

SPORTS LEAGUE OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION
OFFICIAL MEN'S INDOOR FOOTBALL RULES
(YARDAGE FOR 1ST DOWNS)
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OVERVIEW

7 players on the field (you can play a legal game with a minimum of 5 players).

Two 20-minute halves (45 Minute Games – 1-minute half time)

Teams will have 2 time-outs PER GAME to use at their discretion.

FIRST DOWNS ARE ACHIEVED AT DESIGNATED MARKERS (One at each “ten” yard line and another at mid field)

6 point touchdowns

All legal catches within the “boundaries” of the playing surface are considered “in bounds”

Balls caught off the ceiling netting ARE legal catches

Choice of 1 or 2 extra points on PAT's (3 paces / yards for 1 Pt., 10 paces / yards for 2 Pts.)

Dead ball on all fumbles or contact with the walls.

Quarterbacks cannot snap the ball to themselves.

Running clock except for final two minutes of the 2nd half.

Ties during regular season stay as a tie.

ONLY 2-Point conversion attempts may be intercepted and returned for 2 points.

Laterals may be intercepted and run back for a touchdown or yardage.

All fumbles will be ruled dead balls with the offense retaining possession at the spot of the fumble.

Four-Downs-and-Out format applies for ties in the playoffs.

Receivers need only one foot in-bounds with possession of the ball to be considered a catch.

RULE CLARIFICATION: The clock does not stop for a 2-minute warning unless there is a dead ball situation when the clock hits 2 minutes.

RULE CLARIFICATION: Offsides on the defense will be a free play for the offense. After the play the offense will decide to take the 5-yard penalty or the result of the play

COIN FLIP / BEGINNING OF GAME

- The team that wins the coin flip (or a one-time Ro-Sham-Bo) at the start of the game will have first choice of Ball/ Defense in the first half. The team that started the game on defense will start the second half on offense. There are no kick-offs. Play starts at a designated “STARTING SPOT” (10 paces / yard line).

TEAM SIZE

- Each team shall field no more than 7 players on the field at one time. CSSC rules allow a team to play a legal game shorthanded with 5 players. Teams not able to field the minimum number of players (5) may play a “legal” game with the consent of the opposing captain and / or league staff. **(Please not: if a team arrives with less than 5 players a “forfeit win” is also an option for the opposing captain.) Games will start no later than 10-minutes past the scheduled start time. At that time, it is up to the referee or staff member and opposing captain to allow play or call a forfeit.**
- If a team substitutes players during the game, they must do so from the same sideline/bench the entire game.
- Eligible receivers must be on the playing field before the cadence starts.

FORFEITS

- Teams will have until 10 minutes past the designated start time to field a legal team. Shorthanded teams may play a legal game with a minimum of 5 players. Teams fielding less than 5 players will receive a forfeit. *Exception: Teams may play a “legal game” with less than 5 players with the opposing teams consent. Teams who agree to play under these conditions will lose the option of receiving a forfeit win.* Teams may pick up/recruit players during the regular season in order to field a full team so long as the number of players picked up does not exceed their opponent's number of players. The use of non-roster players will not be allowed during playoffs. Each team's waiver will be used as its final roster. Only players on the waivers may play in the playoffs. A formal protest may be filed before a game if an opposing player's eligibility is in question. The player in question will be required to provide his/her player information (name, address, phone #, and signature) in writing to a CSSC staff member prior to the start of the game. This qualifies as an official protest. Any protest made during a game or after a game will NOT be considered a formal protest. The game will then be played in its entirety as scheduled.

THE GAMES / SCORING

Games ending in a tie score will be recorded as tie games during regular season play. Please refer to the OVERTIME section for ties during the playoffs. Touchdowns are rewarded 6 pts. Extra points – 3 paces / yards off the goal line = 1 pt., 10 paces/yards = 2pts. 2-

point conversion attempts may be intercepted and returned for 2 points with the defense retaining possession at their 10 pace/yard line. One-point conversion attempts CANNOT be returned.

FIRST DOWNS

Each team shall have 4 downs to either score or earn another first down. First downs are earned each time the ball reaches the one of the marked first down cones (there will be one placed at each “ten” yard line and another at midfield... If a team fails to score or earn a first down, possession will go to the other team. If a team fails to score or earn a first down, possession will go to the other team. Offensive teams may elect to “forfeit possession” or “punt” on fourth downs.

“FORFEIT OF POSSESSION/PUNT”

A “forfeit of possession/punt” can be declared on all 4th downs by the offense (i.e. Arena football equivalent to a punt). If a team decides to “forfeit possession/punt” the ball will be given to the opposing team and a designated spot. If a team has not crossed midfield when they declare “forfeit of possession/punt” the ball will be placed at midfield. If a team has crossed midfield (essentially achieved a first down prior to this set of downs) when they declare “forfeit of possession/punt” the ball will be placed at the “10” yard line and the opposing team will take over from there.

TURNOVER OF DOWNS

If the offense chooses to “play” on fourth down, and does not obtain either a first down or touchdown, the defense will take over at that spot (the line of scrimmage).

CONTINUANCE OF PLAY

Play shall continue until:

- Ball-carrier has at least one flag pulled by an opponent (see flag specifics for the few exceptions/additions concerning flag pulling)
- Ball-carrier leaves the field of play
- Ball-carrier scores
- Ball touches the ground as a result of a fumble or incomplete pass (the ball is not an extension of the arm. If the ball is pinned between the ground and the ball-carrier’s hand, the play is dead)
- Ball-Carrier’s knee touches the ground

TURNOVERS

A change of possession can only occur on an interception of a forward pass or a lateral. A fumble is not a turnover. The ball is dead at the point of the fumble and the offense retains possession. **NEW RULE:** A lateral is not a forward pass and can be picked off in mid-air. A picked off lateral will result in a change of possession, and can be returned for a touchdown.

RUSH

There will be an immediate rush.

PENALTIES

Normal rules and penalties of the NCAA apply unless exceptions have been made herein.

- **Illegal Contact - Down Field:** If the illegal contact occurs during play when the offense is advancing the ball the penalty will be a mark off of 5 paces/yards from the point where the ball carrier is at the time of the infraction. If this occurs during a pass play when the pass is incomplete, the penalty will be a mark off of 5 paces/yards from the line of scrimmage.
- **False Start (Offensive):** 5 paces/yards, play is ruled dead immediately, no option to decline, the down is replayed.
- **Offsides/Illegal or Early Rush (Defensive):** Play will be a free play and will NOT BE BLOWN DEAD. If the penalty is accepted by the offense, there is a five pace/yard mark-off from the line of scrimmage against the defense and the down is repeated. If the penalty is accepted any yardage gained on the play will be nullified. If the penalty is declined, the play will stand and it will be the next down.
- **Illegal Motion:** Players may not be in motion **towards the line of scrimmage** when the ball is snapped. This will result in a dead ball, 5-yd penalty on the offense and repeat of the down.
- **Offensive Holding:** It is illegal to grab any part of a defensive player when blocking on offense. Holding will result in a 10-yard penalty from the original line of scrimmage, which the defense can accept or decline. Replay the down. Offensive holding occurring in the end zone will result in a safety.
- **Offensive Picking/Interference:** The offensive team may not initiate a pick/block while in motion. The penalty for this is a 5 pace/yard penalty from the line of scrimmage. If a catch is made after a clear pick, it will be ruled no catch, 5 pace/yard penalty from line of scrimmage. *Remember: Some acceptable incidental contact will occur while running routes and within the normal course of play, and will not be called.*

- **Unnecessary Roughness (Offense):** Unnecessary roughness by the offense during a play will result in a 10 yard/pace mark off from the line of scrimmage and a loss of down. If the penalty occurs after the play the penalty will result in a 10 pace/yard marked off at the end of the play. **Extreme roughness will result in ejection from the game and or league if deemed necessary by the referee and league staff.**
- **Unnecessary Roughness (Defense):** This includes any illegal tag such as grabbing jerseys or excessive pushing etc. If the play is “dead” at the time the penalty is committed and the offense has not advanced the ball the penalty will be 10 pace/yard marked off from the line of scrimmage and an automatic first down will be awarded. If the play is ongoing or the offense has advanced the ball at the time the penalty is committed the penalty will be 10 paces/yards added on to the end of the play and an automatic first down will be awarded. **Extreme roughness will result in ejection from the game and or league if deemed necessary by the referee and league staff.**
- **Defensive Pass Interference:** Ball is spotted at the point of the infraction and offense is awarded an automatic first down. If the pass interference is in the end zone, the ball comes out to the 1 pace/yard line and it will be 1st down.
- **Defensive Holding:** 10 pace/yard penalty from line of scrimmage, replay down. Offense can accept or decline the penalty.
- **Defensive Checking:** One open hand bump within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage is allowed (at the discretion of the ref). Riding the offensive player for the first five yards will not be tolerated. Any obvious repeated contact within the first 5 yards will result in a 5-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage, replay down, offense can accept or decline the penalty.
- **Safeties:** A safety will be scored if a player is:
 1. - tagged down in their own end zone
 2. -runs out of bounds in their own end zone
 3. -snaps the ball out of the end zone
 4. -if the offense fumbles the ball in their own end zone

As a result, the team on defense receives 2 points and will take over on their own “10” yard line for a first down.

- **Intentional Grounding:** This penalty will be called when a passer facing an imminent loss of yardage because of pressure from the defense, throws a forward pass, without a realistic chance of completion. This will result a loss of down (i.e. if it was 1st down during the penalty, it is now 2nd down). And the ball being spotted at the point of infraction (QB’s point of release).
- **Fighting** – Fighting is not allowed and will **NOT** be tolerated. All parties involved in fighting will be subject to immediate ejection from the game at the referee’s discretion and subject to ejection from the league at CSSC staff discretion.

FLAG SPECIFICS

- 1) No flag guarding *****The play/down counts, and the penalty will result in a 5 paces/yard penalty from the spot of infraction/spot the penalty occurred. Note: If the flag guarding occurs on fourth down and the resulting yardage, after the penalty is marked off 5 yards/paces, does not make a first down then it is a turnover on downs. Defensive player returning an interception, who flag guards, will be penalized 5 paces/yards from the spot of infraction.**
- 2) Shirt must be tucked in and flags must be securely attached. Loose hanging articles (i.e. sweatshirts, long T-shirts, etc.) that are held/ripped will not result in a holding penalty, unless in ref’s eyes player was not attempting to go for flag.
- 3) Any ball-carrier whose flags are (in ref’s opinion) not accessible to be pulled will be down at 1st point of contact with the defense.
- 4) Any ball-carrier who has a flag or both flags missing for whatever reason (falls out, accidentally pulled before reception, not noticed before snap, etc.) will be down at the first point of contact.
- 5) Players may leave their feet to pull flag.
- 6) Spin moves are allowed.
- 7) Belt grabbing will result in a 5 paces/yard penalty from end of play.
 - Any belt grabbing at the end of a half or game will result in a 5 paces/yard penalty from point of infraction and replay of down. If this penalty occurs within 5 paces/yard of the end zone, the ball will be spotted at the one-yard line and the offense will receive one play.

MISCELLANEOUS

- If the player calling the cadence does not receive the snap, the play will not stand and will result in a 5 pace/yard penalty and repeat of the down.
- One person must call the cadence and receive the snap – violation of this will result in a 5 pace/yard penalty and repeat of down.
- Silent snaps will not be allowed – violation of this will result in a 5-yard penalty and repeat of down.
- The QB may not be in motion and then receive the snap – this will result in a 5 pace/yard penalty and repeat of down.
- If the QB crosses the line of scrimmage and then throws a forward pass the defense can either decline the penalty or it will be a 5 pace/yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and loss of down (i.e. if it was 1st down during the penalty, it is now 2nd down).

- If the ball hits the ground on the snap for either a pass or running play, the play is "dead", the ball is spotted where it hit the ground, and it is a loss of down (i.e. if it was 1st down during the bad snap, it is now 2nd down).
- The QB may NOT snap the ball to him/herself. If the QB does snap to him/herself, play will stop immediately and it will result in a 5-yd penalty and repeat the down.
- Loss of down penalties which occur on 4th down will result in change of possession.
- Receivers need only one foot in bounds for a reception. If in the referees eyes a receiver would be able to legally catch a pass, but was pushed out of bounds by a defender while in the air a catch will be awarded.
- Players will not be allowed to intentionally push players out of bounds. Some incidental contact will be allowed at the ref's discretion but any intentional push in the referee's eyes will result in a 5-yard penalty from the spot of the infraction.
- Receivers intentionally leaving the field of play are ineligible to receive a pass if they are the first person to touch the ball. This includes the back of the end zone.
- **DIVING IS ALLOWED.** Offensive players may dive to further advance the ball as long as they do not initiate contact. When this occurs the ball will be spotted where it is whenever the ball carrier is touched with two hands his/her knee touches the ground, or when the ball touches the ground. Diving into or over a defensive player will result in the player being down at the point of takeoff and there will be a 5 pace/yard mark-off against the Offense and loss of down.
- A player who catches the ball and lands with 1 or 2 feet across the goal-line, but is tagged after possession and before he/she pulls the ball across the plane of the goal will not be awarded a touchdown. The ball will be spotted at the point of where the ball was at the time he/she was called "down". The ball must cross the plane of the end zone.
- Only the ball needs to cross the plane of the goal-line in order for a touchdown to be awarded.
- Ball-carrier who initiates excessive contact (i.e. dipping shoulders, using elbows, kicking, stiff-arming, etc.) will result in a 5-yard penalty from the point of the infraction.
- Any player who attempts to knock the ball out of the quarterbacks arm or hits the arm of the quarterback while in delivery will receive an Unnecessary Roughness penalty. If contact is made on the quarterback's follow through there will be no penalty.

PLAYOFFS

- Playoffs will follow the last week of regular season and will be single elimination.
- **SEEDING** – Teams will be seeded based upon their winning percentage throughout the season. In most cases all teams will advance to the playoffs as long as they are not in violation of the forfeit policy. ***Note:** *In some situations the last ranked team in the league may not be eligible for playoffs. This will be decided on a league by league basis.*
- **PLAYOFF GAMES** – Playoff games will follow the same format during regulation as the regular season. If teams are tied at the end of regulation in the playoffs, overtime will be used. Non-roster players will not be allowed for playoffs. All players must have signed the waiver, and/or have been placed at the roster at the beginning of the season.
- **OVERTIME** - In the playoffs the "Four-Downs and Out" format will apply. The beginning of the game will start with the CSSC staff using an "odd/even", or coin flip with the winning team deciding on offense or defense, (there is no option to decline). The losing team will decide which end zone to use. Teams will attempt to score in the same end zone for the duration of the overtime. Each team will then have 4 downs to score from 10 paces/yards out from the goal-line. If a team scores, they will have the opportunity to go for one or two on the PAT. An interception will result in a team losing its possession. The game will be decided when one team scores more points in the rotation. **No 1st downs will be awarded except in the case of a penalty.** Interceptions will result in a turnover and may not be returned for any points. If the score is still tied after two complete overtime periods, each team must attempt a two-point conversion after they score a touchdown. From this point on all subsequent overtime periods will continue with each team attempting a two-point conversion after they score a touchdown.

<u>LEAGUE POLICIES</u>

GAMES:

During the regular season one game will be played within time allotted. Games will be divided into two 20-minute halves with a brief half-time break. During the regular season, no overtime will be used. The clock runs continuously during the game with the exception of the last 2 minutes depending on the score. Each team is awarded 2 time-outs per game to be used at any time.

REFS:

Each week CSSC will provide referee(s) for each game.

FORFEITS:

If your team forfeits a game during the season, the following rules apply:

First Offense: Loss of game and warning issued.

Second Offense: Loss of game and staff reserves the right to remove team from playoffs.

Third Offense: Removal from the league

If you know in advance that your team is going to forfeit a game, we encourage you to call our office, at 312.850.8196, in order to help us schedule your opponent a game. However, this does not mean that your team will not receive the loss as a forfeit.

Teams have until ten minutes past the designated start time to field a full squad (or the league minimum of players required according to rules). If at that time a team is unable to field a legal team, it will be up to the staff and the opposing captain to determine whether a team will receive a forfeit win or if a team will allow the opposing team to play a legal game with less than the league minimum of players required according to the rules.

STANDINGS:

The updated standings will be posted weekly starting after the third week of play. The standings will display each team's rank within its skill level. Rank is based on each team's winning percentage throughout the season.

PLAYOFFS:

Playoffs will begin immediately following the end of the regular season and will typically last between 2 and 3 weeks. After teams have been seeded according to their records all captains will receive an email or call with the 1st week of playoff game times roughly 3 days before their league. **Teams will not receive a call for any other weeks of playoffs!** It is **ALL TEAM'S** responsibility to check the playoff brackets at the league to find out what time they will be playing the following week if they win. In playoffs it is not uncommon, (and in some cases will be necessary), for teams to have more than one game in a given night. No non-roster players will be allowed during playoffs. All players must have signed the waiver or be on the roster by the second week of the season in order to be eligible for playoffs. All eligible teams will make the playoffs. Playoff eligible teams will be determined on a league by league basis. Teams that have violated the forfeit policy during the course of regular season will not be eligible for playoffs. In certain situations, teams at or near the bottom of the standings may not advance to the playoffs. Check with CSSC league coordinator to see if this applies to your league. Playoffs are single elimination.

Seeding: Teams are seeded according to winning percentage, point differential and various other criteria. Teams may be dropped from their regular season level based on the above criteria. Teams may play more than one game per day/night, and/or play games on days/nights other than your regularly scheduled league day/night if necessary. CSSC reserves the right to schedule playoff games on days other than teams regularly scheduled league night.

WAIVERS:

In order to participate in the league, each participant must sign the team waiver. Waivers are provided and must be completed and handed in no later than the first night of play. Players not present the first week of play will still be required to sign a waiver with our staff before participating. Players must sign the waiver in order to be eligible for playoffs.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:

Any questions regarding rules, policies, or eligibility of players must be addressed before the start of the game. Any team that would like to challenge the eligibility of an opposing player must do so before the start of the game. Players who have been placed on the roster and signed the waiver are eligible for playoffs. A formal protest may be filed before a game if an opposing player's eligibility is in question. The player in question will be required to provide his/her player information (name, address, phone #, and signature) in writing to a CSSC staff member prior to the start of the game. This qualifies as an official protest. Any protest made during a game or after a game will NOT be considered a formal protest. The game will then be played in its entirety as scheduled. Teams will be notified of all rulings on the identified eligibility discrepancy by the following business day – decisions will not be made on site. If the protest is proven to be legitimate, it will result in the forfeiture of the game in question. Games subsequent to the protested game may be rescheduled. The above procedure will also apply for any other "logged" protests. All rulings by CSSC staff are considered final.

SPORTSMANSHIP:

The idea of CSSC is to have fun. We hope that all participants keep that in mind when becoming involved. Although the games may become intense, you still can be competitive while maintaining good sportsmanship. With this said, any behavior deemed unacceptable by staff may result in suspension and/or ejection from a game or the league. Abuse of officials, referees, and other staff will not be tolerated. CSSC reserves the right to remove a player from a game or a league if they are considered to be bringing down the quality of the league. CSSC will not tolerate fighting! Fighting will be an automatic ejection from any game and in most cases ejection from the league for the remainder of the season.

STAFF:

To coordinate and run the league, the officials and/or staff will be available at all times to help the league run as smoothly as possible. If you have questions regarding schedules, policies, rule interpretations, directions to the bar, etc. please ask.

LEAGUE CANCELLATION/RAINOUT:

Please call our weather hotline for the most up to date information on any cancellations (312.773.7100)

Leagues may be cancelled due to existing weather conditions, dangerous or unplayable field conditions, facility constraints, etc. CSSC staff makes every effort to play all scheduled games, thus we will not cancel games until absolutely necessary. Therefore, if you are calling concerning a decision on a cancellation, remember we will not have an answer until close to the start of the league.

If the league is cancelled, CSSC staff will change the voicemail immediately (312-733-7100). CSSC will then email or text all of the captains to let them know. It is then the **captain's** responsibility to inform all teammates of the cancellation. If a league is cancelled on site, CSSC staff will attempt to contact those teams still scheduled to play the remainder of the league day/night. Depending on the time of cancellation, some teams will have to be notified on site. If we do cancel, follow next week's schedule unless otherwise notified, (i.e. If April 13 is cancelled teams should follow the April 20 schedule for their next game). The games that are cancelled will be made up towards the end of the season if time allows. In extreme circumstances, CSSC reserves the right to run a shortened season without a refund. CSSC also reserves the right to schedule games on days other than your regularly scheduled league day/night if necessary.

PRIZES/T-SHIRTS:

Each team will receive a pre-bundled set of colored jerseys with various sizes at the first night of the league. Additional shirts and sizes can be purchased from the CSSC for an additional charge. The top teams in each division will receive a prize of great emotional, spiritual, and most importantly, social value.

These policies are designed to make the league run as smoothly and safely as possible, and provide continuity for its participants. Each player in the league is responsible for this information: please advise your team of these rules and thanks for playing.