

GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED PLAY



WELCOME

Move United aims to ensure that everyone, regardless of ability can participate in sport. In 2020, when founding the USA Wheelchair Football League, we saw an explosion of interest in the sport of wheelchair football. To support this interest, Move United is excited to share the USA Wheelchair League Guidelines for Community-Based Play. These guidelines are set to increase overall accessibility of the sport of wheelchair football by providing guidance for groups and athletes who want to incorporate wheelchair football into their programming, but may not have the space or resources to compete in a regulation USA Wheelchair Football League game. These guidelines ensure groups have the knowledge and guidance to provide a safely structured opportunity for anyone to get on the field and get in the game.

Throughout these guidelines, you'll see modifications to the wheelchair football game to make it more community-play friendly. If you cannot find something in these guidelines, please default to the [USA Wheelchair Football League Rulebook](#) rules.

Only games hosted as part of the USA Wheelchair Football League competitive season and listed on the Tournaments section of the USA Wheelchair Football League website will affect pre-season, regular season, or post-season standings for any current USA Wheelchair Football League Team.

HOSTING REQUIREMENTS

DESIGNATE A HOST

A hosting organization should be designated to assume liability of the event, ensure that policies are upheld, and coordinate event logistics.

- Hosts should ensure that all participants complete any required waivers, registration and roster documentation.
- Hosts should conduct field site assessments to ensure that the general space is appropriately sized, safe and accessible as well as ensure that the play area is flat, without cracks/divots, and clear of any obstacles/debris.
- Hosts should be responsible for coordinating with players, coaches and officials in advance of event.

SAFETY PROTOCOLS & EQUIPMENT

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Hosts are encouraged to establish an Emergency Action Plan that outlines policies and procedures in the case of inclement weather, medical emergencies, and any other areas that the hosting organization deems necessary.

Emergency Action Plans should be created with the guidance of the host site and follow any of their previously outlined procedures.

For guidance on creating an Emergency Action Plan, please visit the [resources section](#) of the USA Wheelchair Football League Website

MEDICAL STAFF

Move United and USA Wheelchair Football League Policies require medical staff to be 'available' during any practice or community-based play event. Available is defined as: medical personnel can be contacted at any time during the event via telephone, messaging or other immediate communication means. Further, the medical case can be discussed through such communication, and immediate arrangements can be made for the athlete to be evaluated.

HELMET USAGE

Move United USA Wheelchair Football League safety protocols outline requirements for helmet usage at three levels of contact. Gameplay is held at full contact, which requires the use of standard football-specific helmets by all participants during game play. It is encouraged to complete the “[Introduction to Wheelchair Football Coaching](#)” course to learn more about the three levels of contact.

SPORTS CHAIRS

For the safety of all athletes, sports chairs with cambered wheels should be used when playing a full-speed version of the game.

The [USA Wheelchair Football League Rulebook](#) outlines the requirements, measurements and parameters for qualifying sports chairs and helmets for the game of wheelchair football in Section 6: “Equipment, Uniforms, and Player Appearance.”

GAME BALL

Hosts are encouraged to use an “Official” sized football for gameplay. This is the standard size for game play at the high school level and above.

MODIFIED GAME RULES

Hosts are encouraged to uphold the policies and standards of the current [USA Wheelchair Football League Rulebook](#). If space does not allow the use of the standard USA Wheelchair Football League field size of 76 yards in length by 22 yards in width, below is a list of modified rules for the game. The modified field can be used anywhere space would allow, whether it be indoor or outdoor.

FIELD SIZE & SET UP

See Appendix A for an example of the Modified Field Set Up

- Updated Field Size: 30 yds x 22 yds plus 5 yrd end zones
- 14 Cones are used on both sides of the field to indicate the perimeter of the field of play as well as the goal line, end zones, 5-yard lines, and 10-yard line.
 - Taping to mark the goal line, end zones, 5-yard line and 10-yard is not required but is encouraged if the facility permits and the host has the available resources.

GAME TIMING

Standard timing of four 15-minute quarters with two minutes in between each quarter and a 10-minute halftime while using a running clock throughout all quarters of play. Unless you want to practice clock-management strategy, do not use the 2-minute drill clock rules outlined in the USA Wheelchair Football League Rulebook.

LINE TO GAIN

Per the updated field set up, teams will have one set line to gain, commonly referred to as first down line, at the 10-yard line.

FREE KICK PASS & SCRIMMAGE KICK PASSES

Given the small field size, Free Kick Passes and Scrimmage Kick Passes, commonly referred to as kickoffs and punts, are not permitted and should be replaced by the rulesets below.

- In place of the Free Kick Pass to start the game, the offense starts at their 5-yard line.
 - Coin Toss: The winner of the coin toss must choose to either start with the ball at the beginning of the first half of the game or start with the ball at the beginning of the second half of the game.
- In place of a Scrimmage Kick Pass, follow the turnover procedure outlined below.
- In place of a Post Touchdown Free Kick Pass, the non-scoring team will take over at their 5-yard line.
- The onside kick option is not available.

TURNOVERS

In place of standard turnover rules, given the small field size, please use the ruleset below:

- If the offense makes it past midfield, and then turns the ball over on downs, the defense will take over the ball at their 5-yard line.
- If the offense does not make it past midfield, and then turns the ball over on downs, the defense will take over the ball at the opposing team's 10-yard line.

PENALTIES

Any penalty call that results in a set loss of yardage, results in a 5-yard loss. Enforcement of other penalty calls, such as spot fouls, will remain the same.

OFFICIALS

Hosts are encouraged to uphold the policies and standards of the current USA Wheelchair Football League Rulebook, which calls for a minimum of five trained officials per field. The five field positions for officials to be stationed at are the following: Referee, Back Judge, Line Judge, Down Judge, Center Judge/Umpire.

MODIFIED FIELD OFFICIALS

If the Modified Field is used as outlined in Section 2 it is recommended to have a minimum of three trained officials overseeing the game to ensure athlete safety. It is suggested that the three officials are stationed at the following field positions: Referee, Back Judge, Line Judge.

Appendix A

Modified Field Set Up

Figure A1. Depiction of the Modified Field set up using two indoor basketball courts as the play area.

