

FLAG FOOTBALL

OFFICIAL RULEBOOK

2026

As of August 26, 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL PROVISIONS 1
- ROSTERS AND ELIGIBILITY 1
- COACHES 1
- FIELD DIMENSIONS AND EQUIPMENT 1
- TEAM FORMATION 2
- NO COMMUNICATION DEVICES 2
- DRONE USE PROHIBITED 2

SPORTSMANSHIP AND CONDUCT 3
- PLAYER CONDUCT 3
- OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE 3
- COACH AND SPECTATOR CONDUCT 3
- FIELD SAFETY 3
- PARTICIPATION RULE 3
- COACH AND PARENT PARTICIPATION 4
- SIDELINE ASSIGNMENTS 4
- PLAYOFF SEEDINGS 4

GENERAL GAME PROVISIONS 5
- START OF GAME 5
- POSSESSION AND CHANGE OF POSSESSION 5
- NO-RUN ZONE 5
- GAME CLOCK 5
- DELAY OF GAME 5
- TIMEOUTS 6
- INJURY STOPPAGE 6
- OVERTIME 6

GAME PLAY 7
- BALL SPOT 7
- LIVE AND DEAD BALL 7
- INADVERTENT WHISTLE 7
- PRE-SNAP DEFENSE 7

OFFENSIVE PLAYS....7
SCORING....8
SAFETY....8
MERCY RULE....8
OFFENSE....9
OFFENSIVE FORMATION....9
MOTION....9
RUNNING....9
PASSING....11
DEFENSE....12
BLITZER AND RUSHER....12
FLAG PULLING....13
OFFICIALS AND PENALTIES....14
OFFICIALS....14
GENERAL PENALTY PROVISIONS....14
OFFENSIVE PENALTIES....14
DEFENSIVE PENALTIES....15
SUMMARY FRESHMAN DIVISION PROVISIONS....17

GENERAL PROVISIONS

ROSTERS AND ELIGIBILITY

All teams must have a minimum of 10 players and preferred roster size is 11-12 players. SFL may add players to any team up to a maximum of 12 players. All participants must be registered as a team member and have guardian signed league waiver forms. All rosters will be frozen before the first game of the season begins.

The SFL generally categorizes players according to grade level. In order to promote fairness, the League reserves the right to recategorize a player according to his or her date of birth if it is determined that categorizing by grade provides an unfair advantage for such player or team. Under no circumstances will a player be allowed to "play down" a level below his or her grade level and/or age.

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
Grade Level	1st and 2nd	3rd and 4th	5th and 6th	7th and 8th
Age (September 1 through August 31 birthday)	6-8	8-10	10-12	12-14

COACHES

All head and assistant coaches must be registered with the league and have a background check performed before being cleared to be able to coach in the league. SFL recommends 2-3 coaches per team, and no team may have more than four (4) coaches on the sidelines during the game. Head coach responsibilities include:

- Knowing the rulebook and ensuring their team operates in accordance with all League rules
- Promoting sportsmanship, including being responsible for the behavior of players, assistant coaches, parents and fans of their respective team
- Ensuring all assistant coaches register with the League and have a background check performed
- Make certain scoreboards are managed and fields are set up/put away when it is their team's responsibility
- Follow the Participation Rule in its wording as well as its spirit
- Manage any League required fundraising initiatives

FIELD DIMENSIONS AND EQUIPMENT

Field size will be standard football field width and 50 yards in length, with modification in width for the Freshman Division per the table below.

The League will provide flags to be used in games. No team may provide its own flags for game use unless approved by the League in advance.

The League will provide each team with game jerseys and practice shirts. Jerseys must be tucked in at all times during a game. All players must wear black shorts with no pockets.

Players are required to always wear soft-shell helmets during practices and games. Any standard soft-shell helmet will suffice and can be ordered through the SFL website or obtained at local sporting goods stores. Players will be required to always play with a mouthpiece.

Field dimensions and game ball sizes are by division according to the following table:

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
Field Dimensions				
Length	50 yards	50 yards	50 yards	50 yards
Width	40 yards	53 1/3 yards	53 1/3 yards	53 1/3 yards
End Zone	10 yards	10 yards	10 yards	10 yards
Safety Yard Line	45 yard line on opposite side of field	45 yard line on opposite side of field	45 yard line on opposite side of field	45 yard line on opposite side of field
Game Balls	Pee Wee (K2)	Pee Wee (K2)	Junior (TDJ)	Youth (TDY)

TEAM FORMATION

Players may request to be placed on teams with specific coaches and/or players. For players to be considered for placement on a specific team with other players, a coach must be identified, or the players are subject to being allocated to other teams. Coaches are allowed to designate an entire team. However, the League reserves the right to move players to other teams if it deems the team formed to have an outsized skill advantage relative to other teams. SFL is a recreational league and desires to maintain a competitive balance throughout the League. Coaches are strongly encouraged to form teams with schoolmates.

Players who sign up individually will be placed on teams with strong emphasis on school affiliation.

No player may play on more than one team, including on a temporary basis. No coach may coach more than one team in each division.

The League reserves the right to place individual players on teams until team size is 12 players.

NO COMMUNICATION DEVICES

The use of cellular phones, handheld radios, “walkie talkies”, or any other personal, portable communications devices to communicate with coaches or individuals either on the field, on the sidelines, in the press box or in the stands is prohibited.

DRONE USE PROHIBITED

For the safety and privacy of all participants, spectators and staff, the use of drones or any unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) is strictly prohibited at all league events, including games, practices, and team gatherings, without prior written approval from the league administration. Violators may be subject to removal from the premises and additional disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the league.

SPORTSMANSHIP AND CONDUCT

PLAYER CONDUCT

If an official witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player may be subject to ejection from the game. The decision to eject will be made at the referee's discretion, which may be determined by the seriousness of the offense or repeated infractions. Once an ejection decision has been made, no appeals will be considered. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!

a. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.

b. Ball-carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.

c. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.

OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE

Offensive or confrontational language is not allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee may elect to give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

COACH AND SPECTATOR CONDUCT

Coaches and fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well:

a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.

b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.

c. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.

Coaches are responsible for monitoring parent behavior for their team. If a referee deems fan behavior to violate this provision, he or she may elect to 1) provide a warning, 2) remove offending fan from the premises and/or 3) impose a 10 yard penalty on the team who's fan made the offense. If a fan is removed, he or she must immediately exit the fields and leave the premises before play is resumed.

If a coach or a fan is ejected from a game, he or she is automatically suspended for the next scheduled game, including any make-up game or playoff game. If a coach or fan is ejected for a second time in a season, he or she is permanently suspended from coaching and/or attending any future games, including subsequent seasons.

FIELD SAFETY

Fans are required to keep fields safe and kid-friendly:

a. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field.

b. Keep sufficient distance from coaches and players in sideline areas.

c. Dispose of ALL trash in designated trash cans.

PARTICIPATION RULE

SFL operates by the honor system and assumes coaches take a practical approach to managing the players on his or her respective team. However, all coaches are required to ensure **ALL** players participate and

receive a reasonable amount of playing time to ensure a good experience for everyone. If at any point in time opposing coaches or SFL Board members believe a coach or team is taking advantage of this honor system, then they are subject to council, game forfeit, game suspension and/or expulsion from the league.

COACH AND PARENT PARTICIPATION

On offense, one coach is allowed on the field to call plays and direct players according to need. Once the quarterback begins his or her cadence, however, coaches on the field can no longer speak and must be behind the deepest offensive players and out of the action. Coaches can assist in the alignment of their players, but coaches on the field may not provide extra instruction or make audibles to play calls once the huddle is broken. Coaches on the sidelines can provide this information to players on the field.

Except for the Freshman Division, no coach will be allowed on the field when his or her team is on defense. Coaches cannot agree to waive this provision.

For the Freshman Division, one coach will also be allowed on defense to facilitate alignment of players.

Coaches on the sidelines are allowed to coach anywhere between the goal line and the 50 yard line.

No parents can be on the sideline with the team. All parents must remain in the stands or out of the field of play during the game.

SIDELINE ASSIGNMENTS

In an effort to increase spacing and avoid crowding a particular sideline, all Home teams and fans will utilize the sideline with the relevant game field's press box and all Visiting teams and fans will utilize the opposite sideline.

The Home team is responsible for operating the game clock and scoreboard.

The Visiting team is responsible for set-up and/or teardown of the fields.

PLAYOFF SEEDINGS

The following tiebreaker system will be used to determine playoff seedings:

- Head-to-head record
- Record against common opponents
- Strength of victory (combined win percentage of teams defeated)
- Fewest forfeits
- Coin toss

GENERAL GAME PROVISIONS

START OF GAME

It is the responsibility of the head coach to have their team on the field and ready to play when the referee blows the whistle to begin game play. A team must begin play as long as it has 5 players. If a team is late and cannot start when the referee starts the game, the following penalties will be enforced:

- The game clock will be started
- The opposing team will be granted 7 points at the start
- The opposing team will be granted an additional 7 points after 5 minutes
- The team who has not arrived will forfeit after 10 minutes.

The referee will not start the game prior to its official start time.

A central timekeeper or referee will be designated to keep the time of the game. All games will begin and end on this person's instructions. Separate game clocks will be used for multiple games played on the same field. If no scoreboard clock is in use, the referee will keep the game clock and announce the time remaining at the 10, 5, and 2-minute mark as well as the score and time after each score and before each offensive possession.

POSSESSION AND CHANGE OF POSSESSION

The visiting team will have possession to start the game. The home team will have first possession in the 2nd half.

To start each possession, the ball is always placed on the right hash-mark on the 45-yard line. Once the ball has been advanced, hash-mark placement of the ball must be enforced by officials in accordance with NCAA rules. Offenses always move in the same direction.

The field is marked at 15-yard intervals by field striping or with cones. An offense crossing each interval results in a first down. An offense has three downs to cross the 30-yard line, after which it will have another three downs to cross the 15-yard line. Failure to cross each interval in the respective number of downs will result in a change of possession. Once the offense passes the 15-yard line, it will have four downs to score a touchdown.

NO-RUN ZONE

A no-run zone is located between the five-yard line and the end zone and designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations. Offenses are not allowed to run the ball in this zone.

A no-run zone does not exist for the Freshman Division.

GAME CLOCK

Total game time is 44 minutes with two 22-minute continuous clock halves. Halftime is 6 minutes long and there will be 10 minutes between games. Any timeouts used may reduce the time between games.

DELAY OF GAME

Each team has 25 seconds to snap the ball once it has been marked ready for play by the referee. Delay of game results in a loss of down and a 5-yard penalty.

During the regular season, the referee is expected to be lenient on delay of game penalties in the Freshman Division if offensive team is not intentionally delaying the snap.

TIMEOUTS

Each team has one 35 second timeout per half and the clock will stop when a timeout is called. The ball must be snapped 1:00 after the timeout is called or the offense will receive a delay of game penalty.

INJURY STOPPAGE

If an injury occurs, all games on the field will halt until the player(s) can be removed as soon as safety dictates. If an injury occurs that requires play stoppage in the last three minutes of a game and the score is within one touchdown, the referee will stop the clock and keep the remaining time in the game.

OVERTIME

During the regular season and playoffs, ties go into a sudden death format with each team having an equal number of possessions. The overtime format is as follows:

a. After the coin flip to determine first possession, each team will have a 4-down series from the 15-yard line.

b. If a touchdown is scored, PAT rules apply (1 point from the 5 yard line, 2 points from the 10 yard line).

c. A winner is determined when one team scores more during its possession than the other team did during its possession.

d. If after the first period the score is still tied, the second and following periods consist of series with each team playing a 1-point try from the 5-yard line (no-run zone rule applies). Overtime ends when the score after a period is no longer a tie or the defense scores during the first series of a period.

GAME PLAY

BALL SPOT

The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage by spotting the ball before each play and signaling ready for play with a short whistle.

If a ball-carrier is ruled down between the 45- and 50-yard line, the ball will be replaced at the 45-yard line. A ball carrier ruled down behind the 50-yard line will be ruled a safety (see below).

LIVE AND DEAD BALL

The ball is live at the snap and remains live until an official's whistle blows the ball dead.

Play is ruled "dead" when:

a. The ball hits the ground.

   i. If the ball hits the ground because of a bad snap, it is not ruled dead and the quarterback may pick up the ball and play it.

   ii. If the ball hits the ground on a handoff exchange or backwards pitch, it is considered a fumble and the ball is placed at the spot where the ball hit the ground (subject to the 45 yard line and safety rule above). If a ball is fumbled or propelled forward (whether intentionally or not) it will be placed at the original spot of the fumble or point of initial contact.

b. The ball-carrier's flag is pulled.

c. The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.

d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.

e. Any part of the body other than feet or hands touches the ground.

f. The ball-carrier's flag falls out.

g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).

h. An inadvertent whistle.

INADVERTENT WHISTLE

In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:

a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed.

b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

PRE-SNAP DEFENSE

The defense may not mimic the offensive team's signals by trying to confuse the offensive players while the quarterback is calling signals to start the play. The defense also may not make excessive noise or yelling to try to confuse the offense. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

OFFENSIVE PLAYS

Offensive plays must be runs or passes. No kicking or punting.

The ball must be snapped between the center's legs in a continuous motion. No side snaps.

SCORING

Touchdown: 6 points

Point after Touchdown (PAT):

c. 1 point from the 5-yard line (no-run zone applies)

d. 2 points from the 10-yard line (may be run or pass)

e. 2 points if a defensive team returns a PAT back across the 50-yard line.

Safety: 2 points

SAFETY

A safety occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down behind the 50-yard line. Runners can be declared down for any reason a play is ruled "dead". A penalty behind the 50-yard line (i.e. flag guarding) is also a safety. If a ball carrier runs behind the 45 yard line on the opposite end of the field he or she will be declared down and it will be ruled a safety (back of the end zone).

MERCY RULE

After one team is leading by 30 points or more, no more scores will be kept. Teams will continue playing but no additional points will be recorded for either team.

Forfeits will be scored 30-0.

OFFENSE

OFFENSIVE FORMATION

Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and any number of other players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.

MOTION

One player at a time may go in motion a maximum of 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage. An offensive player lined up more than 1-yard deep in the backfield can never go in motion. A player in motion must either start from a set position on the line of scrimmage or 1-yard off to adhere to this rule.

No motion is allowed toward the line of scrimmage. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.

RUNNING

a. **Spotting the Ball**: the spot of the ball is the position of the ball when the flag is pulled, not the location of the hips or feet.

b. **Legal Running Plays**: Running plays are only permitted through a **handoff or a backward pitch that occurs behind the line of scrimmage**. The quarterback may not simply take the snap and run across the line of scrimmage.

i. Handoffs

1. A handoff may only occur **behind the line of scrimmage**.
2. Handoffs may be **in front, behind or to the side** of the offensive player receiving the ball.
3. The offense may use **multiple handoffs** on the same play, provided each handoff occurs behind the line of scrimmage.

ii. Pitches

1. A pitch may only occur **behind the line of scrimmage**.
2. A pitch may be made underhand or overhand, but **the ball must travel backward**.
3. Any pitch that travels forward will be ruled a **forward pass** and will be subject to the league's forward pass rules.
4. The offense may use multiple backward pitches on the same play.

iii. Quarterback Running

1. The quarterback **may not advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage after receiving the snap** unless the quarterback has first handed or legally pitched the ball to another player and then subsequently receives the ball back through a legal handoff or backward pitch.

2. In other words, the quarterback cannot keep the snap and run but may become a runner after first relinquishing possession through a legal exchange behind the line of scrimmage.

iv. Passing After a Handoff or Pitch

1. Any player who legally receives a handoff or backward pitch **behind the line of scrimmage** may throw a legal forward pass, provided the pass is thrown from behind the line of scrimmage and all other passing rules are satisfied.

v. Defensive Rush

1. Once the offense completes a legal handoff or backward pitch, **all defensive players are immediately eligible to rush the ball carrier or quarterback**, regardless of any no-rush restrictions that existed before the exchange.

vi. Additional Rules

1. **Center Sneak Prohibited**. The center is an ineligible ball carrier and may not receive a handoff or pitch at any time.

2. Any handoff or pitch that occurs **beyond the line of scrimmage** is illegal

3. Any pitch that travels **forward** is a forward pass and is governed by the rules applicable to forward passes.

c. **Flag Guarding**:

i. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

ii. Runners may not leave his or her feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.

iii. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave his or her feet to avoid a flag pull. Players spinning out of control will be called for flag guarding.

iv. Runners may leave his or her feet if there is a clear indication that he or she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.

v. Flag obstruction – All jerseys must be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

d. **Blocking/Screening**: No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.

e. **Running with the Ball Carrier**: Offensive players without the ball must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. There is no running with the ball-carrier.

PASSING

f. **Forward Pass**: A pass is considered a forward pass if the ball first touches anything beyond the spot where the ball is released. All other passes are backward passes, even if it is lateral (parallel to the scrimmage line), and are illegal.

   i. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. The pass must be in the vicinity of a receiver. This does not apply to the Freshman Division if the quarterback makes a good-faith effort to throw the ball in the vicinity of a receiver.

   ii. Quarterbacks cannot spike the ball dead unless the ball is in the vicinity of a receiver.

   iii. Any player who has received a legal handoff or pitch can throw the ball forward if they are still behind the line of scrimmage.

g. **Shovel Pass**: Shovel passes are allowed and will be considered a forward pass.

h. **Seven Second Clock**: A seven-second pass clock begins upon the snap and continues until there is a handoff, pitch or pass. If the seven-second clock expires while the quarterback still has the ball, the play is blown dead, a down is lost and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage as if an incomplete pass occurred. The Freshman Division will have a five-second clock due to no blitzing allowed in that division.

i. **Eligible Receivers**: All players are eligible to receive passes.

j. **Legal Reception**: A player must have at least one foot inbounds to make a legal reception.

k. **Simultaneous Possession**: In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.

l. **Interceptions:** Interceptions are returnable for a touchdown or a PAT by crossing the 50-yard line. If the interception does not result in a touchdown, the intercepting team starts a new possession with a first down on the 45-yard line.

DEFENSE

BLITZER AND RUSHER

a. **Blitzer**: All Blitzers must be a minimum of seven yards behind the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped and must declare themselves by raising their hand until the ball is snapped. Players not blitzing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.

b. **Rusher**: Once the ball is handed off, the 7-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. At this point players crossing the line of scrimmage are Rushers.

c. **Legal Blitzing**: A marker, or the official, will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position and identify themselves before every play.

    i. A legal blitz is:

        1. Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.

        2. If a blitzer leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7-yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.

        3. If a blitzer leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before he or she crosses the line of scrimmage, he or she may legally rush the runner.

    ii. A penalty may be called if:

        1. The Blitzer leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – illegal rush (5 yards from the line of scrimmage).

        2. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5 yards from line of scrimmage).

        3. Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line or declared crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off – illegal rush (5 yards from the line of scrimmage).

        4. A maximum of 2 players may establish themselves as a blitzer. Rushers MUST identify themselves by raising their hand before the snap. Rushers MUST rush the passer immediately after the snap. Delayed rush is NOT permitted. If a player who signals as a blitzer is less than 7 yards from the line of scrimmage, is giving an invalid signal or more than 2 players simultaneously keep their hand raised after the center has touched the ball – illegal signal (5 yards from the line of scrimmage).

    iii. Special circumstances:

        1. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the seven second clock in effect.

2. Teams are required to identify their Blitzer before the play.

3. There is no legal blitzing allowed in the Freshman Division.

d. **Roughing the Passer**: Players blitzing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.

e. **Impeding the Blitzer**: The offense cannot impede the Blitzer in any way. The Blitzers have the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. If the "path or line" is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense's responsibility to avoid the Blitzer. Any disruption to the Blitzer's path and/or contact will result in an impeding the blitzer penalty. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the Blitzer's responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.

f. **Quarterback Sack**: A sack occurs if the quarterback's flag is pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterback's feet are when the flag is pulled.

FLAG PULLING

g. **Legal Flag Pull**: A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.

h. **Diving and Holding:** Defenders cannot dive, tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.

i. **Stripping:** It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.

j. **Inadvertent Loss of Flag:** If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands or where the player first obtains possession of the ball, whichever is farther.

k. **Illegal Flag Pull**: A defensive player may not intentionally pull a flag off a player who is not in possession of the ball. If a defender makes a good-faith flag pull while a receiver bobbles or juggles what will be a completed catch, the ball is down where possession is made.

OFFICIALS AND PENALTIES

OFFICIALS

The officials' jurisdiction begins when the whistle blows to start the game and ends when the referee declares the score final.

The game shall be played under the supervision of two officials: a referee and a field judge, who will split responsibilities using the referee's best judgment.

GENERAL PENALTY PROVISIONS

a. The officials will call all penalties.

b. Game officials determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.

c. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted (spot penalties).

d. Only the head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question calls.

e. Games may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.

f. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.

g. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

OFFENSIVE PENALTIES

OFFENSIVE FOULS	DEFINITION	PENALTY ENFORCEMENT
LOS = Line of Scrimmage EOR = End of Run		
The offense can never be penalized beyond the 45-yard line; however, any loss of down provision still applies		
SCREENING OR BLOCKING AT ANY TIME	Any offensive player screening, blocking or initiating contact with a defender at any time beyond the LOS	10 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down
OFFENSIVE HOLDING	When an offensive player restrains any defender at any time	10 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down
CHARGING	When the runner runs over a defender	10 yards from the spot and loss of down
OFFENSIVE UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS	Any offensive player initiating any excessive physical contact with a defender	10 yards from the LOS or spot of the foul (if beyond

		the LOS and further than 10 yards) and loss of down
FLAG GUARDING	When the runner obstructs the defender access to their flag including using their hands or dipping their shoulder excessively	5 yards from the spot and loss of down
UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT	Excessive celebration, taunting, use of abusive language, punching, kicking, etc	10 yards from the spot of the foul or LOS and loss of down (also subject to ejection)
ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS	When the runner throws or pitches the ball at any time beyond the LOS	5 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down
OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE	When an offensive player purposely hinders a defender from receiving the ball	10 yards from LOS and loss of down
DELAY OF GAME	When the offense fails to snap the ball within 40 seconds from the end of the previous play	5 yards from LOS and loss of down
IMPEDING A RUSHER	When an offensive player initiates or causes contact with a rusher (whether intentional or otherwise)	5 yards from LOS and loss of down
ILLEGAL MOTION OR SHIFTING	When more than one (1) offensive player is moving at the same time prior to the ball being snapped	5 yards from LOS and loss of down
OFFSIDES/FALSE START	When any offensive player moves forward prior to the ball being snapped	5 yards from LOS and loss of down
CENTER SNEAK	When the center receives the ball at or behind the LOS	5 yards from the LOS and loss of down

DEFENSIVE PENALTIES

DEFENSIVE FOULS	DEFINITION	PENALTY ENFORCEMENT
LOS = Line of Scrimmage EOR = End of Run		
ROUGHING THE PASSER	When a defender makes any contact with the passer during the process or after a forward pass has been made	+10 yards from LOS or EOR and automatic first down
DEFENSIVE HOLDING	When a defender restrains another player at any time with or without the ball	+10 yards from the LOS or spot of foul and automatic 1st down

STRIPPING	Slapping or grabbing the football out of the runner's possession	+10 yards from the spot of the foul and automatic first down
DEFENSIVE UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS	Any defender initiating any excessive physical contact with an offensive player with or without the ball	+10 yards from the line of scrimmage or EOR and automatic first down
OFFSIDES	Lining up beyond or crossing the LOS before the ball is snapped	+ 5 yards from LOS
UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT	Excessive celebration, taunting, use of abusive language, punching, kicking, etc.	+10 yards from the LOS and automatic first down
ILLEGAL RUSH	When the rusher is not lined up at least 7 yards beyond the LOS at the time of the snap or fails to return 7 yards beyond the LOS before resuming their rush	+5 yards from LOS
DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE	When a defensive player significantly hinders an eligible receiver with the opportunity to catch the ball	+10 yards from the LOS or spot foul and automatic first down
ILLEGAL FLAG PULL	When a defensive player pulls an offensive player's flag without the ball	+5 yards from the EOR or LOS
ILLEGAL RUSH	When more than 2 defenders rush the passer or when any previously declared rusher does not actually rush the passer	+5 yards from the LOS
SIMULATING OFFENSIVE SIGNALS	When any defender makes any action or sound simulating an offensive play or snap	+5 yards from the LOS

SUMMARY FRESHMAN DIVISION PROVISIONS

The following is a summary of the adjustments to the rules for the Freshman Division:

Field Width	40 yards (vs 53 1/3 yards)
Defensive Coach on Field	Allowed only for Freshman
Delay of Game Penalty	More lenient during regular season
No-run Zone	Eliminated
Illegal Forward Pass	If quarterback is throwing the ball away under pressure and the ball is not in the vicinity of a receiver, it is not a penalty as long as the quarterback made a good-faith attempt to throw the ball in the vicinity of a receiver
Legal Blitzing	Not allowed
Passing Clock	Five-second clock due to no blitzing allowed