

# 2023 USAWFL RULES UPDATES

**FIELD MARKINGS** – Field marking diagrams and descriptions have been updated to remove the across field line at the 3 yard line and add in the 'X' markings at the 3 and 22 yard lines for PATs and Kickoffs, respectively.

**Rule 3, Section 9, Article 1. HANDING THE BALL** – Updated definition to be in line with current game play. "A muffed handoff is dead except in the case of a snap where the ball can be safely recovered by the offense." It is still not permissible for the defense to recover a muffed snap. *See also rule 8, Section 5, Article 3 Fumble*

**Rule 3, Section 11, Article 3. PLAYER ON LINE OF SCRIMMAGE** - Removed requirement for players to have their shoulders facing the opposing team's goal lines to be in line with needs of wheelchair athletes.

**Rule 3, Section 24, Article 1. TACKLING** – Updated definition to be in line with current game play. Tackle is from waist to shoulder (no neck/head contact), with exception that striking a QB on their throwing arm in the motion of throwing is not a sack.

**Rule 4, Section 3, Article 2. STOPPING THE GAME CLOCK** – To not encourage running up of the score, an exception is made to automatically discontinue 2-minute drill clock stoppage rules if the score differential is 21 points or more with 2 minutes left in the game. The notice takes place at the start of the 2nd half so the officials have time to prep the scoring volunteers.

**Rule 4, Section 4, Article 3. EQUIPMENT TIMEOUTS** – Rule has been updated to allow teams to use a charged timeout versus an equipment timeout, which would allow the affected player to return to the field immediately versus sitting out one play. Additionally - updated to allow for 2 equipment timeouts per team per half - versus 2 per game.

**Rule 5, Section 2, Articles 1, 2 & 3. ROSTER REQUIREMENTS** – Added in clarifications around Roster Limits (14 for away, 21 for home/driving distance), Geographic Limits (play for team closest to you) and Post-Season Roster Requirements (must have played in regular season, plus 3 veteran minimum). *Contact Move United if you have questions or if this would significantly impact your team.*

**Rule 5, Section 4, Article 1. MANDATORY APPAREL** – Rule has been updated to codify that home team wears primary or darker colors and away team wears lighter colored jerseys during regular season. During the post-season, the higher seeded team will choose their jersey color and the opposing team should wear one of sufficient contrast.

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**Rule 6, Section 1, Article 1. FREE KICK PASS** – Updated rule & penalty to require ball to travel 16 yards to match up with new restraining lines from 2022 season and require ball to meet the receiving team's restraining line.

**Rule 6, Section 1, Article 3. FORMATION** – Item 2 updated so that the receiving team will have at least 4 players 10 yards beyond the restraining line, to allow for more balance with the shorter field space given the updated 2022 restraining lines.

**Rule 6, Section 2, Article 2. FREE KICK PASS OUT OF BOUNDS** – Updated penalty to allow receiving team to choose from their restraining line (22-yard line) or the out of bounds spot) versus previously written 15 yards from the kickoff.

**Rule 6, Section 2, Article 3. FREE KICK PASS HITS THE CEILING** - Rule added to account for indoor games. Re-kick from same spot.

**Rule 7, Section 2, Article 1. DEAD BALL DECLARED** – Added number 5, dead ball declared when a forward pass hits the ceiling (ceiling considered out of bounds).

**Rule 8, Section 4, Article 3. PASS INTERFERENCE PENALTY** – Updated to make defensive pass interference a spot foul and automatic first down versus a 10 yard penalty & automatic first down, making the rulebook more in line with NFL rules.

**Rule 10, Section 2, Articles 3. PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY AFTER FAIR CATCH** – Updated rule so that if a legal fair catch is made behind the 20 yard line (see touchback below) the ball will be brought out to the 20 yard line.

**Rule 11, Section 5, Article 3. BALL NEXT IN PLAY** – Touchback rule has been updated to encourage safety of kickoffs. A touchback will now be brought to the 20 yard line to create as short 1st down situation for the offense, and any fair catch behind the 20 yard line will come out to the 20 yard line.

**Rule 12, Section 1, Article 4. DEFENSIVE HOLDING** – Updated rule to loss of 5 yards plus automatic first down, to be in line with NFL rules.

**Rule 12, Section 1, Article 6. ASSISTING THE RUNNER** – Added in rule to clarify that no offensive player may assist their teammate by pushing them downfield with their hands or their chair.

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**Rule 12, Section 3, Article 2. CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATIONS** – Added in a rule to clarify that if an athlete is under investigation for a potential code of conduct violation that player will be immediately removed from play until the investigation is complete. Code of Conduct policies have been updated at a Move United organizational level, and will be provided in late Spring 2023. *See also non-player personnel Rule 13, Article 5.*

**Rule 14, Section 1, Article 3. CHOICE OF PENALTIES** - Updated rule to note that if a personal or unsporting conduct foul will be enforced in addition to chosen penalties to make in line with NFL policies and ensure personal fouls are being enforced to encourage on-field safety. *See also Rule 14, Section 5, Article 2. Exception 4.*

**Rule 15, Section 1, Article 3. EXTRA PERIOD** – Updated over time rules to allow for tournament schedule management. 1st overtime period will be the same as 2022 season (NCAA Rules). Subsequent overtime periods will allow each team one down for a TRY from the 3 yard line (pass for 1 point or run for 2 points). Decrease time before overtime from 5 minutes to 3 and decrease time between overtime periods to 1 minute. Overtime continues until a winner occurs. Only one time out provided for entirety of overtime.

**Rule 16. TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES**– Added a new rules section to codify tournament procedures. 1) All tournaments will run via pool play 2) Pools will make every attempt to be evenly matched by using current team rankings 3) codifies tie break rules that do not incentivize running up the score during mis-matched games.

**Rule 17. POST-SEASON QUALIFICATIONS**– Added a new rules section to clarify how teams will be chosen for post-season play and codify tie-break procedures.