FLAG FOOTBALL

OFFICIALS MECHANICS MANUAL

2026 – 2027

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

All Officials..... 4

3-MAN CREW RESPONSIBILITIES

Referee..... 8
Linesman..... 14
Field Judge..... 18

4-MAN CREW RESPONSIBILITIES

Referee..... 21
Linesman..... 21
Field Judge..... 21
Back Judge..... 21

ALL OFFICIALS

FLAG FOOTBALL OFFICIALS' MECHANICS

The TSSAA tackle mechanics are the basis for our movements and coverage for any level or style of football. If a mechanic is not addressed in this section, refer to the tackle mechanics for the answer to your question.

OFFICIALS' UNIFORM

All Officials in the crew must:

- be dressed alike.
- wear the Football 2-inch stripe collared shirt (short or long-sleeve) with TSSAA logo and American Flag on each sleeve.
- wear black pants with the 1 ¼" white stripe or solid black shorts and black socks.
- wear black athletic shoes with black laces. Some white accents are permitted.
- wear the official black hat with narrow white piping, except for the Referee. The Referee will wear the white hat with TSSAA embroidered on the front. All hats must be fitted.
- wear a black belt 1-1/4" to 2" wide with a plain buckle.
- wear black undershirts, **if** undershirts are worn. Undershirts cannot show at the collar or through the outer striped shirt or extend below the sleeves of the outer striped shirt. Turtlenecks are allowed for cold weather.

APPEARANCE AND CONDUCT

All Officials in the crew must:

- be neatly groomed.
- treat players and coaches with courtesy and respect at all times.
- never use profanity or inappropriate language or gestures.
- never consume alcoholic beverages on the day of any game at any level of play prior to the contest.
- never purchase alcoholic beverages or even enter an establishment that serves alcoholic beverages while wearing a TSSAA Official's uniform.
- never use any form of tobacco product (e-cigarette or similar item) beginning at the arrival at competition site until departure.
- never degrade another TSSAA Official or make any comments about games in public or on social media.
- assume everything said or done is being monitored by the host school.

PREGAME CONFERENCE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

SOUNDING WHISTLE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

STOPPING AND STARTING THE GAME CLOCK

I. The game clock will only be stopped by the Officials (S #3 twice) during play in the 1st and 3rd periods and the first 10 minutes of the 2nd and 4th periods for the following:
   A. a charged or TV/radio time-out is granted (restart on the snap).
   B. there is a change of team possession (start on the snap).
   C. following a safety (restart on the snap).
   D. a touchdown (the clock will NOT run on the try and will start again on the snap after the change of possession).
   E. penalty administration (start on the ready for play signal).
   F. an Official's time-out is taken (restart on ready-for play signal).
   G. an inadvertent whistle is sounded (restart on ready-for play signal).
   H. the Two-Minute Timeout (see below).

II. During the first dead ball with two minutes or less remaining in either half, the Referee shall stop the clock and notify both the field captains and their coaches of the time remaining and that the last two-minute timing rules are in effect. This is not a timeout for the coaches to confer with their players. The clock starts on the snap following this timeout.

III. During the final two minutes of each half, all Officials should stop the game clock (S #3 twice) when:
   A. a charged or TV/radio time-out is granted (restart on the snap).
   B. there is a change of team possession (start on the snap).
   C. following a safety (restart on the snap).
   D. a touchdown (the clock will NOT run on the try and will start again on the snap after the change of possession).
   E. a play ends out of bounds (restart on the snap).
   F. a dead ball occurs (restart on the snap).
   G. an incomplete pass (restart on the snap).
   H. penalty administration (start on the ready for play signal unless the ball became dead at the end of the play).
   I. an Official's time-out is taken (restart on ready-for play signal).
   J. an inadvertent whistle is sounded (restart on ready-for play signal).
   K. a first down is gained (start on the ready for play signal unless the ball became dead at the end of the play).

IV. Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 19 points or more at the Two Minute Timeout of the 4th period, the game clock will continue to run. Team coaches can mutually agree to end a game early at any time.

V. An Official's time-out requires the game clock to be stopped when the ball becomes dead. An Official should stop the game clock (S #3) followed by tapping their hands on their chest twice:
   A. when a player appears to be injured.
   B. when a player is in need of equipment repair.
   C. to dry or change the ball after the ball has been spotted.
   D. for unusual heat or humidity, which may create a health risk for the players.
   E. there is an unusual delay in getting the ball ready for play.
   F. for any other reason relating to the administration of the game.

VI. The following are situations for starting the game clock:
    A. Unless the game clock starts on the snap by rule, the game clock will start on the Referee's ready-for-play signal (S #1) following a first down inbounds with less than 2 minutes remaining in either half. The Referee is not required to come to the line of scrimmage to give this signal.
    B. The game clock will start on the ready-for-play signal (S #1) followed by the game clock wind signal (S #2) - two different signals - if the game clock was stopped:
        1. for an Official's time-out.
        2. for a dead ball foul.
        3. for an inadvertent whistle.
    C. If the game clock starts on the snap, no visible signal to start the game clock is given.
    D. If the signal to stop the game clock (S #3) is erroneously given, restart

VII. If the ball becomes dead near the sideline inbounds and a first down is gained with less than 2 minutes remaining in either half:
    A. the covering Official will:
        1. use normal coverage
        2. give one signal to indicate the game clock would normally continue to run (S #2) because the ball became dead in the field of play and then stop the game clock with the time-out signal (S #3) twice to indicate the line to gain was reached.
    B. the Referee will start the game clock with the ready-for-play signal (S #1) followed by the game clock wind signal (S #2) - two different signals.

STARTING THE PLAY CLOCK

The play clock will be set to 25-seconds and started once the Referee gives the ready-for-play signal (S #1).

CREW COMMUNICATION SIGNALS

The following signals will be used:

I. The Referee will count the number of offensive players and signal with a clenched fist that counting is complete and correct.
II. The Field Judge will count the number of defensive players and signal with a fist that counting is complete and accurate.
III. The Linesman will verify the number of offensive and defensive players, **if** time permits.
IV. For penalty enforcement, the Linesman will communicate with the Referee before marking off a penalty. When marking off the penalty the Linesman will jog off the yardage from the spot of the foul to the succeeding spot. The following signals should be used:
    A. One finger indicates a 5-yard penalty.
    B. Two fingers indicate a 10-yard penalty.
    C. An outstretched arm with the opposite hand to the elbow indicates a half-distance penalty.
V. Last play was out of bounds
VI. Completed catch

FUMBLE PROTOCOL

I. When a fumble or backward pass hits the ground or goes out of bounds, the play is dead.
II. The ball belongs to the passing or fumbling team (unless lost after a fourth down).
III. If a fumble or backward pass goes out of bounds behind a goal line, the ball belongs to the team defending that goal and the result is either a touchback or safety.

OFFICIALS' RADIO HEADSET PROTOCOL

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

USE OF PENALTY MARKER

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

USE OF THE HAT

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

USE OF THE BEAN BAG

I. The bean bag is to be dropped on the appropriate yard line in accordance with the situations calling for such action in this manual.
II. The bean bag is to serve as an aid to enforcement and not an absolute reference point.
III. The Field Judge must carry contrasting bean bags and has responsibility from sideline to sideline on all scrimmage kicks and interceptions. The bean bag is to be used to:
    A. mark the spot of possession, **if** at the five-yard line or less, for the defense or receiving team, **if** their momentum carries them into the end zone.
    B. when the kick is returned by the receiving team, to mark the spot the kick ended.

CONTROLLING SAFETY ISSUES ON THE SIDELINE AND IN THE TEAM BOX

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

3-MAN CREW

REFEREE

GAME WEEK PREPARATIONS

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

PREGAME COACHES CONFERENCE

The Referee will:

I. have the crew enter the field 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
II. deliver the list of Officials to each Head Coach, starting with the home team.
III. ask the Head Coach to verbally verify, in the presence of all crew members, that all players are legally equipped and in compliance with NFHS rules.
IV. obtain captains' numbers and advise that captains are needed 5 minutes prior to the scheduled kickoff. Circle the number of the speaking captain as determined by the Head Coach.
V. check with each Head Coach for any unusual plays, shifts or formations.
VI. secure names of coaching staff personnel who will be responsible for sideline safety control of team members and report this information to all Officials.
VII. secure names of coaching staff personnel designated to call time-outs in absence of Head Coach.
VIII. verify where teams will be before the game and at half time.
IX. determine the length of the halftime intermission, if less than 10 minutes.
X. verify with each Head Coach the preferred choice if their team wins the toss.
XI. inquire about any clock problems with home team Head Coach.
XII. verify both teams have game balls.
XIII. determine whether each team has a designated health care professional on its sideline and verify that an emergency plan is in place.
XIV. remind coaches no more than four captains are allowed for the coin toss.
XV. secure the name of team's designated representative (Coach or Player) who will make decisions regarding penalty acceptance or declination and ask them to communicate decisions through Linesman and Field Judge.

THE COIN TOSS

Prior to the game, the coin toss will be held as follows:

I. The Linesman and Field Judge will secure game balls from their respective teams to bring on the field for the toss. They will have the team captains line up 5 minutes before kickoff. The speaking captain for each team should stand on the side of the Referee.
II. The Referee will jog to the center of the field 3-minutes before kickoff facing the scoreboard.
III. The Referee will signal the other Officials and captains on the field. The captains will meet the Referee in the center of field. All other Officials should stop at the hash marks facing the Referee.
    A. The Field Judge will come out from the press box side near midfield.
    B. The Linesman will come out from the chain side near midfield.

IV. The Referee will instruct the captains to shake hands.
V. The coin will be flipped no later than the 2-minute mark.
VI. The Referee will:
    A. instruct the visiting captain to give “heads” or “tails” choice before the coin toss and inform the captains that if the coin is dropped, it will be tossed again.
    B. make the toss and determine the winner.
    C. place a hand on the winning captain’s shoulder and have the captain choose one of the following options:
        1. go on offense
        2. defer choice to second half
    D. **if** the winner of the toss defers, step toward the press box and give the deferred signal (S #10) twice; then ask the deferring captain which direction they would like to play defense.
    E. **if** the winner of the toss chooses offense, ask the other captain which direction they would like to play defense.
VII. The Referee will place the captains in position facing each other with their backs toward the goal they will defend.
VIII. While facing same direction as the captain going on offense, the Referee will signal the choice by giving a first down signal (S #8).
IX. The Referee will dismiss the captains.
X. After captains are released back to their sidelines, all Officials will gather in the middle of the field to verify the coin toss information and receive last-minute instructions from the Referee. After instructions are given, all Officials will jog to their positions with 1-minute remaining on the game clock.
XI. If the Home Team requests that military personnel, celebrities, etc. participate in the pregame coin toss, the actual coin toss should be held immediately following the meeting with the coaches. A ceremonial coin toss will then be held as described above with the options already being determined. If the coin toss is not done prior to the game, the Referee should toss the coin.

USE OF THE MICROPHONE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

DECLARING BALL READY-FOR-PLAY

I. After the ball is spotted, the Referee will:
    A. move to a position approximately 8-10 yards from the line-of-scrimmage and at least 5 yards wide of the ball position.
    B. announce the down (using appropriate fingers or fist), check that the crew is ready and in position to officiate and verify the number of offensive players.
    C. sound their whistle, give the ready-for-play signal (S #1) and give the signal to start the game clock, **if** necessary (S #2) twice.
II. After the end of the preceding play:
    A. the Referee will move to a position approximately 8-10 yards from the line-of-scrimmage and at least 5 yards wide of the ball position.
    B. the Referee will sound their whistle and give the ready-for-play signal (S #1). Unless held in position by the Referee, the Linesman does not linger over the ball.

CORRECTING OBVIOUS ERRORS IN TIMING

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

COACH-REFEREE CONFERENCE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

DISQUALIFICATION PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

OFFENSIVE PLAY

I. After the ball is spotted, the Referee will:
   A. move to a position that is visible to the press box (approximately 8-10 yards from the line-of-scrimmage and at least 5-yards wide of the ball position) prior to the ready signal and will then adjust according to the formation. The Referee's initial position will be on the goal line when the ball is snapped on or inside the 10-yard line. The Referee will be positioned:
      1. on the passing arm side of the quarterback.
      2. in a standing position with shoulders parallel to the line of scrimmage.
   B. declare the ball ready-for-play by using the established procedure.
   C. make sure all players are set for the one-second count before snap.
   D. count the number of offensive players and signal with a clenched fist that counting is complete and correct.
   E. watch for snap irregularities.
   F. watch for illegal shifts or players in motion.
   G. be alert for a Head Coach requesting a time out.

II. After the snap for a running play, the Referee will:
   A. confirm the snap is caught.
   B. observe the ball, runner, action around the runner, and blocks up to the neutral zone.
   C. move parallel to the line of scrimmage **if** action is not in the direction of original position, maintaining position approximately in line with runner's progress.
   D. delay moving immediately toward the line of scrimmage to avoid hindering reverse or delayed play and assure maximum vision of play.
   E. move behind the play toward the side of the field to which the play advances to cover the runner **if** she is downed near the line.
   F. observe action behind the ball and away from the runner near the neutral zone.
   G. check the out-of-bounds spot behind the neutral zone before leaving the area.
   H. continue to observe action behind the neutral zone before leaving the area.
   I. be responsible for the runner until she crosses the neutral zone.

III. After the snap for a passing play, the Referee will:
   A. remain wider and deeper than the passer, as the passer retreats.
   B. observe and protect passer.
   C. determine whether the pass is forward or backward when the quarterback drops back after the snap. The Field Judge and Linesman have the primary responsibility for the direction of the pass when thrown toward their sideline by the quarterback immediately after the snap or when they remain on the line of scrimmage.
   D. be alert to observe an illegal pass and will:
      1. move to the spot of the pass to determine whether the passer's feet were in or behind neutral zone when ball was released.
      2. drop penalty marker, **if** illegal, and continue to officiate.
      3. mark the spot of the pass with a bean bag **if** close and continue to officiate.
   E. solely be responsible for intentional grounding. Although the Referee may get assistance from the covering Official, they are the only one that drops a penalty marker.
   F. continue to observe action behind the neutral zone before leaving the area.
   G. be responsible for the runner until she crosses the neutral zone.

IV. During a dead ball, the Referee will:
   A. only sound their whistle when the ball carrier is down in their area deep behind the line of scrimmage.
   B. only go to the forward progress spot **if** they have the ball carrier down deep in the backfield. The Referee will be aware **if** the run ends close to a first down. Otherwise, the Referee will officiate dead ball action no closer than 5-yards from the dead ball spot.
   C. when the ball is dead, assist with spotting.
   D. extend both arms to the side and parallel with the ground, then give the next down with the fingers and confirm next down with Linesman before the down indicator is changed.
   E. quickly check that the down indicator is correct and that the rest of the crew is ready.
   F. give the time-out signal to stop the game clock unless it is already stopped by rule, **if** a change of team possession has occurred.
   G. declare the ball ready-for-play when needed by using the established procedure.

SCRIMMAGE KICK - PUNT

I. After the ball is spotted, the Referee will:
   A. obtain the Head Coach's decision to declare a punt and announce it to the receiving team.
   B. declare the ball ready-for-play when needed by using the established procedure.
   C. be in correct position:
      1. 5 yards outside the kicker.

2. 3-5 yards behind the kicker on the kicking-leg side.
3. in a standing position with shoulders parallel to the line of scrimmage.

D. count kicking team players and signal with a clenched fist that the players have been counted.

II. After the snap, the Referee will:

A. turn at an angle toward the kicker.
B. ensure the ball is kicked within 5 seconds of receiving the snap. Failure to do so will result in a 5-yard delay of game penalty (S #7 - S #21). *If perceived to be intentional to run out the clock, a dead ball, 5-yard penalty with loss of down can be assessed. (S#7 - S#21 - S#9). If this occurs and time runs out, one untimed down will result.*
C. After the kick is away, the Referee's first movement should be to "circle" behind the kicker.
D. verbally alert the ball has been kicked.
E. move downfield slowly following the kick.
F. watch for fouls and, **if** there is a long return, be in advance of the runner and ready to rule on the touchdown and assist with forward progress near the goal line. When the runner crosses the goal line after running closely down the sideline, the Referee should look to the covering wing Official and assure the runner did not step out of bounds before giving a touchdown signal (S #5).
G. line up the Linesman or Field Judge from their position behind the punter by using an outstretched arm and "chopping" where the ball crossed the sideline **if** the kick goes out of bounds in flight.
H. go directly to the out-of-bounds spot on a short kick out of bounds.
I. signal the Linesman to move the down indicator **if** no foul occurs during the kick.
J. Obtain the ready sign from the Linesman before giving the ready-for-play signal.

ADMINISTERING PENALTIES

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

TIME-OUT PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual, noting the Field Judge does the timing.

INJURY TIME-OUT PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

END-OF-PERIOD PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

BETWEEN-PERIODS PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual, noting the Field Judge does the timing.

BETWEEN-HALVES PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

SECOND-HALF CHOICES

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

END OF GAME PROCEDURE

I. At the end of a Regulation game, the Referee will:
   A. indicate the end of the fourth period (S #14). If the game is decided, the clock is running and is less than the play clock and both teams are leaving the sideline, all Officials can move to the end of the field where they go off, and when time expires, the Referee will signal with a fist above their head to simulate S #14 or announce on the stadium microphone, if used, before leaving the field.
   B. immediately jog off the field, together with all Officials, with security.
   C. not comment about the game on social media.
   D. not discuss the game on the field or make any public statement about the game to the news media.
   E. report any flagrant irregularity or disqualification(s) to the TSSAA by filing a report through the Arbiter website. This includes ejections for fighting.
   F. before leaving the dressing room after the game, ensure the room is left in the same or better condition than when Officials arrived.

II. For Overtime, the Referee will:
   A. after a 1-minute intermission, hold the coin toss at the center of the field, using standard coin-toss mechanics except with only one captain from each team.
   B. indicate the winner of the coin toss by placing a hand on the winning captain's shoulder.
   C. direct the coin toss winner to choose whether to be on offense or defense or to choose the end of the field at which the ball will be put into play.
   D. ask the offensive captain for their choice of a 1-point try from the 3-yard line or a 2-point try from the 10-yard line.
   E. position the offensive captain facing the goal toward which the ball will be advanced, with the defensive captain facing her opponent.
   F. give the first-down signal (S #8) toward the goal line to be used during the overtime period.
   G. inform both coaches that there will be no timeouts during overtime periods.
   H. If the score remains tied after each team has been given an opportunity:
      1. The procedure will be repeated for other overtime periods until a game winner is determined, except the end of the field will not change.
      2. The teams will alternate first options with no coin toss.

LINESMAN

PREGAME COACHES CONFERENCE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

FOLLOWING PREGAME COACHES CONFERENCE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

THE COIN TOSS

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

CONTROLLING TEAM PERSONNEL ALTERCATIONS

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

OFFENSIVE PLAY

I. After the ball is spotted, the Linesman will:
   - A. be in position straddling the line of scrimmage on the sideline.
   - B. confirm spot and neutral zone.
   - C. count offensive and defensive team players and confirm with a clenched fist extended down the sideline, if time allows.
   - D. be alert for illegal substitutions.
   - E. be responsible for all players in motion.
   - F. ensure all players have been, momentarily, at least 5-yards from the sideline after the ball has been marked ready-for-play. If not, drop a penalty marker if the defense does not cover the players who have not done so.
   - G. watch for encroachment or false start and throw the penalty marker to the side of the offending team **if** a foul occurs.
   - H. after the snapper has placed her hand(s) on the ball, look both ways and tell any coaches in the restricted area to back up. Drop a penalty marker if they remain in the restricted area after the ball goes live.
   - I. be alert for a Head Coach requesting a time out.

II. After the snap on a running play, the Linesman will:
   - A. work in the restricted area while the ball is live.
   - B. flow 3-5 yards down field and officiate what is in front of them.
   - C. observe if any offensive or defensive player goes out of bounds. **If** so, toss hat at the spot they went out of bounds. **If** the player illegally returns, drop a penalty marker at the spot they return.
   - D. on a snap within 5 yards of the line to gain, the Linesman will release to the line to gain at the snap and officiate back to the ball.

III. After the snap on a passing play, the Linesman will:
   - A. be ready to rule on the direction (forward or backward) of all quarterback passes to their side and punch accordingly.
   - B. on a snap within 5 yards of the line to gain or the goal line, the Linesman will release to the line to gain or goal line at the snap and officiate back to the ball.

C. on a snap greater than 5 yards from the line to gain or goal line, stay on the line of scrimmage until the ball crosses the line of scrimmage to cover a short pass in their area.
D. watch for interference by either team.
E. be ready to rule on a fumble or an illegal pass after the completion.
F. give the completed signal, **if** a completed catch near the sideline, and only give the time-out signal (S #3) in the last 2 minutes of each half.

IV. When the ball comes to their side of the field, the Linesman will
A. cover the sideline and check for illegal offensive blocks.
B. sound their whistle when the ball becomes dead in their area and mark the spot of the ball when the flag is pulled (using the cross-field spot of the Field Judge when needed) with the downfield foot.
C. square off by moving down the sideline to the spot where the ball became dead and then jog perpendicular towards the center of the field to the numbers, unless the play ends close to a first down or with a possible change of possession. In this case, the Linesman will move quickly in as far as possible until they reach players on that yard line and place the ball on the ground after spotting.
D. when spotting, have the down indicator moved to the new spot.
E. **if** the ball is marked off the sideline, extend both arms to the side and parallel with the ground, then give the next down with the fingers while verbally announcing to the sideline and back out to the sideline.
F. turn and face the sideline and jog back when the ball is marked more than 5 yards from the sideline.
G. when a forward fumble goes out of bounds, the Linesman will drop a bean bag at the spot of the fumble and notify the Referee the ball will be returned to this spot.

V. If the ball becomes dead near their sideline and a first down is gained in the last 2 minutes of each half, the Linesman will:
A. use normal coverage.
B. give the wind signal (S #2) once and then give the time-out signal (S #3) twice after determining the ball is dead.
C. relay the ball to the Referee.

VI. On down-the-line option plays toward them, the Linesman will observe the pitchman, loose ball and then the pitchman as she becomes the runner.

VII. When the ball goes to the opposite side of the field, the Linesman will:
A. move down the sideline in the restricted area until the ball becomes dead and then jog perpendicular toward the center of the field to the numbers.
B. mirror the Field Judge spot and help get the spot **if** they are blocked out.
C. after mirroring the spot, extend both arms to the side and parallel with the ground, then give the next down with the fingers while verbally announcing to the sideline and back out to the sideline.

VIII. The Linesman will observe fouls away from the runner.

IX. The Linesman is responsible for the entire sideline. If the ball goes out of bounds, the Linesman will:
A. signal time-out immediately (S #3) in the last 2 minutes of each half.
B. hold out-of-bounds spot, monitoring players out-of-bounds, while someone retrieves the ball.

X. While moving downfield with the runner, the Linesman will watch for an illegal forward pass or fumble.

XI. If play continues following an illegal forward pass, the Linesman will drop the penalty marker at the spot of the pass to indicate where the run ended and at the spot of any subsequent foul.

XII. If a pass is incomplete in their area, the Linesman will:
- A. sound their whistle.
- B. give the incomplete-pass signal (S #10) twice.
- C. get a new ball and relay to the Referee.
- D. assist the Referee in determining if a receiver is in the area for potential intentional grounding fouls.
- E. be alert for sideline action.

XIII. The Linesman (working with down indicator operator) will:
- A. echo Referee's signal verbally and with proper hand signal.
- B. not turn their back on the field of play when having the down indicator moved.
- C. authorize down indicator operator to move only after Referee's signal.

SCRIMMAGE KICK - PUNT

I. After the ball is spotted, the Linesman will:
- A. be in correct position: same as an offensive play.
- B. check the down number.
- C. count receiving team players and confirm with a clenched fist extended down the sideline, if time allows.

II. After the snap, the Linesman will:
- A. hold momentarily until the ball crosses the line of scrimmage.
- B. release after the ball crosses the line of scrimmage and then move slowly downfield covering their side between the neutral zone and deep receiver(s).
- C. cover all kicks on their side of the field.

III. If the ball goes out-of-bounds in flight, the Linesman will:
- A. sound their whistle and give the time-out signal (S #3) twice.
- B. move farther downfield than where the ball went out of bounds.
- C. if they do not have an out-of-bounds spot, jog up the field with their open hand above their head until the Referee signals them to stop on the sideline by marking the spot with outstretched arm and "chopping" down motion and then signal the direction the ball will be going.

IV. If the ball rolls out of bounds, the Linesman will:
- A. sound their whistle and give the time-out signal (S #3) twice.
- B. hold the spot and continue to observe the action.

V. The Linesman will assist the Referee in covering the ball on a short kick.

VI. On a routine kick, the Linesman will:
- A. watch for fouls in the secondary.
- B. move with the runner **if** she comes to their side.
- C. follow the runner to the goal line **if** there is a break away.

VII. When the ball becomes dead in their area, the Linesman will:
- A. sound their whistle, give time-out signal (S #3) twice and mark spot.
- B. assure the ball is covered **if** a foul needs to be reported to the Referee.
- C. watch the Referee for a signal before moving the down indicator.

ADMINISTERING PENALTIES

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

TIME-OUT PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

INJURY TIME-OUT PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

BETWEEN-PERIODS PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

BETWEEN-HALVES PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

END OF GAME PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

FIELD JUDGE

PREGAME COACHES CONFERENCE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

FOLLOWING PREGAME COACHES CONFERENCE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

THE COIN TOSS

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

CONTROLLING TEAM PERSONNEL ALTERCATIONS

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

OFFENSIVE PLAY

I. After the ball is spotted, the Field Judge will:
   - A. be in correct position: 10 yards beyond the defensive line of scrimmage on the sideline.
   - B. confirm spot and neutral zone.
   - C. count offensive and defensive team players and confirm with a clenched fist extended down the sideline, if time allows.
   - D. be alert for illegal substitutions.
   - E. be responsible for all players in motion.
   - F. ensure all players have been, momentarily, at least 5-yards from the sideline after the ball has been marked ready-for-play. If not, drop a penalty marker if the defense does not cover the players who have not done so.
   - G. watch for encroachment or false start and throw the penalty marker to the side of the offending team **if** a foul occurs.
   - H. after the snapper has placed her hand(s) on the ball, look both ways and tell any coaches in the restricted area to back up. Drop a penalty marker if they remain in the restricted area after the ball goes live.
   - I. be alert for a Head Coach requesting a time out.

II. After the snap on a running play, the Field Judge will:
   - A. work in the restricted area while the ball is live.
   - B. flow 3-5 yards down field and officiate what is in front of them.
   - C. observe if any offensive or defensive player goes out of bounds. **If** so, toss hat at the spot they went out of bounds. **If** the player illegally returns, drop a penalty marker at the spot they return.
   - D. on a snap within 5 yards of the line to gain, the Linesman will release to the line to gain at the snap and officiate back to the ball.

III. After the snap on a passing play, the Field Judge will:
   - A. be ready to rule on the direction (forward or backward) of all quarterback passes to their side and punch accordingly.

B. on a snap within 5 yards of the line to gain or the goal line, the Linesman will release to the line to gain or goal line at the snap and officiate back to the ball.
C. on a snap greater than 5 yards from the line to gain or goal line, stay on the line of scrimmage until the ball crosses the line of scrimmage to cover a short pass in their area.
D. watch for interference by either team.
E. be ready to rule on a fumble or an illegal pass after the completion.
F. give the completed signal, **if** a completed catch near the sideline, and only give the time-out signal (S #3) in the last 2 minutes of each half.

IV. When the ball comes to their side of the field, the Field Judge will
A. cover the sideline and check for illegal offensive blocks.
B. sound their whistle when the ball becomes dead in their area and mark the spot of the ball when the flag is pulled (using the cross-field spot of the Field Judge when needed) with the downfield foot.
C. square off by moving down the sideline to the spot where the ball became dead and then jog perpendicular towards the center of the field to the numbers, unless the play ends close to a first down or with a possible change of possession. In this case, the Field Judge will move quickly in as far as possible until they reach players on that yard line and place the ball on the ground after spotting.
D. **if** the ball is marked off the sideline, extend both arms to the side and parallel with the ground, then give the next down with the fingers while verbally announcing to the sideline and back out to the sideline.
E. turn and face the sideline and jog back when the ball is marked more than 5 yards from the sideline.
F. when a forward fumble goes out of bounds, the Field Judge will drop a bean bag at the spot of the fumble and notify the Referee that the ball will be returned to this spot.

V. If the ball becomes dead near their sideline and a first down is gained in the last 2 minutes of each half, the Field Judge will:
A. use normal coverage.
B. give the wind signal (S #2) once and then give the time-out signal (S #3) twice after determining the ball is dead.
C. relay the ball to the Referee.

VI. On down-the-line option plays toward them, the Field Judge will observe the pitchman, loose ball and then the pitchman as she becomes the runner.

VII. When the ball goes to the opposite side of the field, the Field Judge will:
A. move down the sideline in the restricted area until the ball becomes dead and then jog perpendicular toward the center of the field to the numbers.
B. mirror the Field Judge spot and help get the spot **if** they are blocked out.
C. after mirroring the spot, extend both arms to the side and parallel with the ground, then give the next down with the fingers while verbally announcing to the sideline and back out to the sideline.

VIII. The Field Judge will observe fouls away from the runner.

IX. The Field Judge is responsible for the entire sideline. If the ball goes out of bounds, the Field Judge will:
A. signal time-out immediately (S #3) in the last 2 minutes of each half.
B. hold out-of-bounds spot, monitoring players out-of-bounds, while someone retrieves the ball.

X. While moving downfield with the runner, the Field Judge will watch for an illegal forward pass or fumble.
XI. If play continues following an illegal forward pass, the Field Judge will drop the penalty marker at the spot of the pass to indicate where the run ended and at the spot of any subsequent foul.
XII. If a pass is incomplete in their area, the Field Judge will:
    A. sound their whistle.
    B. give the incomplete-pass signal (S #10) twice.
    C. get a new ball and relay to the Referee.
    D. assist the Referee in determining if a receiver is in the area for potential intentional grounding fouls.
    E. be alert for sideline action.

SCRIMMAGE KICK - PUNT

I. After the ball is spotted, the Field Judge will:
    A. be in correct position: 5 yards in front of the deepest receiver on the sideline.
    B. count receiving team players and confirm with a clenched fist extended down the sideline.
II. After the snap, the Field Judge will:
    A. cover their side of the field between the neutral zone and deep receiver(s).
    B. be alert for any touching by either team.
III. If the ball goes out-of-bounds in flight, the Field Judge will:
    A. sound their whistle and give the time-out signal (S #3) twice.
    B. move farther downfield than where the ball went out of bounds.
    C. if they do not have an out-of-bounds spot, jog up the field with their open hand above their head until the Referee signals them to stop on the sideline by marking the spot with outstretched arm and “chopping” down motion and then signal the direction the ball will be going.
IV. If the ball rolls out of bounds, the Field Judge will:
    A. sound their whistle and give the time-out signal (S #3) twice.
    B. hold the spot and continue to observe the action.
V. The Field Judge will assist the Referee in covering the ball on a short kick.
VI. On a routine kick, the Field Judge will:
    A. watch for fouls in the secondary.
    B. move with the runner **if** she comes to their side.
    C. follow the runner to the goal line **if** there is a break away.
VII. When the ball becomes dead in their area, the Field Judge will:
    A. sound their whistle, give time-out signal (S #3) twice, and mark the spot.
    B. assure the ball is covered **if** a foul needs to be reported to the Referee.

ADMINISTERING PENALTIES

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

TIME-OUT PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

INJURY TIME-OUT PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

BETWEEN-PERIODS PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

BETWEEN-HALVES PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

END OF GAME PROCEDURE

Refer to the Tackle Football Officials Manual.

4-MAN CREW

REFEREE

Responsibilities are the same as a 3-Man crew.

LINESMAN

Responsibilities are the same as a 3-Man crew.

FIELD JUDGE

Responsibilities are the same as the Linesman in a 3-Man crew, except the Field Judge will have no responsibilities relating to the down indicator or timing.

BACK JUDGE

Responsibilities are the same as the Field Judge in a 3-Man crew, except that:

I. After the ball is spotted, the Back Judge will be positioned 20-yards beyond the line of scrimmage and always deeper than the deepest defensive back (3-5 yards), in the center of the field.
II. On a scrimmage kick (punt), the Back Judge will be positioned 10-12 yards wider than and 5-yards behind the deepest receiver on the Linesman's side of the field.