

# 2012 Flag Football Coaches Handbook



## **Football Manitoba Contact Information**

If you have any questions, concerns or need help at any time please do not hesitate to contact the Football Manitoba Flag Football Program staff at the following information:

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\*\*For the Flag Football Rulebook please go online to our website and download a copy

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## Section 1: General Information

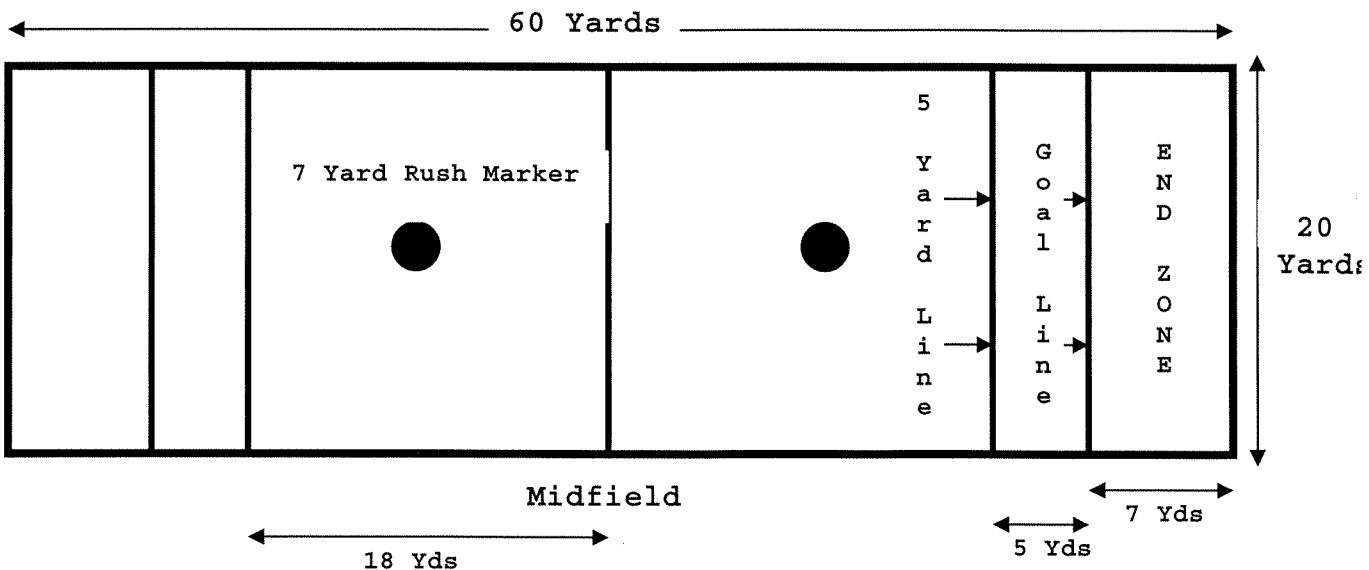


NFL Manitoba Flag Football is non-contact. Blocking and tackling are not permitted under any circumstances!!

**NOTE:** When you see (MB) in front of some rules it refers to rules used only in Manitoba. Teams planning to play in the National Tournament should disregard these rules at the National Tournament.

### Field Dimensions

- Length: 60 yards
- Width: 20 yards
- End Zones: 7 yards deep
- No running zones: Marked 5 yards from each end-zone
- **(MB):** Coaches must stay on their half of the field designated to their team and cannot pass centre. If a coach crosses center their team will be given a 5-yard penalty and a loss of down (on offense) or an automatic first down (on defense)
- Parents are designated the side of the field across from the players

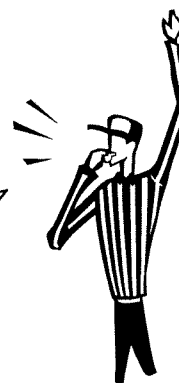


## Player Attire

- Cleats are allowed, but must be rubber. Metal spikes of any kind are not permitted
- Mouth-guards are mandatory for all players
- Players must wear shorts or pants of a solid color i.e. entirely black – NO EXCEPTIONS
- **(MB):** Shorts or pants cannot be the same color as the players flags
- **(MB):** Shorts or pants cannot have open pockets – NO EXCEPTIONS
- Before the beginning of every play, players flags must be at the sides and be properly tucked into their bottoms with at least half an inch of white showing
- Baseball caps, sunglasses and jewelry of any kind are not permitted on the field of play
- All player shirts must be tucked in while on the field of play. Untucked shirts block flags.

**Remember:** Each team should have 5 players on the field at one time!!

Teams can play with a minimum of 4 players but if there is less than 4, games are cancelled and the team with not enough players must forfeit!!



## Scoring

- Touchdown – 6 points
- Extra point(s) – 1 point (played from 5-yard line - **Must be a PASSING PLAY** - a play-action fake or backwards toss is considered a running play and will result in a dead ball and a loss of down)
- 2 points – (played from the 12 yard line/7 yard rushing marker; play actions fakes or backwards tosses are allowed)
- Safety – 2 points
- A win constitutes 2 points, a tie 1 point, a loss 0 points

**Note:** An interception return to opponent's end zone on any extra-point play by the defense will result in the defense scoring 2 points plus gaining possession for the next series at its own five yard line.

## Timing & Overtime

### TIMING:

- Each team has 1 – 60 second time out per half. The clock stops during a time out. Timeouts cannot be carried over to the second half or overtime.
- Officials may stop the clock at their discretion, i.e. during injuries
- Teams will be warned when there are two minutes left to play in both halves. The official will make two whistle blows to signal two minutes.
- There will be a halftime period of 2 minutes between the first and second half

### OVERTIME:

- If the score remains tied at the end of regulation in regular season, a tie will be rewarded with each team receiving one point
- **Only in the playoffs** – If the score is tied at the end of regulation time, teams move directly into overtime. A coin toss determines first possession of overtime. The team that wins the coin toss starts with the ball on the opponents 12 yard line. The game is decided by alternating convert attempts from the 12 yard line (ala. CFL/NCAA Football Overtime). If the team with first possession scores, the second must match that score to continue the overtime period. If the first team does not score, the second team can win by scoring their convert. If both teams do not score, overtime will continue until one team scores and the other is unable to convert their attempt.

**NOTE:** There will be no timeouts granted during the overtime period.



### Did You Know

- That flag halves are 25 minutes running time and that there are 2 halves in a game. That's 50 minutes of playing time!!
- That a flag game **CANNOT** end on a defensive penalty!

## Age Divisions

This year Football Manitoba has changed their age divisions for competitive participants based on Football Canada's Long Term Athlete Development Model (LTAD). Please remember that there will be a possibility of 3 competitive divisions this year. Please see below for a list of these divisions with roster specifications:

- 15 Competitive Female Division (roster of 7, all female)
- 15 Competitive Male Division (roster of 7, all male)
- 16/17 Competitive Division (roster of 7, not gender specific)

### Sportsmanship/Roughing/Ejections

- If the official witnesses any acts of flagrant contact, i.e. intentional/deliberate tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or other physical conduct, the team committing the foul will be penalized 15 yards, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. FOUL PLAY IS NOT TOLERATED
- Trash talking and taunting is illegal. If trash talking or taunting occurs, the team committing the foul will be penalized 15 yards for unsportsmanlike conduct. Officials have the right to determine offensive language
- Discriminatory statements/offensive language, such as comments of race, sex and upbringing by players, coaches or spectators will result in a 15 yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and an immediate ejection
- Deliberate questioning of officials calls will be penalized upon the officials discretion
- Any physical or verbal abuse against an official by a player, coach or spectator will result in a 15 yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and an immediate ejection
- In the case that parents are asked to leave the field of play, coaches are responsible to help officials enforce the decision if parents are unwilling to leave. If the parent does not leave, the team they are sided with will forfeit the game  
**Note:** If an official must call the first game of the night due to an inappropriate parent, the second game must still be played, unless the official fears for his or her safety. If the parent continues to be inappropriate during the second game, the team they represent will forfeit the game.
- Once a flag is pulled, the defensive player should drop the flag at their feet so the official can spot the location of the flag pull.

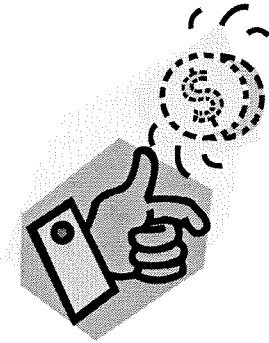
### Fair Play Wins Games

Flag football is a developmental and recreational sport and therefore all players must be given fair playing time.

If complaints are registered by coaches, parents, or players about fair play, please ask them to contact Rachel at Football Manitoba and then contact Rachel yourself to advise her of the complaint. Football Manitoba will then investigate, evaluate and possibly discipline the coach in question.



## Section 2: In Play Rules



### Did You Know

Every flag football game begins with a coin toss. This determines who has first possession at their own 5-yard line.

Loser of the coin toss has choice of end zone to defend and the loser of the toss also gets possession of the ball at the beginning of the second half, starting at their own 5-yard line

### Possession

- There are **no** kickoffs or punts
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line at the beginning of each series and has three players to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three plays to score a touchdown.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield or score a touchdown (once passed midfield) it will produce a turnover on downs, resulting in a change of possession
- An automatic first down penalty will overrule the other requirements regarding three plays to make either a first down or to score
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line
- If an offensive penalty occurs passed midfield, which causes the ball to be placed behind the midfield marker, the offensive team must still make a touchdown within three plays
- Teams change sides at halftime
- **(MB): One pass must be made for every three plays of possession**

### Passing

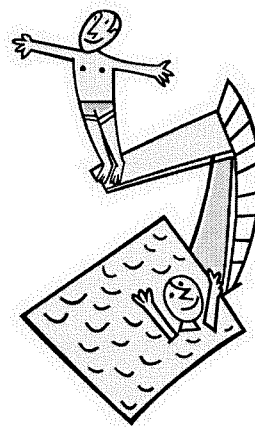
- The quarterback has seven seconds to throw the ball. If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play will be blown dead, a loss of down will occur and the ball will be spotted at the previous line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball is handed off or tossed, or there is a play-action fake or toss, the seven second rule is no longer in effect
- Any player can receive a toss or handoff and be allowed to throw the ball downfield behind the line of scrimmage
- Forward passes must cross the line of scrimmage. If a forward pass does not cross the line of scrimmage, the offense will be penalized with an illegal forward pass
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be beyond the line of scrimmage
- Once a player catches the ball past the line of scrimmage, they are no longer allowed to lateral the ball

## Running

- At the start of each play, the ball must be snapped between the legs of the snapper
- The center is the player who gives the ball to the quarterback via a snap. The center cannot take a direct handoff back from the quarterback (no center sneak play)
- The quarterback is the player who first receives the ball directly from the snap
- The quarterback cannot run the ball past the line of scrimmage
- An offence may use multiple handoffs behind the line of scrimmage. Only backward or lateral handoffs are allowed during a down
- Tosses or sweeps behind the line of scrimmage are allowed, as are running plays.
- Downfield tosses (once the ball passes the line of scrimmage) are not permitted. Once a player has possession of the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, any loss of possession (i.e. fumble) will be blown dead by the official
- “No running zones” are located 5 yards from each end zone. When the ball is on or inside the 5-yard line going towards the opponent’s end zone, the offense cannot use a running play to cross the line of scrimmage. A play-action fake or lateral/backwards toss is considered a hand-off within the 5-yard no run zones. If a run or play-action fake or lateral/backwards toss occurs within the five yard no run zone, the play will be blown dead, a loss of down will occur and the ball spotted at the original line of scrimmage
- Any player who takes a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage
- Spinning is allowed, but offensive players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player. If a player leaves their feet, the play will be blown dead by the official and the ball will be placed from the spot the player left his/her feet or will result in a turnover on downs (if on 3<sup>rd</sup> down)
- The ball is spotted where the ball carriers feet are when the flag is pulled, not at the spot of the ball
- It is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender. Good defensive position will be rewarded to the defense by the officials
- If the ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage and laterals the ball, or throws the ball forward, the play is blown dead and the ball is spotted at the point of the lateral or forward pass
- There are no fumbles in flag football. Any fumble will be considered a dead ball and will result in a the subsequent down or a turnover on downs
- Any fumble by the offensive team in their own end-zone will result in a safety

## No Diving

No diving is allowed by an offensive player. If a player dives from his feet, the play will be blown dead by the official and the ball will be placed from the spot the player left his feet or will result in a turnover on downs (if on 3<sup>rd</sup> down).



## Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage)
- Only one foot must be in bounds for a caught ball to be ruled a catch
- Players may catch the ball while on their knees, back or side, however, the play will be blown dead and the ball spotted where the catch was made
- Players are ineligible to catch a pass if their flag has fallen off
- If a player dives to catch a ball, the play is dead where the catch is made (i.e. where the players feet/body are at the time of the catch)
- If both an offensive and defensive player catch the ball simultaneously, the tie will always go to the offense

**Remember:**  
Coaches can  
make  
substitutions on  
any dead ball!!

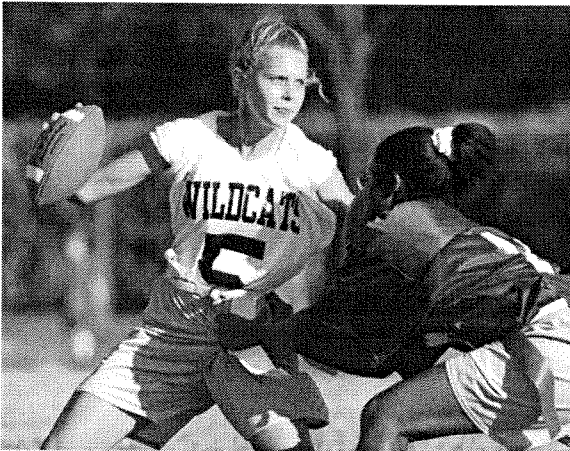


## Dead Balls

- Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - Official blows the whistle
  - Ball carrier’s flag is pulled or becomes illegal.  
Note - Illegal meaning the flag is in a position unable for the defense to pull, i.e. falls off
  - Ball carrier steps out of bounds, jumps or leaves feet
  - Touchdown or safety is scored
  - When any part of the ball carrier’s body, other than a hand or foot, touches the ground
  - When the ball is fumbled  
**Note:** There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted where the ball carrier’s feet were when the fumble was made. If a fumble occurs, it will result in a loss of down or a turnover on downs. If a fumble occurs in the end zone it will result in a safety
- If the ball carrier’s flag falls off, the play will be whistled dead and the ball will be spotted at the spot where the flag fell off

## Defensive Rushing

- Only players starting from a minimum of 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage can rush the passer
- A bean bag designates the seven yards from the line of scrimmage
- Any number of players may rush the quarterback
- A rusher lined up **within** two yards (side to side) of the 7 yard marker is entitled to a free rush at the quarterback – the rusher may not be interfered. If interfered, it will result in an offensive rusher interference penalty
- **(MB)** - A rusher lined up **outside** the two yards (side to side) of the 7 yard marker is **not** entitled to a free rush to the quarterback and may be interfered (For example - a running back or receiver in motion or in a pattern who runs into the rusher)
- All defensive players are eligible to rush once the ball has been handed off or tossed, or there is a play-action fake or toss
- **(MB)** - A rusher **may not** hit the quarterback's arm or any other part of their body while the quarterback is throwing



### Important

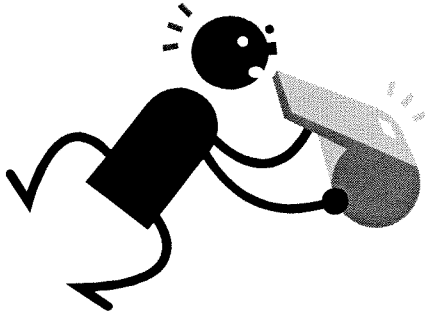
Rushers must be **under control** when rushing the quarterback!

Players may not leave their feet when rushing the quarterback to pull his/her flag!!

## Interceptions

- The defense can return interceptions
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball
- If an interception occurs in an end-zone, the ball will become dead and will result in the ball belonging to the intercepting team at its own 5-yard line.
- If an interception occurs in the end zone and the ball carrier leaves the end zone, the ball will belong to the intercepting team at the spot the ball becomes dead.
- If the ball carrier intercepts in the end zone, subsequently leaves the end zone, then returns to the end zone and is de-flagged, or the ball is ruled dead, the result will be a safety for the other team

## Section 3: Penalties



**Remember:** All flag football penalties are 5 yards, except for pass interference and unsportsmanlike conduct which are both 15 yards!!

### Penalties

- All penalties may be declined - the official should check with the coach or captain after each penalty to determine if they accept or decline the penalty
- Officials determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play
- All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage except for flag guarding and defensive diving
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines the penalty
- If the offense and defense are both penalized with two penalties that are of the same distance (i.e. 5 yard and 5 yards), the down will be repeated
- If the offense and defense are both penalized, but one side is penalized with a 15 yard penalty, the difference between the penalties will be assessed, and the down will be repeated

#### Did You Know

That the term "spotted foul" means that once the penalty is assessed the ball is placed at the spot of infraction!



## Section 3A: Defensive Penalties



### Spotted Foul:

#### 5 Yards & Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> Down (Unless in No Run Zone)

- Defensive Flag Dive

### 5 Yards & Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> Down

- Illegal contact – holding, jamming at the line of scrimmage
- Roughing – unintentional tackling
- Illegal Flag Pull – occurs when a defensive player pulls an offensive player's flag with intention to cause a dead ball or making the receiver ineligible for a catch
- **(MB):** Coach crossing designated sideline area
- **(MB):** Quarterback release interference – Hitting the quarterback's arm when rushing the passer

### 5 Yards & Down Repeated

- Disconcerting signals – Signals to distract opponents or simulate offensive signals prior to the snap
  - Interference with ball at the snap
  - Substitution fouls – i.e. 6 players on the field, players entering the field during the snap of the ball
  - Offside – occurs when a player is passed the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball
  - Illegal Rush - occurs when a rusher is passed the minimum 7 yard rushing length before the ball is snapped when attempting to rush the quarterback
- Note:** The rusher must pass the line of scrimmage to be considered an illegal rush

### 15 Yards & Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> Down

- Pass interference – illegally preventing a receiver from catching the ball
- Note:** Along with the standard rules for pass interference, if a defensive player pulls the flag of an offensive receiver just as the receiver is about to make a catch, the defensive player will be penalized for pass interference.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct – intentional physical conduct, verbal abuse, player ejected

## Section 3B: Offensive Penalties

### Spotted Foul; 5 Yards & Loss of Down

- Flag guarding – using hands, arms or elbows to intentionally block the defender from pulling the flag.  
**Note:** Stiff arming a defender is a form of flag guarding and may also result in a roughing penalty



### 5 Yards & Loss of Down

- No cadence by quarterback
- Illegal forward pass – pass received behind the line of scrimmage
- Offensive pass interference - receiver push offs  
Note - If an offensive player pulls the flag of a defensive players just as the defender is about to make a catch, the offensive player will be penalized for pass interference
- Roughing - it is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender. Good defensive position will be rewarded to the defense by the officials
- Blocking/Illegal pick play  
Note – Offenses may not run plays where players are placed into a stalemated position to act as stand-still blockers downfield. If a pick play or wall is intentionally run it will result in a 5 yard penalty and a loss of down
- **(MB):** Coach crossing designated sideline area
- Rusher interference – It is illegal for a receiver, running back or center to run a pattern that interferes with a rusher who is at a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage and who is 2 yards (side to side) of the 7 yard rushing marker
- No run zone – If a run or play action fake or lateral/backwards toss occurs within the five yard no run zone, the play will be blown dead, and a loss of down will occur, with the ball being spotted at the original line of scrimmage

### 5 Yards & Down Repeated

- Substitution fouls – i.e. six players on the field, players enters field during the snap of the ball
- Delay of game – inability to snap the ball before the 30 second play clock expires
- False Start
- Illegal Snap – snap must occur between the legs of the snapper to the quarterback
- Player out of bounds – if a player goes out of bounds, without interference, the player may not return to the field or catch the ball
- Illegal contact – holding, jamming etc
- Offensive diving – leaving your feet in an uncontrolled movement to catch the ball

### 15 Yards & Loss of Down

- Unsportsmanlike Conduct and player ejection

## Section 8: Policies

### Lightning Policy

If you can count less than 30 seconds between the lightning strike and the thunder clap this means that the storm is 10km away and there is an 80% chance the next strike will happen within that 10 km zone. (Environment Canada)

If this is the situation Football Manitoba requires the following:

- Play will be suspended for 15 minutes, if there is no improvement in the weather the game will be called.
- If the game is called during the first half, the score will be a 1-1 tie.
- If the game is called after the first half, the score and statistics will remain as at the time the game is called
- If the second game is called before being played at 7:30 pm the score will be reported and record as a 1-1 tie.

Flag football officials, players, coaches and parents are required to adhere to the above stated policy.

All teams are to report to the field for the beginning of the first game. If a Head Referee is present at the field the Head Referee is responsible to call all games at that location. If a Head Referee is not present the referee who's officiating will use his/her discretion on whether or not to play.

Games will NOT be re-scheduled.



**NOTE: Referees will be paid for all first games whether they are called during the first or second half. However, if the first game is called and after waiting the mandatory 15 minutes the referee will only be paid if the time extends into the time scheduled for the second game.**

## **Football Manitoba – Flag Football Suspension Guidelines**

### **Harassment of Officials**

1. a) Any player or team official who is assessed a penalty for intentionally touching, holding or pushing a flag football official will immediately be suspended until a hearing is convened. If the official's decision is upheld by the disciplinary committee then the minimum suspension for the infraction will be two (2) months carrying over to all Football Manitoba events (tackle, flag)
- b) Any player or team official who is assessed a penalty for deliberately injuring or threatening a flag football official will immediately be suspended until a hearing is convened. If the official's decision is upheld by the disciplinary committee the minimum suspension for the infraction will be one (1) year carrying over to all Football Manitoba events (tackle, flag).
- c) Any player or team official who makes a travesty of the game and/or completely disrespects a flag football official will be subject to the following policy:
  - a. 2 games for first offence
  - b. 3-5 games for second offence
  - c. players receiving a third offence will be suspended indefinitely

### **Profane & Abusive Language by Coach, Manager or Player**

2. a) Any player or team official who uses profane or abusive language to an official or other participant in the game will be immediately removed from the field and then be subject to the following policy:
  - a. 2 games for first offence
  - b. 4 games for second offence
  - c. players receiving a third offence will be suspended indefinitely

### **Racial/Ethnic Slurs**

3. a) Any player or team official who is identified by the game officials as uttering racial/ethnic slurs shall be immediately removed from the field and then be subject to the following policy:
  - a. 4 games for first offence
  - b. 6 games for second offence
  - c. players receiving a third offence will be suspended indefinitely

A letter of apology from the player/team official identified as using racial/ethnic slurs shall be sent to the opposing team and a copy of said letter forwarded to the Commissioner of the Flag Football league, President of Football Manitoba and Executive Director of Football Manitoba. Failure to do so will result in suspension until letter is received from all respective parties.

## **Fighting**

4. a) Any player or team official who instigates or participates in a fight during league play will be immediately removed from the field and then be subject to the following policy:

- a. 2 game for first offence
- b. 4 games for second offence
- c. 6 games for third offence
- d. Players receiving a fourth fighting penalty will be suspended indefinitely

## **Penalties (Players)**

<b>Infraction</b>	<b>First Offence – No Injury</b>	<b>Second Offence – No Injury</b>	<b>Injury Occurred</b>
Deliberate Attempt to Injure	4 games	Indefinite	Indefinite
Spitting on another participant	4 games	Indefinite	Indefinite
Head Butting	4 games	6 games	6 games
Hair Pulling	2 games	4 games	4 games
Taunting	1 game	2 games	4 games
Kicking	2 games	4 games	6 games
Excessive Rough Play	2 games	4 games	6 games
Use of offensive /insulting /abusive language towards other players or official	2 games	4 games	6 games
Threatening an Official	1 year	5 years	Life
Violating terms of suspension	Minimum doubling of sentence	Minimum doubling of sentence	Minimum doubling of sentence

**\* Each category will be dealt with independently and past history will be considered.**

### Coaches/Team Officials

<b>Infraction</b>	<b>First Offence</b>	<b>Second Offence</b>	<b>Third Offence</b>
Use of offensive/insulting/ Abusive language towards an official	2 games	4 games	To be reviewed with a suspension up to including lifetime suspension
Failure to exit the vicinity of the playing area in a timely manner after being dismissed from game.		6 games	
Threatening a game official (FM Discipline committee to deal with the incident)	1 year with review	5 years with review	Lifetime suspension
Spitting on another participant	4 games	Indefinite	Indefinite
Coach or Team official receiving second caution in the same game	1 game	2 game	4 game
Coach or Team official knowingly played a ineligible player	6 games	12 games	2 years

\* Each category will be dealt with independently and past history will be considered.

**Football Manitoba  
Provincial Disciplinary Suspensions Policy**

**Purpose of the Policy:**

1. Football Manitoba is committed to creating a sport environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. All coaches, managers, administrators, trainers, officials and players have a responsibility to maintain a safe and respectful sporting environment.
2. To receive, review and maintain a record of all suspensions, imposed by ordinary members, leagues and associations, and when necessary, conduct further review to determine if the suspension should be extended across Football Manitoba, and if supplemental discipline is required.

**Scope and Application:**

1. The policy applies to all coaches, managers, trainers, administrators, officials and players registered with; or named on an official sport roster; or under the jurisdiction of Football Manitoba.
2. All Leagues and Associations will be required to submit their disciplinary incidents c/o VP of Program Development, to the offices of Football Manitoba in a timely manner, accompanied with a copy of all information, incident reports, referee reports, and previous deliberations.
3. The VP of Program Development in conjunction with the Board of Directors Football Manitoba, and the Technical Director, is responsible for collecting, and reviewing all submitted incidents, and determining whether further disciplinary actions are required.

**Enforcement:**

A hearing, complete with a process of full disclosure, and a right to representation, must be scheduled following the recommendations of the VP of Program Development.

The Hearing Committee will consist of 2-5 Board members including the VP of Program Development, and shall be assembled and empowered to conduct a review of all disciplinary matters. This committee shall meet with the parties involved within 5 working days after it has been received, and issue a ruling within 48 hours thereafter.

**Process of Appeal:**

An Appeals Committee consisting of 3 Board members or other interested individuals who are not members of the Hearing Committee, shall be appointed by the Board, and be empowered to hear appeals against this Committee. The committee shall meet with the parties involved in the matter within 5 working days after it has been reported, and issue a ruling within 48 hours thereafter.

**Review and Approval:**

This policy was approved by the Board of Directors on February 16, 2010 and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## Football Manitoba – Appeal Policy

### PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this appeals policy is to enable disputes with members and participants to be dealt with fairly, expeditiously and affordably, within Football Manitoba, without recourse to external legal procedures.

### DEFINITIONS

2. These terms will have these meanings in this policy:

- a) Days – will mean total days, irrespective of weekends or holidays
- b) Member – refers to categories of members in Football Manitoba, as well as to all individuals engaged in activities with or employed by Football Manitoba, including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, officers, team managers, team captains, medical and paramedical personnel, administrators and employees (including contract personnel)
- c) Appellant – refers to the Member appealing a decision
- d) Respondent – refers to the body whose decision is being appealed.

### SCOPE OF APPEAL

3. Any Member of Football Manitoba who is affected by a decision of the Board of Directors, of any Committee of the Board of Directors, or of any body or individual who has been delegated to authority to make decisions on behalf of the Board of Directors, will have the right to appeal that decision, provided there are sufficient grounds for the appeal as set out in Paragraph 7 of this policy. Examples of decisions that may be appealed include but are not limited to those relating to eligibility, carding, harassment, team selections, discipline, and entitlements and obligations under an athlete agreement or national team agreement.

4. This policy will not apply to decisions relating to:

- a) Matters of employment;
- b) Infractions for doping offences, which are dealt with pursuant to the Canadian Policy on Doping in Sport and the Canadian Doping Control Regulations;
- c) The rules of football, which may not be appealed;
- d) Discipline matters arising during events organized by entities other than Football Manitoba, which are dealt with pursuant to the policies of these other entities; and
- e) Any decisions made under Paragraphs 6 and 9 of this policy.

### TIMING OF APPEAL

5. Members who wish to appeal a decision will have 7 days from the date on which they received notice of the decision, to submit in writing notice of their intention to appeal, grounds for the appeal and a summary of the evidence that supports these grounds, to [Official of Football Manitoba] (hereafter referred to as "Official")

6. Any party wishing to initiate an appeal beyond the 7-day period must provide a written request stating reasons for an exemption to the requirement of Paragraph 5. The decision to allow, or not allow an appeal outside the 7 day period will be at the sole discretion of the Official, and may not be appealed.

#### GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

7. Not every decision may be appealed. Decision may only be appealed, and appeals may only be heard, on procedural grounds. Procedural grounds are strictly limited to the Respondent:

- a) Making a decision for which it did not have authority or jurisdiction as set out in Football Manitoba's governing documents;
- b) Failing to follow procedures as laid out in the bylaws or approved policies of Football Manitoba; or
- c) Making a decision that was influenced by bias.

#### SCREENING OF APPEAL

8. Within 5 days of receiving the notice and grounds of an appeal, the Official will determine whether there are appropriate grounds for the appeal to proceed as set out in Paragraph 7. IN the absence of the Official, a designate will perform this function.

9. If the appeal is denied on the basis of insufficient grounds, the Appellant will be notified of this decision in writing, giving reasons. This decision is at the sole discretion of the Official, or designate, and may not be appealed.

#### APPEALS PANEL

10. If the Official, or designate, is satisfied that there are sufficient grounds for an appeal, within 14 days of having received the original notice of appeal the Official will establish an Appeals Panel (hereafter referred to as the "Panel") as follows:

- a) The Panel will be comprised of three individuals who will have no significant relationship with the affected parties, will have had no involvement with the decision being appealed, and will be free from any other actual or perceived bias or conflict.
- b) The Officials may designate one of the Panel members to serve as chairperson of the Panel. In the event the Official does not designate a Chairperson, the members of the Panel will select from themselves a Chairperson.



# Code of Conduct

## Football Manitoba

**Football** is a great sport and all who participate - players, coaches, athletic therapists / sport-aiders, officials, administrators, families and spectators - contribute to its success by:

- o Being fair and respectful
- o Following the rules
- o Practicing ethical and non-abusive treatment of all individuals
- o Providing a safe and welcoming environment
- o Supporting all efforts to remove verbal & physical abuse from football

We all benefit when we treat others as we wish to be treated. Remember, we learn best by example. Football Manitoba follows the Football Canada's Code of Ethics. ([www.footballcanada.com](http://www.footballcanada.com))

### Players

1. Play for fun & always be a good sport. Remember that winning isn't everything – making friends & doing your best are important.
2. Work hard to learn the rules, improve your skills and work as part of the team. Attend practices and games.
3. Listen to coaches, managers and athletic therapists / sport-aiders - follow their direction in a positive manner. They are volunteers who love the game like you do.
4. Maintain personal self-control since you are responsible for the consequences of your decisions and actions.
5. Never verbally or physically harass or abuse coaches, athletic therapists / sport-aiders, managers, administrators, officials, opponents, spectators, or teammates. Be respectful of your opponents in victory and in defeat.
6. Accept an Official's on-field game judgment and decisions.
7. Respect your team's and your opponent's field, buildings and equipment.

### Coaches, Athletic Therapists/Sport-aiders, Managers, Administrators

1. Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important. There is more about football than winning the game. Remember, players are in football for fun and enjoyment.
2. Be reasonable when scheduling practice – players / families have other obligations. A player's opportunity for achieving academic success is more important than success on the football field.
3. Have realistic expectations – remember that players are not professional and cannot be judged by professional standards.
4. Be a positive role model to players, parents/guardians, officials and spectators – display emotional maturity, show consistency and ensure the physical safety of others. Be honest, sincere and honourable in your relationships with others. Maintain personal self-control since you are responsible for the consequences of your decisions and actions.
5. Know the rules of the game and follow them as well as the 'spirit' of the rules. Do not disregard the rules since they exist to keep the game fair for all participants.
6. Be consistent, honest & just and generous with your praise when it is deserved. Do not ridicule or criticize players publicly. Be an effective teacher and communicator.
7. Respect all individuals and never verbally or physically harass or abuse players, coaches, athletic therapists / sport-aiders, managers, administrators, officials, parents/guardians, or spectators.
8. Ensure that an injured player receives prompt and competent medical care.
9. Be considerate of the personal needs and problems of others. Be a good listener. Remember that events occur in the lives of others that make for good days and for bad days.
10. Be concerned with the overall development of all players – stress good habits on and off the field, give players the opportunity to improve their football skills, gain confidence, develop self-esteem and display good sportsmanship. Encourage players to be 'team players'.
11. Organize practices that are fun and challenging, as well as effectively teaching the rules, strategies and individual / positional techniques of football.
12. Obtain proper training including the Sport Manitoba 'Respect in Sport' Certificate and continue to upgrade skills.

*Turn page over....*

## Officials

1. Know the rules and be consistent, objective and fair in calling all infractions. Realize that sometimes infractions will require explanation so that players and coaches understand the call.
2. Maintain a safe environment during the game by not allowing intimidation of any player by verbal or physical actions of another individual.
3. Do not tolerate unacceptable conduct towards officials, players, coaches or spectators.
4. Have realistic expectations - remember that players are not professional and cannot be judged by professional standards.
5. Be a positive role model to players, parents/guardians, officials and spectators – display emotional maturity and ensure the physical safety of others. Be honest, sincere, and honourable in relationships with others. Maintain personal self-control since you are responsible for the consequences of your decisions.
6. Respect all individuals and never verbally or physically harass or abuse coaches, athletic therapists / sport-aiders, managers, administrators, officials, parents/guardians, spectators or players.
7. Obtain proper training including the Sport Manitoba 'Respect in Sport' Certificate and continue to upgrade skills.

## Parents / Guardians / Spectators

1. Players are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment. Make it fun - do not force your child to participate in sports, but support their desire to play their chosen sport.
2. Teach your child that doing one's best is as important as winning, so that a player will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game. Offer praise for competing fairly and displaying a positive attitude.
3. Enjoy the game. Cheer good plays of both teams. Be supportive after the game - win or lose. Recognize good effort and sportsmanship.
4. Never ridicule or yell at others for making a mistake or losing the game. Profanity and rude gestures / comments are offensive.
5. Teach your child to play by the rules and to resolve conflict without verbal or physical hostility.
6. Respect all individuals and never verbally or physically harass or abuse coaches, athletic therapists / sport-aiders, managers, administrators, officials, opponents, spectators or players.
7. Display a positive attitude toward the game and all of its participants. Maintain personal self-control since you are responsible for the consequences of your decisions. Don't embarrass your child by stating negative feelings towards others.
8. When you talk with the coach – do so at the next practice. Do not approach the coaching staff immediately following a game to question the coaching decisions including play calls and player participation.
9. Emphasize the importance of practices and how they benefit the player. On-going practice builds skill development, teamwork and increases knowledge of the game. Help the player attend team practices and games.
10. Recognize the importance of the volunteer coaches, athletic therapists / sports-aiders and managers & administrators. Be willing to communicate with them and understand their viewpoints. They are important to the development of the players.
11. Learn all you can about the game – it will enhance your enjoyment and will enable you to discuss the game with your player.

## Remember.....

1. **Misplaced Enthusiasm and Guilt** – don't overemphasize the winning or losing.
2. **Expectations** – don't push the player to make up for your own limitations or to match your 'star' ability. Less than 1% of players will have a successful professional career in football. Don't let great expectations become a distraction or burden.
3. **Perspective** – don't lose sight of what is important to the player – having fun and being part of the team. Players do not mean to make mistakes.

## Dealing with Parents

In coaching youth sports, there are a number of challenges you will face; teaching players the proper fundamentals, preparing effective practice plans, and developing game strategies are only a few. One of the most difficult aspects you may face is dealing with the parents of your players. There are two things to remember about parents: at times they view their children through rose-colored glasses and can tend to be very protective of their children. This view by parents can make for very difficult situations in sports, especially team sports, where no individual should take priority over the team as a whole.

A key aspect in effectively dealing with parents is proper communication. A situation can turn from bad to worse if there is miscommunication or no communication between parent and coach. Communication starts with a beginning of the season Parent Letter and Parent Meeting. In the parent letter, outline your coaching philosophy, goals for the team, rules for the players, rules for the parents, practice and game schedule, coach's contact information, league rules, etc. This letter can be as detailed as you feel necessary, and may include information on positions, playing time or any other information you feel is important to help your season run smoothly. As previously stated you need to get this information out in the open at the start of the season. If a parent has an issue with any of the information, you will need to address their concerns IMMEDIATELY.

As the season progresses, there may be situations where a parent will have an issue and confront you about this. For example, a common problem in any sport is playing time. In many cases there is a reason why you as a coach have decided who plays what position and why. However, in some cases this may be a simple oversight by the coaches. Whatever the case may be, it is better for the coach and parent to talk about the situation, so everyone has a common understanding on why things are done the way they are. Regardless of the reasons, or even if it is an oversight, these issues must be addressed immediately and you should reflect back on the information packet you provided them with at the first of the season that outlines your policies and theories.

We suggest that communication during the season NOT TAKE PLACE IMMEDIATELY AFTER A GAME. Right after a game is where emotions are at their height. Think about it; professional, college and high school coaches usually have a "cooling down" period before they address the media. You and the parents should have a cooling down period before you address each other. BEFORE or AFTER PRACTICE is good time to have a coach-parent discussion. In your beginning of the season letter, inform your player's parents when the best time to talk is.

We also suggest that you instruct the parents NOT TO USE EMAIL as a way to communicate an issue/problem. People tend to write things in an email that they would never say face to face, our civilized guard is down. I am sure we have all had situations at work where after reading over an email, we decided not to hit the "send" button. And when it comes to a perceived injustice to their children, many parents hit the send button when they should not.

Remember, you are the coach. You have a way that you want to run the team. You don't have to change to appease one parent, however you should listen to a concern a parent may have and explain your philosophy/reasoning.

**When dealing with parents, communication is the key.**

[www.CoachYouthSports.com](http://www.CoachYouthSports.com)