

Harrisburg Parks & Recreation
Adult Coed Flag Football
Rules & Regulations

I. LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

1. The league shall be administered by Harrisburg Parks & Recreation. The Department reserves the right to make any changes or decisions that they deem necessary for the betterment of league play.
2. The Harrisburg Parks & Recreation Department shall be the chief supervising body of all teams under the Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Adult Flag Football Program and reserves the right to suspend any team member or captain whose conduct is considered as detrimental to the best interest of Harrisburg Adult Flag Football. The department will also be responsible for ruling on all matters not herein stated in the rules and regulations.

The Parks and Recreation Staff shall have the following additional responsibilities:

- 1) To review all matters concerning complaints, suggestions, violations, and subject concerns of stated program Rules and Regulations.
 - 2) To resolve all matters concerning the interpretation of the accepted playing rules.
 - 3) To render decisions and rulings on all league matters.
3. The purpose of the Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Athletic Program is to provide the citizens of Harrisburg the opportunity to play organized sports. The leagues will encourage sportsmanship, and good conduct among participants, and it will develop such rules and regulations that will be for the general good of the leagues. At all times the health and welfare of each individual will be taken into consideration. It should be clear that participation in Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Athletic Programs is a privilege and NOT an inherent right of an individual. Those who persist in exhibiting a negative attitude toward the program shall be asked to refrain from participating or attending any league activities particularly after they have been counseled and given extended opportunities to change their conduct. This type of action distracts from the positive aspects of the program and the department has an obligation to protect the interests of those who participate within the League's Rules & Regulations.

II. TEAM COMPOSITION

1. Team rosters may not exceed 15 players.
2. All players must be 17 years or older by October 15, of the current year. All players that are 17 must have a waiver signed by their parent/guardian on file at the Parks and Recreation office each season.

3. Team/Roster: All players must be listed on the official Team Roster which must be on file with Harrisburg Parks & Recreation at least 24 hours prior to the first game or when established by the department.
4. Any changes made to the rosters must be submitted to the Assistant Parks and Recreation Manager prior to the third game. All rosters will be final by the third game and no additional changes may be made after this time. Any updated roster may be mailed, faxed or emailed in. **Players may only appear on one roster in the same division.**
5. If the legality of a player is questioned, the Game Official may request to see a player's picture ID during any game of the season. If the player does not have a picture ID on their person they can finish the game but must come to the Harrisburg Parks & Recreation Department before the end of the next business day and present their identification to the Assistant Parks and Recreation Manager. Business days are Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm (excluding holidays). If the player does not present their ID within the allotted time he/she will be considered an illegal player and will be, along with the team captain suspended from participating in the adult flag football program for one calendar year and any games in which the player participated in will be considered forfeits.
 - a. A non-rostered illegal player is a player that is found playing for a team and their name is not listed on that team's official roster or if a female is not listed on any team's official roster.
 - b. A rostered illegal player is a player who is a female that is found playing for another team and does not meet the specifications listed in rule #11 under Team Composition.
6. The person listed as the Team Captain on the roster will be considered the team contact person. The Team Captain must make certain that all team members receive all information distributed by Harrisburg Parks & Recreation Department and are aware of league rules.
7. The Team Captain is the spokesman for the team during all games.
8. It is the responsibility of the Team Captain to call Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Inclement Weather Line, 704-455-2903 or visit the website www.HarrisburgNC.org to determine the status of games in case of inclement weather.
9. The only two personnel permitted on the sidelines during games are: players, the team captain and two (2) assistant captains. All sidelines should be cleaned by the team that occupied them at the end of the game.
10. Teams may field a minimum of 5 players and a maximum of 7 players with at least 3 of these players being female to avoid a forfeit. At least 3 females must be on the official team roster.

11. Females that are currently participating in the league may fill in for a missing female on another team with the opposing team captain's approval. All females playing in the league must be on one (1) team's official roster. Below are the only circumstances where a team may pick up additional female players:
 - a. If the team playing only has 2 rostered female present they make pick up 1 rostered female from other teams.
 - b. If the team playing only has 1 rostered female present they make pick up 2 rostered females from another team.

III. PLAYING RULES

1. Games will consist of two (2) 20 minute halves with a 5 minute half time. Playing field shall be a regulation size full length football field.
2. A coin toss determines first possession. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at the 10-yard line.
3. There are four downs to advance the ball to the next zone line. Zone lines are 20, 40, 40 and 20 yard lines.
4. A team has 25 seconds to put the ball in play after it is signaled ready for play by the referee.
5. Each team will have two (2) 30 second time outs per half.
6. Two Minute Warning: The Referee shall stop the clock and inform both teams of the time remaining. The clock starts on the snap. The official will announce to the teams the remaining time and status of the clock after every play in the last minute.
7. During the final two minutes, the clock will stop for:
 - A. Incomplete legal or illegal forward pass
 - B. Out of bounds
 - C. Safety
 - D. Time-out
 - E. First Down Dependent on previous play
 - F. Touchdown
 - G. Penalty

IV. OVERTIME

1. If the score is tied at the end of the regulation game, teams move directly into overtime.

2. All overtime periods will be played towards the same goal line. A coin toss shall be administered to determine the options. If additional overtime periods are played, captains will alternate option choices.
3. Each team will have a series of downs to score a touchdown beginning from the 10 yard line. Intercepted passes may be returned. If the ball is not returned for a touchdown, the ball will be placed at the 10-yard line and play will begin as stated above.
4. The goal line shall always be the line-to-gain.

V. SCORING

1. **Touchdown:**
 - a. 6 points (male to male)
 - b. 9 points (male to female, female to male or female to female)
2. **Extra Point:**
 - a. 1 point (played from 5-yard line) or
 - b. 2 points (played from 10-yard line) or
 - c. 3 points (played from 20-yard line)

**A team is given one choice on an extra point attempt,
which cannot be changed even if a penalty should occur.**

** If a double foul occurs during the down, the down shall be replayed.**

The defensive team may return a conversion attempt for 3 points.

3. **Safety:** 2 points
4. **Mercy Rule:** If a team is 19 or more points ahead when the referee announces the 2 minute warning for the second half, or any time after that, the game is over.

VI. RUNNING

1. The player who takes the handoff or lateral can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball has been handed off or lateraled, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
3. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).

4. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
5. A male runner cannot advance the ball through the line of scrimmage.
6. There are no restrictions concerning runs by a female.
7. Once the line of scrimmage has been legally penetrated, all advancement restrictions are eliminated (i.e., a female runner may advance beyond the line and then pitch to a male who is still behind the line and he may advance with no restriction.)
8. Male QB cannot advance ball beyond the line of scrimmage on closed play, even if rushed.
9. After a change of team possession, any male runner may advance the ball without restriction, as in an interception or punt return.

VII. RECEIVING

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or lateraled behind the line of scrimmage).
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

VII. PASSING

1. All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass. Backward passes are unlimited.
2. Only one forward pass may be thrown per scrimmage down, but NOT on punts, or interceptions.
3. The following passes are illegal – when either of the passer's feet is beyond the line of scrimmage when the ball leaves the hand, the ball is intentionally grounded, the passer catches their own untouched pass, when there is more than one forward pass during a scrimmage down, if a forward pass is thrown after a change in team possession.
4. A player may pass the ball backward at any time. NOTE: Backward passes that hit the ground in play are dead at the spot. Backward passes that go out of bounds belong to the offense unless the ball goes out of bounds behind a goal line and then the play will result in a touchback or safety.

5. The pass begins when the ball is released from the passer's hand. The ball is dead if the passer is de-flagged before the release.
6. The initial direction of a pass determines whether a pass is forward or backward.
7. If a forward or backward pass is caught simultaneously by opposing players, the ball becomes dead, is considered a completed pass, and belongs to the offensive team.
8. Interceptions in a team's own end zone may be advanced out or downed for a touchback.
9. Momentum Rule: When a player intercepts a forward pass or catches a legal kick between his/her 5 yard line and the goal line, and his/her momentum carries him/her into the end zone and become dead, the ball is placed at the spot where possession was gained.

IX. HAND-OFFS

1. Any player may hand the ball backward at any time.
2. If the ball is tossed or there is airtime between the ball and the catch, then passing rules will apply.
3. There are no restrictions on handling the ball during punt returns or following changes in possession.

X. DEAD BALLS

1. The ball must be snapped between the legs or off to one side, to start play.
2. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
3. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - A. Ball carrier's flag is pulled
 - B. Ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - C. Touchdown or safety is scored
 - D. After an interception has been ruled dead
 - E. Ball carrier's knee hits the ground
 - F. Ball carrier's flag falls off

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

XI. LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

1. All players are subject to motion, position, and illegal procedure rules.
2. The offense must have at least 4 players not in motion on their scrimmage line at the snap.
3. The offense must bring all players within 15 yards of the ball at some point after the ready for play whistle and prior to the snap.
4. One player may be in motion, but not forward motion, at the snap.
5. Following a huddle or shift, each offensive player must come to a full stop for one second before the snap.
6. Rushers must be at least SEVEN yards off of the line of scrimmage.

XII. OPEN vs CLOSED PLAYS

1. Each drive will begin with the play being open. During the offensive team's possession there may **not** be two (2) consecutive legal forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. This rule applies to the Try. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass completion **MUST** involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yards. (i.e. All plays are OPEN until a forward pass is completed from a male QB to a male receiver. After a male-to-male completion, the next play shall be CLOSED, and will remain closed until positive yards are gained on a passing play that involves either a female QB or a female receiver). All closed play violations shall be penalized as illegal forward passes. There are no other restrictions concerning a male passer completing legal forward passes to a female receiver, or female to female, or female to male. Any foul, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next legal forward pass completing is "open" or "closed." If a female ball carrier rushes the ball for positive yardage on a CLOSED play, there is no penalty, but the play shall remain closed.

XIII. PUNTING

- 1 On fourth down, a team may punt, however they must inform the official.

2. There are no fake punts.
3. If the offense wants to change their decision to punt or not, they must call a time-out.
4. After receiving the snap, the kicker must kick immediately and in a continuous motion. The kicker may not kick the ball to him or herself or any other member of the kicking team. Defensive players may jump in an attempt to block the kick.
5. If a punt touches a player on either team and then hits the ground it is dead and belongs to the receiving team. If a punt hits a receiving player, and is then caught in the air by another receiving team player, it can be advanced. If a punt hits a receiving player, and is caught in the air by a kicking team player, it belongs to the kicking team at that spot.
6. If a punted ball goes out of bounds any time before being touched, or comes to rest between the goal lines it shall belong to the receiving team at that spot.
7. There are no fair catches. The kicking team may not interfere with the receiving team's ability to catch the ball. If the kicking team touches the ball first, the receiving team can take the ball at that spot or the result of the play.

XIV. BLOCKING

1. An offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back. Any use of the arms, elbows, or legs to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his/her hand or arm to break a fall or to retain balance.
2. A player who screens shall not:
 - a. When behind a stationary opponent, take position closer than a normal step from the opponent;
 - b. When he/she assumes a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent, make contact with him/her;
 - c. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that this opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. This position will vary and may be one or two normal steps or strides from opponent;
 - d. After assuming his/her legal screening position, move to maintain it, unless he/she moves in the same direction and path of his/her opponent.

**If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results,
he/she has committed a personal foul.**

3. Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere for him/her by screen blocking but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner.

4. Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. A blocker may use his/her arms or hands to break a fall or retain his/her balance

XV. PERSONAL FOULS

1. Players may not commit any of the following personal fouls:
 - A. Punch, strike, strip, steal or attempt to steal the ball from a player in possession.
 - B. Trip, clip or hurdle any player.
 - C. Contact an opponent who is on the ground, or after the ball is declared dead.
 - D. Throw the runner to the ground.
 - E. Deliberately drive or run into a defensive player or lower the shoulder.
 - F. Commit any unnecessary roughness.
 - G. Tackle a runner by grasping or encircling with the hands or arms.
 - H. Roughing the Passer (automatic first down) - applies only to the player throwing a legal forward pass behind the offensive line of scrimmage. If a defender contacts the passer in any fashion, whether or not he/she touches the pass, it is roughing the passer. Contacting the ball while in the passer's hand is roughing the passer.
 - I. Aid the runner, grab, push or pull a teammate with the ball.
 - J. Stiff arm an opponent.
 - K. Guard flags by blocking them with the hands, ball or otherwise denying the defense the chance to pull.
 - L. Use hands or body to block an opponent.
 - M. Pulling the flag from an opponent who does not have the ball.
 - N. Tying the flag belt in a knot or any other tampering with the flag belt. (also results in player ejection)

XVI. SUMMARY OF FOULS & PENALTIES

1. **Loss of 5 Yards**
 - A. Delay of game
 - B. Off sides
 - C. Encroachment
 - D. False start
 - E. Illegal shift or motion
 - F. Illegal procedure
 - G. Failure to wear required equipment or required equipment worn illegally
 - H. Helping the runner
2. **Loss of 10 Yards**
 - A. Personal foul
 - B. Flag guarding
 - C. Impeding the runner or holding

- D. Illegal participation
 - E. Unsportsmanlike conduct
 - F. Forward pass interference – Defense (also automatic first down)
 - G. Roughing the passer (also automatic first down from line of scrimmage)
3. **Loss of Down**
- A. Illegal forward pass (also loss of 5 yards)
 - B. Forward pass interference – Offense (also loss of 10 yards from the previous spot)
 - C. Intentional grounding (also loss of 5 yards)
 - D. Illegally secured flag belt (also loss of 10 yards from the previous spot, player ejection)
4. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
5. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

XVII. CONDUCT

1. No team captain or player shall belittle or berate the players or team captains of another team. This type of action will **NOT** be tolerated.

FIRST OFFENSE: Warning.

SECOND OFFENSE: Ejection from game of offending person.

2. Harassment of officials and field supervisors will not be tolerated. Questions should be asked by the **TEAM CAPTAIN ONLY** about rule interpretations only. Judgment calls are not to be argued. Failure to comply with this rule will result in immediate ejection of the guilty party and possible forfeiture of the game. **NO WARNINGS WILL BE GIVEN!**
3. Team Captains are accountable for the behavior of their assistants, players and related supporters. Game officials may penalize the team captains for unsportsmanlike conduct.
4. **PENALTY:** Any team captain or player ejected from a game will be suspended for a minimum of 1 game up to a maximum of the remainder of the season. Any team captain or player ejected for a second time during the season will be expelled from the league. When a player is ejected for un-sportsman like conduct that team will play a player short for the rest of the game.
5. Any player ejected from a game must schedule a meeting with a member of the Parks and Recreation Staff prior to playing in their next game. Failure to meet with a staff member will result in expulsion from the league for the remainder of the season.

XVII. OFFICIALS

1. Officials shall be certified and authorized by Harrisburg Parks & Recreation. The referee will have authority over the game and his/her decisions over points scored, rules, etc. shall be final. Please respect their rights and work with them to ensure a well-played game. There will be no less than two officials for any game.
2. Officials shall:
 - a. Make all decisions for infringement of the rules committed within or outside the boundary lines from the beginning of the game to the end.
 - b. Act as timekeeper and allow the full or agreed time, adding any time lost through injury or other causes at their discretion.
 - c. Will send off the field of play any player/team captain who is guilty of violent conduct, serious foul play, the use of abusive language, or is guilty of a second caution offense.

XIX. PROTESTS

1. There will be no protests.

XX. UNIFORM

1. Each team must wear matching jerseys. Matching is defined by same color shirt and same color ink for lettering and numbers. No made up shirts using taped numbers will be allowed.
2. Each team must have matching jerseys by the first game. All players must keep shirts (including sweatshirts) tucked in at all times. A jersey shall in no way interfere with the flags.
3. Players must wear and provide themselves with jerseys, shorts/pants with no pockets and appropriate athletic shoes. No metal cleats or spikes may be worn.
4. Flags shall be provided to each team and must be worn by all players on the fields at all times. Flag belts must be worn on the outside of all clothing with the clip/buckle in front. Two flags are to hang down vertically along the side seam of the trousers. The flags will be fasted to the belt in such a manner as not to be twisted under or fastened to the inside of the belt.

5. No jewelry is allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, earrings, wedding rings or bands, other rings, mouth, facial, and body piercings, necklaces, bracelets, rubber bands, metal barrettes, etc. Taping of jewelry is not allowed. Exception: medical alert jewelry, which must be taped down.
6. The referee shall not permit any player to wear equipment in his or her judgment, which is dangerous or confusing to other players. This includes, but not limited to, items such as:
 - a. A guard, cast or brace made of hard and unyielding leather, plaster, pliable (*soft*) plastic, metal or any other hard substance even though covered with soft padding when worn on the elbow, hand, finger, wrist or forearm.
 - b. Head decorations, head wear and jewelry. EXCEPTION: Head bands no wider than 2 inches and made of nonabrasive unadorned single colored cloth, fiber, soft leather or rubber may be worn. Rubber (elastic) bands may be used to control hair.
 - c. Equipment which is unnatural and designed to increase a player's height or reach or to gain an advantage.
7. Items not covered are enforced at the official's discretion.

XXI. EQUIPMENT

1. Game Ball – Any regulation High School or Junior size Football is allowed for Coed play. Each team may provide their own football or may agree to use the same ball. The offensive team is responsible for retrieving the ball after play. Each team is responsible for getting their own game ball in and out of play following changes of possession.

XXII. FORFEITURE

1. Teams must field a minimum of 5 players with at least 3 of these players being female to avoid a forfeit.

XXIII. CANCELLATIONS / INCLEMENT WEATHER

1. For the most up to date information on cancellations, call the Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Inclement Weather Line at 704-455-2903 or visit www.HarrisburgNC.org. Any game that is stopped at halftime or beyond will be counted as a complete game. Games that have not reached halftime will be continued from that point on their makeup date.

2. Any games that must be re-scheduled will be done so by the Harrisburg Parks & Recreation Department.