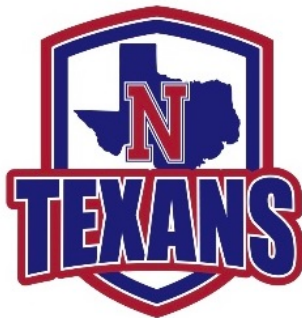




# North Texas Football League Bylaws and Rules

Board Approved: July 24, 2018



# APPENDIX: RULES OF THE GAME

THIS PAGE LEFT  
BLANK

## **RULE 1: PLAYER QUALIFICATIONS**

### 1) Age Requirements

- a) Players shall not be less than 5 years of age or over 12 years of age on or before September 1 of the current year.
- b) Shall present to the local official at the time of registration a certified birth certificate (or a copy thereof) or current passport. Proof of birth date accepted by local school district may also be accepted.
- c) No child may participate if conditions of **RULE 1 item 1) b)** are not accomplished.
- d) Any exceptions must be approved by the NTFL Board.
- e) NTFL Board encourages use of SportsAgeID for age certification vs using birth certificates.

### 2) Local Association Boundaries

- a) Players shall participate only with the local association whose boundaries are defined by the player's school district, residence, or attendance at a public/private school located within the associations' approved limits. NTFL Board must approve any exceptions.
- b) Any child participating or who is eligible to participate in a school affiliated football program shall be prohibited from participation in NTFL as a player.

### 3) Special Needs Players

- a) Any children with special/physical needs **MUST** be brought before the NTFL Board for approval to participate in the program.

## **RULE 2: COACHING QUALIFICATIONS**

### 1) Coaching Requirements

- a) The NTFL Board will require ALL Coaches to sign the NTFL Code of Ethics, with your local association. All head coaches must live in the member association boundaries or have NTFL Board approval.
- b) All coaches will agree to have a criminal background check performed by their association and must be approved in accordance with the Local Association Bylaws.
- c) The head coach and/or at least one alternate must attend the sports medicine/bylaw and officials meeting sponsored by the NTFL.
- d) All coaches must be "Heads Up Football" certified.

2) Coaching Regulations

- a) Each team must have one individual designated as a head coach.
- b) The head coach must carry team pictures and official team roster to all game sites, as well as a signed copy of the NTFL Coaches code of Ethics, for himself and all coaches. The draft form is the official team roster.
- c) Penalty for not having picture and official roster at game site is \$100.00 to the local association for the first offense. The coach may be required to appear before the NTFL Board for the second offense. The NTFL Board will determine any penalty.
- d) It is the responsibility of the head coach for conduct unbecoming to the objectives and goals of NTFL for himself/herself, his/her assistant coaches, players and the players' parents.
- e) NTFL rules allow for only one head coach, one assistant coach, and five sideline passes to be on the field at home and away game sites. (Seven adults maximum...does not include chain gang if you are the home team) All seven (7) adults must wear the approved current season lanyard.
  - i) If the team exceeds the 7 Lanyard total the referee will give a warning first to remove the extra persons from the sideline. If the additional persons stay on the sideline the referee will impose a 15 yard penalty.

3) Coaching Violations

- a) The penalty for violation of **RULE 8** shall consist of: first offense, a \$100.00 fine, notification to the NTFL Board, and possible one-game suspension; second offense, automatic one-game suspension and \$250.00 fine to the local association; third offense, possible suspension/banning from the league.
- b) The board of directors dictates suspension.
- c) "Banned" is out for life.
- d) If any association takes action against a coach, parent, or participant, then that association must notify the NTFL Board in writing of its decision.

### RULE 3: DIVISIONS

1) Compilation of Divisions

a) The breakdown of league divisions shall be the following:

**TABLE 1: Breakdown of League Divisions**

| Division                               | Type of Play | Player Age Limitation   |
|--|--------------|---|
| Kindergarten and 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade | Flag         | Players aged 5 and 6 or before June 1 <sup>st</sup> , may participate in this division but cannot have reached the age of 8 by September 1. |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade                  | Flag         | Players cannot have reached the age of 9 by September 1.  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade                  | Tackle       | Players cannot have reached the age of 10 by September 1.   |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade                  | Tackle       | Players cannot have reached the age of 11 by September 1.   |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade                  | Tackle       | Players cannot have reached the age of 12 by September 1.   |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade                  | Tackle       | Players cannot have reached the age of 13 by September 1.   |

2) Requests to Play in Other Divisions

a) Any deviations from **RULE 3 item 1)** as listed above, **MUST** go through the local Association and presented to the NTFL Board prior to July 31. Final approval is with the NTFL Board. Any request(s) may be required to appear before the NTFL Board.

b) Any parent that wishes to move their child up to the next division, must present in writing to the Local Association prior to the draft. Once a player has completed two seasons in the higher division he may not return to his age appropriate division with the exception of 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

### RULE 4: PLAYER WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

1) Weight Restriction Guidelines

a) No minimum weight restriction shall be required for participation in any Division.

b) Weight restrictions will be imposed in the following circumstances:

i) Weight-restricted players may not handle the ball. **No play can be designed for a stickered player to touch the ball.**

ii) Weight-restricted players may catch or advance the ball only on:

- (1) Blocked Punts
- (2) Fumbles
- (3) Interceptions
- (4) Stripping of the ball carrier
- (5) Kickoff and kickoff return if kicked directly to the player, the weight restricted player must be lined up on the front line.

iii) A weight-restricted player may kick the ball off of the tee.

iv) Any weight restricted offensive/defensive player at the time of the snap of the ball must be stationary and within one yard of the line of scrimmage. The only positions allowed for a weight restricted player on offense are tight end, tackle, guard or center, if they are lined up at tight end they are not eligible to go out for a pass or advance the ball. A weight restricted guard, tackle, or tight end cannot be more than one (1) yard apart from each other on the line of scrimmage. The only positions allowed for a weight-restricted player on defense are nose tackle, unless prohibited by the **RULES OF PLAY**, the A, B, and C gaps and defensive end. The weight-restricted defensive end cannot be more than two (2) yards outside of the tackle box.

- (1) Penalty for first offense is 5-yard delay of game and loss of down.
- (2) Second penalty is 15 yards and loss of down.

v) Offensive violations of **RULE 4 item 1)** will result in loss of down.

vi) Weight restriction guidelines as mentioned above shall be applied to players as follows: (the weight is not to exceed that specified for each division ie. 80 is 80.0 on the digital scale, 80.1 equals weight restricted and so forth for each division).

**Table 2: Weight Restriction per Division**

| DIVISION                               | WEIGHT RESTRICTION (lbs.)      |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Kindergarten and 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade | NONE                           |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade                  | NONE                           |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade                  | Player shall not to exceed 95  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade                  | Player shall not to exceed 105 |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade                  | Player shall not to exceed 115 |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade                  | Player shall not to exceed 125 |

2) Weigh-In Regulations

- a) All players from every local association shall have his/her weight certified by NTFL officials at the official weigh-in on an agreed upon date and time by all local associations.
- b) The official weigh-ins shall be at a specified time and place designated by the NTFL Board. Each association must make arrangements to have a minimum of two reps present at all times at the weigh-in. Failure to do so will be a mandatory fine of **\$500.00**. The president of the NTFL may grant an exemption to this requirement; however, the fine is mandatory if no exemption is given.
- c) Any player coming to the official NTFL weigh-in who does not have his/her helmet will have his/her weight listed on the official roster as an overweight player. The president or the NTFL Board must approve any exceptions.

- d) Those players at official weigh-in shall have their weights certified by NTFL officials. No NTFL Board member may be the official weigh-in supervisor for his/her local association.
- e) Failure to participate in the weigh-in process will result in a player being stickered. Any exception will require NTFL approval.
- f) Any player who misses the official NTFL weigh-in shall have 48 hours after the end of the official weigh-in to be weighed with agreed predetermined NTFL representation and the player's head coach. If the player is weighed after the 48-hour period five (5) pounds will be added per day. The cumulative additional weight will be added to the weight on the scale and the player will be designated appropriately.
  - i) Example Scenario: Official Weigh-in is Saturday August 23 and ends at 3PM. Player "A" (6<sup>th</sup> Grader) misses weigh-in and requests to be weighed on Wednesday August 27 at 5PM. The scale weight for Player "A" shows 111lbs; the official weigh-in weight will be recorded as 126= (111lbs+15lbs) and the player will be designated as weight restricted.

### 3) Weight Restricted Player Violation

- a) The designed and intentional use of a player in a weight-restricted position whose weight exceeds that specified in **TABLE 2**, or of those whose weight does not exceed those in **TABLE 2** but did not have their weight certified at an official weigh-in, does constitute a violation of the bylaws of NTFL, and the head coach will be subject to action under **RULE 2 item 3) a)**. During the game the offending team will be assessed a fifteen-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. The coach will be suspended for one game.
- b) Any player whose weight is above the division weight restriction shall have his/her helmet labeled in a conspicuous manner by NTFL officials. Violation (for not wearing it) will cost the local association **\$25.00** for the first offense. The second offense may be removal of the player from the official roster.

## **RULE 5: PLAYER CERTIFICATION**

### 1) Certification Process

- a) Each player is to be certified as to participation eligibility. Accepted forms of certification are:
  - Proof of grade placement
  - Birth Certificate and/or Passport/or SportsAgeID
  - Proof of residency in the form of utility bill or tax statement
  - Proof of attendance in boundary school



- b) The official team roster shall serve as the document of certification, with team picture certified by NTFL officials. Team rosters will be made available upon request to each member association at any time.
- 2) Certification Responsibility
  - a) The local association President shall have the responsibility for certification of grade placement/school, player age, and residence.
  - b) No player shall participate who has not been certified.
- 3) Certification Penalty
  - a) The penalty for playing a player whose grade, age and/or residence was not certified, or has been falsified shall be suspension of the player from the NTFL. The head coach and local association may be brought before the NTFL Board for consideration of bylaw violations under **RULE 1**. The local association may elect to do, as they deem necessary to any coach for violating any bylaw; however, their final judgment does not prevent NTFL from imposing further penalties.
  - b) Member associations are subject to a \$1000 fine if a player is found to not meet the certification requirements as outlined in **RULE 5 item 1**).

## **RULE 6: PLAYER ALLOCATION AND TEAMS**

- 1) Team Size
  - a) No team in any division shall consist of more than 25 players without the approval of the NTFL Board, provided an additional team can be made. Any exceptions to this article must be brought before the NTFL Board.
  - b) If any team falls to 16 players or below, by the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) game of the season, that team may go to the waitlist to obtain additional players to make up to 18 players on the team. These additional players shall be limited to participation as weight restricted players only.
- 2) Player Registration
  - a) All players shall register with their local association on or before the registration deadline. The NTFL Board will approve this deadline.
  - b) Each association shall have a registration period of no less than six (6) weeks before registration deadline.
  - c) NTFL shall publish the registration deadline on the NTFL website no less than eight (8) weeks before deadline.
  - d) If a local association sees that its numbers are down or not enough to split by the registration deadline then that local association may register more players in that division.

- e) If a player plays up a division for two or more full seasons that player may never request to play back down with the exception of 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
- 3) Local Association Waitlist Procedure
- a) Waitlist closes at weigh-in, no additional players may be added to the waitlist after weigh in.
  - b) If no waitlist players exist in the needed division after weigh in and a team falls below 16 players they may not go out and find players to add to their team.
- 4) Player Allocation and Draft - General Information
- a) Each association will adhere to the NTFL draft guidelines as follows. These draft guidelines were developed to provide consistency in drafting players for the NTFL leagues and to assist the draft auditors in the correct process and procedures to follow.
  - b) A NTFL representative will audit each draft. The auditor will be responsible for conducting the draft. The local association will be responsible for filling out all draft paper work. At the end of the draft, the auditor will conduct a private 'exit' poll of each coach to ensure the draft was fair and equitable. If an impropriety exists, the auditor will redraft the players using a blind draw.
  - c) The head coach will be allowed his son (or equivalent) and four (two for flag) coach agreement players per team to be agreed upon amongst coaches from their local associations at a meeting to be determined before the day of the draft. The coach will also have first right of refusal for players that played on the team the previous year, as his coach agree players. This meeting will be monitored by the local board members who will not be impacted by that draft. NTFL must be given 7 days' notice of the date and location of the meeting so that Board members from other cities may attend. In the event an agreement for players cannot be resolved at the local association meeting, a formal NTFL coach agreement meeting will be held one hour prior to the official scheduled draft. The coaches will have 30 minutes to come to an agreement. If no agreement is reached there will be a 15-minute break. Immediately after the break if there is still no agreement, each coach will get one assistant's son as a coach agreement and remainder of the players will be selected through the draft. An NTFL Official from another association will attend the formal coach agreement meeting.
  - d) The coach agree players are the only players who may be defined to a specific team prior to the date of the draft per the Coach Agreement Meeting. Any other conversations about player placement are not official in nature and are not a part of the player placement procedure.
  - e) If a parent requests in writing that his/her child not be coached by a particular coach that child must be placed into the draft, he is not eligible to be coach agreed by another coach.

- f) The order of the draft will be serpentine and determined by a numbered drawing by the coaches. The format will be (i.e. 1, 2, 3 reverses to 3, 2, 1).
- g) The draft table may have a maximum of two representatives per team. The head coach and assistant, the assistant coach's child must be one of the coach agreed players.
- h) Roster Players are players who are automatically placed on a team.
  - Example:*
    - a. *Head Coach's Son*
    - b. *Coach Agreement Players*
    - c. *Brothers of Other Roster Players*
    - d. Any exceptions to the above must have NTFL approval
- i) At the time of the Draft, each team must start with the same amount of players.
- j) "Hat" Picks.
  - i) "Hat" picks are not the same as the blind draw.
  - ii) "Hat" picks are the players who did not attend the grass drills and are not on the draft sheet. A coach may elect to go to the 'Hat" at any time during the draft.
  - iii) If all coaches agree, all players that participated the previous year can be moved into the draft.
- k) Brother Picks:
  - i) When you pick a brother, the other brother is automatically placed on the team as the next pick.
  - ii) If a brother is a coach agreement player, the other brother must also be a coach agreement player. No exceptions.
    - Example:*

You pick a brother (older age group) in round 3. The younger brother is automatically placed on the team. You pick a brother (twin) in the third round; the other brother is automatically your 4th round pick.
- l) Head coaches are prohibited from relinquishing their positions (stepping down) to add additional players/coaches to their roster.
- m) Each local association shall establish a specific time and place, within NTFL guidelines, to conduct player allocation.
- n) No draft auditor may monitor his/her local association draft.

- o) When deemed necessary, the board shall appoint alternates for assigned auditors to serve in their absence.
  - p) At the conclusion of each draft, the draft auditor shall cause to be prepared an official roster for each team.
  - q) The official roster form shall be provided by NTFL.
  - r) The official roster form shall include:
    - i) Local association
    - ii) Team name
    - iii) Team division
    - iv) Head coach name
    - v) Player number
    - vi) Player name
    - vii) Player residence street address, zip code
    - viii) Player school of enrollment
    - ix) Players grade of enrollment
    - x) Player age
    - xi) Birth date
    - xii) Weight R=over, red striped, N=under no red stripe, write the actual weight
    - xiii) Place for signature of head coach, draft auditor, Association President and NTFL official at weigh in
  - s) The draft auditor shall retain and submit the original copy of the roster to the NTFL secretary at a prescribed time and place.
  - t) No player may quit one team and move to another team.
- 5) Grass Drill Regulations
- a) Grass Drills for all players may be conducted at the discretion of the association but no more than four weeks before the draft unless approved by the NTFL Board.
  - b) Any or all plays and team formations are prohibited during these grass drills.
  - c) Videotaping will be allowed at grass drills by Local Association coaches only, and must be done from a stationary position. No coach may follow a targeted child around with a video camera.

## **RULE 7: PRACTICES, SEASON, AND GAMES CANCELLATION**

- 1) Practices
  - a) Following player allocation/draft and roster acceptance, the head coach may begin team practice on or after the NTFL established practice start date.

- b) No practice shall be conducted on Sunday.
  - c) No practice shall be held before the official starting date set by NTFL.
  - d) No team shall practice or play more than four (4) days per week after the start of school or the season begins. (i.e. 4 practices or 3 practices and 1 game). No practice shall exceed two (2) hours in length.
  - e) Flag teams shall practice or play no more than three (3) days per week. (i.e. 3 practices or 2 practices and 1 game). No practice shall exceed two (2) hours in length.
  - f) Violation by a team of any practice rules will result in suspension of the Head Coach and Assistant Coaches for the current season. A second offense will result in a lifetime coaching ban.
- 2) League Season
- a) Starting date, number of games and scheduling will be determined by the NTFL Board.
  - b) The NTFL Board at an annual scheduling meeting shall establish the procedure for determining playoff participation.
- 3) Game Cancellations or Forfeiture
- a) If a game is cancelled due to, weather or extenuating circumstances, it will be made up on the Sunday immediately following the Saturday the game was originally scheduled. It is the sole responsibility of the home team association to schedule the make-up game for that Sunday, if the home association fails to schedule the game for Sunday the home team will forfeit the game. If the game cannot be made up on that Sunday due to weather or extenuating circumstances, it will be counted as a tie with .5 being recorded towards the end of season record. The home team local association may utilize another NTFL local association fields as an alternate field location, if necessary, to complete the game(s).
  - b) In the event of forfeiture by the visiting team, said team shall be liable to the home team for any officiating or field expenses incurred by the latter as a direct result of the forfeiture.
  - c) If a game is stopped or cancelled due to weather or extenuating circumstances at half time or during the second half of a game and a team is leading by 18 or more points the game will be considered a complete game and the team with the lead will be awarded the win.

## **RULE 8: PLAYER PARTICIPATION**

### 1) Player Participation Guidelines

- a) Every player shall participate as a player in every game in which he/she is in attendance.
- b) Each player will play a minimum of five (5) downs per half (10 plays minimum per game) in every game in which he/she is in attendance. The five (5) plays must occur during regulation play. Kick-off or return teams will count as part of this rule. Walk off punts do not count as a play.
- c) Only a member of the NTFL Board for any reason may grant authorization for restriction of a player's participation to a requesting head coach. The player's parent(s) must be notified prior to the beginning of play. No NTFL Board member that is also a head coach may grant him/herself a restriction. They must seek out another NTFL Board member to ask for the restriction.
- d) Each coach must only use the NTFL APPROVED STATISTIC SHEET. This sheet must record player name, game, date, and number of downs per player a minimum of five (5) per half and signature of statistician and head coach. NTFL officials will randomly check statistic sheets. At the end of the game, the coach's stat sheet is to be given to the ref or NTFL official to be added to the game outcome reports. In the event the head coach does not keep an active PLAYER PARTICIPATION STAT SHEET the association must notify the NTFL. Possible penalties imposed can include a \$100 fine and/or possible suspension for the next game and forfeit the current game that the infraction occurred. Any exceptions will be subject to NTFL approval. DO NOT PRE-FILL OUT THIS SHEET BEFORE GAME TIME.
- e) An injured or ill player in attendance at a game shall be allowed in the bench area and shall not be required to play provided he/she is not in full pads.

## **RULE 9: PLAY-OFF DETERMINATIONS**

### 1) Play-Off Game Schedule and Locations

- a) Play-off and Super Bowl venues will be determined by seeding. The team with the higher seed shall have home field advantage. Not all teams are guaranteed a playoff spot. Playoff teams will be determined based on the total number of teams in each division and modified by the NTFL Board from season to season.
- b) Playoff locations and schedules shall be established by the NTFL Board.

### 2) Playoff Tie Breakers

- a) The following is a clarification on how tiebreakers are handled in the playoff seeding:

First - Raw Winning Percentage (RWP)

$$\text{RWP} = (\text{Games Won} / \text{Total Number of Games})$$

- Second - Head to Head
- Third – Strength of Schedule (SOS)
- Fourth - Coin Flip

Once the highest seed is determined. Lower seeds are determined by the same tiebreak procedure starting over.

b) Strength of Schedule will be determined as follows:

Strength of Schedule is calculated by creating a cumulative total of the Raw Winning Percentage for all the opponents that a team has beaten during regular season games. No adjustments will be made for teams who play more or less games than another team.

For example:

Team A with a season record 4-3 beats the following teams:

| Team Name                     | (Win-Loss Record) | RWP   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Team B                        | (5-1)             | 0.833 |
| Team D                        | (4-3)             | 0.571 |
| Team F                        | (2-5)             | 0.286 |
| Team M                        | (0-6)             | 0     |
| Team A - Strength of Schedule |                   | 1.690 |

Team E with a season record 4-3 beats the following teams:

| Team Name                     | (Win-Loss Record) | RWP   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Team N                        | (5-2)             | 0.714 |
| Team D                        | (4-3)             | 0.571 |
| Team F                        | (2-5)             | 0.286 |
| Team M                        | (0-6)             | 0     |
| Team E - Strength of Schedule |                   | 1.571 |

Team A SOS=1.690>Team E SOS=1.571

- i) No scores are taken into account for Strength of Schedule; just wins and losses.

## **RULE 10: GENERAL GAME RULES**

### 1) General Game Guidelines

- a) All games shall be played according to the current rules of the NCAA, with the Texas High School UIL exceptions and the exception of NCAA jersey numbering systems (i.e., no ineligible jersey numbers) unless otherwise stated in these **RULES OF THE GAME**. For any offensive tackle to be an eligible receiver the player must report as eligible to the official.

2) Game Duration

- a) Each game will consist of four (4) quarters with a 10-minute half time.
- b) Quarters shall be ten (10) minutes. Play clock will be managed per UIL Rules.
- c) Time of quarters may, by mutual consent of opposing head coaches, be shortened at any time during the game.
- d) Game forfeit time (15 minutes allowance approved).

3) Game Winner Determination

- a) The team scoring the most points in regulation time shall be judged the winner.
- b) Scoring values:
  - i) Touchdown = 6 points
  - ii) Safety = 2 points
  - iii) Try Points after touchdown
    - (1) Passing/Running = 1 point from the three (3) yard line
    - (2) Kicking = 1 point from the three (3) yard line w/ NO DEFENSIVE RUSH
      - (a) The kicker must kick the ball within three (3) seconds after the snap of the ball.
      - (b) No Fake attempt may be attempted.
    - (3) Kicking = 2 point from the three (3) yard line w/ FULL DEFENSIVE RUSH
    - (4) Passing/Running = 2 points from the seven (7) yard line
    - (5) Defensive Advancement is allowed on the passing/running/kick (FULL DEFENSIVE RUSH–Only) attempt, if successful, 2 points will be awarded.
  - iv) Field goals = 3 points w/ FULL DEFENSIVE RUSH (ONLY)
  - v) Forfeit (offended team wins by) 1 point to 0 points
- c) If, at the conclusion of regulation play, both teams are tied in score, the game will be continued in the following format:
  - i) The below description on tiebreakers shall apply to all division with the exception of flag division. There are no ties in NTFL football games unless caused by weather and or extenuating circumstances see **RULE 7 item 3**).
  - ii) NTFL has adopted the NCAA rules for overtime. The team with possession at the end of regulation will maintain possession and will not change direction. There will be a one-minute break, and then play is to resume. Each coach will be allowed one time out in overtime. (This is not for each overtime quarter. Only one time out for the entire overtime period). NCAA overtime rules with the following exception will be used if at the end of regulation play the score is tied.
    - (1) The starting position for the first overtime period will be at the 25-yard line.



- (2) Each subsequent overtime period the starting position of the ball will be moved 10 yards closer to the goal line until reaching the 5 yard line. (i.e. 25,15,5).
  
- (3) In the event no team has scored by the third overtime (ball on the 5 yard line), the ball shall continue to be placed on the 5-yard line for all subsequent overtime periods.
  
- d) If at any time during regulation play a team is leading another by thirty (30) points or more, in the second half, from that time on the game clock shall not be stopped except for the following:
  - i) A team still has time-outs left.
  - ii) The official stops it.
  - iii) Trailing team will receive the ball at their own 40-yard line when the leading team scores as long as the deficit is more than 30 points.
  - iv) If the deficit falls to less than thirty (30) points due to points scored by the trailing team, the clock shall return to a regular running clock with stops and starts. The clock can return to a running clock at any time the score has a team leading by thirty-(30) points or more.
- e) All other rules still apply if a team is leading another by thirty (30) points or more; including starting the second half based on the original coin toss designation.
  
- 4) Attempting Extra Points
  - a) All players, including weight-restricted players, are eligible to kick but the defense cannot cover the center.
  
- 5) Official Game Football
  - a) All game balls must be a good grade of Authentic Leather Wilson Football, as approved by the Board of Directors of NTFL. The Home Team will provide the Authentic Leather game ball. See RULE per division for football size.
  
- 6) Coaches and Sideline Personnel
  - a) Coaches will be allowed on the field to help an injured player.
  
  - b) Bench area will be restricted to players and coaches with lanyards only.
  
  - c) Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties against any coach will be accompanied with a 15-yard penalty. The official **MUST** eject the coach following his second infraction. This is an ejection only. The team will not be assessed a 15-yard penalty for the second infraction.
  
  - d) Head Coaches are responsible for non-lanyard persons on their sidelines. You will receive a warning to remove the non-lanyard persons; if there is a second occurrence you will be given a 15-yard penalty.

- e) Each facility will determine on which side of the field sideline chains are to be placed. The chains must be on the opposite side of the field from the video. Video location to be approved by the approved NTFL video vendor. If they are on the visitor side, the visiting team is to be given first option to provide people to run the chains. If they are on the home side, the home team will provide people.

7) Trophies, Awards, and Sponsors

- a) Sponsor name may appear on player's uniform with NTFL approval.
- b) Sponsors should be those organizations, firms or companies whose activities or products are not detrimental to the welfare of youth. Specifically, no firm or company whose advertising directly reflects the sale of alcoholic beverages or tobacco products shall be permitted to sponsor the program or be permitted to display any form of such advertising in connection with the program.
- c) The Board of Directors shall authorize any trophies and or awards presented under the auspices of NTFL.
- d) The head coach of the team receiving recognition may keep any NTFL award represented by a singular item (i.e., team trophy)
- e) Reward stickers may be given out but may not be given for big hits, skull and crossbones sticker is not allowed.
- f) Participants in championship play-offs may receive awards from NTFL.

8) Officials

- a) Excessive running of the clock by the officials will be cause for refusal of game payment. The offending official must be warned prior to refusal of payment.
- b) Officials are required to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. Any official that is considered as goading a coach will be removed at once (to be determined by the field commissioner).
- c) Any coach, parent or any other person or persons confronting an official in any disrespectful manner at any time will be subject to the full penalty extent and maximum penalty that can be imposed by the NTFL Board of directors.
- d) Officials may call water break timeouts at their discretion. These timeouts do not count against either teams allowed timeouts.

9) Game Ejections

- a) Game reports will include any ejections. They must include the half in which the ejection occurred. A written report is to be done by the Officials.
  - i) The NTFL appeal process is as follows:

- (1) Only an association president can request appeal and it must be within 48 hours of game completion.
  - (2) An NTFL ejection appeal form must be submitted with the required documentation.
  - (3) NTFL Board decision is final.
- b) If a child or coach is ejected for any reason during the course of the game. They will serve that ejection for the remainder of that game and the next scheduled game. In the event of a bye the following week, the suspension will carry over to the next week of actual play.
- i) For a second ejection offense during the season, the child or coach, is ejected from the remainder of that game and for the next two games.
  - ii) For the third ejection offense during the season, the child or coach, is immediately ejected from the current game and expelled for the remainder of the season and any subsequent playoff games.
  - iii) If an ejection occurs and the penalties cannot be served in the current season because of a season ending game or playoff game, the penalties will carry over to the next season and be served until all ejection provisions are satisfied.
  - iv) If an ejection occurs for the coach, and the coach is not returning for a subsequent season and therefore cannot serve the penalties provided herein, the NTFL Board may take action against that coach and his team up to and including forfeiture of the game where the ejection occurred.
  - v) An ejected player may be on the sideline of the game they are ejected from but they must be in shorts and no pads and he/she may not participate in any aspect of the game, this includes team captain or participate in the coin flip or water boy.
  - vi) In the event a player or coach is flagged for two unsportsmanlike penalties during a game, this will result in immediate ejection.
  - vii) If a child throws a punch, kicks, or is called for targeting, this action is grounds for immediate ejection by the official and counts toward the ejection actions in the above paragraphs.

## **RULE 11: 6<sup>th</sup> GRADE AND 5<sup>th</sup> GRADE DIVISION GAME RULE EXCEPTIONS**

- 1) Football sizes
  - a) 5<sup>th</sup> Grade and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade divisions will use TDJ (Wilson).
- 2) Punting and Kicking Game
  - a) Defensive rush on the Kicker (Field Goals or Extra Points) will be based on the middle school guidelines established by UIL but the defense cannot cover the center.
- 3) Covered Center
  - a) Defensive linemen may line-up over center on the line of scrimmage.
- 4) Neutral Zone
  - a) Offensive lines may line up on the line of scrimmage per NCAA regulations.

## **RULE 12: 4<sup>th</sup> GRADE DIVISION GAME RULE EXCEPTIONS**

- 1) Football sizes
  - a) This division will use K2 (Wilson).
- 2) Punting and Kicking Game
  - a) A punt is a twenty (20) yard walk off punt and ten (10) seconds is run off the clock. The ball will move an entire twenty (20) yards at any location on the field. If you punt from inside the twenty (20) it will be a touch back and ten (10) seconds will be run off the clock.
  - b) Defensive rush on the Kicker (Field Goals or Extra Points) will be based on the middle school guidelines established by UIL but the defense cannot cover the center.
- 3) Covered Center
  - b) Defensive linemen may line-up over center on the line of scrimmage.
- 4) Neutral Zone
  - a) Offensive lines may line up on the line of scrimmage per NCAA regulations.

## **RULE 13: 3<sup>rd</sup> GRADE DIVISION GAME RULE EXCEPTIONS**

- 1) Football sizes
  - a) This division will use K2 (Wilson).
- 2) Punting and Kicking Game
  - a) A punt is a twenty (20) yard walk off punt and ten (10) seconds is run off the clock. The ball will move an entire twenty (20) yards at any location on the field.

If you punt from inside the twenty (20) it will be a touch back and ten (10) seconds will be run off the clock.

- b) Defensive rush on the Kicker (Field Goals or Extra Points) will be based on the middle school guidelines established by UIL but the defense cannot cover the center.

3) Covered Center

- a) It is illegal to lineup a defensive player on the line of scrimmage over the center.
- b) Defensive linemen are allowed to line-up in the “A” Gap, between the center and guard.
- c) Penalty for Violation of the above RULE will be administered as follows:
  - i) Ten (10) yards and an automatic first down.

4) Coaching and Sideline Personnel

- a) One coach can be on the field (offensive or defensive) but are to be ten (10) yards from the deepest player prior to the snap. Once the offense is lined up in their position, coaches are not to direct/talk to players.

Defensive Line and Blitzing

- a) Blitzing linebackers, cornerbacks/safeties or overloading any single gap (A, B, or C) is not allowed. **There will be no timed blitzing allowed.** All players must be in a set position at the snap of the ball, with the exception of covering offensive players that are shifting, or going in motion. The defensive players that are not on the line, must move parallel with the offensive players, and not up to the line.
- b) Any defensive player playing the interior defensive line, (A and B gaps) must be in a 3 or 4 point stance prior to the snap of the ball.
- c) Penalty for Violation of the above RULE will be administered as follows:
  - i) Ten (10) yards and an automatic first down.

4) Neutral Zone

- a) Offensive lines may line up on the line of scrimmage per NCAA regulations.

## **RULE 14: FLAG FOOTBALL RULES**

1) Flag Team Assignments

- a) There will be two Flag Football Divisions based on grade.
  - i) K-1<sup>st</sup> grade
  - ii) 2<sup>nd</sup> grade
- b) The Flag team assignments will be monitored by the NTFL to ensure the teams are even by age group.

c) Teams will have a maximum of twelve (12) players allowed.

2) Players

- a) A game may be played between two teams consisting of a maximum of six (6) players each team.
- b) Only players appearing on the official NTFL team rosters are allowed to play.
- c) The offensive team must have three (3) players on the Line of Scrimmage.
- d) A team will have 30 seconds to put the ball in play after the ready signal.
- e) One coach from each team shall be on the field at all times for the purpose of lining up his/her team. No coaching is allowed after team has been set for play.
- f) K-1<sup>st</sup> Grade Division will be coach quarterback and played with 5 additional kid players on the field during offense.

3) Playing fields

- a) Games shall be played on a normal football field from the 40-yard line into the end zone. Two games can be played at the same time.
  - i) This field measures fifty (50) yards in length with one end zone of ten yards. The field width will be 106'-8" as measured from home field sideline to inside edge of the far side hash marks.
  - ii) Goal posts are unnecessary as points after conversions are made only by passing or running and there are no field goals kicked.

4) Equipment

- a) The flags will be attached to the pants with NTFL approved "hook and loop" fastener (i.e. Velcro™ style product) that is sewn on the side seam of the waistband.
- b) Flags will be a minimum 10 inches long and minimum 2 inches wide. Teams wearing dark colored (Blue or Black) pants must use yellow flags and teams wearing light colored (white or silver) pants must use red flags.
- c) The securing of flags to the body or waist other than provided by **RULE 14 item 4) a)** is illegal.
- d) Jerseys cannot be worn over flags.
- e) Jerseys must be tucked in at all times.

- f) If a player's flag is inadvertently lost, he/she is ineligible to handle the ball.
  - g) Mouth pieces are mandatory for all participants.
- 5) Game uniform
- a) All team members must wear the same color jersey.
  - b) All jerseys will be numbered, front and back, for proper identification by officials and statisticians.
  - c) Only football or baseball type pants may be worn.
  - d) Jerseys will be tucked in at all times.
  - e) Molded rubber cleats are required.
  - f) Soft shell helmets are allowed but not required.
- 6) Prohibited equipment
- a) All hard surface padding such as shoulder pads, hip pads, and hard helmets are prohibited.
  - b) Hard metal or any other hard substance on a player's clothing or person.
  - c) Anything that conceals the flags.
  - d) Sticky substances such as grease or glue on a player's clothing, body, or equipment.
  - e) Any equipment, in the opinion of the referee that will endanger or confuse players.
  - f) FLAG BELTS ARE PROHIBITED.
- 7) Officials
- a) There can be one (1) or two (2) referees per game.
- 8) Player Substitutions
- a) The free substitution rule is always in effect and a player may enter the game anytime the ball is dead.
- 9) Field Coaches
- a) Only one coach for each team will be permitted on the field to direct the Offense and/or Defense.

- b) Coaches to be ten (10) yards from the deepest player prior to the snap. Once the offense is lined up in their position, coaches are not to direct, motion, or talk to players until the play is whistled dead by the officials. Unless the coach is serving as the Coach QB.
- c) Coach QB will be replaced by a player if a team is up by 18 points. If the score drops below the 18 point lead, the coach can resume on the field as QB.
- d) Coach QBs can only throw or hand off the ball and cannot direct, motion, or talk to players during a live play. Trick plays are not allowed.
- e) Penalty for Violation of the above **RULE 14 item 9)** will be administered as follows:
  - i) First offense - warning
  - ii) Second offense - 5-yard illegal procedure penalty
  - iii) Third offense - new coach on field for the remainder of that game.

#### 10) Penalties

- a) Offensive Penalties will follow UIL rules unless otherwise noted.
  - i) **Offensive Pass Interference:** 10-yard penalty and replay of down
  - ii) **Illegal Motion (2 men in motion):** 5-yard penalty and replay down
  - iii) **Illegal Formation:** 5-yard penalty and replay down
  - iv) **False Start:** 5-yard penalty, play blown dead
  - v) **Illegal Forward Pass:** 5-yard penalty and loss of down
  - vi) **Blocking:** Ball dead at the spot
  - vii) **Flag Guarding (including stiff arms):** Ball is dead at spot
  - viii) **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** 15-yard penalty (possible ejection)
  - ix) **Delay of Game:** Clock is stopped and a 5-yard penalty
  - x) **No Intentional Grounding Penalty**
- b) Defensive Penalties will follow UIL rules unless otherwise noted.
  - i) **Defensive Pass Interference:** 10-yard penalty and down over unless it's an offensive catch – offense decides. 1<sup>st</sup> down can occur depending on the yardage.
  - ii) **Illegal Contact (holding, jams, etc.):** 5-yard penalty and down over unless it's an offensive catch – offense decides.
  - iii) **Defensive Holding while pulling flag:** 5-yard penalty added to the end of the play and down over.
  - iv) **Illegal Flag Pull (before player has ball):** 5-yard penalty and down over.
  - v) **Off-Sides:** 5-yard penalty and replay the down.
  - vi) **Illegal Rush (before hand-off has occurred):** 5-yard penalty and replay down – offense decides.
  - vii) **Inadvertent Tackle:** 5-yard penalty added to the result of the play. If from behind with a clear line to the end zone result will be automatic touchdown.
  - viii) **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** 15-yard penalty and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down (possible ejection).



11) Game Time

- a) Four 10-minute quarters with running clock. Clock will stop only for time-outs, injuries or referee discretion.
- b) The clock will be kept to a regulation clock during the last two (2) minutes of a half.
- c) Twenty-five (25) second play clock will begin when the official places the ball and starts the clock.
- d) Offense must throw or hand off the ball within 6 seconds.
- e) Two (2) time-outs per half.
- f) Ten (10) minutes between halves.
- g) Games cannot end on a defensive penalty or defensive touchdown.
- h) Flag teams will not play overtime and may have tie game outcomes. Ties will be assessed at .5 points. Wins will receive 1 point and losses 0 points.

12) Kick-off and Beginning of the Game Ball Placement

- a) There will be no kick-off.
- b) Each half will start with the ball placed on the thirty-five (35) yard line.
- c) The referee will call the team captains together for a toss of a coin to decide a choice of starting on offense or defense. The winning captain has the choice.
- d) The losing captain has the same choice at the beginning of the second half.
- e) A safety in K-1<sup>st</sup> grade will result in a dead ball with the next play starting at the forty (40) yard line.
- f) For 2<sup>nd</sup> grade only - In the event of a safety the team awarded the 2-points will start on offense with the ball placed on the twenty (25) yard line.

13) De-flagging and contact

- a) There shall be no tackling of the ball carrier or passer.
- b) There shall be no blocking on offense. Stationary picks are allowed but the player cannot move.
- c) The player carrying or having possession of the ball is down when his/her flag is removed from his/her waist (de-flagging) by another player. The defensive player shall hold the flag above his/her head and stand still.

- d) The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier to remove his/her flag. An accidental touch of the body or shoulder while reaching for the flag shall not be considered a violation; however, touching of the head or face shall be considered a violation.
- e) A defensive player must go for the passer's flag. He/she cannot touch the passer's arm.
- f) If a flag falls off a player inadvertently the player is considered down at that location.

#### 14) Scoring

- a) Touchdowns are 6 points.
- b) Extra points from the 2-yard line are 1 point and from the 5-yard line are 2 points.
- c) Safety is 2 points (2<sup>nd</sup> grade only).

#### 15) Defense

- a) It is illegal to lineup a defensive player on the line of scrimmage over the center.
- b) Defensive players cannot cross the line of scrimmage until a handoff or lateral has occurred.
- c) Penalty for Violation of the above **RULE 14 item 15) a)** will be administered as follows:
  - i) Ten (10) yards and an automatic first down.

#### 16) Quarterback

- a) Quarterbacks are prohibited from running the ball.

#### 17) Ball Carrier

- a) The ball carrier cannot use his/her hands or arms to protect his flags. The defensive player must have the opportunity to remove the ball carrier's flags.
- b) The ball carrier cannot lower his/her head to drive or run into a defensive player.
- c) Stiff-arming by the ball carrier is illegal.
- d) Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
- e) He/she may run in any direction until the ball is declared dead.

18) Center

- a) The center must snap the ball between his/her legs.
  - i) Fumble on the snap to QB will not be a dead ball.
- b) He/she must have both feet on the scrimmage line with no part of his/her body beyond the forward point of the ball.
- c) He/she may adjust the long part of the ball at right angles to the scrimmage line, one time only.
- d) Center will be eligible as a receiver but cannot take a hand-off from the QB.

19) Passing

- a) All backfield players are eligible passers.
- b) Passing will be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage only.
- c) A lateral pass is a pass thrown parallel to the line of scrimmage or back toward the passer's own goal line. A lateral pass is not considered a forward pass.
- d) A forward pass is a pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage toward the defensive team's goal line.
- e) A forward pass can be thrown overhand or underhand.

20) Neutral Zone

- a) The defense must line up a yard off of the ball. See Figure 3.

21) Receiving

- a) All players are eligible to receive forward passes.
- b) Two or more receivers may touch a ball in succession resulting in a completed pass.
- c) If an offensive and defensive player catches a pass simultaneously, the ball is declared dead at the spot of the catch and the passing team is awarded possession.
- d) An offensive player cannot be out-of-bounds and return in-bounds to catch a pass. This will be ruled an incomplete pass.

22) Dead ball and Interceptions

- a) All balls touching the ground are immediately dead. (For example, the ball is declared dead at the following times):
  - i) When the ball carrier touches the ground with his/her body, other than hands or feet.

- ii) When the ball carrier's flag has been pulled.
  - iii) If a pass receiver or ball carrier has a missing flag (ball is dead at the spot).
  - iv) Following a touchdown, safety or touchback.
  - v) When the ball carrier goes out-of-bounds for any reason.
  - vi) When the ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble or muffed ball. There are no fumble recoveries in NTFL Flag, and no stripping of the ball is allowed.
  - vii) If a lateral pass touches the ground, ball is declared dead at that point. If a lateral pass goes out-of bounds, the ball is ruled dead at the point it crosses the boundary line.
  - viii) If a forward pass strikes the ground or is caught at the same time by an opposing player(s).
- b) Interceptions can be returned.
- i) Possession will begin where the player is flagged.
  - ii) If a player returns the ball beyond the 40-yard line, it is considered a touchdown with extra point rules to follow.

**23) Overtime (Playoffs Only)**

- a) Overtime period will take place with each team receiving a possession.
- b) Coin Flip determines choice of 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> possession.
- c) Possession begins 10 yards from the goal line. Each team will receive 4 downs.
- d) If a touchdown is scored, a team can elect to go for a 1 or 2 point conversion during the first overtime. In all subsequent overtime periods, a team must go for 2 points.
- e) If the defense intercepts the ball it is a change of possession starting at the 10-yard line unless it is returned beyond the 40-yard line which will result in a touchdown.
- f) If the game is still tied, overtime will be repeated until there is a winner.
- g) Teams alternate first possession each overtime period

## **RULE 15: PROTEST PROCEDURE**

### 1) Invalid Protests

- a) No protest will be allowed concerning officials (includes all judgment calls and quality of officials). These items fall under complaint category and should be reported to the local region commissioner.

### 2) To protest game in progress

- a) Head coach will call a time-out (will not count as a charged time-out for game).
- b) Head coach will inform the official that he wants to protest game. Immediately following the notification to the official, the protest fee must be paid to the NTFL Field Commissioner.
- c) Any protest must be accompanied by a NON-REFUNDABLE protest fee. Protest fee shall be \$150.00 payable at the time of notification to NTFL.
- d) Complete game with no other interruptions concerning the protest.
- e) Following the game, the Head coach will meet with the NTFL Field Commissioner in private and explain details of protest to NTFL Field Commissioner which will be documented in the NTFL Field Book at the scoring table at the field. (No spectators, officials, or assistants present).
- f) Immediately after game, if possible, but no later than 72 hours, provide the protest to writing and submit to your local association NTFL representative for delivery to NTFL Board.
- g) The local associations NTFL representative, upon receiving the protest, must notify all parties concerned before submitting to the NTFL Board.
- h) All decisions of the NTFL Board concerning all protests, either game rules or rule violations of NTFL bylaws, are final with no course for appeal.
- i) **No protest will be acted on if all the above items or steps are not adhered to, and protest will be disregarded.**

### 3) Protest to any other Violations of NTFL BYLAWS or RULES

- a) To protest any other violations of NTFL bylaws or rules, start with above item 2) c) and complete above items 2) g) above and proceed through item 2) h).

### 4) Official Game Video Review

- a) If a head coach feels there has been a violation of rule that was missed by the officials that under normal circumstance would warrant ejection from the game, an Official Game Video Review can be requested.
  - i) Under no circumstance will the review change the outcome of the game.

- ii) Review will only be complete of Official NTFL Game Video.
- iii) Review will only be for offenses which warrant a game ejection.
- b) Process for review will only be handled by the NTFL under the following procedures.
  - i) All issues for review must be noted on the Official NTFL Game Record and signed by both head coaches and the head official.
  - ii) A head coach must submit by email a request for review to their organization President within 24 hours of the game completion.
  - iii) Once the game video has been released it will be the responsibility of the requesting organization President to review the video and determine if a blatant violation had occurred.
  - iv) If a violation warrants action, the requesting organization President will send the request and video clip to the opposing organization President to be handled by their board of directors. This must be completed within 24 hours of the release of game video.
  - v) If the offense review results in disagreement or a request for appeal, a NTFL Board review can be made.
    - (1) The request for NTFL Board review must be made within 96 hours of completion of the game and sent directly to NTFL President.
    - (2) The requesting organization must pay a review fee. Review fee shall be \$150.00 payable at the next board meeting to NTFL.
    - (3) If the review is due to a parent request for appeal, the fee must be paid by the parent directly to the requesting organization prior to the appeal submission.
    - (4) The request must include a full explanation of the issue along with the Video clip(s) for review.
    - (5) All decisions of the NTFL Board are final with no course for further appeal.