



OFFICIAL FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

www.cusesports.com email: info@cusesports.com

315-447-5686

1. TEAM REQUIREMENTS

1. (8) Starters (Indoor & Outdoor) Team may play with (6), opposing team may play (7) maximum. Roster size (18) players.
2. Regular players must play (5 Outdoor) (4 Indoor) regular season games, IR replacements must play (4 Outdoor) (4 Indoor) regular season games in order to be eligible for playoffs
3. IRs need to be submitted no less than (24) hrs prior to game time. Captains need to submit a completed IR Request Form and send to League before IR replacement can be used. Captain can no longer send just email with IRs and Replacements name and number. The IR Request Form must be used. The IR Request Form can be found under the rules section of www.syracusesportsassociation.com website and will also be sent out in email the first week.
4. All players must be recorded on the online roster with their legal first and last name which is also the waiver form before they are allowed to participate. Any form of violation of this could result in a forfeit of the game. Roster protest should be brought to the head official at the start of the game however if any of these rules are found in violation at any point, the game could result in a forfeit.
5. Designated team areas are between the (20) yard lines, (2) yards off the sideline. This area may include (2) coaches
6. Spectators' area is (5) yards from the sideline and not in the team area. (Indoor): Spectators are not allowed on the Field. (Outdoor): Spectators are not allowed on the inner sidelines and must stay on the outer sidelines (5) yards back from the sideline. (1) photographer per team is allowed in the inside sideline only and must stay between the (20) yard line markers
7. Forfeits: Teams that forfeit must give (24) hrs notice. If officials are at the field and any team forfeits then they are responsible for both team Referee fees which will be due the following week.

2. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

1. All players are required to wear shoes or cleats (Indoor & Outdoor) No metal cleats.
 - a. Depending on the indoor facility, they may not allow cleats (Hopkins Rd and Jones Rd does allow cleats)
2. Towels may be worn by the Quarterback and Center only and must be tucked in the back. If a Quarterbacks' towel is pulled by a defensive player, he will be down.
3. Flag must not be covered by the jersey. The team will get (1) warning then a (10) yard penalty will be called.

4. Any knots on the flag belt will result in unsportsmanlike conduct, (15) yard penalty, and ejection from the game.
5. Teams must use SSA provided Flags unless approved by the league. Flag – A – Tag flag belts and Champ Pro are the only flag belts and flags that are approved by SSA to use.
6. Teams must wear same jersey with a number on the back (By week #2) After Week #2, if anyone is without the same jersey and not wearing the team primary color (picked at registration) will result in a (15) yard penalty when the opposing team wishes to enforce it except on the final play of the game. Team captain is the only player who can call this penalty. If a player is without a number on the back of their shirt they will not receive stats for that game. The number has to be the same number after week #2. If a player changes their number after week #2, they will only receive stats for the original number given and will not receive stats for the new number. (Make sure the number you are going to be is correct by week #2).
7. When wearing hoodies, your jersey must be worn over the hoodie

3. START OF GAME AND TIMING

1. Game clock starts at the 5 minute mark past game time if team is late. If you do not have minimal amount of players on the field at the 10 minute mark after game time and clock has started, game will be considered a forfeit. Forfeiting team will be responsible for both team Referee fees which will be due the following week.
2. Captains meet at midfield for the coin toss. Visiting team calls first, whichever team wins the toss has the option of taking the ball or deferring to the second half. The team that losses the toss has the choice of the ball or direction.
3. Officials Fees are due at Coin Toss or the game does not start.
4. Games shall consist of:
 - (2) 20 minute halves (Indoor)
 - (2) 22 minute halves (Outdoor)
 - Outdoor games may be shortened on account of the weather and is at the head referee and League discretion
5. (2) Time outs per half with no carryover (Indoor & Outdoor)
6. Half Time:
 - (2) Minutes Indoor
 - (5) Minutes Outdoor
7. Mercy Rule: If a team is up by (19) points or more with (2) Minutes or less left in the game, the game will be over.
8. (2) Minute Warning (Second Half Only)
 - Clock will stop on the following:
 - Incomplete Pass
 - Penalties
 - Play ends out of Bounds
 - Touchdowns
 - Safeties
 - Touchbacks
 - Referee's Time out under (2) minutes in the second half: the clock will start on the whistle.
 - Under (2) minutes in the second half: If the offense commits a dead ball penalty with the game clock running and no timeouts, there will be a (10) second run off. The clock will start on Whistle

- Inadvertent Whistle: Team with ball may take ball at spot when whistle blew or replay the down. Clock starts on Whistle
 - If team with ball consumes time illegally, there will be a (10) second run off or use a time out. Clock will start on the snap.
9. First Half of games, clock only stops for Timeouts or Injuries
 - Injury timeout, clocks start on Whistle
 10. Play clock is (25) seconds and starts when ball is potted and head official blows his whistle. Officials try to give a little more time outdoors due to the heat. Official will yell "10 seconds" then chop his hand. Delay of game will be called if ball is not snapped.

4. GAME RULES

1. Field size (Outdoor) 80x40, (10) yard. End zone yard lines every (10) yards (Markers placed every 20 Yards)
2. Ball will be placed on the (20) yard line to start the game and after touchdowns, touchbacks unless there is a penalty
3. Team has (4) plays to gain a first down: (40) yard line then (20) yard line the first and goal (Indoor& Outdoor)
4. (Outdoor): If a team declares a punt they must punt: (they have (2) options)
 - Kick the ball
 - Walk off (20) yards- other teams ball
 - Kicking the Ball (Free Kick)
 - No rush or release until the ball is kicked
 - Kicking team must have (4) players on the line
 - Receiving team must have (5) players on the line, drop (3) players
 - Receiving team must catch the ball in the air or (1) bounce in order to return it
 - If the ball hits the ground twice, you cannot return the punt and the ball will be spotted where it stops rolling or it is first touched
 - Any muffed punt will be blown dead and spotted where it hit the ground
5. (Indoor): Teams have (3) options on Fourth Down
 - Go for first down
 - Walk off (20) yards
 - Control Punt: Opposing teams (20) yard line

5. FLAG BELT REMOVAL (INDOOR & OUTDOOR)

1. When flag is pulled, play is dead and the ball is spotted where players lead foot is.
2. If flag falls off, player only needs to be touched with 1 hand to be down
3. Defense may leave their feet to pull flag
4. Ball becomes dead when:
 - Flag is pulled
 - Ball hits the ground
 - Ball carrier falls to the ground and is touched, If not touched, he may get up and run
 - A snap from the center hits the ground, ball is dead
5. If a defender throws a flag: 1st offense will be a delay of game (5) yard penalty; 2nd offense will be a unsportsmanlike conduct penalty

6. OFFENSE (8 Players All Must Wear Flags)

1. (3)-Ineligible linemen
2. (5)- eligible players
3. Must have (4) players on the line of scrimmage
4. All blocking will be with open hands between shoulders and waist
5. All eligible players must have flag on at the snap. If an offensive player comes in possession of the ball without any flags, play is dead on spot
6. Running Plays:
 - Runners can't jump or dive (may jump if there is a fallen player in front of them only)
 - Runners can't run over defensive player, must try to avoid or a penalty will occur
 - Runners can crow hop
7. Receivers only need to have (1) foot in bounds on catches
8. Ball is dead if it hit the ground
9. If backwards pass hits the ground it is considered a fumble and ball is spotted where it hit the ground
10. Quarterback may jump to throw a pass as long as he is not trying to avoid a flag pull. If he jumps he must throw the ball or it's a penalty
11. You may substitute players anytime between plays
12. Offensive players may not use their shoulders or forearms to block, this will result in a penalty
13. If football is tipped or fumbled into the air, the play is live and ball may be advanced as long as ball does not touch the ground
14. (Indoor): Passes hitting or skimming the net the play being dead and will be a down count.
15. A catch shall be deemed if the following occurs:
 - Must have possession with (1) foot or body part on ground.
 - If player dives to catch ball, he must maintain control of the ball. If the ball is moving and touches the ground, it will be an incomplete pass.
16. Defensive players may not punch or strip the ball once a receiver has possession with (1) foot or body part on ground.
17. If defensive player punches or strips ball after possession by offensive player, a penalty will be called and tacked on to the end of the play. The play will count(Next down)
18. Quarterback may not use his non-throwing hand to stiff-arm or shield his flag when a defensive player is rushing. If this occurs, play will result in a penalty and loss of down
19. Tackle Eligible Play (lineman must have flag belt on to run this play). Running back must line up directly behind tackle and step up and take his place after the snap. (he is now ineligible). If the lineman does not have flag belt on it will result in a penalty and loss of down. Officials must be notified.
20. Ball carrier may not grasp a teammate when running with the ball. Teammates may not push or pull runner. If this occurs, it will result in a penalty
21. If ball carrier is breaking free at mid field or in and is held with no defenders in front of him, Officials may award a touchdown.
22. If receivers go out of bounds on their own, they may not be the first to touch the ball. If a receiver is pushed out of bounds, they must immediately come back inbounds and may be the first to touch the ball.
23. Screen passes and passes behind the line of scrimmage, receivers may only be (1) yard downfield and blocking before the ball is thrown. Players more than (1) line downfield and blocking before the ball is thrown will result in penalty and loss of down unless the ball is caught behind the line of scrimmage.
24. Receivers may cover up other receivers and is still an eligible player, there is no penalty

7. DEFENSE (8 Players All Must Wear Flags)

1. (3) Linemen: Must be heads up with offensive Linemen until ball is snapped
2. Defensive players may not use their shoulders or forearms when rushing. If this occurs, will result in a penalty
3. Linebackers may not be in the "A" gaps at the snap. If this occurs, will result in a penalty
4. Defensive players rushing must use open hands between shoulders and waist. Anything above the shoulders or below the waist will result in a penalty.
5. Defensive players may leave their feet to pull a flag but must be going for a flag or a penalty may be thrown
6. Defensive players rushing the Quarterback may not make contact with his throwing arm even if the ball is tipped. If this occurs, roughing the passer penalty will be called with an automatic first down.
7. Defensive players rushing the Quarterback may not run into the Quarterback and knock him to the ground. If this occurs, roughing the passer penalty will be called with automatic first down.
8. If the Quarterback is outside of the pocket and contact is made other than with his arm, it will be the head officials' discretion if there was unnecessary contact made.
9. On backwards double passes, the player with the ball is considered the Quarterback and is still protected with roughing the passer calls.
10. Defensive backs are allowed (1) chuck within (5) yards. Any hand contact after that will result in a penalty. (If ball is thrown to that wide receiver)
11. Knocking receivers to the ground or into the wall with excessive force may result in a penalty
12. Once receiver has possession of the ball, you must go for his flag. If you push him to the ground or out of bounds, play will result in a penalty. (Player can be ejected if force was excessive)
13. Any contact to a player's head, neck or below the waist will result in a penalty. (May not punch or strip ball once offensive player has control of the ball)
14. Defensive players may not yell, scream, or clap their hands to try and get offense to false start.
15. Defensive players may not intentionally trip a player. If this occurs, will result in a penalty
16. When a Quarterback is throwing the ball and his arm is going forward, if a flag is pulled it will not be a sack. The ball is considered out of his hand
17. If defensive player comes in possession of the ball without any flags, play is dead on spot

8. ON-SIDE KICK RULE

1. When the team that is losing scores when there is (2) minutes or less left and are down less than (19) points, they may declare an on-side kick
2. They get (1) play starting at the (20) yard line to get to the (40) yard line. (Clock is stopped).
 - If they get passed the (40) yard line the play is blown dead. They keep the ball and it will be placed on their (20) yard line and be first down (Clock will start on snap)
 - If they don't get passed the (40) yard line, the other team gets the ball on the (40) yard line
3. If the losing team scores again but are still down by less the (19) points and there is still time left on the clock, they may declare another on-side kick.

9. OVERTIME RULES (PLAYOFFS ONLY)

1. Regular season games that are tied at the end will result in a tie game
2. Team captains meet at midfield for a coin toss, visiting team calls toss, winner of the toss has choice of offense, defense or direction
3. Each team gets (1) timeout per overtime period
4. Each team gets (1) possession from the (20) yard line ((4) downs)

5. If the defense intercepts the ball they may return it, if they score and takes the lead, the game will be over
6. If the first team that has the ball does not score and the second team scores on their possession, the game is over
7. If the score is tied after the first overtime, the team that was on defense will get the ball first. The same goes for the second overtime.
8. For the third overtime period, teams must go for (2) points on the extra point try
9. For the fourth overtime period, teams get (1) possession to score, this process will continue until the game is over

10. SCORING

1. Touchdown: (6) points
2. Extra Point Tries:
 - Indoor
 - (5) yard line: (1) point
 - (10) yard line: (2) points
 - (15) yard line: (3) points
 - Outdoor
 - (5) yard line: (1) point
 - (10) yard line: (2) points
 - (20) yard line: (3) points
3. Any try intercepted and returned by the defense: (3) points
4. Safety: (2) points
 - Offense penalty in the end zone
 - Ball snapped out of the back of end zone
 - Ball hits the ground in the end zone
 - Ball carriers flag is pulled (Both feet must be in the end zone)
5. If the player with the ball has (1) foot out of the end zone, ball will be placed there

11. TEAM & SPECTATOR CONDUCT

1. Team captains are responsible for the conduct of their players and spectators.
2. If captains cannot defuse the situation, then the officials will and penalties will occur at their discretion
3. Any fighting will result in ejections and possible game over
4. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties will be discussed by the officials. Their decision is final
5. League may enforce fines and length of suspension at their discretion
6. Teams that are arriving with a game still in progress, please stay out of the team area (see team area in Team Requirements section)
7. Players are responsible to wear flag belts. Please see Offense section and Defense section for specifics
8. Spectators' area is (5) yards from the sideline and not in the team area. (Indoor): Spectators are not allowed on the Field. (Outdoor): Spectators are not allowed on the inner sidelines and must stay on the outer sidelines (5) yards back from the sideline. (1) photographer per team is allowed in the inside sideline only and must stay between the (20) yard line markers

12. PENALTIES

• **(5) Yard Penalties**

- Covering flag with jersey (Loss of Down)
- Delay of Game
- Illegal Snap
- False Start
- Encroachment (Off sides)
- Illegal Formation (Offense must have (4) on line)
- Illegal Forward Pass (Spot Foul, Loss of Down)
- Helping The Runner (Runner may not hold teammate or be pushed or pulled forward)
- Ineligible Lineman Down Field (Pass plays)
- Illegal Motion ((2) or more players moving at once)
- Illegal Shift (Players must be set for (1) second before snap)
- Illegal Substitution (Too many players on the field or offense breaks huddle with too many players)
- Illegal Defense (Linemen must be heads-up)
- Illegal Contact (May not contact receiver beyond (5) yards before the ball is thrown. Officials Discretion)
- Defensive Hold (Holding receiver beyond (5) yards before ball is thrown, holding lineman who is run blocking) Automatic first down(Both officials discretion)
- Illegal Touching (Are as follows, Loss of down)
 - Offensive lineman touches pass at line
 - Offensive lineman downfield touches the ball
 - Receiver going out of bounds on his own may not be the first to touch the ball
 - Receiver pushed out of bounds must immediately return to the field in order to be the first to touch the ball
- Sideline warning (Players outside of team area or on field when they are out of the game)
- Disconcerting Acts (Defense clapping, yelling, screaming and so forth trying to simulate a snap)
- Intentional Grounding (Spot Foul, Loss of Down) Quarterback outside of pocket, the ball must cross the line of scrimmage. If the Quarterback intentionally throws the ball out of bounds to avoid a sack, a penalty will be thrown

• **(10) Yard Penalties**

- Receiver pushing off or knocking defender down
- Offensive Pass Interference (Loss of Down)
 - Crossing routes may not contact defender
- Receivers blocking downfield on a pass play
- Offensive Holding
- Illegal Stripping or Punching Ball out (Automatic First Down)
- Charging (Loss of Down) Ball carrier must try to avoid the defender
- Blocking In The Back is the Following:
 - Blocking outside of the tackle box
 - Blocks that start in the front and players disengage then player finishes with a block in the back
 - Blocks that start and finish in the back, outside of the tackle box
 - Blocks that start in the front, lineman stays engaged then the block finishes in the back (Is NOT a penalty)
 - Defenders turning their back during the block (Is NOT a penalty)

- Flag Guards are as follows: (Loss of Down)
 - Jumping, diving, hurdling
 - Stiff Arms
 - Chopping or Swatting defenders hand
 - Blocking flag with ball or hand
 - Leaving Feet (Both feet off ground)
- Holding Ball Carrier ((10) Yards added to the end of play, not a first down)
- Illegal Use of Shoulders or Forearms (If first contact with opponent is made with either)
- All contact is made with open hands between shoulders and waist

- **(15) Yard Penalties**

- Illegal Jersey (Wrong primary color (1) time penalty that opponent (captain only) may enforce anytime during the game except for last play of game)
- Sideline Interference (Contact with official)

- **(15) Yard Personal Foul Penalties**

- Roughing The Passer (Automatic First Down)
- Chop Block (Loss of Down)
- Hands to the Face: Offense (Loss of Down)
- Hands to the Face: Defense (Automatic First Down)
- Pass Interference: Defense (Spot Foul, First Down)
- Tackling Ball Carrier (Automatic First Down)
- Pushing Ball Carrier out of bounds (First Down)
- Block below the waist (Loss of Down)
- Illegal Participation: Offense (Loss of Down) To many players on the field and they participate in the play
- Illegal Participation: Defense (First Down) To many players on the field and they participate in the play
- Roughing Center (First Down)
 - If a player hits the center before the ball is snapped
- Late Hits: Offense (Loss of Down)
- Late Hits: Defense (First Down)
- Hits made out of bounds or after whistle (Officials Discretion)
- Tripping (intentionally) Offense: (Loss of Down) (Officials Discretion)
- Tripping (Intentionally) Defense: (First Down) (Officials Discretion)

- **(15) Yard Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

- These are calls after the whistle has been blown. IF the conduct was excessive, players may be ejected at the officials discretion
- Any player who receives (2) unsportsmanlike flag in (1) game will be ejected and must leave the field area immediately. Player will be contacted by the league for further instructions.
 - Spiking the ball towards opponent
 - Excessive yelling and swearing
 - Illegal Flag Pull (Before player has the ball)
 - Taunting (Any personal words towards opponent)
 - Intentional Contact with Official
 - Fighting (Any punches players are ejected)

- Tampering with Flag Belts
- Any derogatory words towards opponents and officials by other players or spectators
- Any foul is subject to automatic ejection (Officials Discretion)
- Any bench clearing altercations, players will be subject to penalties
- Any spectators going on field will be asked to leave the area and team will receive penalty
- Any fights that do not break up quickly, Officials will have the right to end the game

The Syracuse Sports Association Zero Tolerance for Poor Sportsmanship

The Syracuse Sports Association was started in the hopes of developing a social organization that at its core has a fundamental belief in sportsmanship, fair play, and community building. It is the belief of the SSA that all three of these important elements begin with individual members and extend to entire teams. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of every player, fan, and supporter of the SSA to ensure that they do their individual part to promote the core beliefs of the SSA. While the appropriate level of competitive play is expected in the appropriate leagues, it shall be understood that at no time should the Spirit of the game or any player, fan, or supporter be made to suffer at its expense. Everyone is charged with the responsibility of developing a bond of mutual respect among all players, adherence to agreed-upon rules of play/conduct, promoting SSA for fostering a love for recreational sports. Actions such as taunting in an extreme manner, name-calling, excessive profanity, dangerous aggression, intentional fouling, or other 'win at all costs' behavior are hereby strictly forbidden and are considered contrary to both the Spirit of the game and to the Mission of the SSA and must be avoided by all players.

Failure to do so will have severe consequences.

The Syracuse Sports Association has instituted a **Zero Tolerance Policy** for poor sportsmanship, extremely aggressive behavior, trash-talking that does not fit within the SSA code of conduct and for any behavior that is "contrary to the Spirit of the Game." Furthermore, excessive profanity, especially stemming from disagreements or during taunting will not be permitted and will be considered an example of poor sportsmanship and will be subject to penalties.

ENTIRE TEAMS WILL BE PENALIZED FOR THE BEHAVIOR OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS.

Teams are expected to police the behavior of their members for the entire duration of the season at hand regardless of whether or not they are currently playing. Any extreme behavior occurring in the stands, after games, or at any later date anywhere SSA members are assembled will be subject to the same penalties. Understand that if any member of a team or person known to be associated directly with that team is ejected from the game or park for any violation or if a person is a constant source of controversy, **THE ENTIRE TEAM MAY BE SUBJECT TO PENALTY**. Any player ejected from a game for any reason will be fined before they can play in another game. The amount of the fine can vary and is at the leagues' discretion. Captains are expected to be the first line of prevention and are expected to police their members. If you cannot control a person on or off the field, you are expected to remove them from the SSA for the benefit of your team, fellow players and for the good of the league. If not, your entire team will suffer penalties. No exceptions.

IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS IS EVERYONE'S ONLY WARNING!!!

SSA Directors will investigate all infractions fairly and aggressively and everyone is reminded of the following fact: as commissioners of this league, we will have final say on all matters. We also reserve the right to consult with anyone we see fit. If warranted, any of the following penalties may be additionally imposed for unsportsmanlike conduct or any behavior that is "contrary to the Spirit of SSA Leagues:

(a) The offending individual may be banned from all future SSA events and will not be allowed in SSA facilities.

(b) The offending player's team may be further penalized with a specific number of week(s) suspension meaning any games scheduled for the following week(s) will be forfeited and the team and its members will not be permitted in SSA facilities for that week.

(c) The offending team may be dropped from the remainder of the schedule or season. **No refunds** will ever be issued.

(d) The offending team and any players associated with that team may not again be allowed to participate in the SSA; penalties are not limited to only those listed. Any violations occurring during playoffs, tournaments or charitable events will be considered the most extreme and teams may be immediately forfeited from the remaining games. Additionally, if that team participates in the next season, they will forfeit their first game 14-0. No team will be allowed to participate in the SSA with 3 or more members from a previously banned team. It is the responsibility of captains to ensure their team is aware of Syracuse Sports Associations' Zero Tolerance policy.

