

# 2019 Special Olympic Flag Football Rules summary

## Coin toss:

- 2 captains
- Winner chooses Offense or Defense. Whichever team is on defense first will choose direction of play. Second half everything will be opposite.

## Equipment:

- Headgear allowed to be worn on the field while participating is a Skullcap or **Rugby style (SOFT-PADDED) head gear. This head gear is not mandatory but is highly encouraged to help prevent serious head injury due to collisions, or any other type of event that may affect the head. This head gear must be one solid color (preferably black), and SOFT PADDED.**
  - **NO** Bandanas, Scarves, Hats, etc.... are allowed to be worn while participating.
  - Shorts or sweats with **NO POCKETS** are to be worn.
  - Jerseys **MUST** be tucked in at all times, and flags worn properly (1 on each side, and 1 in back).
  - Officials **MUST** check all belts at the beginning of the game and after each score to insure athletes are not illegally securing their flag belts. **ALL belts MUST be one piece (clip or buckle style clasp), that contain three flags that are PERMANENTLY attached to the belt. (The flag belts should be the thicker style belts, rather than flimsy style to prevent from complete breaking of the belt when pulled or stepped on. The belts also need to remain in the proper position on the waist line, with a flag on each hip and one in the back.**
  - Mouth piece must be colored. With at least 4 inch stem. **NO** mouth pieces on lanyards, around neck!
  - **NO JEWELRY!** Unless medical necessity and must be secured/taped/covered.

## RUSHING:

- ALL Players that rush the QB must be behind the special 7 yd. rushing marker.
- Players not rushing the QB may defend the LOS.
- Once the QB hands the ball off the rushing zone dissipates and ALL defenders may rush.
- **NO BLOCKING AT ALL!** This is a non-contact sport. Legally obstructing an opponent without contacting him/her with any part of the screen blocker's body. The screen blocker shall have his/her arms fully extended to the ground (below the waist) either at his/her side, in front, or behind his/her back. **Any use of arms, elbows, or legs to initiate contact during the screen block is illegal.**
- **NO DIVING** to grab flags. The only legal form of diving is to catch a pass, or interception.
- **NO** spinning, **NO** flag guarding, **NO** Holding Flags, **NO** Hurdling, **NO** stiff arming
- If the runner touches a hand down on the playing field, they are down at that spot.
- **The ball can either be snapped between the center's legs to the QB, or on the side of the hip as one CONTINUOUS motion from the ground to the QB.**
- Fumble / interception ball dead immediately. Ball spotted at that spot.
- Defense cannot initiate contact with QB.
- If a receiver's flag falls off inadvertently, they will be down as soon as they catch/possess the ball.
- **SCORING:** Touchdown – 6 pts                      Extra point from 5 yd. line (Must pass) - 1 pt.  
Safety – 2 pts    Extra point from 10 yd. line (Run or Pass) - 2 pts.

- **MUFFED SNAPPED BALL CLARIFICATION / RULING - When a muffed snap in the shotgun/under center formation(s) occurs (ball doesn't make it to quarterback, ball hits ground before ever making it to the quarterback, or rolls on the ground to the quarterback), the play is dead and the ball will return to the original line of scrimmage, but will be the next down. If the ball is snapped over the quarterback's head, or beside him/her in the air the ball will be placed at the spot where the ball hits the ground. If the ball is snapped into the end zone, the result is a safety.**

## The Game:

- Two 20 -minute running halves. EXCEPT last minute of each half. Regular dead ball officiating, (Incomplete pass, out of bounds, Change possession)
- 5 Minute half time.
- 2 time outs per half. No carry over.
- Possession: all new series starts on offensive 5 yd. line. EXCEPT on an interception. The intercepting team will next put the ball in play at the point of the interception. (No returning and intercepted pass. Kill it once B possesses it.
- Offense has 4 downs to get pass mid field, then another 4 downs to score.
- No run zones 5 yds. To midfield / 5 yds. to goal line. Must pass.
- A division game 30 second play clock. B division 45 second play clock
- 6 Second pass count. If not next down, ball goes back to previous spot.
- **Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the quarterback/offensive player, but MUST be behind the line of scrimmage. Laterals and Pitches are not allowed.**
- ALL players are eligible to catch a forward pass. Shovel pass is legal forearm must be above elbow. Nothing underhand.
- **MERCY RULE: team is up by 36 points or more, the clock will be continuously running the remainder of the game. Also, the second half of play will be shortened from 20 minutes to 15 minutes. If this 36-point differentiation is hit in the first half of play, the remainder of the first half will be a running clock, but not shortened in time. Once the 36-point differentiation is met, at no point will the clock or regular amount of time ever go back to the normal ruling. \*(COACHES – Once the mercy rule goes into effect, your key players should come out and subs (if any) should be brought in to play the remainder of the game)**

## OVERTIME:

- Coin toss Offense or Defense
- Each team 1 play from midfield. Team scoring points or gaining most yds. awarded 1 point and wins game.
- If both teams score or gain the same yardage repeat OYT procedure until inner declared.

## PENALTIES: ALL penalties are from LOS.

### • Offense: 10 yds. and LOD

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|----------|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Motion | * False start   | * Illegal Forward pass/ Handling | * Illegal Procedure (QB Run) |
| • OPI    | * Flag Guarding | * Delay                          | * Unsportsmanlike Conduct    |

### • DEFENSE: 10 Yds. / Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down

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|-------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| • Encroachment    | * DPI               | * Illegal Rush |
| • Illegal Contact | * Illegal flag pull |                |