

ADULT INDOOR FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE

RULES



LEAGUE OVERVIEW

The DeKalb Park District Flag Football League strives to promote sportsmanship, competition, community involvement, and health and fitness in a recreational setting. This document serves to help guide the league to meet these goals and should not be used to gain a competitive advantage. This is a non-contact league; however, accidental contact may occur and penalties for contact may be assessed at the referee's discretion. Contact does not automatically mean there is a penalty.

The DeKalb Park District reserves the right to modify any rule that is deemed fit to better enhance the quality of the program at any point before, during or after the season.

ELIGIBILITY & ROSTER

- 1 All eligibility questions that are not specifically mentioned in this rulebook are decided by the league coordinator.
- 2 Team rosters are limited to 12 active players. All players must play at least one regular season game to be eligible for the playoffs.
- 3 Rosters must be submitted at the field prior to the first game. Failure to have a roster on record by this deadline may result in a forfeit.
- 4 Only team managers can make changes to the team rosters. All changes must be made at the field, no exceptions. All roster changes must be approved by the league coordinator or onsite staff.
- 5 Any player who does not personally complete and sign the roster is declared an illegal player. All games in which this player participated are forfeited.
- 6 Players may not play on more than one team or change teams during the season. If this occurs, those games will be forfeited.
- 7 Players participating in the DeKalb Park District adult flag football program must reach their 18th birthday prior to participating and out of high school.
- 8 All players must have a form of legal identification (driver's license/military ID) in their possession at all league games.
- 9 Men's division plays 5 v 5 with a minimum of four players on the field.

RULES & REGULATIONS

Playing Field

- 1 The field length is 66 yards long (50-yard playing field and 8 yards for each end zone) by 30 yards wide.
- 2 First down line: Mid-field only.
- 3 No-run zones: five yards before the end zone or at the first down lines.

Game Clock Format

- 1 Each game is played in two 22-minute halves. A running clock format is used.
- 2 The clock is stopped in the final two minutes of the game only when the score is within 8 points.
- 3 The clock does not run during extra points in the last two minutes of a game.
- 4 A two-minute warning is given as a courtesy before the end of the game.
- 5 Halftime duration is three minutes.
- 6 Each team receives one 60-second timeout in the first half and two 30-second timeouts in the second half. If the first half timeout is not used, it does not carry over into the second half. If the game goes to overtime, each team will receive one 30-second timeout each overtime period.
- 7 On any change of possession, play may not resume until the referee has signaled the ball ready for play.
- 8 Overtime consists of one play from the 5-yard line (closed play). If successful, the score is followed by either a point after touch attempt.
 - Each team receives a chance to score. There is no sudden death.

- If the game is tied at the end of the first overtime period, game continues until a winner is determined.
- 9 At the third overtime period, teams must go for a two-point conversion after scoring a touchdown.
- There are no goal changes in overtime situations.
- 10 **Mercy rule:** If a team is leading by 28 points or more with two minutes or less remaining in the game, the game will be called in favor of the winning team.

Coin Toss

- 1 The coin toss is used at the start of the game and during overtime.
- 2 The winner of the coin toss has the option to take the offense at the start of the first or second half.
- 3 The loser of the coin toss chooses which goal to defend.
- 4 The referee/official has the right to determine who calls the coin toss if the two teams fail to come to an agreement on who's calling the toss.

Drives/Possessions

- 1 Kickoffs are put in play at the 10-yard line.
- 2 Each team has 30 seconds from the time the previous play is ruled dead to snap the ball. Teams receive a warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced, unless the attempt to delay the game is flagrant.
- 3 If the offense wishes to execute a hurry-up offense before the referee has established the 7-yard rush line, they may do so with the understanding that the defense may rush from anywhere on the field.
- 4 Interceptions may be returned from anywhere on the field.
- 5 Drives consist of three plays to either make a first down or a touchdown.
- 6 If a team crosses the first down line, they have three additional plays to score a touchdown.
- 7 If a team doesn't earn a first down or score a touchdown, then there is a turnover on downs.
 - The defensive team will receive the possession of the ball at their 10-yard line.
 - It will be 1st down with the opportunity to get a first down or score a touchdown.
- 8 The ball is spotted where the flag belt is at the time of a flag pull, not where the player's feet were, or the ball was.
- 9 Forced fumbles are not permitted.

Formations/Centering the Ball

- 1 The player snapping the ball must face the line of scrimmage and snap the ball between their legs to start each play.
- 2 The center may snap the ball to any offensive player if the ball and player remain behind the line of scrimmage and the snap proceeds backwards.
- 3 Once the center is set to snap, they may not pick up the ball with the intent to deceive. This is considered a false start.
- 4 The center in an eligible receiver, runner, or pass catcher.
- 5 Should the offense wish to move the ball to another legal location on the line of scrimmage, the referee must be notified before picking up the ball from its original spot.
- 6 The center (snapper) is the only player required to be on the line of scrimmage. All other players may be in the backfield or on the line of scrimmage.
- 7 One player may be in motion at a time either backwards, or laterally if no player crosses the line of scrimmage prior to the snap.

Running

- 1 The quarterback may not advance the ball across the line of scrimmage without first having a defender cross the line of scrimmage.
- 2 The no-run zone is designated to avoid short-yardage power running. It is located five yards from the end zone and first down lines.

- 3 It is illegal for a player to leap or jump to advance their position as a runner. Leaping is defined as both feet leaving the ground in order to advance their position. Moves such as spinning and juking to elude the defender are legal. A player who leaps, such as diving for a first down or touchdown or in a reckless manner, will receive a 10-yard penalty from the spot of the foul.
- 4 **Spin Move:** a spin move must be made in a natural running motion. Spin moves made by the player who does not hop or jump with both feet off the ground are legal. Any other variations will result in a 10-yard penalty from the spot of the foul.
- 5 Once the ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage, all offensive players must stop moving, otherwise a screening penalty is called (10 yards from spot of infraction).
- 6 Any pass that doesn't pass the line of scrimmage is considered a run. This includes any "jet sweep" and "shovel" passes.

Receiving

- 1 All players are eligible to receive passes, including the quarterback.
- 2 A receiver must have one foot in-bounds and not be out-of-bounds for a catch to be considered legal.
- 3 Players may bat, deflect or tip a ball to themselves or to another player. Once a ball has been touched the player's flag may be pulled.
- 4 Receivers have a right to their pattern, as the defenders have a right to defend them. The person who initiates contact is considered the offender for penalty.
- 5 "Pick" plays are illegal and are defined as attempts by the offense to interfere with a defensive back's effort to cover an offensive player downfield during a play.
- 6 Face guarding is illegal and results in a pass interference penalty. Players must play the ball.
- 7 A lateral pass may be intercepted if it has not touched the ground.
- 8 If a player loses their flag during any point of the play that player is ruled "down" by a one-hand touch.
- 9 Extensive or rough touching of a receiver results in an illegal contact or pass interference penalty.

Passing

- 1 Offense is allowed one forward pass per play.
- 2 Any pass attempt from beyond the line of scrimmage is illegal.
- 3 A player is past the line of scrimmage when either foot crosses the line of scrimmage.
- 4 The quarterback must release the ball before the rusher pulls their flag; otherwise, the play is a sack (tie goes to the defender).
- 5 The quarterback may not intentionally ground a ball to avoid a flag pull.
- 6 Questionable passes must have a receiver in the general area.
- 7 Grounding is not to be confused with spiking the ball to stop the clock in the last two minutes of a game; the intent must be clear on the part of the quarterback to immediately spike the ball after the snap.
- 8 The quarterback has five seconds to throw a pass if the defense does not rush the quarterback. If the quarterback pitches the ball to a teammate, that player has an unlimited amount of time to pass the ball if he chooses to throw.

Rushing the Quarterback

- 1 All players rushing the quarterback must be seven yards beyond the line of scrimmage and at least one yard off to either side of the center when the ball is snapped.
- 2 Once the ball has been legally exchanged, by handoff or lateral pass, all players are eligible to rush from anywhere in front of or beyond the seven-yard marker.
- 3 Any number of players may rush the quarterback.
- 4 The referee designates seven yards from the line of scrimmage. If the offense starts before the rush line is set (hurry-up offense), the defense may rush from anywhere on their side of the line of scrimmage.
- 5 If a rusher enters the seven-yard neutral zone before the snap, they must get back before the ball is snapped, or they are ineligible to rush on that play.
- 6 A rusher must go for the quarterback's flag. The rusher may attempt to block the pass, but it is illegal to contact the quarterback's body or arm, even if the ball is deflected.
- 7 If the offense lines up with potential receivers behind the quarterback, it is assumed that defenders closer than seven yards are coming across the line to defend potential receivers behind the quarterback. Only defenders who started behind the seven-yard mark may legally make a play on the quarterback until there is a handoff, lateral pass or forward pass, or they cross the line of scrimmage. There is no penalty for faking a rush at the quarterback from an illegal rushing position.
- 8 The rusher has a direct line to the quarterback without impediment by offensive players; this includes plays that involve quarterback rollouts or receiver crossing patterns.
 - Offensive players, must, in all instances, adjust their position to give the rusher their direct line to the quarterback. Impeding is defined as causing contact with the rusher. The infraction causes a 10-yard penalty and a loss of down.

Dead Ball

- 1 The ball is marked down at the point of the flag pull, not where the ball is at the time of the flag pull.
- 2 The ball is ruled dead once it hits the ground; this includes snaps from the center. On a dead ball, possession is given to the last team to have the ball legally. The ball is spotted where possession is lost. Any attempt to strip or remove possession of the ball from any ball carrier results in an illegal contact penalty, even if contact is only with the ball.

Scoring

- 1 Touchdowns are worth six points.
- 2 A point after touchdown (PAT) is worth one point from the 5-yard line and two points from the 10-yard line.
- 3 A safety is worth two points. The team who caused the safety will retain possession of the ball at their own 10-yard line.
- 4 If a PAT attempt is intercepted and returned for a score, two points are awarded.
- 5 To score, a ball carrier must have both the ball and flags over the goal line prior to having their flag pulled. This is at the referee's discretion.

PENALTIES

The following are penalties to be assessed by the referee. It is understood that judgment calls are part of the game and are unchangeable on or off the field without the consent of the referee who made the call.

Defensive Penalties

- 1 **Offsides:** 10 yards from the line of scrimmage.

- 2 **Pass interference:** First down at the point of infraction (defense) or the line of scrimmage if behind the line.
- 3 **Illegal flag pull:** 10 yards from the line of scrimmage or 10 yards from the spot of illegal flag pull if it is beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - This is when an athlete is wrapped up or held by the defensive team in order to gain access to the offensive player's flag.
- 4 **Illegal rush:** 10 yards from the line of scrimmage.
- 5 **Illegal contact:** 10 yards from the point of contact or the line of scrimmage. The advantage is given to the team not being penalized.
 - **Last defender:** Should the last defender before a touchdown commit a penalty to prevent the score, the touchdown is allowed and a penalty of half the distance to the goal is assessed against the offending team from the kickoff spot.
- 6 **Delay of game:** 10 yards and automatic first down. If this occurs in the last two minutes of the game, the clock stops.
- 7 No game may end on a defensive penalty if the offense could win or tie with a successful touchdown and extra points.
- 8 Any defensive penalty that occurs during a successful PAT attempt will be enforced on the penalized team's next offensive possession. The penalty yardage will be marked off from the 10-yard line. The first down would still be at the 40-yard line.

Offensive Penalties

- 1 **False start:** 10 yards from the line of scrimmage.
- 2 **Offside:** 10 yards from the line of scrimmage.
- 3 **Illegal forward pass:** 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down.
- 4 **Intentional grounding:** 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down.
- 5 **Pass interference:** 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down.
- 6 **Illegal pick:** 10 yards from the line of scrimmage.
- 7 **Illegal contact/screening/blocking/impedance:** 10 yards from point of contact.
- 8 **Illegal run:** 10 yards from the line of scrimmage.
- 9 **Delay of game:** 10-yard penalty. If this occurs in the last two minutes of the game, the clock stops.

Roughing

If the referee witnesses any act of rough play such as tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, illegal blocking, tripping, or similar unsportsmanlike conduct, the game is stopped, and any player involved is subject to immediate ejection, per referee discretion. Rough play is not tolerated. Roughing Penalties (per incident):

First rough play: 10-yard penalty.

Second rough play: The player(s) is ejected from the game.

EQUIPMENT

- 1 No steel cleats are allowed. Referees may request players remove any clothing, jewelry or items that might cause injury.
- 2 Teams are required to have matching uniforms with similar colors.
- 3 All players must wear the flags provided by the DeKalb Park District. Flags must be worn on top of shirts and cannot be tucked under the shirt.

- 4 Mouth guards are strongly recommended.
- 5 Referees and park district staff determine if a uniform or player is eligible for play. This decision cannot be protested.

Game balls: Balls are provided by the Park District. If teams choose to provide their own game ball they may do so if it meets official size and weight requirements. Official size and weight must meet National Federation of State High School Associations game ball standards. Referees and staff must approve all game balls used.

LEAGUE TIES

- 1 Should two or more teams be tied, the team that won the regular season games between the tied teams is awarded the higher seed. If the teams split, or did not play one another, then the team that scored the highest number of points throughout the season is the higher seed.
- 2 Games cannot end in a tie.
- 3 Any other situations will be determined by the Park District.

FORFEITS

- 1 Games are forfeited if a team fails to appear on the field ready to play at the time indicated by the official league schedule. (A ten-minute grace period is allowed). Should neither team be able to field a team, the game is declared no contest and both teams are credited with a loss by forfeit.
- 2 *Any team forfeiting a league game without notifying the Park District within 24 hours is subject to responsible for referee fees for both teams.*
- 3 Any team forfeiting two games without appropriate notice is subject to removal from the league, without refund.
- 4 Teams can avoid the two-forfeiture-deletion rule by notifying the Park District 24 hours in advance of the game in question, allowing notification of the other team and scheduled referees of the cancellation.

MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1 Managers are responsible for informing all team players of the rules and regulations and must keep a copy of these rules in their possession at all league games.
- 2 No smoking or drinking is permitted in any park district facility, on the field, or sidelines during the game. Managers must enforce this rule.
- 3 Managers are responsible for keeping rosters and waivers current throughout the season. All addresses and phone numbers must be current.
- 4 Managers are responsible for their players and fans and are expected to curtail any excessive or unwarranted actions between them and the game in progress.

Managers ensure that the sideline areas are policed following each game. Trash should be deposited in containers provided. Teams leaving the area in unsatisfactory condition are subject to suspension.
- 5 Only the team's uniformed players and registered managers are permitted on the team's sideline. All personnel must be at least 5 yards away from the field of play.
- 6 Managers must obtain information on cancelled games due to bad weather and are responsible for notifying their team.
- 7 It is recommended that all managers have a first-aid kit on site for minor injuries.

PLAYER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

The Following Rules and Regulations Are Strictly Enforced:

- 1 Unsportsmanlike conduct is not tolerated. The penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct is automatic suspension from all DeKalb Park District leagues for one week. If so, directed by the official, the ejected player must leave from sight and sound of the playing field within a time period not to exceed one minute. Failure to comply is cause for forfeit and could prolong suspension. The official must provide an ejection report to the Park District. Players suspended from a game are placed on probation for one year from the date of the incident. Any player suspended from a game while on probation may be suspended for one year from the date of the incident. Unsportsmanlike acts defined:
 - Unnecessary rough tactics against an opposing player
 - Damage to facilities
 - Abusive language or gestures, either directly or indirectly, to an official or opposing team
 - Throwing equipment in anger or disgust
 - Intentional delay-of-game tactics
 - Disruption of any league game by verbal or physical abuse from a sideline or bleacher
- 2 A player is automatically suspended for a minimum of one year from the date of incident for fighting or physical violence against another player or spectator.
- 3 Any player or coach who strikes, pushes, shoves, or otherwise molests an official is automatically suspended for one year from the date of the incident. If an official files assault and battery charges and the player is found guilty in a court of law, they are suspended for life.
- 4 Any player who attempts to intercede with the orderly disposition of a dispute while a game will be removed from the league. Coaches must instruct their players to remain in the bench area during any dispute involving rule interpretation or unnecessary rough tactics between members of opposing teams. The officials will eject offending players from the game and provide an ejection report to the Sports office
- 5 Any player or coach who violates the established rules and regulations that result in their suspension cannot participate in any official league game until they have been reinstated by the DeKalb Park District.

PLAYER DISQUALIFICATION/SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

The Sports monitor will review and transmit such reports along with their recommendations to the Recreation Program coordinator, who has the authority to discipline offending individuals or groups in accordance with decency and the severity of the charges.

PROTESTS

- 1 Protests based on a decision which involved accuracy of judgment on the part of the official will not be received or considered.
- 2 Protests based on the misinterpretation or misapplication of a playing rule may be received and considered. Failure of any official to apply the proper penalty for a certain violation of the rules can be protested.
- 3 Whenever the matter of protest arises during a game, the coach of the protesting team must immediately notify the official and the opponent, prior to the next live play, that the game is being delayed under protest. This enables all interested parties to take notice of the conditions surrounding the making of the decision and aids in the proper determination of the issue. This must be followed by submitting a protest form to the Park District within 24 hours from the time of the occurrence of the protest.
- 4 The protest committee consists of the Recreation supervisor, the Recreation Program coordinator and Sports staff. The decision of the committee is final.

REFEREES

- 1 Referees are responsible for submitting documentation to the DeKalb Park District coordinator reporting any incident involving a player, team, manager, or spectator. The park district coordinator and supervisor have the authority to discipline offending individuals or groups in accordance with the severity of the charges.
- 2 The DeKalb Park District exercises authority over assigned league referees relative to game situations.
- 3 All league games are under the control and direction of the referee and only the manager may talk to the referee on the field during the game.
- 4 Referees are representatives of the Park District and, as such, are authorized and required to enforce each section of these rules. They have the power to order a player or manager to do or omit any act that in their judgment is necessary to give force and effect to one or all these rules and to enforce penalties as herein prescribed.

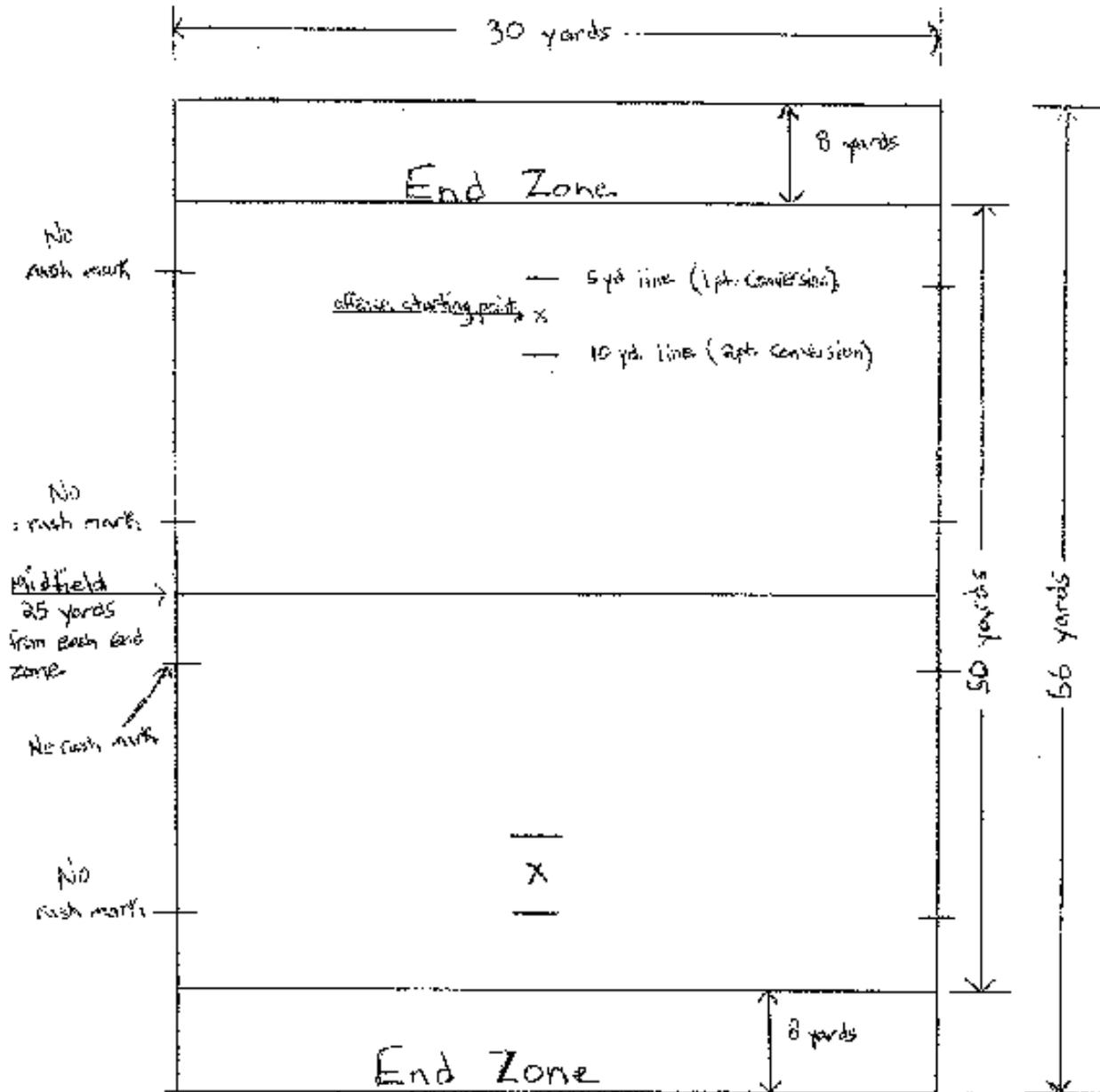
GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 1 The assigned referee oversees the game from 10 minutes before the game begins until the game ends and exercises authority as granted in the official rules. Managers are responsible for the conduct of their players prior to games and under all circumstances that may occur as a result of league activities, both on the playing field and in the general area. Players are instructed in the best interests of the league to report any violation of the spirit of these provisions.
- 2 Any matter not specifically mentioned in these rules and regulations concerning league policies or procedures are under the jurisdiction of the Program Coordinator. His decisions in such matters are final.
- 3 Complaints regarding performance of referees must be submitted in writing.

GLOSSARY

Closed play	In the co-rec division this is a play that must involve a female player
Face guarding	A technique in which a defensive player attempts to block a receiver's view of the ball
Illegal contact	Contact between opposing players to gain an advantage (pushing or holding)
Impeding	When a player places his/herself as to take away the direct line to the ball
Last defender	The last player on the field who could prevent a touchdown
Lateral	A pass thrown to a teammate backwards from the origin or parallel to it
Line of scrimmage	An imaginary line perpendicular to the sidelines at which the ball is put in play with defense on one side and offense on the other
Open play	In the co-rec division this is a play that allows either gender to be involved as the runner, receiver or passer
Pass	The act of throwing the ball to another player. An offensive toss, over- or underhand, is when the ball moves forward. Forward passes are legal only if they are caught in the air and originate from behind the line of scrimmage
Pick	An illegal attempt by the offense to interfere with a defensive back's effort to cover an offensive player downfield during a play
Roughing	When a player flagrantly runs into or hits another player
Rush line	Imaginary line seven yards back of the line of scrimmage on the defensive side. This is the point from which a player rushing the quarterback must start their rush
Safety	When a ball carrier is tackled in their own end zone after bringing the ball there under their own power
Screening	When an offensive player moves to prevent a defender's straight-line access to the ball carrier
Touchdown	When a team crosses the opponent's goal line with the ball

Indoor Flag Football Field Dimensions



DeKalb Sports & Recreation Center