

# The Official Rulebook of Big League Football

This code of rules governs the playing of two-hand touch football games in Big League Football divisions. Any rule or situation not expressly defined here will default to NFL rules. All calls made by the Game Head Referee (GHR) are final.

**#1. NO WHINING!** – The first and foremost rule of the game is to have fun. If you are hoping to recapture your athletic glories from the past, this is not the league for you. Absolutely no whining will be tolerated during the course of a game. Be gracious whether you're winning or losing. This is a social league. Keep a relaxed attitude, meet new people, and have a good time.

**#2. NO ALCOHOL AT THE FIELDS!** – The consumption of alcohol is PROHIBITED BY STATE LAW at all Big League Footballs playing fields. Anyone seen violating field policies will be immediately asked to leave the grounds. Continued violations by individuals or groups will result in permanent removal of the players from the league and/or team forfeits. Individuals (players, fans, or friends of players), at the discretion of BigLeagueSports, will be ejected immediately if they are found bringing alcohol, weapons, or controlled substances to any venue or sponsor bar in use by BigLeagueSports; if they're suspected of excessive pre-game alcohol consumption; if they're suspected of abusing a controlled substance; or if they're deemed unruly or a danger to themselves or others at any time. Furthermore, anyone who is ejected from one of our venues or sponsor bars will be required to petition the League for reinstatement before participating in or attending any subsequent BigLeagueSports events. These policies are in place for the safety, enjoyment, and continued camaraderie of all players, the sponsoring venues, sponsor bars, and the entire league.

**#3. THIS IS A NON-CONTACT LEAGUE** – Other than a two-hand touch, all players must try to avoid contact at all times. We understand that there will be incidental contact, and that some cases of incidental contact need not be penalized. However, any sort of intentional contact (such as tackling, blocking, or picking) or reckless unintentional contact of any kind can result in a penalty, and in more severe instances an immediate ejection from the game without warning. Defensive players attempting to two-hand touch a carrier, covering a receiver downfield, etc. must give offensive players the right-of-way to avoid contact; Offensive players must avoid contact with defensive players. The lowering of the shoulder or initiating contact for the purpose of gaining yardage or position is not permitted.

**#4A. PROVIDING REFEREES** - Captains are ultimately responsible for making sure their team provides referees as per the season schedule.. Failure to provide referees will result in penalties for your team, including forfeits in the standings. Please provide players that are knowledgeable with BLF rules.

Captains must provide the referees as they are scheduled. If not, you will be charged a forfeit.

Any team that forfeits three or more games will be removed from the remaining schedule and not be allowed to participate in any playoff situations. No refunds will be given and a team dropped by the league may, at BL's discretion, not be allowed to rejoin the next season.

**#4B. REFEREES ARE PEOPLE TOO!** – Our Referees are not pros, they're people just like you, so please treat them with respect. Their interpretations of rules and their judgments on the field are final. Any aggressive behavior in their direction (or anyone else's direction) will not be tolerated and may result in suspension or expulsion from our leagues; let's avoid that.

**#5. TEAM SIZE AND PLAYER ELIGIBILITY** – All players must be at least 18 years old, and all players must sign a waiver to play. A full roster consists of at least 12 players; there is no roster maximum, but no players will be added to the roster after the 4<sup>th</sup> week. BLF reserves the right to add players to teams to ensure roster size balance. Players may only play on the team to which they are registered. Teams may play up to 8 players at a time, and no team will be allowed to play with fewer than 6 players. Teams may play up to 5 male players at a time, and no team will be allowed to play without at least 1 female player. Teams with no female players or with fewer than six total players will be compelled to Forfeit. Teams must start the game at the scheduled game time if the minimum number of players is present on both teams.

**#6. CAPTAINS** – Each team shall have one or two Captains who are charged with making sure that only players registered on their team are participating on their team's behalf. Any team playing with an unregistered player is subject to forfeiting that game and expulsion from the league. Only captains may dispute calls on the field, and must remain cool throughout. Captains are responsible for their players understanding the rules. Captains must stay in contact with BLF and attend any required league meetings, communicating any changes in regards to scheduling or rules with his/her team. Captains are responsible for any trash left by his or her team after each session of play.

**#7. THE FIELD** – The playing field is broken down into three equal size zones capped on each end by Endzones. Field size and dimension are subject to change based on space available. Each zone is marked with a cone of a similar color. These cones signify First Downs. Cones are also used to mark the goal line (the front of the Endzone). For lined fields, the line is out of bounds. For unlined fields, the inside edge of the cone is out of bounds.

**#8. EQUIPMENT** – Metal/removable spikes are not allowed. Molded cleats are permitted provided they don't tear up the field. Each player on an official team roster will receive a league-issued shirt at the start of the Season. Shirts should arrive on week 2 of each season unless there is an unforeseen problem. Shirt Sizes and ink colors are not guaranteed based on availability. You always need your Team T-Shirts. They are our only way of identifying you. The shirt must be worn and visible during each and every game of the Season. Any player wearing a non-Team T-Shirt deemed too confusing to the other team (ex: wrong color or wrong league) will not be allowed to play until they change their shirt. Team T-shirts are used by the employees of the sponsor Bar to identify BLF players, who are eligible to receive league discounts. While Shirt customization is allowed, teams/players may not use offensive language or designs that obscure/alter the BigLeagueSports logo when personalizing Shirts. Names, nicknames, numbers, and team logos are all welcome additions to the shirts. Please also feel free to bedazzle, tie-dye, or apply patches to them, if you are so inclined.

**#9. INCLEMENT WEATHER** – In the event of heavy rain or snow that results in the conditions of a game being unsafe or travel being unsafe, BigLeagueSports will notify all captains. In the event the games have been started and then have to be called off due to inclement weather while underway, the games will be restarted from the beginning if less than half of the game has been played and will be called or resumed from the stoppage of play if the game has reached the halftime mark. Any games postponed for weather will be rescheduled and information on the rescheduled game will be sent to all players by email.

**#10. STANDINGS** – Standings are ordered by Standings Points [calculated as  $(2 * \text{Wins}) + \text{Ties} - \text{Forfeits}$ ]. The first tiebreaker is Head-to-Head performance among all tied teams, followed by points allowed, followed by points scored, followed by a coin flip.

**#11. POSTSEASON PLAY** – Playoff brackets may be divided into different levels of competition as determined by BigLeagueSports. While regular season games can end in a tie, postseason games tied after the second half will play a first-score-wins (sudden death) overtime period.

**#12. FORFEITS** – Games start as scheduled, so please be on time. We recommend showing up at least 15 minutes early to avoid any confusion and the chance of forfeiting. Please don't forfeit. Your teammates and opponents count on you to have a full team and a social game. Upon arrival, inform BLF Field Manager if you a) know that your team will be short players for your game or b) expect to field a full team, but are currently short players. BLF staff and head referee will help make sure that a game is played (official or scrimmage) on every field. A team must have at least 5 players from the team roster including 1 woman to start a game. Game time is forfeit time. There is no grace period. The penalty for a team's forfeit is a negative point in the standings, a team's second forfeit is a negative point in the standings and ineligibility for the playoffs, and a team's third forfeit is removal from the remaining schedule, as they will be considered to have abandoned their place in the league, forfeiting their registration fees. A BigLeagueSports staff member will contact teams in this category to confirm their status. However, there are no additional penalties beyond a negative point in the standings if you show up short-handed and have to forfeit the game, since you did make an effort to get a team to play. If you know in advance that your team is going to forfeit a game, please contact [bigleaguesport@gmail.com](mailto:bigleaguesport@gmail.com). It is not considered notification unless you receive a reply. Once BigLeagueSports & Entertainment is notified you are forfeiting, it is official (you cannot change your mind), and the other team will be notified.

**#13. EJECTED PARTICIPANTS** – Any ejected individual must get approval by Maurice Reep, President of BIGLEAGUE SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT, prior to attending or participating in future games, leagues, or hosted events, including Post-Game Parties. Attempted participation without approval is subject to further penalties. Rulings may include, but are not limited to, probation, game/league suspension, or permanent expulsion.

# GAME PLAY

**#14. GAME LENGTH AND THE CLOCK** – Games consist of two 24-minute halves with a continuous running game clock, separated by a halftime up to 7 minutes in length. The play clock is 25 seconds which begins at the end of an unsuccessful play or setting of the ball and/or line of scrimmage. The clock is always running if 9 points or more separate the score. If the score is within 8 points in the last two minutes of the game, the clock will stop for the **TWO-MINUTE WARNING**, which just resets the play clock and is not a free timeout for both teams; when the ball carrier runs out of bounds, or an **INCOMPLETE PASS**; on a **SCORING PLAY**, and the clock remains stopped for extra points; on a **CHANGE OF POSSESSION** including a defensive fumble recovery, interception, or turnover on downs; at the end of a kickoff; on a **QB SPIKE**, which is when the QB throws the ball directly into the ground immediately after taking the snap. This action must immediately follow the snap, and doesn't count as a female play (even if the QB is female); on **PENALTIES**; with offensive penalties in the last two minutes, the clock starts once the yardage is walked off and the ball is deemed Ready For Play by the referee's signal or whistle; with defensive penalties in the last two minutes, the clock starts on the following snap; on an **OFFICIAL'S TIMEOUT**; on a **TEAM TIMEOUT**; each team is permitted one timeout per half. Unused 1<sup>st</sup> half timeouts are not carried over to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half.

**#15. STARTING THE GAME, AND THE SECOND HALF** – Before the game begins, the captains play Rock Paper Scissors (RPS) to determine who is kicking and who is receiving, and which side each team defends. The RPS winner chooses [Option A. to kick or to receive to begin the first half], or [Option B. to defend a specific side of the field in the first half]. The RPS loser then makes a choice from the Option not selected by the RPS winner. The kicking team, receiving team, and sides defended are reversed to start the second half.

**#16. CONCLUDING THE GAME** – At the end of the game, the referee will call the captains from both teams together to confirm the final score of the game, sign next to their respective scores, shake hands, and confirm location of sponsor bar.

**#17. GENERAL OFFENSE** – We encourage you to pass, run, lateral, and reverse. The more creative the plays the better! But there are a couple things to keep in mind. A **LEGAL PASS** must be thrown while positioned behind the LOS. A **LEGAL CATCH** is a ball thrown from behind the LOS to a player who establishes control of the ball while at least one foot in bounds. All players are eligible receivers. **PLAYERS WHO STEP OUT** of bounds and then re-enter the field can't be the first person to touch the ball. If this happens the play is ruled incomplete and a non-catch, e.g. a receiver is running a route in the end zone and steps out of bounds and continues the route, then catches a pass while in the Endzone. The play is ruled incomplete because the receiver was out of bounds prior to catching the ball and not eligible. The receiver can be re-established as eligible on that play if another player or defender touches the ball prior to the receiver in question. There is no maximum number of players required on the LOS, however, the minimum is one, the Center. The QB may not cross the LOS to run the ball until the referee completes the 5-Second Count.

**#18. GENERAL DEFENSE** – Doing its best to avoid contact, the defense can cover the offensive team as it sees fit, however, no defensive player may cross the LOS until the ball is handed off, lateraled, or tossed in the backfield, until there is a fumble in the backfield (however a fumbled snap is a dead ball), or until the referee has completed his **5-SECOND COUNT**. After the snap, the referee will begin the count using a 5-second “Mississippi” cadence at normal speed. The count is deemed completed at the point where the referee finishes the “final syllable of the 5th Mississippi” and not before. The defense may not cross the line before the count is completed, even if trying to cover a receiver in the backfield. When the count is completed any or all players can rush. Once a QB throws a forward pass or lateral or hands the ball off, the referee will stop the 5-second count and the defense is free to cross the LOS. There must be a “clear transfer of ball possession between two offensive players” for the referee to stop the 5-second count.

**#19. STARTING A PLAY FROM SCRIMMAGE** - After the conclusion of a play the referee sets the ball and establishes the Line Of Scrimmage (LOS). **PLAY CLOCK:** 25 seconds: Once the ball is set and deemed Ready For Play by the referee, the play clock is started. **FORMATION:** The Offense must have a Center and a QB directly behind the Center at the start of each play. If it is unclear to the referee who the QB is, the referee will stop the play after the snap in question and enforce a penalty. All players on the field should have no doubt by the team’s formation who is playing QB on a given play. All players must be even with or behind the LOS until the ball is snapped. **ELIGIBLE RECEIVERS:** All offensive players are eligible receivers. **PRE-SNAP MOTION:** One player at a time may be in motion behind and parallel to the LOS, but may not be moving forward); all other players cannot move. **SNAP:** When the offense is ready, the center snaps the ball from the ground directly to the QB to start the play.

**#20. CONCLUDING A PLAY FROM SCRIMMAGE** - A play ends when any of the following things happen: The ball carrier is touched with two hands by a defender, any part of the ball carrier’s body (besides his/her feet) touches the ground, the ball carrier runs out of bounds, A team scores, an Incomplete Pass, a Fumbled football that is touched by either the offense or defense (Diving on fumbled footballs is not permitted), a ball is inadvertently fumbled out of bounds without being touched (NOTE 1: team with the last possession is awarded ball and it’s spotted at the point at which it went out of bounds, NOTE 2: If a team purposely fumbles a ball out of bounds subject to referee’s discretion, the team will be assessed a delay-of-game penalty and/or lose possession depending on the current down), a Penalty or Violation that forces the play to stop, someone is in danger or injured, an Official’s timeout, or a weather stoppage.

**#21. DEFENSIVE RUSHER** - The defense may line up anyway it sees fit, with one exception. For each play (that is not a punt or kickoff) the defense must have a player as the “rusher” no more than 3 yards from the LOS at the snap and until the end of the 5-second count. A defense that fails to employ a rusher will be called for illegal defensive formation. If a team is playing with less than the required number of players, they are not mandated to have a rusher and can’t be penalized for not having one. However, in such cases the QB can still run at the completion of the 5-second count.

**#22. FEMALE PLAYS** – There should be equal playing time for all players, regardless of gender. At least every 3rd play must be a “Female Play” a.k.a. “Closed Play”. To qualify as a Female Play, 1 of 3 things needs to happen:

- **A female player is the intended receiver for a pass beyond the LOS** whether the pass is complete or incomplete. Passes behind the LOS don’t count. If the QB throws to an intended female target and male team members steps in front of his own teammate to attempt to catch or catches the ball, the female play is now nullified and the play counts as male. If there is question on the intended receiver of a pass, the ruling relies solely on the referees’ judgment and can’t be influenced by a player trying to explain his intention. If the intended receiver of a legal forward pass is not clear, that is the fault of the player and the referee will use their discretion to determine how the play is ruled. If a legal forward pass is thrown (over the LOS) with the intended receiver as a female and the ball deflects off the female and then is caught by a male, the play counts as female. If in referee’s judgment, the offense is “hitting” female receivers with ball with the only intention to hit them and not for them to catch the ball, they will be warned, i.e. hitting the receiver in the ankle or legs to have the next play be an “open play”. If the action continues, the team will be penalized 15 yards for an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty with a loss of down and the female play will not count. This must be clearly in poor sportsmanship and not an attempt to avoid a rush and “throwing it away”. The referee has sole discretion to enforce this clause.
- **A female player is QB for a downfield pass** Handoffs/Backfield passes to males don’t count;
- **A female player is the primary carrier** (as QB or RB and tries to achieve positive yardage downfield. This does not mean she receives the ball & hands it back off to a male player.

The provisions above can be enforced only upon referee’s judgment and may not be argued. Any arguments over a judgment call on male / female play and “intended receiver” will be viewed as verbal harassment of the particular official and penalized accordingly. Once a team runs a female play, the count resets and the team may choose to run two plays in a row to male players before it must run a Female Play again. Prior to each play, Refs tell the teams if the play is open or closed after stating the down (For example, the ref will say “It’s 2nd and open,” or “It’s 3rd and closed”). Teams that fail to run a female-play will be penalized with a loss of down and must run a female play next play. The ball will remain at the previous spot, as no yardage will be penalized on top of the loss of down. If an illegal contact penalty is called against the defense, the play remains either open or closed, whatever it was before the play.

**#23. FIRST DOWN** – Each team will have four Downs to either score or earn another First Down. First Downs are earned with two completions caught beyond the LOS in the same set of downs, or by crossing the mid-field line. Teams can only earn the midfield line First Down once per drive so if a catch is made past midfield, but the carrier moves behind the midfield line where he/she is two-hand touched, it is NOT a First Down. If a team begins a drive beyond midfield, they can't earn a midfield First Down. If a team fails to score or earn a First Down, possession goes to the other team. The Offense may elect to punt on any Down. There is a limit to 3 earned First Downs per drive, i.e. four sets of Downs per possession. A DPI penalty does NOT count as an earned First Down, nor does a penalty that moves the ball past midfield.

**#24. SPOTTING THE BALL** - After a play has concluded, the ref spots the ball at the carrier's hips. On scoring plays into the Endzone, both the ball and the carrier's hips must have crossed the plane of the goal line to be a touchdown.

**#25. CHANGE OF POSSESSION** – Possession changes on Scoring Plays, Fourth Down Stops, a Loss of Down Penalty on Fourth Down, Punts, and Interceptions. If the offense fumbles the ball on the ground the ball is dead once it touches the ground. Penalties will be assessed to any player who dives for the ball or wrestles with another player for the ball and his/her team will automatically lose possession of the ball. A fumble occurs any time the ball hits the ground on a non-forward pass attempt following the snap of the ball. A fumbled snap is a dead ball and is not ruled a fumble under any circumstance.



**#26. KICKOFFS/THROWOFFS** – The **KICKING TEAM** lines up in its Endzone, and the ref signals to start the play. The kicker/thrower may place kick, punt, or throw the ball from inside his/her Endzone. Kicking tees are not permitted, however a teammate may act as the holder for a place kick, and said holder must be one of the players legally allowed to be on the field at the time of the kick, i.e. a team may not use a 9th player to hold the ball. The kicking team may not leave the Endzone until the ball is kicked, punted or released from the thrower's hands. Players may get a running start but may not cross the goal line prior to the ball being kicked or thrown. The kicker/thrower may not cross the goal line in his or her motion. All players must start in the field of play. If the kick/throw goes **OUT OF BOUNDS**, the ball is spotted where it went out of bounds. The **RECEIVING TEAM** lines up on its half of the field. No player is permitted past midfield on the receiving team prior to the kickoff/throwoff. The ball may be fielded out of the air, cleanly off a bounce or off any part of another player's body without hitting the ground. **MUFFS:** Any "muffed" or failed attempt to field a kickoff that results in the ball hitting the ground after touching the player will be ruled down at the spot of the touch. **PLAYERS AHEAD OF THE CARRIER** must stop moving immediately once the carrier begins advancing the ball, to avoid blocking with contact, which is a penalty. Members of the receiving team may not at any time form a wedge which is defined as at least three teammates lining up shoulder to shoulder and less than two yards apart, in an effort to block for the ball carrier. A wedge will be considered a block with contact no matter whether contact occurred or not. Determining whether or not a wedge has been formed to create an advantage for the receiving team is solely at the discretion of the referee. The wedge can lead to increased contact and injuries. Players who move in front of the ball carrier will be called for illegal blocking regardless of whether he/she actually blocked someone. **PLAYERS BEHIND THE CARRIER** may move. Backwards laterals on kickoffs/throwoffs are legal. If the kickoff goes into the receiving team's Endzone, the receiving team can either run the ball out or down the ball, resulting in a touchback. If the kickoff leaves the back of the Endzone, it's automatically a touchback. Touchbacks are placed at the closest cone to the receiving team's Endzone.

**#27. PUNTS** – On 4th Down, the offense must declare to the referee whether it wishes to punt (no fake punts). All punts must be kicked, not thrown. All offensive players must be on or behind the LOS prior to the punt, similar to kickoffs. The punter may punt the ball from anywhere behind the LOS as long as he/she is in-bounds and does not cross the LOS (there is no snap on a punt). If a punt crosses the LOS and touches a player from either team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead at that spot and belongs to the receiving team. If the offense elects to punt, the defense will be allowed the opportunity to send players back to return the punt. The referee will signal the ball is Ready For Play and the offense may then punt. No team may punt until the referee has signaled the ball Ready. If a team is delaying getting in position in an effort to waste time, the referee may signal the ball Ready For Play even though the team may not fully be in position. This is at the referee's sole discretion. The receiving team may not have a rusher on the LOS and must put all players at least 10 yards back from the LOS. The receiving team may not try to block punts. Similar to kickoffs, no player from the receiving team in front of the ball carrier may move, but players behind the ball carrier may choose to move.

**#28. TOUCHDOWNS** – A touchdown is scored when **THE BALL AND THE CARRIER'S HIPS** break the plane of the goal line, or a receiver catches a ball (with one or two feet in bounds) in the Endzone. Touchdowns are worth 6 points.

**#29. EXTRA POINTS** – After the touchdown and the ball is returned to the referee and the referee will ask the captain of the scoring team their decision on whether to go for a 1 or 2 point conversion. At this moment, the 25 second play clock starts. A 1-Point Conversion is a run or pass play that crosses the goal line from the 5 yard line. A 2-Point Conversion is a run or pass play that crosses the goal line from the 10 yard line. Extra point attempts cannot be returned by the defense for points. Conversions are always ruled an Open Play. If a team lines up and then changes their mind, the play clock will continue to run during the resetting of the ball by the referee. If in the process of resetting the ball for play, the clock expires, a delay of game penalty will be enforced. The team will now be forced to go with their original decision with the additional penalty yards. Teams cannot change their decision to go for 1 or 2 point conversions after being called for a penalty. After the conversion attempt, the scoring team takes the ball and walks to the opposite end of the field to kickoff. The defense remains on their side of the field and will setup to return the ensuing kickoff. Teams have 5 seconds to return to their respective Endzones before the ref starts the play clock. This is to prevent teams delaying the game by walking to the opposite side of the field to kickoff. So after a score a team has a total of 30 seconds to kick the ball off. (5 seconds + 25 Second Play Clock)

**#30. SAFETIES** - A safety occurs when the offense fumbles it and touches the ball 1st in its own Endzone, when a player is two-hand-touched in his/her own Endzone, or when the offense commits a penalty inside its own Endzone, e.g. illegal contact in your own Endzone while on offense would be a safety. The defensive team is awarded 2 points and possession of the ball at midfield. There is no free kick to restart play. If a player receives a punt, kickoff or throwoff, or intercepts a pass and the momentum of the of the play carries them into the Endzone, it is not a safety. Unless the player leaves the Endzone under his/her own power and then returns into the Endzone, in which case it would be ruled a safety.

# PENALTIES

Penalties marked with an asterisk (\*) are “dead ball fouls”, and the play is over as soon as the penalty is called. All other penalties are “live ball fouls” enforced at the conclusion of the play and may be declined by the opposing captain.

**DEFENSIVE OFFSIDES** – A defensive player lining up in the neutral zone prior to the snap, a defensive player crossing the LOS before the rusher completes the 5-second count (unless there is transfer of the ball in the backfield; Play-action is not a transfer and a defender can be called offside on such play), or a defensive player crossing into the neutral zone in an attempt to cause a false start by the offense. It is common for refs to issue “warnings” for players that are clearly lined up offside prior to the snap and this is consistent with the spirit of the league. However, this is not mandatory to give warnings and all players are responsible for their position in relation to the LOS prior to the snap – *PENALTY: 5 yards from PREVIOUS LOS, replay down*

**DEFENSIVE OFFSIDES ON KICKOFF** – Crossing midfield before the ball is kicked/thrown – *PENALTY: 5 yards from the end of the play, teams will not have the option of a re-kick and all offside or illegal motion penalties will be enforced at the end of the run.*

**DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE (DPI)** – Contact by a defensive player while the ball is in the air that prevents an offensive player from possibly catching a pass and/or maintaining their current position – *PENALTY: 15 yards from PREVIOUS LOS (or half the distance to the goal, whichever is less) and Automatic First Down (AFD), i.e. it is not a spot foul*

**\*DELAY OF GAME** – Any attempt by a player to delay or prevent the continuation of play, including but not limited to, failure to snap the ball before the 25 second play-clock expires, moving a ball out of bounds, preventing the ref from setting the ball - *PENALTY: 5 yards from PREVIOUS LOS, replay down*

**\*ENCROACHMENT** – A defensive player coming over the line and making contact with any member of the offense before the snap – *PENALTY: 5 yards, replay down.*

**EXCESSIVE CELEBRATION** – Any action, after the conclusion of the play, that is not in keeping with the spirit of league and the code of conduct (i.e. Sportsmanship) – *PENALTY: 15 yards from PREVIOUS LOS and an AFD if penalty is on the defense. If it occurs after a scoring play, the defense then has the option to have the penalty assessed on either the upcoming conversion or the ensuing kickoff. If the penalty is assessed on the kickoff, it is 15 yards from the end of the kickoff run.*

**FAILURE TO COMPLETE FEMALE PLAY** – An offense does not run a Female Play (Closed Play) for three consecutive plays – *PENALTY: The result of the third play will not count, the ball is returned to PREVIOUS LOS, loss of down, next play is a Female Play.*

**FALSE START** – All players who are not the one permitted legal receiver in motion must be stationary prior to the snap of the ball for at least one second. Any “quick or jerky” movement (as determined by referee) that simulates the start of the play is considered a false start. A center who starts to snap the ball and then stops, or the offense doesn’t execute the play will be considered an act of “simulating the start of a play” – *PENALTY: Play is blown dead at time of infraction and results in 5 yard penalty from LOS and a replay of the down.*

**ILLEGAL BLOCKING** – Contact by an offensive player with a defender, prior to the ball being thrown, that prevents the defender from covering the receiver, such as a pick. Any catch resulting from an illegal block will not count. If the block occurs behind the LOS, the penalty is enforced from the previous spot. If the contact occurs past the LOS it is marked from spot of the foul. Illegal block plays are often a very “gray area” and with multiple players in a small area contact is bound to happen. In the ref’s sole discretion that the offense gained an advantage though the use of an intentional pick. Referees will do their best to be on alert for teams using this very dangerous play to gain an advantage. NOT all contact may be an illegal block or even a penalty; players complaining to the refs about this will be penalized. – *PENALTY (With Contact): 10 yards from PREVIOUS LOS, loss of down – PENALTY (Without Contact): 5 yards from PREVIOUS LOS, loss of down*

**ILLEGAL DEFENSIVE CONTACT** – Contact by a defensive player against an offensive player including pushing a player instead of appropriate two-hand contact, making contact with a receiver at the LOS or downfield or after the ball has passed them, contact while stripping or attempting to strip the ball. If the contact occurs while an uncatchable ball is in the air, it is Illegal Defensive Contact and not DPI. The referee doesn’t have to infer the motive of the player and the penalty will be enforced either way. The defensive player must be able to control his or her movements in the attempt to make a tag. – *PENALTY: 10 yards from PREVIOUS LOS and AFD*

**ILLEGAL DEFENSIVE FORMATION** – A team with a full defense fails to establish and maintain a Rusher at the snap until the end of the 5-second count. A “rusher” must remain within 3 yards of the LOS during the count to establish their position as rusher. They may move side to side but not drop back deeper than the 3 yards from the LOS. The legality of the position of the rusher is solely at the referee’s discretion. Referees will be advised to at their discretion and in the spirit of the league – *PENALTY: 5 yards from the end of the play, repeat down.*

**\*ILLEGAL DIVE** – A player dives to the ground while attempting to advance the ball or recover a fumble – *PENALTY (To advance ball) – 5 yards from the spot of the dive, loss of down; PENALTY (To recover a fumble) – 5 yards from the spot of the dive, loss of possession*

**ILLEGAL FORWARD HANDOFF** – An offensive player may not hand the ball forward to a player who is over the LOS. An offensive player may handoff to another player who is also behind the LOS - *PENALTY: 5 yards from PREVIOUS LOS, loss of down.*

**ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS** – QB's entire body crosses the LOS before releasing a forward pass – *PENALTY: 5 yards from PREVIOUS LOS, loss of down.*

**ILLEGAL JUMP** – A player leaving his or her feet in an effort to jump or hurdle a defender is a dangerous play and is not legal. Jumping to avoid a tag is also not allowed – *PENALTY (to Avoid Tag and No Contact): 5 yards from spot of jump – PENALTY (Hurdle or Contact): 10 yards from spot of jump.*

**ILLEGAL QB SNEAK** – The QB crosses the LOS prior to the completion of the 5-second count, in an effort to advance the ball for positive yardage - *PENALTY: 5 yards from PREVIOUS LOS, replay down.*

**INTENTIONAL GROUNDING** – When a passer throws a forward pass without a realistic chance of completion. *PENALTY: 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down.*

### **LATERALS**

A lateral is an underhand/overhand toss of the ball to a fellow team member next to you or behind you. If the lateral is behind the line of scrimmage, the player who formerly had possession of the ball may go downfield and be considered a receiver. A lateral may never go forward.

**Penalty: Illegal forward lateral – 5 yards from the spot of the thrown lateral. Play blown dead at time of penalty**

**\*OFFENSIVE OFFSIDES** – Offensive player lined up across the LOS prior to the snap. It is common for refs to issue “warnings” for players that are clearly lined up offside prior to the snap and this is consistent with the spirit of the league. However, this is not mandatory to give warnings and all players are responsible for their position in relation to the LOS prior to the snap – *PENALTY: 5 yards from PREVIOUS LOS, replay down.*

**OFFENSIVE OFFSIDES ON KICKOFF** – Crossing the Endzone line before the ball is kicked or thrown – *PENALTY: 5 yards assessed at the end of the return. No option to re-kick is given to the receiving team.*

**OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE** – Contact by an offensive player while the ball is in the air that prevents a defensive player from possibly catching the pass and/or maintaining their current position – *PENALTY: 10yds from PREVIOUS LOS, replay down*

### **SUBSTITUTIONS / IN THE HUDDLE**

A team is permitted to substitute players before each play. They must do so from the same sideline/end line for the entire game. Players must be set on the field for one full second before the snap.

if you do not have your full amount of players on the field at the time the ball is snapped, players will not be permitted to enter the field of play until the current play is blown dead by the referee.

**PENALTY - Illegal substitution** – 5 yard penalty after the play is completed – may be declined by the offense/defense.

Teams may not have more than 8 players in the huddle.

**PENALTY - Illegal substitution** – 5 yard penalty before the ball is snapped.

Once the offense is set on the line of scrimmage, no substitutions should be made

**PENALTY - Illegal substitution** – 5 yard penalty before the ball is snapped.

**\*UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT** – Any intentional act with the ability to injure, arguing, taunting, harassing or aggressive act towards another person, referee or any other member of BLF Game staff – *PENALTY: 15 yards from PREVIOUS LOS and an AFD if penalty is on the defense. Any team receiving 2 unsportsmanlike conduct penalties in one game forfeits that game automatically no matter what the score is and receives a forfeit loss in the official standings.*