

FLAG FOOTBALL RULE INTERPRETATIONS

SECTION A - GENERAL RULES

- A-1. In cases not covered by these interpretations Special Olympics North America will govern. Rules can be downloaded at <http://sonc.net/wp-content/uploads/Flag-Football-Rules-SONA.pdf>.
- A-2. Athletes will not be allowed to wear jewelry or awards during competition. Athletes will also be expected to dress appropriately for weather. No jeans will be allowed during competition.
- A-3. The Games Rule Committee will make all final decisions.
- A-4. No advertising or sponsorship is allowed on competition uniforms or warm-ups.
- A-5. Athletes must compete and attend a qualifying tournament. DQ's may be contested on a case-by-case basis. It is the coach's responsibilities to contest status. Coaches should contact their Regional Manager.
- A-6. At all times athletes are expected to compete to the best of their ability to ensure a quality competition at all levels. Coaches are expected to provide accurate and honest scores of their athlete's ability.

SECTION B - EVENTS

- B-1. Events offered:
 - a. Traditional Flag Football
 - b. Unified Flag Football
 - c. Individual Skills

SECTION C – EQUIPMENT & FACILITIES

- C-1. An intermediate (youth) size football will be used in all divisions.
- C-2. A protective mouthpiece is recommended at all times.
- C-3. A one-piece, three-flag belt will be worn during the game at all times.
- C-4. All participants must have a playing uniform consisting of matching shirts/shorts/pants and matching numbers on front and back which can be tucked in at the waist to avoid obstruction of Flag Pulling.
- C-5. No blue jeans will be allowed.
- C-6. No metal-tipped cleats will be allowed. Players must wear rubber-cleated or flat-soled athletic shoes. Metal cleats, spikes, hiking boots or other equipment deemed dangerous by officials will not be allowed.
- C-7. All players must wear athletic shorts without pockets.
- C-8. Field Set Up:
 - a. The playing field is 60 yards long (including the end zones) and 25 yards wide. If insufficient space is available, a slightly smaller space can be used. A space of at least 5 yards around the field must be free and clear of obstructions. The field

can be marked with chalk, paint, and/or traffic cones.

- b. No-Run Zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays.
- c. While in the No-Run Zones (a 5-yard zone before midfield and before the end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
- d. Stepping on a boundary line is considered out of bounds
- e. Each offensive team approaches only TWO (2) No-Run Zones in each drive (a 5-yard zone before midfield to gain the first down and before the end zone, 5 yards from the goal line to score a touchdown).

SECTION D - RULES OF COMPETITION

D-1. Divisioning

- a. All coaches are reminded to review the section on Divisioning of the Special Olympics Colorado Coach Handbook.
- b. Teams will be divisioned based on the results from previous tournaments as well as the Team Entry Form.

D-2. Timing

- a. There are two options for game place. The option used will be communicated to coaches prior to the competition.
 - 1. Option 1: Two 20-minute halves – running clock
 - 2. Option 2: Two 20-minute halves – running clock until the last minute of each half at which the clock will stop on all dead ball whistles.
- b. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- c. The clock will stop on all time outs.
- d. Each team will receive one-60 second time out. An un-used timeout in the first half DOES NOT carry over to the second half.
- e. Half time will be a 3 minute break.
- f. Delay of Game penalties
 - 1. Interrupting the 30 second count for any reason except a granted time out.
 - 2. Consuming more than 30-seconds to snap the ball after it is ready for play.
 - 3. Failing to remove an injured player for whose benefit an excess time out has been granted.
 - 4. Deliberately advancing the ball after it has been declared dead.

D-3. Overtime

- a. A coin toss will determine first possession.
- b. Each team will receive two plays from midfield and the team gaining the most points or gaining yardage is awarded one extra point and wins the game.
- c. Except to this rule would be in interception. The team that intercepts automatically wins the game.
- d. If the team, with the first attempt in overtime, scores on the first play, the opposing team must score in the first play also. If both teams score a touchdown or gain the same yardage, the procedure will be repeated until one team wins.

D-4. Scoring and other rules

- a. Touchdown: six (6) points.
- b. Extra Point: one (1) point from the 5-yard line, two (2) points from the 10-yard line.
- c. Safety: two (2) points.
- d. Please note that there will be no side – snapping allowed at competitions.