



Recreation Ministry

2019 Bellevue Men's Flag Football Rules

I. Governing Rules:

Play will be governed by the NIRSA 2016-2017 National Touch and Flag Football rules. The following are modifications and highlights of these rules. Final interpretations are made by the Bellevue Recreation Staff and may be changed/amended at any time.

II. Equipment:

- A. No protective equipment may be worn; i.e. helmets, shoulder or hip pads. The game official must approve all protective materials (tape, pads, etc.) Casts are illegal equipment. Mouth and teeth mouthpiece are strongly recommended.
- B. Shoes must be worn at all times. **Shoes with metal, metal screw-in cleats, or metal tipped are not allowed (Screw in cleats that are plastic are allowed)**. Shoes must be one piece molded plastic/rubber or regular tennis shoes.
- C. Jewelry of any type is considered illegal equipment.
- D. **Shirts must be worn with the tails tucked inside pants.** No cut off shirts will be allowed. Shirts may not be altered in any manner that produces a knot-like protrusion or creates a tear-away jersey. **Players must wear the given Bellevue Flag Football Shirt in order to play.**
- E. Players preferably wear shorts or pants without belt loops or pockets and the drawstring must be tucked inside. It is difficult to find shorts without pockets, so those are allowed.
- F. The ball provided by the Bellevue Baptist shall be used unless a team wants to use their own ball with the approval of the referee and the opponent. All teams are required to leave the flags, balls, spotters or any other equipment that is property of Bellevue Baptist Church.

III. Playing Field:

- A. The field shall be 100 yards long and 40 yards wide with four 20-yard first down sections, and two 10-yard end zones.
- B. The following dash marks shall be measured from each goal line and placed in the center of the field:
 - 3 yards from goal line = 1 point conversion attempts
 - 10 yards from goal line = 2-point conversion attempt
- C. A player's box shall run parallel to the sidelines between the 20-yard lines. **Players must remain in the box if not on the field. Both teams may remain in the same box. Failure to remain in the box will result in penalty.**
- D. **Please, no pets are allowed on Bellevue Baptist Church property.**

IV. Timing:

- A. A game shall consist of two 20-minute halves with running clock. Half time shall be no more than 7 minutes in duration and will consist of the Devotion lead by each individual team's Captain or Team Shepherd. **Failure to have a devotion will result in an automatic 15 yard penalty to start the second half (first offense); every failure to have a devotion following the first offense will result in a forfeit.**
- B. There is a 5 minute grace period at the start of the actual game time if 5 players have not shown up to start the game. (Not when the game before you has finished.)
- C. If a team forfeits 3 games, they are dropped from further competition.
- D. **Mercy Rule:** If a team is **19** or more points ahead with 5 minutes remaining in the second half or if a team scores putting them up by 19 within the 5 minutes of the second half the game will be over.

E. Each team is allowed **two 30-second time outs per half that do not carry over if not used.** Time outs may be shortened if both teams are ready.

F. **The clock will stop during the last 2 minutes of each half for the following situations.**

1. Incomplete pass - starts on the snap
2. Out-of-bounds - starts on the snap
3. Team time-out - starts on the snap
4. First down - dependent on the previous play
5. Penalty and administration - dependent on the previous play.
(Exception: Delay of game - starts on the snap)
6. Referee's time-out - starts at their discretion
7. Touch back - starts on the snap
8. Change of possession - dependent on the previous play
9. Team attempting to waste time illegally - starts on snap.
10. After a score.

G. Once the ball is marked ready for play; a team has 25 seconds within which to snap the ball.

H. A game will be declared a forfeit by the referee if a team is in violation of the following rules:

1. Team must have five players ready to begin the game at the scheduled time.
2. If a team commits 3 unsportsmanlike fouls in one game.
3. If a team employs tactics obviously intended to delay the game. One warning will be given.
4. If an order for the removal of a player or spectator is not obeyed within three minutes after the warning.
5. If after play has been suspended (by the referee), one side fails to resume playing within 25 seconds after ordered by an official.
6. If a team or its spectators, in the opinion of the referee and the Bellevue Supervisor, continues to display unsportsmanlike behavior after being warned by an official.

I. A completed half will constitute a complete game if weather conditions cause cancelation.

1. This includes field conditions worsening due to rain on a game day
2. Lightning will automatically delay a game and if continued cancel a game.

V. Players

A. Seven players per team are allowed on the field at a time. Teams are required to know all Bellevue eligibility rules.

B. A team may begin a game with five players.

C. The offense must have at least four players within one yard of the scrimmage line. There is no requirement for defensive players to line-up along the line.

D. All plays must originate with a snap from the center. A minimum of 2 yards must be between the center and the person receiving snap. A towel may be placed under the ball, regardless of weather or field conditions.

E. Only one offensive player may be in motion when the ball is snapped. This motion must begin more than one second before the ball is snapped, and must be parallel to or away from the line of scrimmage. There must be four players on the line of scrimmage not counting the person in motion.

F. An offensive huddle is not required prior to play. However, if a huddle is formed, all players must attend.

G. Defensive buffer restrictions: No defensive player may be closer than 2 yard to the line of scrimmage. Defensive players may not break the buffer zone prior to the snap of the ball. **If at any point a defensive player enters the buffer zone prior to the snap they will be penalized 5 yards for a neutral zone infraction. The play stops and this does not give the offense a chance at a free play.**

H. All substitute players and spectators must remain between the 20-yard lines.

I. **Each team is allowed to have 3 emergency roster players. Each emergency roster player may play 2 regular season games, NO TOURNAMENT. Emergency players may only be used when 7 or fewer original rosters players are available.** The emergency list must be turned into the recreation staff by the first scheduled game. If a member of a team's original roster moves, is injured, or some other extreme circumstance they may be replaced by a member of the

emergency roster for the remainder of the season, including tournament play. Must be approved by Bellevue Staff.

VI. First Downs:

- A. A first down is awarded to a team whenever they advance the ball across the next 20-yard marker. Four downs will be allowed to obtain the first down.
- B. A first down may be obtained by running, passing, penalty, or change of possession.
- C. Only one first down per series of possession can be obtained at each 20-yard marker.

VII. Carrying the Ball:

- A. A ball carrier may not guard their flag other than "spinning" to avoid being deflagged.
- B. The ball carrier may not hurdle a player or **jump** to avoid being deflagged. Hurdling is interpreted as an attempt by a runner to jump over a player; the opposition should stand on their feet. **Offensive players must be in contact with the ground while carrying the football.**
- C. If a player inadvertently loses their flags or the opposition pulls it before possession of the ball, the play will continue and ball carrier must be downed by a one-hand touch, between the shoulder and knees, including the hand and arm.
- D. A player will be ruled "down" when:
 - 1. A defender removes the flagbelt for a runner. The defender should hold the flagbelt high above the head after removal
 - 2. Any part of the body other than the hand or foot touches the ground
 - 3. under the provision of section C
- E. A player is not "down" if the ball touches the ground while they are in possession (The ball then becomes an extension of the hand)
- F. The defender may not play the man, nor may they hold or tackle the runner (play the ball, attempting to not make contact with the player).
- G. The ball carrier may not be pushed out of bounds, but must be cornered and made to run out of bounds on their own accord.
- H. A fumbled or muffed ball is dead when it strikes the ground.
- I. When an official sounds their whistle inadvertently during a down or during a down in which a penalty accrue the foul is declined, when:
 - 1. The ball is in player possession - the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where declared dead or replay the down.
 - 2. The ball is loose from a fumble, backward pass, illegal kick, or illegal forward pass - the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.
 - 3. During a legal forward pass of a free or protected scrimmage kick - the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down replayed.

Note: **If a foul occurs during any of the above downs, an accepted penalty shall be administered as in any other play situation. When the foul is accepted, disregard the inadvertent whistle.**
- J. A player may not dive forward while carrying the ball in attempt to gain extra yards/score. If it is an accidental fall forward (trip, spin and fall, inadvertent push from behind) it will not be penalized. **If a player dives forward intentionally they will be penalized 10 yards from the spot of the foul.** Diving to make a catch or diving to pull a flag are legal forms of diving.

VIII. Blocking and Rushing:

- A. Blocking will be by **screening only**, that is, a blocker must hinder a defender's movement through positioning rather than body contact.
- B. No part of the body except the feet shall be in contact with the ground and the feet must remain on the ground for the duration of the block.
- C. During a block, the body must remain upright with elbows and hands touching the body at the side or behind the back.
- D. **Down field blocking is illegal. Once a catch is made or a player rushes beyond the line of scrimmage, offensive players may set a stationary screen, but no use of hands. This means players may not run down field alongside a teammate carrying the ball. Once the catch is made players must make a stationary screen, not following the ball carrier. This does not mean you run**

with the ball carrier and once a defender is close you stop and set a screen. Once a catch is made you stop where you are as a screen. If there is a running play or quarterback run, you can act as a stationary blocker in front of them, but may not continue to run with them down field screening.

- E. While incidental contact may occur; blocking/rushing penalties will be called against the player who initiates **excessive** contact. Both the defensive rusher and offensive blocker should make every attempt to have as little contact as possible.
- F. The defense may not use hands, arms, or legs as a wedge to gain an advantage over a blocker.

IX. Passing:

- A. A forward pass may be thrown from any point behind the line of scrimmage.
- B. All incomplete backward passes shall be marked down at the point of ground contact.
- C. Only 1 forward pass may be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage on a given play. A pass is determined to occur at any time the ball is intentionally put into the air, regardless of direction or manner.
- D. A forward pass is **illegal** if:
 - 1. The passer's foot is beyond the plane of Team A's scrimmage line (first ball spotter-orange) when the ball leaves their hand.
 - 2. Thrown after team possession has changed during the down.
 - 3. Intentionally thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage.
 - 4. A passer catches their untouched forward pass.
 - 5. There is more than one forward pass per down.
- E. All players except the passer are eligible to receive a pass.
- F. A player must have complete possession of the ball and land with their first foot in bounds, to be a legal reception.
- G. A pass intercepted in the end zone may be advanced.
- H. If the passer is de-flagged prior to releasing the ball, the ball is dead and the down is ended.
- I. An offensive player, **who goes out of bounds on their own** cannot come back into the field and participate in the play.
Penalty: Illegal Participation: - 10 yards.

X. Kicking:

- A. There will be no formal kickoff. The team that is the receiving team will have the ball placed at the 20yd line and start their possession from there. This will take place at the start of the game, after every score, and at the start of the second half.
- B. On fourth down, the offense must announce when the ball is marked whether they will kick. Once the decision is made, it is reversible by using a timeout. If a kick is to be made, the following procedures must be followed.
 - 1. The kicker must receive the snap at least two yards behind the center.
 - 2. The kick must be made immediately upon receiving the snap.
 - 3. All other offensive and defensive line players may not cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.
 - 4. **There is no requirement for defensive players to line-up along the line. But only stationary screen blocking is permitted on a punt return.**
- C. Only the receiving team may advance a punt
 - 1. On a muffed punt the play will be dead and the ball placed where the ball hit the ground.
 - 2. If the punt is short the returning team may return it regardless of how many times the ball bounces on the ground.
- D. A ball that goes into the end zone from the impetus of the kick may be returned.
- E. **Failure to kick the ball before the "25 seconds" has elapsed will result in placing the ball on the 40 yard line and adding the time back to the game clock. (Purpose: With running clocks, this will encourage teams to "delay" the game.)**

XI. Scoring:

- A. Point values will be as follows
 - 1. Touchdown: 6 points
 - 2. Safety: 2 points
 - 3. P.A.T. from the 3-yard line: 1 point

4. P.A.T. from the 10-yard line: 2 points

- B. **Touchdown Verification: The player scoring the touchdown must raise their arms so the nearest official can de-flag the player.** If the player is not easily de-flagged, and the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed. The player is disqualified and an unsportsmanlike penalty will be enforced from the previous spot.
- C. **Once the football crosses the plane of the end zone a touchdown will be awarded. It must cross the plane before the flag is pulled.**

XII. Tie Breaker (Overtime):

Should a game end with a tie score, the following system shall be used:

A. Coin toss with the following options:

1. Offense or defense.
2. Goal - Both teams will use the same goal on offense.
3. First overtime PAT will be from the 3 yard line. If more OT is needed PATs will be from the 10 yard line.

B. Each team is allowed a maximum of 4 downs in which to score from 10-yard line. A series is ended by:

1. Scoring a touchdown, P.A.T. is attempted.
2. Interception - If returned for touchdown, P.A.T. is attempted, if needed. If no touchdown, they begin their 4 down series if available.
3. If the score remains tied, the tiebreaker procedure is used again, team captains will alternate choices.

XIII. Penalties:

A. The offended team may have its choice of the penalty or the result of the play.

B. When both teams commit an infraction during the same live ball period, regardless of the severity, the down is automatically replayed, provided there is no change of possession. If an ejection is warranted, this may occur even though no yardage is assessed.

D. When the live ball and dead ball penalty occurs, each is handled on its own merit, regardless whether the penalties are on the same or opposing teams.

E. Personal Foul/Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- a. Any use of Foul/vulgar language will result in an immediate personal foul.
- b. Any personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will result in the removal of that player from the field of play for that possession and must pay a \$10 fine. For a second personal foul/unsportsmanlike conduct penalty in a game the player will not be able to re-enter the game, will sit out the following game, must pay a \$15 fine in addition to the previous \$10 fine, and meet with a Bellevue Recreation Staff member.
- c. If a player is given 4 personal fouls or unsportsmanlike conduct penalties over the course of the season they will be removed from the league.

XIV. Fighting and Ejections:

A. Any teams fighting will cause a double forfeit and removal from the league.

B. Any player ejected from a game will not be allowed to participate in their team's next game.

C. We reserve the right to suspend a player for any amount of games based on the severity of the ejection.

SUMMARY OF PENALTIES:

CODE:

(P.S.) = Previous Spot

(Spot) = Spot of Foul

A. *Dead Ball Fouls* - Loss of 5 yards

1. Delay of game (P.S.)
2. Encroachment (P.S.)
(2nd consecutive encroachment - loss of 10 yards)
3. False Start (P.S.)
4. Illegal Snap (P.S.)
5. Illegal substitutions (P.S.)

B. *Live Ball Fouls* - Loss of 5 yards

1. Aiding runner by teammates
2. Failure to wear required equipment (P.S.)
3. Illegal forward pass (Loss of down if by team A) (SPOT)
4. Illegal handing the ball forward (Loss of down if by team A)
5. Illegal motion (P.S.)
6. Illegal procedure (P.S.)
7. Illegal shift (P.S.)
8. Less than required # of players on the scrimmage line at the snap (P.S.)
9. Player receiving snap within 2 yards of scrimmage line (P.S.)

C. *Live Ball Fouls* - Loss of 10 yards

1. Eligibility lost by going out of bounds and participating in the play.
2. Flag Guarding
3. Unsportsmanlike conduct (Succeeding spot)
4. Illegal bat, illegal kick, illegal participation.
5. Illegal contact
6. Illegal secured flag belt on touchdown (Loss of down& score; player disqualification) (P.S.)
7. Pass interference - defense (Automatic 1st down) (P.S.)
8. Pass interference - offense (Loss of down) (P.S.)
9. Personal Foul (includes vulgar language)
10. Roughing the passer (Automatic 1st Down) (P.S.)

NOTE: If any of the above infractions are deemed flagrant, the player will be disqualified.