.
- l. Interference with opportunity to catch a punt.
- m. Stripping of ball or batting the ball from the player in control.
- n. **(7-on-7)** Defensive use of hands

4. AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN:

- a. Defensive pass interference + 10 yards
- b. Roughing the quarterback + 10 yards
- c. Unsportsmanlike behavior/language + 15 yards

Definitions for all rule interpretations can be found in the N.I.R.S.A. rules manual