



## ***FLAG FOOTBALL RULES***

Revised 9/1/2021

*Each player must present a valid RU I.D. and be on the team's roster. If you cannot present an RU I.D you will not play. All players must be on the roster to prove that you are a current Rutgers Student and so they have consented to a waiver form. Players can join their roster using [services.rec.rutgers.edu](https://services.rec.rutgers.edu)*

*Rutgers Intramural Sports will provide referees for each regular season and playoff games and they have absolute authority during the game. Teams are responsible for keeping their spectators under control. Misconduct of participants, coaches or spectators can result in an implementation of an unsportsmanlike penalty, or harsher penalty.*

*All rules mentioned here are under the discretion and interpretation of Rutgers Intramural Sports and it's Directors, Supervisors, and Referees.*

### **Team Requirements**

1. Registration fee will be \$40 per team.
2. A MEN's and WOMEN's league team consists of 7 players. There must be 5 legal players present to start play and avoid a forfeit. Games will begin if both teams have at least 5 players. A player may only play on one team per campus.
3. A roster may have a maximum of 14 people.
4. Teams must arrive 15 minutes before their scheduled start time. A 5-minute grace period will be given after the scheduled time. After the five minutes, the Supervisor will officially rule the game a forfeit. Call in losses will only be accepted if made by 4:30PM the day of your game. Otherwise, games are expected to be played as scheduled. **Call in losses can be called into 848-445-1981 or by email to [intramurals@echo.rutgers.edu](mailto:intramurals@echo.rutgers.edu).**

### **Equipment**

Pants or shorts WITHOUT POCKETS must be worn. If a player has pockets in their outer most layer of pants/shorts they will not be permitted to play. Due to the nature of Flag Football if a player has pockets a fellow participant could get their hands caught in a pocket and be injured.

Flags will be provided and must CLIP around your waist. They do not tie. If a player is found with a tied Flag Belt they will be automatically ejected. The flags should be positioned with one on each hip and one down the center of the back. *Penalty: Illegally Secured Flag Belt; 10 yards from the previous spot, automatic first down/loss of down, player ejection*

Shirts must be worn at all times and they must be long enough to be tucked in so that they remain tucked in the pants/shorts during the entire down OR short enough so that there is a minimum of 4" from the bottom of the shirt to the player's waist. If our pinnies are used, shirts must be worn underneath.

Shoes, sneakers or cleats must be worn. Metal spikes, 5-finger shoes, hats with brims, or any type of jewelry are not allowed to be worn during play.

The game will start with a coin toss with the winner having a choice of offense/defense, direction, or defer their choices at the start of the second half. The loser will have the remaining options. Each half and new series, after a score, will start with the ball being put into play on the 14 yard line, unless moved by penalty.

A game shall consist of two twenty-minute halves, with a five minute intermission between halves. The clock will stop only for time outs during the first 19 minutes of the first half and the first 18 minutes of the second half.

During the last minute of the first half the clock will stop for:

- A. Charged Timeouts
- B. Enforcement of Penalties

During the last two minutes of the second half the clock will stop for:

- A. Incomplete legal or illegal forward pass – starts on the snap.
- B. Out-of-bounds – starts on the snap.
- C. Safety – starts on the snap.
- D. Team timeout – starts on the snap.
- E. First down – dependent on the previous play.
- F. Touchdown – starts on the snap (after the Try).
- G. Penalty and administration – dependent on the previous play (EXCEPTION: Delay of game – starts on the snap).
- H. Referee's timeout – starts at his/her discretion.
- I. Touchback – starts on the snap.
- J. A is awarded a new series – dependent on the previous play.
- K. B is awarded a new series – starts on the snap.
- L. Either team is awarded a new series following a legal punt – starts on the snap.
- M. Team attempting to conserve time illegally – starts on the ready.
- N. Team attempting to consume time illegally – starts on the snap.
- O. Inadvertent whistle – starts on the ready.

Each team is allowed 2 one minute time outs per half which cannot be carried over.

After the Referee blows their "Ready for Play" Whistle the offense has 25 seconds to snap the ball. Snapping the ball prior to the "Ready for Play" whistle or after the 25 seconds has expired is illegal. *Penalty: Delay of Game; 5 yards from the previous spot.*

**The offensive team must have at least their snapper on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap.** The defensive team does not have any line requirements. There is a 1 yd restraining line (neutral zone).

Player receiving snap must be at least 2 yards behind the scrimmage line. *Penalty: Illegal Formation; 5 yards from the previous spot*

Motion/Shift: Only one offensive player may be in motion at the time of the snap. This motion must not be toward the opponent's goal line. *Penalty: Illegal Motion/Shift; 5 yards from the previous spot*

Offensive screen blocking: The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. **NO CONTACT WILL BE ALLOWED.** The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back. Any use of arms, elbows, legs, or knees to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his/her feet in order to gain position before, during, and after screen blocking. *Penalty: Illegal Contact; 10 yards from the spot of the foul*

Screen blocking fundamentals: A player who screens shall not: A.) when he/she is behind a stationary opponent, take a position closer than a normal step from him or her; 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 his opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player to be screened will be determined where the screener may take his/her stationary position. This position will vary and may be one to two normal steps or strides from the 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. *Penalty: Illegal Contact; 10 yards from the spot of the foul*

Use of hands or arms by the defense: Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block, not through it. The arms and hands may not be used to hold, grab, or push the opponent aside. The application of this rule depends entirely on the judgment of the official. A rusher may use his/her arms or hands to break a fall or retain his/her balance. *Penalty: Illegal Contact; 10 yards from the previous spot*

A team may run or throw the ball on any down. Only one forward pass may be attempted per down and it must be attempted from BEHIND THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE. All players are eligible to catch a forward pass. Unlimited lateral/backward passes may be thrown during a down and from anywhere on the field.

Catch: A catch is the act of establishing possession of a ball, in flight, and first contacting the ground inbounds while maintaining possession of the ball.

- A. If 1 foot lands in bounds and the receiver has possession of the ball, it is a catch or interception even though a subsequent step or fall takes the receiver out of bounds.

If a player, on offense, goes out of bounds, prior to a change of possession, and returns inbounds they are not eligible to participate in the play in any way. *Penalty: Illegal Participation; 10 yards*

The ball is dead at any time it hits the ground. You cannot pick up and advance a punt or fumble that hits the ground. The ball is also dead anytime the clip on a ball carrier's flag belt breaks, or any part of the ball carrier, other than their feet or hands, touches the ground.

NOTE: The ball is an extension of the ball carrier's hand.

Scrimmage line: One (1) yard of NEUTRAL ZONE must be given up by the defense from where the ball is spotted. The NEUTRAL ZONE will be marked by two discs on the field (orange for offense and yellow for defense); neither the offense nor the defense may be in the neutral zone prior too or at the snap. *Penalty: Dead Ball, Encroachment; 5 yards from the previous spot*

To obtain a new series of downs the offense must advance the ball into the next zone. Each team will get four (4) downs to advance the ball to the next zone (first down or score), once they enter a zone. Zone lines are the 20, 40, 20 and Goal lines.

No punting before the 4th down. On 4th down, the captain must announce the intention to "punt" or "play" (a throwing punt is not allowed). Even, when punting the kicking team must have 4 players on the line of scrimmage. The receiving team does not have any line requirements.

No one on either team is permitted to move until the punter kicks the ball and there are no fake punts.

All flags will be checked after the player scores a TD to ensure that the flag is legally fastened.

Scoring:

Touchdown (male/female) – 6 points

Touchdown (female involved – CoRec only) – 9 points

Safety – 2 points

Try:

After each touchdown the scoring team will have option to Try for 1, 2, or 3 points. Once the captain makes their choice the option can only be changed if a time out is taken.

- A. 1 point try = 3 yard line
- B. 2 point try = 10 yard line
- C. 3 point try = 20 yard line

**\*\*If the ball is intercepted during a try the ball is dead and the try is over.**

The mercy rule is in effect. If a team is up by 19 or more pts (Co-Rec 25 points) at the 2 minute warning of the second half, the game shall be called.

If a ball carriers flag belt falls off accidentally (without being deflagged by an opponent), the play continues until he/she is tagged with one hand by the defense.

A player may spin to avoid being deflagged, but may not hinder an opponent's attempt to pull their flag (flag guarding).  
*Penalty: Flag guarding; 10 yards from the spot of the foul*

You may not leave your feet and hurdle a player when running (jumping/hurdling). *Penalty: Personal Foul; 10 yards from the spot of the foul*

Diving is allowed so long as no contact is made with another player. If an offensive runner leaves their feet and contacts a defensive player the onus is on them for the contact. *Penalty: Illegal Contact; 10 yards*

It is illegal to steal or attempt to steal (strip) the ball from a player in possession. The object of the game is to deflag a ball carrier, not to steal the ball. *Penalty: Illegal Contact; 10 yards*

A defensive player cannot obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the belt. *Penalty: Holding; 10 yards from the end of the run*

**Interference:** Hindering an opponent's vision without making an attempt to catch, intercept or bat the ball is pass interference, even though no contact was made.

**Offensive Pass Interference:** After the ball is snapped, and until the pass has been touched by any A player, there shall be no offensive pass interference beyond A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange). *Penalty: Offensive Pass Interference, 10 yards from the previous spot.*

**Defensive Pass Interference:** After the pass is thrown, and until the pass has been touched by any A or B player, there shall be no defensive pass interference beyond A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange) while the pass is in flight. *Penalty: Defensive Pass Interference, 10 yards from the previous spot.*

A substitute does not need to report to an official when entering the game, but must be signed in to play with the Rutgers University Intramural Sports Staff Member on the score sheet.

The team captains are the only players allowed to discuss a call with the game officials, as long as, it is done courteously.

Disrespectfully addressing the game officials may result in immediate game disqualification. **A WARNING IS NOT NECESSARY.**

## Playoffs

1. Seeds will be decided based on a points system. Defaulting a game results in no loss of points in the standings however forfeiting a game will result in your team losing points. Any combination of 2 defaults or forfeits will result in your team being removed from the league.
2. **Players must participate in a minimum of 1 regular season game in order to play in the playoff tournament.**

**OVERTIME:** There is no overtime during the regular season. During the playoffs, overtime will be similar to college rules. A coin toss will determine first possession. The team that wins the toss will have options for the odd periods and the team that lose will have options during the even numbered periods. The ball is put in play at the 10 yard line. Each team gets a possession to score. If a team scores, they can choose to Try for 1, 2, or 3 after any score in overtime. If the defense intercepts the ball then the ball is dead.

## CoRec Rules

The above rules are in effect with the following modifications

1. A team consists of eight players – four females and four males. A minimum of 6 people with at least two females on the field at all times is required to avoid a forfeit.
2. The offense must have their snapper on the line of scrimmage at the snap.
3. A male player may not advance past the line of scrimmage with possession of the ball. Penalty: Illegal Male Advancement; 5 yards from the previous spot
4. A male player may not catch a pass behind the line of scrimmage and advance with the ball, in their possession, over the line of scrimmage. Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass; 5 yards from the spot of the pass and Loss of Down
5. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass must involve either a female passer or female receiver. If it does not it is illegal. Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass; 5 yard penalty from the spot of the pass and Loss of Down
6. “Open” Plays – A team is eligible to make a completion from any passer to any receiver.
7. “Closed” Plays – A the next completed pass must involve a female passer and/or a female receiver.
8. A penalty does not negate action on a play that causes the play to “Open” or “Close”.
9. “Open” / “Closed” Plays are still in effect for Tries, however there is no point difference for a female score on a Try.
10. A new possession will always start “Open”. A down will remain “Open” until a male passer completes a pass to a male receiver, which will “Close” the play. The down(s) will then remain “Closed” until
  1. There is a LEGAL Forward Pass
  2. The pass involves either a female passer or a female receiver
  3. The play must end in POSITIVE yardage (even if just a ½ inch)Once, these three qualifications are met the play will become “Open” again and there will be no pass restrictions, until a male-to-male completion “Closes” the play again.
11. If a female throws the initial pass that results in a touchdown or carries the ball into/catches a pass in

the end zone the touchdown will be worth 9 points.

## **Rutgers University Intramural Sports Policies:**

1. The game of Flag Football is a contact sport and injuries (mostly minor) do occur. Players should participate with this understanding. Also, participation in the Intramural Sports Program is completely voluntary. Rutgers University is not responsible for injuries incurred during intramural play. It is strongly recommended that participants have satisfactory health status and accident insurance to cover any injury that may occur.
2. Alcohol is not to be brought to any Rutgers Recreation Facility. Players coming to their game under the influence, risk forfeiture of the game, suspension from intramural play, and referral to the Dean of Students.
3. There will be a Sportsmanship Rating System in place for all teams. At the conclusion of every game, the officials and intramural supervisors, will rate each team based on their sportsmanship towards their opposing teams and the officials. The rating can range from 4.0-0.0. Teams that forfeit will receive a 1. Teams must have at least a **2.5** rating average in order to be eligible for the playoffs. During the playoffs, teams must attain at minimum of a **2.0** rating in order to advance to the next round. Any team that does not attain a minimum 2.0 rating during the playoffs must schedule a meeting with the campus Intramural professional staff member before the next scheduled game. Failure to do so will result in the team being removed from the remainder of the playoffs and further sanctions if necessary.

The sportsmanship ratings are based as follows:

**A (4) Excellent Sportsmanship** - given to a team where all players cooperate fully with the officials and opposing team members. [Text Wrapping Break]

**B (3) Above Average Conduct** - Team members verbally complain about some decisions made by the officials and/or show minor dissension, which may or may not merit an unsportsmanlike penalty (technical, yellow flag, etc). Any team receiving an unsportsmanlike penalty will receive no higher than a "B" rating.

**C (2) Poor Sportsmanship** - Team members constantly comment to the officials and/or the opposing team from the field/court and or/sidelines. The team captain exhibits little control over teammates or him/herself. Teams that earn at least two unsportsmanlike warnings will receive no higher than a "C" rating.[Text Wrapping Break]

**D (1) Deplorable Conduct** - given to a team that persist in questioning officials' decisions; and/or they repeatedly argue with the officials. Teams display frequent use of profane or vulgar language. Spectators, clearly related to the team, fail to cooperate with the officials and the team is not supportive of the officials' efforts. Teams that earn at least three unsportsmanlike warnings will receive no higher than a "D" rating. Teams receiving an ejection due to unsportsmanlike actions of a player will receive no higher than a "D" sportsmanship rating. Teams that forfeit games will receive a 1 rating.

[Text Wrapping Break]

**F (0) Intolerable** - given to a team where the team is completely uncooperative and the captain has no control. Any team that receives four unsportsmanlike penalties or two player ejections will receive an "F" rating and the game will be forfeited.

## **PENALTIES**

### **Ejection from game**

#### **5 yards**

Delay of game (Dead Ball)

False Start (Dead Ball)

Encroachment - Player lined up in the neutral zone at the snap (Dead Ball)

Illegal Snap (5 yards)

Illegal Substitution

Illegal Motion

Illegal Shift

Illegal Formation (not enough players on scrimmage line)

Not being 5 yards inbounds after the "Ready for Play" whistle (unless covered by a defender)

Illegal Forward Pass (Includes Loss of Down)

Illegal Backward Pass – throwing the ball out of bounds to conserve time (Includes Loss of Down)

Intentional Grounding (Includes Loss of Down)

Illegal Male Advancement (**COREC ONLY**)

Illegal Forward Pass – 2 Consecutive Male to Male Forward Pass Completions (**COREC ONLY** – Includes Loss of Down)

Illegal Forward Pass – Male Catches Pass and Runs Beyond the Line of Scrimmage (**COREC ONLY** – Includes Loss of Down)

#### **10 yards**

Delaying start of game or half

Holding

Unsportsmanlike conduct (players, bench, fans)

Two or more encroachment fouls during the same interval between downs

Jumping/Hurdling another player

Illegal Contact

Tripping

Flag Guarding

Illegal Batting

Illegal Participation

Illegal use of hands or arms

Interlocked Blocking

Runner obstruction (defense impedes forward progress)

Illegal use of equipment

Pass interference – 10 yds from the line of scrimmage

Quick Punt

Kick Catching Interference

Spiking or Kicking the ball during a Dead Ball

Stripping or attempting to strip the ball

Drive or run into an opponent

Roughing the passer (automatic first down)

### **Ejection Associated with Certain 10 Yard Penalties**

Intoxication

Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Intentionally Contacting a Game Official

Flagrant Personal Foul (Tackling)

Fighting

Illegally Secured Flag Belt (Loss of Down/Automatic First Down)

#### **Yards and loss of down**

Illegal forward/backward pass (5 yds)

Intentional grounding (5 yds)

Illegally securing flag belt (10 yds, ejection – on Offense only)

**Yards and automatic first down**

Roughing the Passer (10 yards)

Illegally Tied Flag Belt (10 yards, ejection – on Defense only)