DEAF REGIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE LLC

FLAG FOOTBALL GAME RULES

CURRENT SEASON: 7v7 | FUTURE OPTION: 8v8

CURRENT SEASON - 7v7	FUTURE SEASONS - 8v8
Men’s and women’s flag football play 7 players against 7 players.	When officially offered by DRFL, teams may select 7v7 or 8v8 during registration, subject to approved divisions, rosters, facilities, officials and insurance.

DRFL website: drflleagues.co | Proposed issue: October 2026

1. Purpose, scope and rule authority

These proposed rules organize adult DRFL flag football. For the current season, both men's and women's flag divisions use 7v7 only. A future 8v8 option is described in Section 16; it is not active this season.

The DRFL Official Bylaws control league organization, eligibility, discipline, regional administration, finances and appeals. These Flag Football Game Rules address game mechanics. An announced league policy or season notice may specify administrative details, but should not contradict the adopted bylaws.

2. Participation, team size and eligibility

- Seven eligible players per team may be on the field during a live play in current-season 7v7 games.
- Owners and coaches must verify approved roster status, completed required registration, waivers, eligibility and applicable fees before participation.
- Current flag source lists 10 to 20 players per team; DRFL has separately considered a 15 to 21 player roster. Final roster minimum and maximum must be approved before registration.
- Substitutions occur between live plays and must be complete before the next snap; deceptive substitution intended to confuse opponents is not permitted.

3. Football, flags, clothing and field setup

- The draft calls for an adult NFL- or NCAA-size leather football, subject to DRFL inspection. This is the source rule; DRFL must confirm whether this remains its equipment policy.
- The flag draft uses three flags per player. Belt placement, permitted belt styles, secure attachment, missing flags, and inspection must be specified by DRFL before play.
- The source requires visible jersey numbers and coordinated team uniforms. Exact uniform materials, reversible-jersey language and exceptions require final confirmation.
- The original diagram shows an 80-yard total field (60-yard playing area plus two 10-yard end zones), 30 yards wide. Other source passages have inconsistent spots. Confirm field layout and line markings in a final field diagram.

4. Beginning play and possession

- A coin toss determines the initial choice (possession/defense or goal direction) under the source rules.
- The source generally starts a drive at the 20-yard line, with exceptions after interceptions. DRFL must confirm the final 7v7 field orientation, yard markings and start spot.
- The ball is snapped from the official-designated spot. The source requires a between-the-legs snap.
- After a score, turnover, safety, penalty or unusual stoppage, officials place the ball using the adopted restart and penalty rules.

5. Offense, passing and ball handling

- Running, handoffs and backward passes are permitted under the reviewed source rules.
- Receivers need one foot in bounds for a completed catch. Exact completion and simultaneous-possession definitions should be published with official training.
- The source permits one legal forward pass from behind the line of scrimmage. An illegally forward-thrown pitch or second forward pass requires a defined penalty and ball status.

- The source provides a 25-second play clock. Where there is no quarterback rush, it uses a five-second release count; DRFL should confirm the count and enforcement.

6. Defense, blitzing and non-contact safety

- Flag football is a non-tackle game. Tackling, deliberate dangerous contact, charging and unnecessary roughness are prohibited.
- Defenders stop the runner by legally removing a flag. No pulling clothing, holding an opponent, or flag guarding.
- The source allows defensive blitzing, but also mentions bump-and-run coverage and physical blocking. DRFL must make one clear decision about whether any controlled contact is allowed. This draft does not authorize contact that has not been approved and insured.
- A defender may attempt to block the quarterback's pass but may not illegally contact the quarterback or throwing arm.

7. Dead ball, fumbles and interceptions

- A play ends when the flag is legally removed, the runner goes out of bounds, a pass is incomplete, or an official stops the play.
- The original material includes differing treatment of loose footballs, laterals and live fumbles. Do not enforce a live-fumble recovery rule until DRFL chooses a safe, consistent standard.
- Interceptions are returnable under the source rules. Final field boundaries, restart positions and conversion-return rules must be published.

8. Scoring

Play	Source points / placement
Touchdown	6 points
Safety	2 points
One-point conversion	1 point; source attempts from 5-yard line
Two-point conversion	2 points; source attempts from 8-yard line
Field goals	Not used in the source flag rules
Defensive conversion return	Source describes 2 points on a return touchdown; confirm enforcement

9. Game clocks and timeouts

- Source round-robin games: two 16-minute halves and 10-minute halftime.
- Source playoff games: two 20-minute halves and 10-minute halftime.
- Source specifies three timeouts per team in each half; confirm whether this applies to all current-season games.

- Officials must publish whether the clock runs continuously or stops on scores, out-of-bounds plays, penalties, injuries and the final minutes; the source does not fully settle these details.

10. Downs, fourth down and conversion decisions

- The original describes one first-down marker between possession and the goal; this must be matched to a final field diagram.
- On fourth down, the offense declares whether to try for the first down or relinquish possession.
- The original alternates between a referee-spotted no-kick punt and an immediate turnover. DRFL must choose one fourth-down option and an exact ball spot.

11. Common fouls and officials

- Officials decide on-field judgment calls, timing, spotting, incidental contact and safety stoppages under the adopted rules.
- The source identifies offside, holding, illegal contact, roughing the passer, flag guarding, illegal blocking, illegal pass, false start and delay of game.
- The source generally mentions five-yard penalties but leaves important exceptions unclear, including pass interference, flag guarding, automatic first downs and loss of down. Publish a complete enforcement chart before competition.
- Only a head coach or team captain should approach an official respectfully for rule clarification. Applicable league procedures govern later complaints.

12. Overtime, standings and tournament play

- The original source permits a tie in round-robin play and reserves overtime for selected bracket or championship games.
- The source overtime instructions conflict about the second team’s possession and sudden death. DRFL must adopt a fair, exact overtime sequence before the first tournament.
- Source tournament seeding refers to round-robin points and a drawing for remaining teams. Final points, tie-breakers and bracket methods must be published.

13. Sportsmanship, safety and discipline

- No fighting, threats, discrimination, harassment, intentional injury or abuse of officials.
- Officials may stop play and report serious misconduct to DRFL for review. Discipline must align with the league bylaws and appeal process.
- A player who appears injured or may have a concussion must leave play and follow the applicable return-to-play procedures. DRFL should approve a written emergency response plan and medical policy.
- The original source proposes public photo ban lists and fixed multi-year fighting suspensions. These provisions need separate DRFL legal/privacy review and should not be applied solely from this draft.

14. Weather, accessibility and game-day communication

- DRFL and officials may delay, suspend, reschedule or cancel games when field, lightning, heat or other conditions pose a danger, consistent with league policies.

- Use clear visual referee signals and accessible written/ASL communication procedures where needed. This is a proposed operational addition for DRFL approval, not a settled rule from the original flag document.
- Before each game, head officials should confirm format, field, clock, penalties, participant eligibility and any safety restriction with both teams.

15. Acknowledgment and approval

Players, coaches, owners and officials should receive the approved final version of the rules and the applicable bylaws, then complete required acknowledgments before participating. Signing this working draft does not substitute for adoption of final game rules.

16. Future 8v8 team-choice option - NOT ACTIVE THIS SEASON

DRFL intends to offer a choice between 7v7 and 8v8 in a future season. When DRFL officially activates the option, a team may select a preferred format during season registration. This choice is subject to an approved division, enough registered teams, eligible rosters, compatible field size, officials, insurance and written scheduling rules.

- 7v7 and 8v8 shall not compete against one another in the same match unless DRFL separately adopts an explicit crossover format.
- Team selections become effective only when DRFL confirms the division and season schedule.
- Before the 8v8 option goes live, DRFL must approve 8v8-specific lineups, any modified field, minimum roster, formations, rush, substitutions and penalties.

17. Required decisions before DRFL releases final rules

☐ Confirm current 7v7 men’s and women’s divisions and season dates.

☐ Choose 7v7 team roster minimum/maximum (source 10–20 vs planning 15–21).

☐ Approve field size, markings, drive start, first-down zones and diagram.

☐ Approve permissible player contact, blocking, blitzing and all flag-equipment rules.

☐ Choose live/dead loose-ball rules, fumbles, pitches and interception restarts.

☐ Confirm game durations, play clock, five-second QB count and timeouts.

☐ Choose fourth-down no-kick punt/turnover rule and exact spots.

☐ Publish complete penalty/enforcement table and referee signals.

☐ Adopt overtime, tie-breaker, standings and playoff procedures.

☐ Approve emergency/concussion policy, insurance requirements, and disciplinary privacy rules.

☐ Confirm permission/ownership to adapt the original rules credited to Joe A. Martens Jr.

☐ Obtain final written DRFL approval and publish version/effective date.

DRFL authorized approver: _____ Date: _____

Approved final version number: _____ Effective date: _____

Source note: DRFL Official Bylaws (2026); DRFL Gameplay Rules (Joe A. Martens Jr., August 22, 2026); DRFL 7-on-7 Rules Draft (grammar review copy). This PDF is a newly organized working draft. It is not a legal opinion, insurance determination, or third-party copyright clearance.

FIELD DIAGRAM - REFERENCE ONLY (NOT YET APPROVED)

Original figure: DRFL Gameplay Rules, p.12. Confirm dimensions before game use.

3:6 Field Dimension:

Key:

Measurements by FT (feet)

5 yards = 15 FT
8 yards = 24 FT
20 yards = 60 FT

10 yards = 30 FT
30 yards = 90 FT
60 yards = 180 FT
A. Right side of field 90 FT
B. Left side of field 90 FT
80 yards = 240 FT



