



**Harrisburg Parks & Recreation**  
**Adult Men's Flag Football**  
**Rules & Regulations**

**I. LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

1. The league shall be administered by Harrisburg Parks & Recreation. The Department reserves the right to make any changes or decisions that they deem necessary for the betterment of league play.
2. The Harrisburg Parks & Recreation Department shall be the chief supervising body of all teams under the Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Adult Flag Football Program and reserves the right to suspend any team member or captain whose conduct is considered as detrimental to the best interest of Harrisburg Adult Flag Football. The department will also be responsible for ruling on all matters not herein stated in the rules and regulations.

The Parks and Recreation Staff shall have the following additional responsibilities:

- 1) To review all matters concerning complaints, suggestions, violations, and subject concerns of stated program Rules and Regulations.
  - 2) To resolve all matters concerning the interpretation of the accepted playing rules.
  - 3) To render decisions and rulings on all league matters.
3. The purpose of the Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Athletic Program is to provide the citizens of Harrisburg the opportunity to play organized sports. The leagues will encourage sportsmanship, and good conduct among participants, and it will develop such rules and regulations that will be for the general good of the leagues. At all times the health and welfare of each individual will be taken into consideration. It should be clear that participation in Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Athletic Programs is a privilege and NOT an inherent right of an individual. Those who persist in exhibiting a negative attitude toward the program shall be asked to refrain from participating or attending any league activities particularly after they have been counseled and given extended opportunities to change their conduct. This type of action distracts from the positive aspects of the program and the department has an obligation to protect the interests of those who participate within the League's Rules & Regulations.

## **II. TEAM COMPOSITION**

1. Team rosters may not exceed 12 players.
2. All players must be 17 years or older by October 15, of the current year. All players that are 17 must have a waiver signed by their parent/guardian on file at the Parks and Recreation office each season.
3. Team/Roster: All players must be listed on the official Team Roster which must be on file with Harrisburg Parks & Recreation at least 24 hours prior to the first game or when established by the department.
4. Any changes made to the rosters must be submitted to the League Coordinator (staff person with Harrisburg Parks and Recreation) prior to the third game. All rosters will be final by the third game and no additional changes may be made after this time. Any updated roster may be mailed, faxed or emailed in. **Players may only appear on one roster in the same division.**
5. If the legality of a player is questioned, the Game Official may request to see a player's picture ID during any game of the season. If the player does not have a picture ID on their person they can finish the game but must come to the Harrisburg Parks & Recreation Department before the end of the next business day and present their identification to the Assistant Parks and Recreation Manager. Business days are Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm (excluding holidays). If the player does not present their ID within the allotted time he/she will be considered an illegal player and will be, along with the team captain suspended from participating in the adult flag football program for one calendar year and any games in which the player participated in will be considered forfeits.
  - a. A non-rostered illegal player is a player that is found playing for a team and their name is not on that team's official roster.
6. The person listed as the Team Captain on the roster will be considered the team contact person. The Team Captain must make certain that all team members receive all information distributed by Harrisburg Parks & Recreation Department and are aware of league rules.
7. The Team Captain is the spokesman for the team during all games.
8. It is the responsibility of the Team Captain to call Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Inclement Weather Line, 704-455-2903 or visit the website [www.HarrisburgNC.org](http://www.HarrisburgNC.org) to determine the status of games in case of inclement weather.
9. The only two personnel permitted on the sidelines during games are: players, the team captain and two (2) assistant captains. All sidelines should be cleaned by the team that occupied them at the end of the game.

10. Teams may field a minimum of 4 players and a maximum of 5 players.

### **III. PLAYING RULES**

1. Games will consist of two (2) 25 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime. Playing field shall be approximately 30 yards wide and 50 yards long.
2. A coin toss determines first possession.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at the 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
4. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
5. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
6. Each team will have one 30 second time out per half.
7. Officials may stop the clock at their discretion.
8. Any regular season game that is interrupted, regardless of the reason, will be considered official if half time has been reached. If the game is tied, only an overtime period will be rescheduled.
9. It is the responsibility of the Team Captain of each team to keep score for their team. Team captains should communicate to one another throughout the game, each time a point or points are scored to verify that both teams are in agreement with the score. If there are discrepancies in the score, those should be solved prior to leaving the playing field. The score of the game should be emailed to the league coordinator by the Monday following the game at [smarble@harrisburgnc.org](mailto:smarble@harrisburgnc.org).

### **IV. OVERTIME**

1. If the score is tied at the end of regulation game, teams move directly into overtime.
2. All overtime periods will be played towards the same goal line. A coin toss shall be administered to determine the options. If additional overtime periods are played, captains will alternate option choices.

3. Each team will have a series of downs to score a touchdown beginning from the 10-yard line. Intercepted passes may be returned. If the ball is not returned for a touchdown, the ball will be placed at the 10-yard line and play will begin as stated above.
4. The goal line shall always be the line-to-gain.

## **V. SCORING**

1. Touchdown: 6 points
2. Extra point: 1 point (played from 5-yard line) or 2 points (played from 12-yard line)
3. Safety: 2 points
4. Mercy Rule: If a team is 19 or more points ahead when the referee announces the 2 minute warning for the second half, or any time after that, the game is over.

## **VI. RUNNING**

1. The quarterback cannot run with the ball.
2. The player who takes the handoff or lateral can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
3. Once the ball has been handed off or lateraled, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
4. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
5. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

## **VII. RECEIVING**

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or lateraled behind the line of scrimmage).
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

### **VIII. PASSING**

1. All passes must be forward.
2. Shovel passes are allowed. Backward laterals are permitted anywhere on the field. Interceptions change the possession of the ball, and may be advanced. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
3. The quarterback has 7 seconds to pass the ball

### **IX. DEAD BALLS**

1. The ball must be snapped between the legs or off to one side, to start play.
2. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
3. Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - A. Ball carrier’s flag is pulled
  - B. Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - C. Touchdown or safety is scored.
  - D. After an interception has been ruled dead.
  - E. Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground
  - F. Ball carrier’s flag falls off.

*\*Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.\**

### **X. RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK**

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball is handed off, the seven yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking (or moving picks) or tackling is allowed. Once the ball has been completed the offensive team must not interfere with the defensive team

### **XI. PERSONAL FOULS**

1. Players may not commit any of the following personal fouls:
  - A. Punch, strike, strip, steal or attempt to steal the ball from a player in possession.
  - B. Trip, clip or hurdle any player.
  - C. Contact an opponent who is on the ground, or after the ball is declared dead.
  - D. Throw the runner to the ground.
  - E. Deliberately drive or run into a defensive player or lower the shoulder
  - F. Commit any unnecessary roughness.
  - G. Tackle a runner by grasping or encircling with the hands or arms.
  - H. Roughing the Passer (automatic first down) - applies only to the player throwing a legal forward pass behind the offensive line of scrimmage. If a defender contacts the passer in any fashion, whether or not he/she touches the pass, it is roughing the passer. Contacting the ball while in the passer's hand is roughing the passer.
  - I. Aid the runner, grab, push or pull a team mate with the ball
  - J. Stiff arm an opponent
  - K. Guard flags by blocking them with the hands, ball or otherwise denying the defense the chance to pull.
  - L. Use hands or body to block an opponent
  - M. Pulling the flag from an opponent who does not have the ball.
  - N. Tying the flag belt in a knot or any other tampering with the flag belt. (Also results in player ejection)

## **XII. SUMMARY OF FOULS & PENALTIES**

1. Loss of 5 Yards
  - A. Delay of game
  - B. Off sides
  - C. Encroachment
  - D. False start
  - E. Illegal shift or motion
  - F. Illegal procedure
  - G. Failure to wear required equipment or required equipment worn illegally
  - H. Helping the runner
2. Loss of 10 Yards
  - A. Personal foul
  - B. Flag guarding
  - C. Impeding the runner or holding
  - D. Illegal participation
  - E. Unsportsmanlike conduct
  - F. Forward pass interference – Defense (also automatic 1st down)
  - G. Roughing the passer (also automatic 1st down from line of scrimmage)
3. Loss of Down
  - A. Illegal forward pass (also loss of 5 yards)

- B. Forward pass interference – Offense (also loss of 10 yards from the previous spot)
  - C. Intentional grounding (also loss of 5 yards)
  - D. Illegally secured flag belt (also loss of 10 yards from the previous spot and player ejection)
4. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
  5. Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
  6. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

### **XIII. CONDUCT**

1. No team captain or player shall belittle or berate the players or team captains of another team. This type of action will **NOT** be tolerated.

#### **FIRST OFFENSE: Warning.**

#### **SECOND OFFENSE: Ejection from game of offending person.**

2. Harassment of officials and field supervisors will not be tolerated. Questions should be asked by the TEAM CAPTAIN ONLY about rule interpretations only. Judgment calls are not to be argued. Failure to comply with this rule will result in immediate ejection of the guilty party and possible forfeiture of the game. **NO WARNINGS WILL BE GIVEN!**
3. Team Captains are accountable for the behavior of their assistants, players and related supporters. Game officials may penalize the team captains for unsportsmanlike conduct.
4. **PENALTY:** Any team captain or player ejected from a game will be suspended for a minimum of 1 game up to a maximum of the remainder of the season. Any team captain or player ejected for a second time during the season will be expelled from the league. When a player is ejected for un-sportsman like conduct that team will play a player short for the rest of the game.
5. Any player ejected from a game must schedule a meeting with a member of the Parks and Recreation Staff prior to playing in their next game. Failure to meet with a staff member will result in expulsion from the league for the remainder of the season.

### **XIV. OFFICIALS**

1. Officials shall be certified and authorized by Harrisburg Parks & Recreation. The referee will have authority over the game and his/her decisions over points scored, rules, etc.

shall be final. Please respect their rights and work with them to ensure a well-played game. There will be no less than two officials for any game.

2. Officials shall:

- a. Make all decisions for infringement of the rules committed within or outside the boundary lines from the beginning of the game to the end.
- b. Act as timekeeper and allow the full or agreed time, adding any time lost through injury or other causes at their discretion.
- c. Will send off the field of play any player/team captain who is guilty of violent conduct, serious foul play, the use of abusive language, or is guilty of a second caution offense.

## **XV. PROTESTS**

1. There will be no protests.

## **XVI. UNIFORM**

1. Each team must wear matching jerseys. Matching is defined by same color shirt and same color ink for lettering and numbers. No made up shirts using taped numbers will be allowed.
2. Each team must have matching jerseys by the first game. All players must keep shirts (including sweatshirts) tucked in at all times. A jersey shall in no way interfere with the flags.
3. Players must wear and provide themselves with jerseys, shorts/pants with no pockets and appropriate athletic shoes. No metal cleats or spikes may be worn.
4. Flags shall be provided to each team and must be worn by all players on the fields at all times. Flag belts must be worn on the outside of all clothing with the clip/buckle in front. Two flags are to hang down vertically along the side seam of the trousers. The flags will be fasted to the belt in such a manner as not to be twisted under or fastened to the inside of the belt.
5. No jewelry is allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, earrings, wedding rings or bands, other rings, mouth, facial, and body piercings, necklaces, bracelets, rubber bands, metal barrettes, etc. Taping of jewelry is not allowed. Exception: medical alert jewelry, which must be taped down.
6. The referee shall not permit any player to wear equipment in his or her judgment, which is dangerous or confusing to other players. This includes, but not limited to, items such as:



- a. A guard, cast or brace made of hard and unyielding leather, plaster, pliable (*soft*) plastic, metal or any other hard substance even though covered with soft padding when worn on the elbow, hand, finger, wrist or forearm.
  - b. Head decorations, head wear and jewelry. EXCEPTION: Head bands no wider than 2 inches and made of nonabrasive unadorned single colored cloth, fiber, soft leather or rubber may be worn. Rubber (elastic) bands may be used to control hair.
  - c. Equipment which is unnatural and designed to increase a player's height or reach or to gain an advantage.
7. Items not covered are enforced at the official's discretion.

### **XVII. EQUIPMENT**

1. Game Ball – Must be stamped or approved for National High School or NCAA collegiate play. Each team may provide their own football or may agree to use the same ball. The offensive team is responsible for retrieving the ball after play. Each team is responsible for getting their own game ball in and out of play following changes of possession.

### **XVIII. FORFEITURE**

1. Teams must field a minimum of 4 players to avoid a forfeit.
2. There will be a ten (10) minute grace period given for the first scheduled game at each field. This grace period will be taken away from the total time of the game.

### **XIX. CANCELLATIONS / INCLEMENT WEATHER**

1. For the most up to date information on cancellations, call the Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Inclement Weather Line at 704-455-2903 or visit [www.HarrisburgNC.org](http://www.HarrisburgNC.org). Any game that is stopped at halftime or beyond will be counted as a complete game. Games that have not reached halftime will be continued from that point on their makeup date.

Any games that must be re-scheduled will be done so by the Harrisburg Parks & Recreation Department.