**How to start a franchise in the MPFL:**

1. **The costs to join the MPFL are either of the following:**
   1. A one-time 75,000 fee.
   2. A one-time $15,000 fee & a $5,250 annual league fee until $75,000 has been paid.
2. **However, only the following ownership types are acceptable for both the “professional” & “semi-professional” teams:**
   1. A group of no more than 32 people per franchise, with one holding a minimum 30% stake (may be a religious group and/or non-profit organization).
   2. *A publicly owned, non-profit corporation with a 7-member committee appointed by the board of directors*:
      1. No one is allowed to hold more than 200,000 shares.
      2. *A share must cost at least $75 but no more than $350 2020 US dollars:*
         1. All stocks do not include an equity interest, do not pay dividends, cannot be traded, and has no protection under securities law.
         2. No one is allowed to hold more than 4% of the team’s total shares.
      3. *Shareholders receive nothing more than the following:*
         1. Voting rights (i.e., electing 1 member of the board of directors and the team president that leads the 7-member executive committee & represents the team at league meetings); Only the president gets paid for his services, the other 6 committee members sits gratis.
         2. An invitation to the corporation's annual meeting.
         3. A 25% discount on official team merchandise & an opportunity to purchase exclusive shareholder-only merchandise.
         4. Some season-ticket purchasing privileges in the form of a 10% discount on all plans.
         5. This now includes the Green Bay Packers as well.
   3. *A City and/or County Government as a 501(c)(6) mutual-benefit nonprofit corporation:*
      1. A City and/or County Government that owns a MPFL team can also sell shares/stocks in order to raise funds for the team.
      2. *The same rules for shares/stocks listed above* *for publicly owned/non-profit corporations will also apply, except that the governmental entity will appoint 1 member each to the 1) board of directors & 2) 7-member executive committee that does the following:*
         1. Directs corporate management.
         2. Approves major capital expenditures.
         3. Establishes board policy.
         4. Monitors the performance of management in conducting the business and affairs of the corporation.
      3. All excess revenue that is left after paying all of the players, coaches, & staff must go to funding local government agencies/programs (example = police/fire departments, public transportation, etc.)
   4. *People are allowed to invest in the league itself in order to help bailout teams if they cannot support themselves financially:*
      1. As a result, all teams may have no more than 25% of the ownership rights go to the league.
   5. All teams are required to release their financial balance sheet every year.
3. **In addition, all MPFL teams must have a stadium with all of the following:**
   1. At least *300* seats, but no more than *20,000*.
   2. No size requirement / limitation for Combined Statistical Area (CSA) or Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).
   3. Locker rooms with showers for both teams and officials.
   4. PA system and scoreboard.
   5. The ability to sell tickets and concession.
   6. Turf is not required, but it is encouraged.
   7. Properly lined field if not turf.
   8. The home team is also responsible for providing water and food for the visiting team, ensuring there is a trainer or doctor on-site for the match, and paying the referees fees at the end of each game.
4. **The MPFL Pyramid is organized in a mostly decentralized structure and is managed as team-run leagues:**
   1. Each year the member clubs help elect a chairman, treasurer, and secretary and an eight-member board of directors.
   2. Each team is individually owned and operated, and is responsible for maintaining league minimum standards.
   3. New teams seeking membership into the MPFL are subject to approval from an executive committee of existing team owners of the conference that they wish to join.
   4. Member clubs have the right to make localized decisions for their respective markets, conferences, and divisions based on what they believe is best for their particular division.
   5. Each conference is managed by the individual member clubs and elect a conference commission each year.
5. **All cities can have no more than 10 MPFL football teams within their entire Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) or Combined Statistical Area (CSA):**
   1. Examples of Metropolitan Statistical Areas = [Dallas–Fort Worth metroplex](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dallas%E2%80%93Fort_Worth_metroplex), [Norfolk-Virginia Beach (Hampton Roads)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hampton_Roads), [Riverside–San Bernardino (Inland Empire)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inland_Empire) or [Minneapolis–Saint Paul](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minneapolis%E2%80%93Saint_Paul) ([Twin Cities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twin_Cities)).

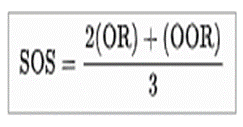
**Roster & Salary Rules:**

1. All players in the MPFL Pyramid must be at least 18 years of age, but no more than 55.
2. 8 players on the field at any one time.
3. **All MPFL teams must be any of the following:**
   1. Option #1 (“fully professional”) = have only a max of 25 total paid players.
   2. Option #2 (“fully amateur”) = have at least 30 but no more than 55 total amateur/unpaid players.
   3. Option #3 (“semi-professional”) = have a max of 25 paid players & an additional 30 amateur/unpaid players, for a total of 55 total players.
   4. All MPFL teams must have at least 2 quarterbacks & 2 kickers.
   5. *All MPFL Teams are required to have at least 4 players that originated from within a 120mi / 193km radius of the team's home town. Eligibility requirements include the following:*
      1. Being born inside the aforementioned limit.
      2. Residing in the aforementioned limit for at least 5 years after graduating from college.
      3. Playing high school football inside the aforementioned limit for at least 3 seasons.
      4. Playing college football inside the aforementioned limit for at least 1 season.
4. **Salary & Other Benefits:**
5. *The overall salary floor for just players will be $53,750 per team, while the salary cap will be somewhere in between $213,500 & $241,000 (depending on the number of 1-platoon & 2-platoon players on the roster):*
   * 1. Practice Squad (5 only) = $75 per regular season game.
     2. 1-Platoon / "Specialist" Players = $200 per regular-season game.
     3. 2-Platoon / "Iron Man" Players = at least $300 per regular season game.
     4. All paid players will earn $50 per post-season game.
     5. All players are not paid during the preseason.
     6. These rates must be annually adjusted for inflation.
     7. All players are not paid during the preseason.
6. *The overall salary floor for just coaches will be $85,000 per team, while the salary cap will be $225,000:*
   * 1. A minimum of $25,000 & a maximum of $100,000 per season for head coaches/general managers.
     2. A minimum of $20,000 & a maximum of $75,000 per season for coordinators.
     3. A minimum of $15,000 & a maximum of $50,000 per season for position coaches.
     4. These rates must be annually adjusted for inflation.
7. **MLF teams can only sign MPFL players from 1) teams that reside in the same state that they are located in & 2) team from all of the adjacent states:**
   1. Example: The Indianapolis Colts can only sign MPFL players from Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, & Kentucky.
8. **All MPFL teams will employ 8 coaches, including the following:**
   1. A head coach (the head coach will also be the general manager).
   2. An offensive and a defensive coordinator.
   3. 4 position coaches.
   4. 1 special teams coordinator.
   5. Each team will also be assigned and limited to 8 football operations staff.
9. **Player/Team Conduct & Equipment Rules:**
   1. *All teams must use the official MPFL football:*
      1. *The football is the same size as an NFL football:*
         1. The ball is inflated to 12.5-13.5 psi (86-93 kPa) and weighs 14-15 oz (400-430g) beyond that, the exact dimensions vary slightly.
         2. The ball has a long axis of 11-11.25” (28-29 cm), a long circumference of 28-28.5” (71-72cm), and a short circumference of 21-21.25” (53-54cm).
      2. The ball used in games will be similar to the American Indoor Football Association (AIFA) ball, with red, white, and blue panels as opposed to the brown colored football of most leagues.
   2. *No spectators are permitted on the sideline:*
      1. Teams can only have rostered players (in uniform) and up to 5 staff members (18 or over) on their sideline.
      2. Teams must keep their sidelines clear of garbage and personal belongings such as chairs, bags and other items. If your sideline is in violation at any point in the game the referee will flag your team 15yds for unsportsmanlike conduct. Multiple infractions could result in a forfeit.
      3. Players & staff can yell but do not curse. Refs will call 15yd penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct every time it occurs.
   3. *Uniform Rules:*
      1. Regular jerseys will be used.
      2. *Numbering system:*
         1. Lineman = 0, 50–79 & 90–99 (includes Tight Ends).
         2. Backfield players = 00–49 & 80-89.
         3. However, numbers cannot be shared.
         4. Player uniforms must have numbers on the front and back of shirts.
      3. Any player can use any name or nickname on their jersey that they please (i.e. Rod Smart using “He Hate Me”) so long as it not offensive/discriminatory (i.e. racist, homophobic, ableist, etc.) in any way.
      4. All players are allowed to wear custom cleats and visors as long as they don’t say anything discriminatory (i.e. racism, sexism, homophobic, ableism, etc.) in any way.
      5. Mouthguards are mandatory for all players.
      6. Long sleeves & pants must be worn in cold weather games.
      7. *No hard pads are permitted in the PAFA:*
         1. Knee, thigh, and rib pads are permitted but cannot have any hard plastic in them, they must be soft. Compression shirts with the thin foam inserts are also permitted. Thick “shock pad” type shoulder pads are not permitted.
         2. The only padded head gear that is permitted are the Skull Caps and Bands supplied by 2nd Skull. Rugby caps and thick head protection are not permitted. Baseball caps and hoodies are no permitted. If your choice of head gear is loud or offensive the official has the right to ask you to remove your head gear.
   4. *Both teams must wear their dark color uniforms during games (similar to* [*rugby*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErWI3S8tlF4) *or this* [*NAL Championship Game*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gMMdVxPCN4&feature=youtu.be)*) unless either of the following occurs (i.e. mandatory “Color Rush”):*
      1. The teams share similar colors.
      2. If someone is colorblind (i.e. teams with red or green uniforms will not participate).
   5. *3 violations over the course of the season will result in a player being suspended:*
      1. This applies to anyone cutting up, cursing a ref, threatening to fight, a dirty hit, or ejection. Any pushing or shoving after the play is over or any vulgar trash talk is not permitted. After you get a warning you will get a 2-game suspension to be served immediately following the game you just played.
      2. A punch will land you a season suspension for an entire year, even if you miss. Depending on your teams actions during this type of infraction the league can suspend or fine your entire team. If that same team has another member throw a punch again that season they will be removed from the schedule with no refund. We have zero tolerance for fighting.
10. **All players may play on both offense & defense, except for the Quarterbacks (QB) & the Kickers (K):**
    1. *If a 2-way player enters and leaves, from the moment he leaves the player is considered "dead" and cannot return to play until the designated time is served:*
       1. “Dead time” is 2 possessions (1 offensive & 1 defensive, or 8 total plays); Exception = a "dead" player may participate on kickoffs and conversions, or as long snapper or holder.
       2. Free substitutions are allowed for 2-way players on all kickoffs & conversions.
       3. All players are required to play in every game unless an injury occurs; Each player must play a minimum of 2 possessions (or 8 total plays).

**Season Structure:**

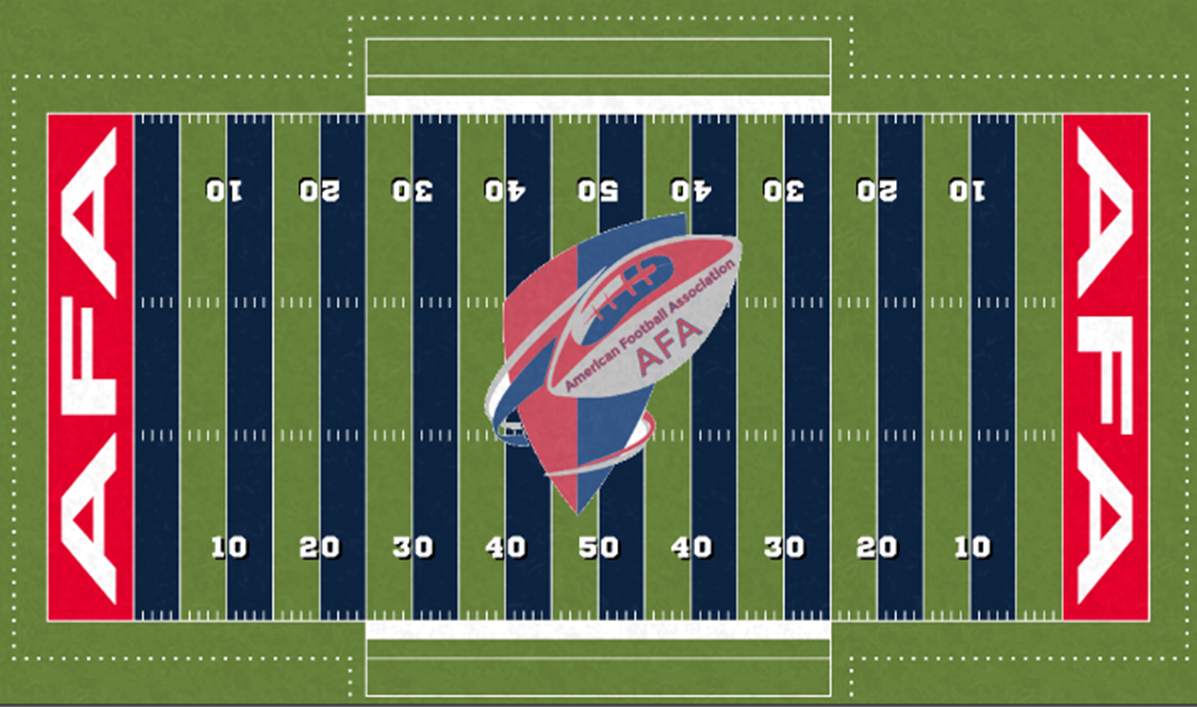
1. **All teams must host an open 1-week tryout no more than 1 week prior to the start of fall training camp:**
   1. A max of 100 potential players in addition to all of the players from the previous year
   2. Players will be tested on their 40-yard dash time and short shuttle with other position-specific drills and one-on-one drills to follow.
   3. All positions will be evaluated in tryouts.
   4. All tryouts must take place on Saturday & Sunday.
   5. *Registration fees:*
      1. *A pre-registration fee for the following types of players listed below can be applied no more than 1 day before the start of the tryouts/preseason:*
         1. Amateur / unpaid = $50.
         2. Paid = $170.
      2. All of the registration fees listed above are in 2020 USD; both fees must be adjusted for inflation at least once every 5 years.
2. **The MPFL uses a fall-to-winter season format, similar to the MLF & the National Football League (NFL):**
   1. All teams must play 1 preseason scrimmage open to the public at least 2 weeks prior to April 1.
   2. *All teams play a 10-week schedule with 10 total regular-season games with no bye weeks (5h/5a):*
      1. The season runs from the fourth Saturday of August to the final Sunday of June (2020 Example = May 8 to June 28).
      2. All teams play the other 10 teams in their level once (10 games).
      3. *All MPFL teams can have no more than 2 games per week:*
         1. Games will be played on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, & Saturday evenings.
         2. All teams must have a 4-day break in-between games.
   3. *Organizational Format:*
      1. All divisions will have no more than 11 teams per level.
      2. This includes all of the teams being promoted (holding spots #1-3) & relegated (holding spots #9-11).
      3. *List of Divisions:*
         1. East North Central (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, & Wisconsin).
         2. East South Central (Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, & Tennessee).
         3. Mid-Atlantic (Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia, District of Columbia, & West Virginia).
         4. Mountain (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, & Wyoming).
         5. New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, & Vermont).
         6. North Atlantic (New Jersey, New York, & Pennsylvania).
         7. Pacific (Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, & Washington).
         8. South Atlantic (Florida, Georgia, & South Carolina).
         9. West North Central (Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, & South Dakota).
         10. West South Central (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, & Texas).
3. **The Post-Season:**
   1. *The post-season is a round-robin tournament for each division instead of each level:*
      1. i.e. the tournament format is more like the USOC or the FA Cup in soccer than a traditional postseason tournament in the sense that teams from all levels will compete instead of just the team at their respective level.
      2. *The teams selected are the top teams from each level in each division:*
         1. The # of teams for each division will vary based on how many levels each division has.
      3. The postseason runs from the first Wednesday of November until the first Wednesday of December (2020 Example = November 4 to December 2).
      4. All teams must have a 3-day break in-between games.
   2. *All MPFL playoff games will be played at the higher ranked team’s stadium:*
      1. *5-Team Example:*
         1. The #1 in a 5-team group gets to host all 4 of its group games.
         2. The #2 seed hosts 3 of its 4 group games.
         3. The #3 seed hosts 2 of its 4 group games.
         4. The #4 seed hosts one game.
         5. The #5 seed goes on the road for all three group games.

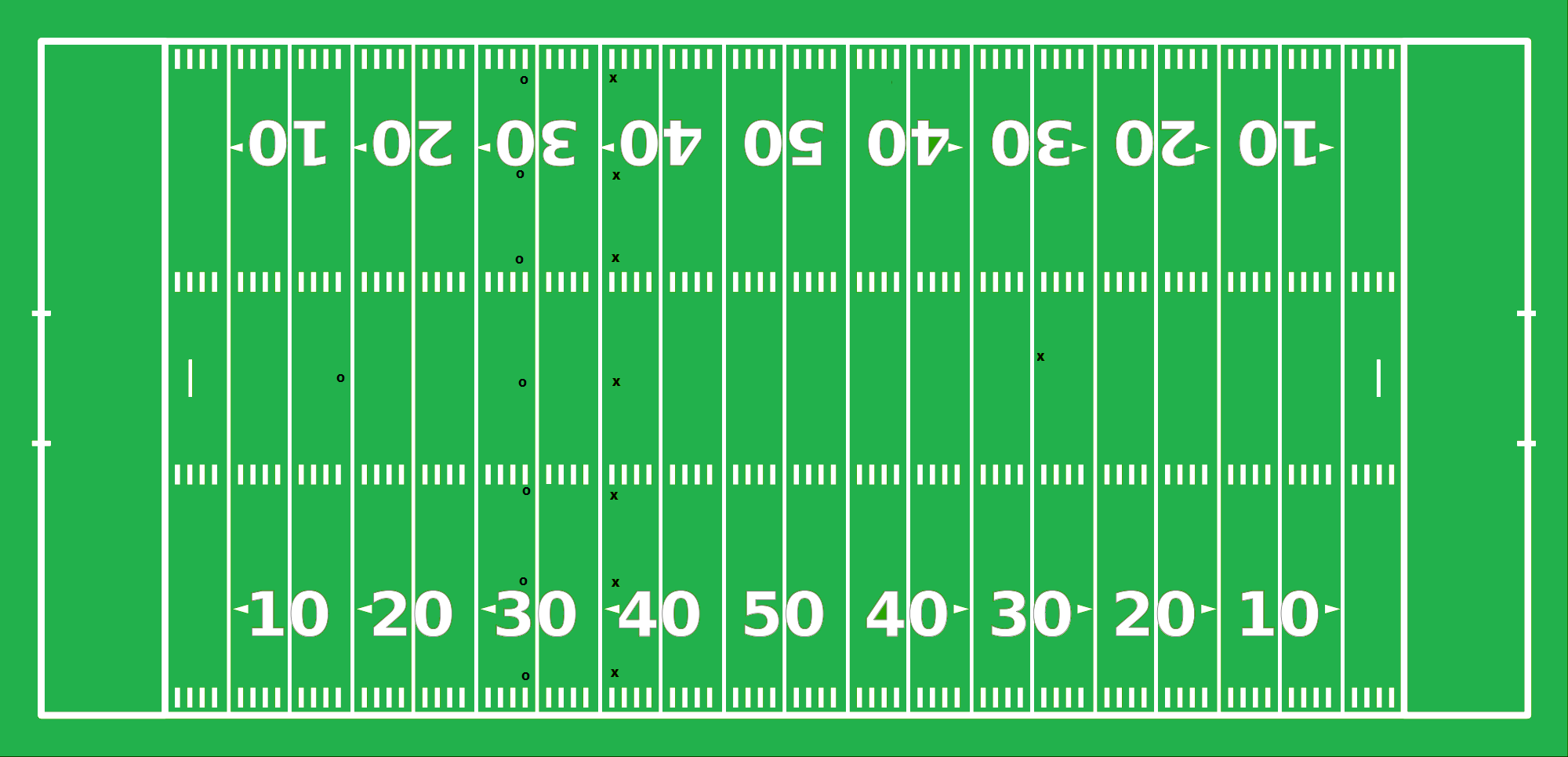
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| **2020 MPFL Postseason Example:** | | | | | |
|  | **Round #1:** | **Round #2:** | **Round #3:** | **Round #4:** | **Round #5:** |
| **Date:** | *November 4* | *November 11* | *November 18* | *November 25* | *December 2* |
| **Game #1 (7pm):** | 1 vs 4 | 1 vs 3 | 3 vs 5 | 2 vs 5 | 2 vs 4 |
| **Game #2 (9pm):** | 2 vs 3 | 4 vs 5 | 1 vs 2 | 3 vs 4 | 1 vs 5 |
| **“Bye” Team:** | Bye - 5 | Bye - 2 | Bye - 4 | Bye - 1 | Bye - 3 |

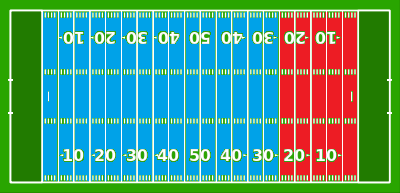
1. **Bonus Points System:**
   1. 4 points for winning a game in regulation.
   2. 3 points for winning a game in overtime.
   3. 2 points for drawing a game
   4. 0 points for losing a game
   5. 1 bonus point for losing by 8 points (or fewer) or in overtime.
   6. 1 bonus point for scoring at least 4 touchdowns.
   7. 1 bonus point for winning while scoring at least 3 more touchdowns than the opponent.
   8. *At the end of the regular-season, the team with the best regular-season record (i.e. highest point total) at each level regardless of conference is awarded the MPFL Level Supporter’s Trophy:*
      1. For those who don't know, it echoes the practice of the top European soccer leagues in which the team with the best record is the champion, like the Supporter’s Shield in MLS.
      2. The Trophy winners are guaranteed home-field advantage in all rounds of the playoffs they compete in (including the Super Bowl & MPFL Level Championships).
      3. The MPFL Level Supporter’s Trophy can just be a certificate in a frame.
      4. Regular-season rankings will be based on the amount of bonus points that each team has.
   9. *Tie-breaker - If only two teams are level on league points:*
      1. Most wins.
      2. *The team that won the head-to-head match (if applicable) is ranked first:*
         1. For divisional rivals, this becomes the teams with the higher aggregate score (i.e. The combined score from both games).
         2. If this game was a draw, then the team with the more wins is ranked first.
      3. Point difference (PD) = is the number of goals (or points) scored in all league matches minus the number of points conceded.
      4. Points for (PF) = is the total number of points scored by a team over the course of the regular-season.
      5. Points against (PA) = is the number of goals scored against them by their opponents over the course of the regular-season.
      6. Fewest disciplinary actions.
      7. Strength of schedule = two-third (66 2/3%) for the opponent's record and one-third (33 1/3%) for the opponents' opponents record.
      8. Total number of points scored on the road.
      9. Road point difference.
      10. Total number of points scored @ home.
      11. Home point difference.
      12. If still identical, a play-off is required.
      13. Coin toss (2 teams) or drawing of lots (at least 3 teams).
2. **All MPFL games will be broadcast live on the following platforms:**
   1. Eversport, Pluto TV, & YouTube.
   2. All telecasts must feature no television timeouts and 60% fewer "full-screen commercials" than fully professional PAFA games.
3. **Promotion & Relegation:**
   1. The bottom 3 teams per division in Level-1 (based on points) will be demoted to Level-2.
   2. The top 3 teams per division in Level-2 (based on points) will be promoted to Level-1.
   3. The bottom 3 teams per division in Level-2 (based on points) will be demoted to Level-3.
   4. The top 3 teams per division in Level-3 (based on points) will be promoted to Level-2.

**Gameplay Rules:**

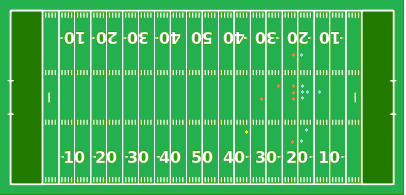
1. **Field Rules:**
   1. Field size = 100yds (91.4m) long and 53 1⁄3yds (48.8 m) wide, with two 10yd (9.1m) endzones at each end (i.e. a full-size field).



1. **Clock & Timing Rules:**
   1. *Four 15-minute quarters with a 15-minute period at half-time & 2-minute periods between quarters:*
      1. *The official time clock runs continuously unless stopped by any of the following:*
         1. Plays in which a touchdown or safety is scored (which must be automatically reviewed).
         2. When a time out is called by either team.
         3. Official reviews of penalties (including coaches challenges; instant replay reviews will be limited to 30 seconds).
         4. PAT conversion plays after a touchdown.
         5. The referee stops play to allow opposing teams to align properly after a play.
         6. The mandatory play stoppage with 2 minutes remaining in each half.
         7. After the two-minute warning, the game clock is run only from the snap of the ball to when the referee declares that play dead (i.e. the clock stops after every play after the 2-minute warning).
   2. A 30 second play clock will start winding once the official has spotted the ball, blown the whistle and signaled for the clock to wind. A play clock will wind in regular game play, conversions, and kickoffs.
   3. There is a 2-minute warning at the end of the 2nd and fourth quarter.
   4. Incomplete pass or if a player runs out of bounds (under 2 minutes at the end of the 2nd and 4th quarter) stops the clock
   5. All teams have no more than 2 timeouts per half.
   6. During regulation the clock will stop during penalties or change of possession. Once the ball is spotted by the official the game and play clock will start.
   7. [*Overtime Format*](https://youtu.be/BxRb01zvs9k)*:*
      1. *If a game is tied after 4 quarters, the teams will play a max of 3 extra periods (no limits for postseason games):*
         1. Teams will meet at the 50-yard line for another coin flip to determine the possession of the first extra period.
         2. The visiting team picks heads or tails.
         3. Whichever team has more points in the first extra period wins.
         4. If it's still tied after one period, they play up to 2 more (regular-season) or until one team wins (post-season).
         5. The AFA pre-season games will no longer have any overtime periods (i.e. be declared ties).
      2. *Each period consists of one possession for each team, the order of which is decided by a pre-overtime coin toss:*
         1. The overtime period begins at the 30-yard line, with the chance to drive down the field for a field goal or touchdown.
         2. First possession is determined by a coin flip, and the teams then rotate starting possession in each overtime.
         3. The 2-point try is required for every touchdown scored in overtime.
         4. If the score is tied after an OT period, the two teams will move to the next overtime until a winner is declared.
         5. Each team has 1 timeout per period.
2. **Prior To The Snap:**
   1. *Line of Scrimmage & Offside Rules:*
      1. 5 players are eligible to touch the ball on offense while the other 3 are required to line up in the center of the formation as linemen.
      2. *The line of scrimmage is set by the referee before the start of each play with a flat cone:*
         1. The cone will represent the line of scrimmage and no body part from either team can be over any part of the cone.
         2. The 3 offensive linemen must be on the line of scrimmage with a split no wider than 1yd.
         3. The defensive line (there must be at least 2) must line up at least 11” away.
         4. All lineman (except for the center) must line up in a 2-point stance, unless either 1) the offense needs 5 yards or less to obtain a 1st down and/or b) the offense is inside the 25yd line (in which case they can line up I either a 3-point or 4-point stance).
      3. *Common Formations:*
         1. Offensive formations include the T, I, Spread, Shotgun, Pro set, & Pistol.
         2. Defensive formations include a 2-3-3, 3-3-2, 3-2-3, 4-3-1, 3-4-1, 4-2-2, 5-3, and a 6-2 goal-line.
      4. *If either an offensive or defensive player is lined up offsides when the ball is hiked it will be a 5-yard penalty:*
         1. The play will be a free play for the offense unless the defender has a clear path to the QB because of his offsides, then it will be blown dead.
         2. If any offensive player other than the quarterback moves early the play will be blown dead and the ref will call for a “reset”. The play clock will continue to wind when a reset is called. If a defensive player jumps early, the whistle will blow, the play clock will pause, and we will instantly reset. A ref can give a warning for defensive and offensive offsides and opt to throw a flag on each infraction after the warning. The idea is to keep the game moving, prevent long discussions and explanations about offsides, and prevent the offense from having to re-huddle.
   2. *QB Cadence & Positioning:*
      1. The QB can start from the Shotgun or behind the center.
      2. The QB cannot be deeper than 5 yards from the line of scrimmage when in the shotgun.
      3. If the QB moves early (rolls before cadence) it’s a 5-yard penalty.
      4. *The QB must be set just like the Offensive Line and receivers. All QB cadences must consist of 3 sounds and the offense can move on any of the 3 sounds:*
         1. For example, if your cadence is Down, Set, Go you can go on either Down, Set, or go but there is no going on 2 or trying to draw the defense offsides.
      5. If the QB needs to audible and has already started his cadence he must stand up and point both arms to each sideline while yelling “CHECK”. Once the audible is complete the QB must get set again and restart his entire cadence.
   3. North-south handoffs are allowed.
   4. *Rules for Wide Receivers (WR) and Defensive Backs (DB):*
      1. Any eligible receiver lining up near an offensive lineman on the line of scrimmage must raise their hand and declare themselves a Tight End.
      2. There are no formation rules for receivers and backs, only the QB and 3 down linemen have to be in a set position.
      3. No more than 2 offensive players can be in motion at one time.
      4. DBs cannot lead with their head on open field tackles.
      5. DBs cannot launch themselves into a defenseless receiver without attempting to wrap up and make a good form tackle.
      6. Players cannot lead with an elbow to make a tackle. You must attempt to wrap up on the secondary.
      7. DBs may blitz but must obey the Pass Rushing Rules listed below.
      8. *All 8 players are eligible to touch the ball on offense:*
         1. The player to whom the ball is snapped cannot advance the ball past the line of scrimmage (thus eliminating such plays as the bootleg or scramble)
         2. However, if the ball is tossed to another player, that player can run or throw the ball and the player to whom the ball was snapped is still an eligible receiver.
         3. All forward passes to the player who snapped the ball (center) must travel at least 1 yard (1 m) in flight.
         4. Teams are able to attempt two forward passes on the same play, so long as the ball never crosses the line of scrimmage before the second pass.
3. **All MPFL league games will include kickoffs, field goals, and punts:**
   1. *The MPFL leagues will implement a revised version of the XFL kickoff (1 kicker, 7 gunners, 7 defenders and 1 receiver):*
      1. To start each half and after every score, the defending team will kick (i.e. place kick or punt) the ball off from their own 30yd line. The player kicking the ball can get a running start but cannot pass the 30yd line.
      2. *Formation Rules:*
         1. The 7 gunners must be set on the receiving team's 35yd line and cannot move until the ball is caught.
         2. The 7 defenders will line up on their 30yd line & also cannot move until the ball is caught.
         3. The receiver must line up inside the 20yd line.
      3. The ball must travel a minimum of 40 yards (to the receiving team’s 25yd line) and stay inbounds.
      4. If the ball passes the back of the end zone on the fly it will be a touchback/rouge (i.e. 1 point will be awarded to the kicking team and the ball will be spotted on the receiving team’s 25yd line).
      5. If the ball lands in the end zone and has NOT been touched by the returner and has traveled the minimum distance the returner may down the ball in the end zone or choose to return it, but it is a live ball.
      6. Kickoffs that go out of bounds froth the sidelines and/or fall short of the receiving team's 25-yard line will come to the receiving team’s 35yd line.
      7. All players are prohibited from leading with the crowns of their heads.
4. **Advancing the ball:**
   1. *Teams will be given 4 downs to make 15 yards:*
      1. Teams with the lead and possession of the ball have to gain positive yards on a play from scrimmage or the clock will be stopped until the next snap.
      2. *Teams are required to go for it on 4th down if they are inside the 25yd line:*
         1. Punting on 4th down is not allowed inside the 25yd line unless the defense punts the ball out of desperation, similar to what happened in this [CFL play](https://www.cfl.ca/2017/08/26/internet-loving-bombers-als-punt-off/).
         2. However, teams may punt the ball if the ball is snapped from the 25yd line.



* 1. *Fair Catch / No-Yards Rules:*
     1. Like in the CFL, punts & kicks are allowed at any point of time in the game (i.e. any player can kick the ball at any time, including kickoffs).
     2. *All punt or kickoff coverage teams must give a 5yd empty zone around the opposing receiver until he has received the ball:*
        1. A returner cannot opt for a fair catch on all throw-offs by clearly waiving his hand side to side above his head (i.e. [Fair catches](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fair_catch)are not recognized).
        2. All of the players offside at the time of the kick may neither touch the ball nor be within 5yds of the member of the receiving team who fields the kick.
        3. The penalty for no-yards is 15yds (if the ball is in flight) or 5yds (if the ball has been grounded).
        4. For punts, the ball must go at least 10 yards before it can be recovered by the kicking team.
     3. *Any unhandled ball from any place kick or punt may be legally recovered by the kicker or any player behind the kicker at the time of the kick so long as the ball travels at least 10 yards:*
        1. The ball doesn't have to be touched by the receiving team in order for the possession to count.
        2. In such a case, the kicker is exempt from the No-Yards rule. Thus, a player from Team A may punt or kick the ball 40 yards, chase the ball upfield, then recover an untouched ball for a Team A first down. Such instances are rare since the player would have to elude plenty of blocking to reach the ball. When it does happen, this play is highly exciting.
        3. Examples = [Montreal at Toronto - Wild Ending - October 29, 2010](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5BFaykcxGg), [Montreal Alouettes Perfect Fake Field Goal vs. Lions Wk. 11 2012](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDOpTXqKGSI).
     4. *With the exception of a rouge, kicking/punting the ball out of bounds is a 10yd penalty:*
        1. Coffin corner punts would be treated as touchbacks and brought to the receiving team’s 35yd line.
  2. *Passing Rules:*
     1. 2 feet in for in bounds and TDs. If a player would have landed in bounds but is pushed out, he is still in.
     2. *A "defenseless player" now includes receivers tracking the quarterback or looking back for the ball, including inside the legal contact (10 yards from the line of scrimmage) zone:*
        1. Bump and run coverage (i.e. defensive backs being allowed to hit wide receivers any time before the quarterback releases the ball as long as the hit comes from the front and/or the side) is only allowed within the first 10yds from the line of scrimmage.
     3. *Teams are allowed to throw a forward pass twice on any given play as long as the ball does not pass the original line of scrimmage before the second pass:*
        1. All players behind the line of scrimmage will be eligible receivers, including those on the offensive line (i.e. this eliminates the "illegal touching of a forward pass" penalty).
        2. Offensive linemen would still be prohibited from advancing downfield before a forward pass that crosses the line of scrimmage is in the air.
     4. No "Tuck Rule" = If a passer brings his arm forward in a passing motion and then loses possession of the ball as he is attempting to tuck it back toward his body, it is considered a fumble.
     5. *Pass Interference Rules:*
        1. Team A’s ball at the spot of the foul, first down (if the foul occurs fewer than 10 yards beyond the previous spot).
        2. Team A’s ball, first down, 10 yards from the previous spot (if the foul occurs 10 or more yards beyond the previous spot).

1. **Having full-contact practices twice in the same day is prohibited during the preseason, regular-season, & postseason:**
   1. *All teams are allowed no more than 2 full-contact practices each week during the regular season & post-season:*
      1. However, all teams must have a 1-day break in between practice & a game.
      2. While players still wear helmets, they no longer wear shoulder pads and other protective gear in in non-contact practices.
      3. There are no limits for practices with robotic tackling dummies.
   2. All teams can still have 2-a-days, but the extra session has to be either film study, weight lifting, or a [walkthrough](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGsDlxdYU58).
   3. No conditioning can take place at the walkthrough, and players can’t be in helmets or shoulder pads unless the tackling involves [robotic tacking dummies](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRdH6s1dxnI).
2. **Tackling & Contact Rules:**
3. *Tackles must be made by attempting to wrap up:* 
   * 1. The only time it is acceptable to not wrap is when forcing a player out of bounds.
     2. *All players must tackle in between the shoulders & the knees:*
        1. Tackling below the knees is only permitted if you are the first available tackler and you attempt to wrap up. If you are the second tackler you must hit above the waste and you must attempt to wrap up.
        2. Players are not permitted to throw a shoulder or elbow to try and knock someone down you must attempt to wrap up!
        3. No head hunting or close lining. Do not wrap around a player’s neck or head, doing so will result in the player being suspended for 1 quarter and a 15-yard penalty will be enforced.
        4. To make a safe tackle keep your eyes to the sky get your butt low, hit and wrap up. Guys tackling with their heads down or throwing their body at the ballcarriers’ legs with no attempt to wrap up will be flagged 15 yards.
4. *The Designated Hitter (DH) Rules:*
   * 1. *The Designated Hitter (DH) is an extra defensive back that has to start the play at least 15 yards away from the line of scrimmage:*
        1. i.e. an additional 9th player on the field for the defense (the yellow player on the diagram).
        2. The DH must be in either a 3-point or 4-point stance prior to the snap.
        3. They are not allowed unlimited motion prior to the snap like the other offensive & defensive backfielders.
        4. They can only blitz the QB unless they pass and/or hand off the ball to another player.
        5. Only defensive backs (i.e. safeties & cornerbacks) can be designated as the DH.
     2. *They can only be played on 3rd downs, & no one’s allowed to block them until any of the following occurs:*
        1. They reach the original line of scrimmage.
        2. The QB leaves the pocket.
        3. The QB passes and/or hands off the ball to another player.
        4. The QB fumbles the ball.
5. *A 15yd penalty is awarded against the team who commits either of the following:*
   * 1. *Both types of fouls are called “targeting” fouls:*
        1. Any “forcible contact” to the head or neck area of a “defenseless” opponent. Example of a “defenseless” player are players who:
           1. are in the act of, or having just thrown, a pass (or has just thrown a pick).
           2. are catching a pass or kick (or trying to) and hasn’t had time to become a “ball carrier.”
           3. are in the act of kicking, or has just kicked.
           4. are on the ground, or a player out of the play.
           5. gets blocked from his blind side.
           6. has the ball and has had his forward progress stopped.
           7. has the ball and is sliding or giving himself up.
        2. Leading with the crown of the head to make “forcible contact” anywhere (i.e. a head-down hit or spearing).
     2. “Inadvertent” head contact won’t be treated as a penalty.
6. *Blocking Rules:*
   * 1. No holding at all, not even inside the jersey. The penalty for holding will be 10 yards from the original line of scrimmage and the offense will repeat the down.
     2. Clipping (blocking behind the back) will result in a 15-yard penalty from the original line of scrimmage. Blocking in the back is only permitted inside the tackle box behind the line of scrimmage while a defender is being pass blocked.
     3. Blocking below the waist is not allowed; this will result in a 15-yard penalty from the original line of scrimmage.
     4. No intentional hands to the face. Penalty will be 15 yards from the original line of scrimmage.
     5. Do not blind side a defender that has no chance in making the play. If you blind side someone that is 10 yards away from the play you will receive a 15-yard penalty. It is also a judgment call by the referee to eject a player for this penalty depending on it severity.
   1. *Pass Rushing Rules:*
      1. *No more than 4 defenders (or 5 with the DH) can rush the passer:*
         1. The penalty for violating this rule is illegal defense (signaled as unsportsmanlike conduct), with a 10-yard penalty and a first down.
         2. Any player who aligns on the line of scrimmage either prior to or at the snap is designated as one of the five players regardless of whether he rushes.
      2. The defensive line can only hold up or block a receiver within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage.
      3. *No contact after 5 yards is allowed when a player doesn’t have the ball:*
         1. Violations will result in a 5-yard penalty, but not an automatic first down
         2. Defensive holding (DB holding receiver) will result in 5-yard penalty, but not an automatic first down.
         3. Contact on a receiver during a pass that is ruled catchable, is a spot found and called pass interference.
      4. No late hits on the QB or any ball carrier.
      5. If a player has a blind side shot on the QB, they must hit him high. They cannot lower their shoulder into the QBs back or legs if they can’t see you.
      6. Players may rush as many guys as they like and blitz whenever they want.
7. Defensive players are prohibited from leaping over or hurdling the offensive line in an attempt to block field goal or extra point attempts.
8. The nameplate area of the jersey has been added to the current horse-collar tackle rule.
9. When a runner now slides feet first, the runner is considered defenseless, and a hit on the runner will result in a targeting penalty (i.e. meaning a 15-yard personal foul will be enforced and the player will be ejected for at least the remainder of the game after the second offense).
10. No pile-ons. If the player is down and you jump on the pile you will be ejected.
11. If a player forward progress is stopped the play will be whistled dead by the ref.
12. Players must sit out at least 1 game after sustaining a concussion.
13. *No leg whipping or tripping:*
    * 1. Defenders can no longer trip the runner to bring him to the ground.
      2. However, this rule does not include defenders attempting to tackle a ball carrier below the waist.
14. All players who leave the tackle box are prohibited from blocking below the waist toward the initial position of the ball.
15. **All players (both offensive & defensive) get a max of 4 fouls (i.e. flags) per game:**
    1. *The Card System:*
       1. 1st = warning (Blue Card).
       2. 2nd = sent off the field for the next 4 plays or the end of the current possession (whichever comes first) with a substitute (Yellow Card).
       3. 3rd = sent off the field for the next 8 plays or the end of the current possession (whichever comes first) without a substitute (Black Card).
       4. 4th = sent off the field for the rest of the game without a substitute for next 12 plays or the end of the current quarter/overtime period (whichever comes first) (Red Card).
    2. *Referees are required to announce how many penalties each player has committed, & keep notes on which players have committed fouls (preferably on a little notebook):*
       1. Example = “Pass Interference. Defense #40. That is his 1st/2nd/3rd/4th foul. The ball will be placed at the spot of the foul, automatic first down”.
    3. *All players sent off the field are still eligible to start in the next game, unless the player either a) committed a targeting foul and/or b) has 3 straight games of receiving red cards:*
       1. In such a case of committing a targeting foul, such players are ineligible to start the first half of the next game regardless of whether they got ejected for targeting before or after halftime.
    4. *All targeting fouls (see above) are still automatic ejections (i.e. red cards) in addition to the 15yd penalty:*
       1. All targeting penalties must be subject to video review. If the hit is not deemed to be targeting by the video review, the player must be allowed to stay in the game and the yardage penalties will not be enforced.
    5. *Reviews:*
       1. Instant replay reviews will be limited to 90 seconds.
       2. The sky judge (i.e. an additional official in the press booth for the sole purpose of reviewing on-field decision) swill conduct all reviews.
    6. Penalty yardage will be assigned using the NFL system.
16. **Coaching Challenges:**
    1. *Each team gets at least 1 challenge per half:*
       1. However, coaches will have unlimited challenges if they keep winning them.
       2. The only time he loses the right to challenge a play is if they get one of their challenges wrong.
    2. *Coaches can challenge anything, including uncalled penalties:*
       1. However, coaches are required to specifically call out the penalty and players involved when challenging uncalled penalties.
17. **Referee Rules:**
    1. *A ref must have the following at all times:*
       1. A penalty flag.
       2. Whistle
       3. Stop Watch
       4. Knowledge of the PAFA rules and access to printed or digital rule book.
       5. Proper referee attire.
18. **Scoring Rules:**
    1. 6 points for a touchdown (TD).
    2. *Conversions or Points After Touchdown (C or PAT):*
       1. 1 point for a kicked (i.e. from a tee without a long snapper) convert (or PAT) kicked from the 25yd line; All kicked converts must be kicked from a tee.
       2. 2 points for a passed or rushed conversion (2yds).
       3. 3 points for a passed or rushed conversion (5yds).
       4. All teams can waive "unnecessary" extra point attempts at the end of the game.
       5. All defensive players are prohibited from leaping or hurdling over offensive linemen on field goal or PAT attempts.
       6. On a convert attempt after a touchdown, the defending team may return a missed kick convert to the kicking team's end zone for 1 point, or if the convert was a rush or pass play may return a fumble or interception for 2 points.
       7. *The team being awarded the touchdown has the option of either:*
          1. Scrimmaging from their own 20-yard line (but must gain at least 15yds in order to retain possession), or
          2. Kicking the ball off from their own 25-yard line (can punt, drop kick, or place kick the ball).
    3. *Field Goals (FG):*
       1. 3 points for a field goal under 50 yards.
       2. 4 points for a field goal 50+ yards (the 40yd line must be painted dark gray to symbolize a 4-point line).
       3. If the field goal is missed, but the ball is not returnable after crossing the end line, then it constitutes a rouge/single as long as the attempt was at least 50yds.
       4. On a field goal attempt, the defending team may return a missed field goal to the kicking team's end zone for a Touchdown.
       5. Any punt that [goes through the uprights](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLJZVWkbzEM) will also count as a field goal.
    4. *2 for a Safety Touch (St):*
       1. *A safety is scored when any of the following conditions occur:*
          1. The ball becomes dead in the goal area of the team in possession of the ball, except for an incomplete forward pass. (Examples = ball-carrier runs out of bounds, ball-carrier is tackled/takes a knee, & the ball is fumbled out of bounds).
          2. The ball touches or crosses the dead line or a sideline in goal after having been directed from the field of play into the Goal Area by the team scored against or as the direct result of a blocked scrimmage kick.
          3. The offense commits a foul in its own end zone (examples = the ball carrier is penalized for intentional grounding or an offside pass in his own goal area).
       2. *The team being awarded the 2 points has the option of either:*
          1. Scrimmaging from their own 25-yard line, or
          2. Kicking the ball off from their own 25-yard line (can punt, drop kick, or place kick the ball), or
          3. Having the opposing team kick off the ball from their own 20-yard line (can punt, drop kick, or place kick the ball).
       3. *However, the team that conceded the safety also has the option of running an option play from their own 25yd line that must go at least 15 yards in order to retain possession, but only under the following circumstances:*
          1. Option #1 = if they are down by at least 14 points.
          2. Option #2 = the game is in the final 5 minutes.
          3. If the play succeeds, then the next possession starts on the 45yd line.
          4. If the play fails, then the team that scored the safety will start their possession on their own 35yd line.
       4. This is different from a Rouge/Single (see below) in that the team scored against begins with possession of the ball & loses possession after the score occurs.
    5. *1 for a Rouge or Single (Ro or Si):*
       1. *A rouge is awarded to a kicking or punting team (Team A) if an opposing player (Team B) either:* 
          1. Catches or recovers a punt or missed field goal in their own end zone but is prevented by Team A from returning the ball back out onto the field of play,
          2. Elects to drop to one knee while still in the end zone before having returned the ball to the field of play, or
          3. Elects to run with the ball from the end zone out of bounds rather than enter the field of play.
       2. *A rouge is also awarded to a kicking or punting team when any of the following scenarios occurs:*
          1. A field goal attempt at least 50yds or longer that goes out of the end zone through the endline.
          2. A [punt](https://youtu.be/6CjYWtf_jqE) at least 50yds or longer that goes out of the end zone through the endline.
          3. A kickoff goes that either a) [goes through the uprights](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYx7l8yASTw), b) lands in and bounces out of the end-zone, or c) goes out of the end zone on the full regardless of whether it is touched or not.
       3. *A rouge is also awarded to a defense (Team A) if they either:*
          1. Force an interception,
          2. Recover a fumble,
          3. Block a field goal, or
          4. Force a turnover on downs (unless the turnover happens inside the 20yd line).
       4. *A rouge is not awarded in the following situations:*
          1. If a ball is downed in the end zone after being intercepted in the end zone.
          2. If a ball is fumbled outside the end zone.
          3. If the kicked ball hits the goalposts.
          4. Kicks that pass out the sidelines of the end zone (punts & field goal attempts only).
       5. After a rouge, the team conceding the score is given possession of the ball on their 25-yard line (i.e. the touchback rule).
       6. This is different from a Safety (see above) in that team scored against receives possession of the ball after the score.
    6. *Mercy Rule:*
       1. If a team has at least a 42-point lead at the start of the 4th quarter, the game is automatically called as a win for the team with the lead.

## Penalties:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Foul:** | **Description:** | **Signal** | **Penalty Yardage:** |
| *Blocking below the waist* | An illegal block, from any direction, below the waist by any defensive player or by an offensive player under certain situations, by any player after change of possession, by any player in high school with certain exceptions. Sometimes incorrectly referred to as a "chop block". | Both hands brought down, wrists turned inward, in a chopping motion across the front of the thighs | 15 yards; automatic first down if committed by the defense |
| *Block in the back (offense, defense, or special teams)* | A blocker contacting a non-ball carrying member of the opposing team from behind and above the waist. Called an "illegal block" in the CFL. | One arm extended horizontally in front of the body, palm facing outward. The other hand grasps the first hand's wrist and pushes outward | 10 yards |
| *Chop block ("high-low" block; offense)* | An offensive player tries to [cut block](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cut_block) a defensive player that is already being blocked by another offensive player. The second block may need to be below the thigh or knee, depending on the code. | Arms extended alongside the body, palms facing outward, then moving in to the upper thigh in a chopping motion. | 15 yards (if it is in the end zone the play will be ruled a safety); automatic first down if committed by defense (penalty also counts regardless of how many yards the offense gained). |
| *Clipping (offense, defense, or special teams)* | A blocker contacting a non-ball carrying opponent from behind and at or below the waist | Chopping the back of one thigh with the hand. | 15 yards; automatic first down if committed by defense |
| *Delay of game (offense, defense, or special teams)* | Any action which delays the next play. In American football, on offense, this includes failing to snap the ball before the [play clock](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Play_clock) reaches zero. (In the CFL, that action is a [*time count violation*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penalty_(gridiron_football)#Time_count_violation).) It may also include spiking the ball. On defense, it occurs when a player hinders the offense in hurrying to make the next snap. This happens most often in the last two minutes of a half when the offense is trying to go down the field in a hurry. The defense can also be flagged for a delay of game if a player spikes the ball after the end of a play. On special teams, it happens when the return team runs after signaling for a fair catch, or the defense does not unpile in a timely manner after the play ends. | Upper arms extended out from the body, forearms bent toward the opposite arm, such that the arms lie on top of one another or that each arm touches the opposite shoulder. | 5 yards |
| *Encroachment (defense)* | Before the snap, a defensive player illegally crosses the line of scrimmage and makes contact with an opponent or has a clear path to the quarterback. In high school, this includes any crossing of the neutral zone by either team, whether contact is made or not. The play is not allowed to begin. In the CFL, this is considered an offside foul. | Two hands placed on the hips | 5 yards |
| *Equipment violation* | Any player in the game without necessary safety equipment (mouthpiece, pads), without chin straps properly fastened or in violation of certain clothing rules (e.g. sock requirements in college). | One hand placed on the back of the head | — |
| *Face mask (offense, defense, or special teams)* | Grasping the face mask of another player while attempting to block or tackle him. In the NFL, the grasping and pulling/twisting must be intentional to be penalized. Under NCAA rules, it is a foul to grasp and twist the face mask. Under high school rules, any grasping of the face mask, any helmet opening, or the chin strap is a foul, though grasping and twisting carries a more severe penalty than "incidental" grasping without any twisting. | One arm in front of the body, forearm extended vertically. The hand is closed into a fist in front of the face and pulled downward | 15 yards; automatic first down if committed by defense |
| *False start (offense)* | An offensive player illegally moves after lining up for—but prior to—the snap. Since the ball is dead, the down does not begin.  Any player who moves after he has gotten in his set position before the snap in a way that simulates the start of the play. | Two arms in front of chest horizontally with closed fists "rolling" around each other (same signal that basketball referees use to signal traveling). | 5 yards |
| *Helping the runner* | When a member of the offensive or receiving team pushes, pulls, grasps or [lifts a person in possession of the ball](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spectacular_mark). | Arms at sides, the forearms are pulled upward perpendicular to the torso. | 10 yards |
| *Holding (offense or defense)* | Illegally grasping or pulling an opponent other than the ball carrier while attempting to ward off a block or cover a receiver. One of the most commonly called penalties. If a penalty for holding that occurred in the offense's end zone is accepted, a safety results. | Raising one arm in front of the body (forearm is roughly vertical with elbow at bottom) and grabbing its wrist with the opposite hand | Offense, 10 yards. If it is called in the end zone by the offense, it's an automatic safety; defense, 5 yards and automatic first down. |
| *Horse-collar tackle* | Illegally tackling another player by grabbing the inside of the ball carrier's shoulder pads or jersey from behind and yanking the player down. | Raising one arm to the side of the body with the elbow bent, so that the closed fist is located near the neck. The fist is then pulled away, horizontally, from the neck. | 15 yards, automatic first down if committed by defense (penalty also counts regardless of how many yards the offense gained). |
| *Illegal batting (offense)* | Any intentional batting of a loose ball or ball in player possession. Batting is legal in certain limited situations, such as blocking a kick or deflecting a forward pass (any eligible player may bat a forward pass in any direction). | Both arms extended the side, with the fingertips brought up to the shoulder of the respective arms. | 10 yards |
| *Illegal contact (defense)* | Making significant contact with a receiver after the receiver has advanced five yards beyond the line of scrimmage. The illegal contact is called only if the quarterback is still in pocket and the ball is still in his hands. This rule was adopted in 1978, and its enactment is regarded as contributing to the increase in passing efficiency the NFL has witnessed since that time. | One arm in front of the body with palm out and fingers up, moved in a pushing motion out | 5 yards and an automatic first down |
| *Illegal formation* | Fewer than 7 players line up on the line of scrimmage (NFL/High School/CFL); more than four players in the backfield (NCAA only); eligible receivers fail to line up as the leftmost and rightmost players on the line (NFL/CFL); or when five properly numbered ineligible players fail to line up on the line. Announced as "[illegal] procedure" or "procedure, no end" in the CFL. | Two arms in front of chest with closed fists "rolling" around each other (same signal that basketball referees use to signal traveling) | 5 yards |
| *Illegal forward pass (offense)* | A forward pass is thrown from past the line of scrimmage. Also, a second forward pass is thrown on the same play or a forward pass is thrown after change of possession | One hand, flat, waved behind the small of the back | 5 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down |
| *Illegal hands to the face* | Pushing or hitting a player on offense in the head or helmet | One open fist in a pushing motion to the referee's chin | 10 yards if committed by offense; 5 yards and automatic first down if committed by defense |
| *Illegal kick* | Any ball not kicked in accordance with the rules, for instance:   * When an attempted [drop kick](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drop_kick) bounces more than once before being kicked * When a player kicks the ball after a turnover or receiving an opponent's kick (the "return kick") * When a player kicks the ball after having advanced the ball past the line of scrimmage   All of the above kicks are legal in Canadian football. One is illegal in CFL.   * A player kicks the ball after the opponent fumbles it, without securing possession (also illegal in Canadian football) | Right arm is curled so that the hand touches the shoulder. | 15 yards |
| *Illegal kickoff (special teams)* | The ball, after a kickoff, heads out of bounds between both goal lines without touching any player on either team. | Two arms in front of chest with closed fists "rolling" around each other (same signal that basketball referees use to signal traveling). (Canadian) Same signal, plus a swinging motion of the leg to simulate a kick | Receiving team awarded possession 25 yards from spot of kickoff, or at spot out of bounds, whichever is more advantageous. |
| *Illegal motion (offense)* | A player in motion is moving forward at the time of the snap. | One arm in front of chest, palm open and down, with the elbow out to the side, moved away from chest. | 5 yards |
| *Illegal participation/Too many players* | 9+ players participate during the play, because the extra players either are not detected before the snap or enter during the play. Once the down begins, no further players may enter the field and participate, even if there are fewer than 8 players. Illegal participation is also called when an offensive player goes out of bounds (unless forced out by contact by the defense) and returns during the play. | Two hands, palms down, touching the top of the head, with an elbow out to each side |  |
| *Illegal shift* | A player is not in motion but is not set before the snap; more than one player is in motion at the snap; or after more than one player was moving (shifting), all eleven players have not been motionless for one second. | Two arms in front of chest, palms open and down, with the elbows out to the side, moved away from chest | 5 yards |
| *Illegal substitution/Substitution infraction/Too many players in the formation* | The offense has 9 or more players in the huddle for a period of 3–5 seconds; or twelve or more players are in the formation before a play; or a player is attempting to leave the field as the ball is snapped; or an offensive player entering the field fails to step at least nine yards from the sideline (inside the field's yardage numbers) before the snap; or a player who has been suspended or disqualified attempts to enter the field of play. | Two hands, palms down, touching the top of the head, with an elbow out to each side | 5 yards |
| *Illegal touching of a forward pass (offense)* | A forward pass first touches an *ineligible receiver* (an offensive lineman). If the ball is touched by the defenders first, any player may touch it. | Two hands held up to shoulders, fingertips touching the shoulders. | 5 yards and a loss of down |
| *Illegal touching of a free kick (special teams)* | The ball, after the free kick, first touches a member of the kicking team prior to travelling 10 yards. This is most often seen on an onside kick where a member of the kicking team prematurely comes in contact with the ball in an attempt to recover it. Like illegal touching of a forward pass, if a defender (member of the receiving team) first touches the ball, any player may touch it. Note: in NFHS it is called 'first touching', not 'illegal touching'.  It is also illegal touching for a kicking team player to touch a free kick after going out of bounds, unless the kick is touched by the receiving team. | One hand held up to shoulder, fingertips touching the shoulder; (NFL) two hands held up to shoulders, fingertips touching the shoulders. | 5 yards, unless the illegal touching occurs inside the receiving team's 5-yard line. In that case, it is ruled a touchback. |
| *Illegal touching of a scrimmage kick (special teams)* | The ball, during the scrimmage kick, is touched by a kicking team player, unless the kick is touched by the receiving team or another member of the kicking team. | One hand held up to shoulder, fingertips touching the shoulder |  |
| *Illegal use of hands* | Illegal use of the hands against a player on offense while attempting to ward off a block, cover a receiver, or tackle a ball carrier. There are several restrictions on how a defender may initiate contact. | One forearm vertically held in front of the body with an open fist facing away from the referee's chest (closed fist for a HS referee); the other hand grasping the first arm's wrist | 10 yards if committed by offense; 5 yards and automatic first down if committed by defense |
| *Ineligible receiver downfield (offense)* | An ineligible receiver is past the line of scrimmage prior to a forward pass. Ineligible receivers must wait until the pass is thrown beyond the line of scrimmage (or touched) before moving past the line of scrimmage. This exception has been added to accommodate the screen pass, where a receiver (most often a back, but sometimes a tight end or wide receiver) catches a ball behind the line of scrimmage behind a "screen" of offensive linemen. | One palm touching the top of the head with the elbow out to the side. | 5 yards |
| *Intentional grounding (offense)* | A forward pass is thrown intentionally incomplete so that the passer avoids loss of yardage or to conserve time. Not assessed if the ball is [spiked](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spike_(gridiron_football)). If the quarterback has moved outside of the area between his offensive tackles (the [tackle box](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tackle_box_(American_football)) or more commonly called "the [pocket](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passing_pocket)"), there is no foul for grounding the ball if the quarterback throws the ball past the line of scrimmage. High school is more restrictive: spiking the ball is only allowed if the quarterback is under center, and the quarterback may not legally throw the ball away when outside the "tackle box." | Both hands held out flat, facing each other, in front of the referee, moving down together diagonally roughly from one shoulder to the opposite hip. | 10 yards or spot of foul, whichever is farther from the original line of scrimmage, and loss of down. If the foul occurs in the end zone, the play is ruled a safety. |
| *Leaping (defense)* | A defender at least one yard in front of the line of scrimmage running forward and leaping in an attempt to block a field goal or a point-after try lands on other players on either team. The penalty is not called if the defender was within one yard of the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap.[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penalty_(gridiron_football)#cite_note-18) | Same as Unsportsmanlike conduct, it is a subset of that penalty | 15 yard penalty; automatic first down if committed by defense (penalty also counts regardless of how many yards the offense gained). |
| *Leverage (defense)* | A defensive player jumping or standing on a teammate or an opponent to block or attempt to block an opponent's kick.[[20]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penalty_(gridiron_football)#cite_note-20) | Same as Unsportsmanlike conduct, it is a subset of that penalty | 15 yard penalty and automatic first down |
| *Neutral Zone Infraction (defense)* | Before the snap, a defensive player (most often a lineman) jumps into the neutral zone and "startles" an offensive player, causing him to false start. | Same as encroachment/offsides | 5 yards |
| *No yards (special teams) (Canadian)* | During a scrimmage kick, a member of the kicking team, other than the kicker or a player even with or behind the kicker at the time of the kick, is the first to touch a kicked ball or is within a five-yard radius of the receiving player who is first to touch the ball. | Upper arms extended out from the body, forearms bent toward the opposite arm, such that the arms lie on top of one another or that each arm touches the opposite elbow. | *see Kick catching interference or Illegal touching of a scrimmage kick* |
| *Objectionable conduct (Canadian)* |  |  |  |
| *Offside (offense or defense)* | A player is on the wrong side of the line of scrimmage (or in the neutral zone) when the ball is snapped. This foul occurs simultaneously with the snap. Unlike offensive players, defensive players are not compelled to come to a set position before the snap. If a defender jumps across the line but gets back to his side before the snap, there is no foul. In the case of an offside foul, play is not stopped, and the foul is announced at the conclusion of the play. Media covering the games call it a "free play" for the offense, as the non-offending team may decline the penalty and take the yardage gained on the play (and when the play works against them, like a turnover to the opposing team, the non-offending team can accept the penalty and retake possession of the ball) - unlike in the case of a false start foul against the offense, whereupon the play is immediately stopped by the officials.  This foul is almost always committed by the defense (any offensive player that moves into the neutral zone after setting would be charged with a false start). However, it is possible for the offense to commit this foul. If an offensive player lines up in the neutral zone, an offside foul will be called against the offense. | Two hands placed on the hips | 5 yards |
| *Offside pass* | Any act to direct the ball forward (toward the opponent's dead/end line) other than a kick or a forward pass. This includes batting the ball and forward passes after change of possession. | One arm in front of chest, palm open and down, with the elbow out to the side, moved away from chest | *see Illegal batting or Illegal forward pass, above* |
| *Pass interference (offense or defense)* | Making physical contact with an intended receiver (intentional physical contact in NFL), after the ball has been thrown and before it has been touched by another player, in order to hinder or prevent him from catching a forward pass. (On offense, the restriction begins at the snap and continues until the ball is touched in order to prevent receivers from blocking defenders away from a passed ball.) | Both arms extended in front of the body, palms upright, in a pushing motion | Offense, 10 yards; defense, spot of foul (or placement on the 1-yard line if the foul occurs in the end zone) and automatic first down |
| *Personal foul (offense or defense)* | A conduct- or safety-related infraction. Includes unnecessary roughness, such as hitting a ball carrier after he is already out of bounds, "piling on" a ball carrier who is already down, or violent contact with an opponent who is away from and out of the play. In American football, if the officials decide that the action was particularly flagrant, the player in question can be [ejected](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ejection_(sports)) from the game. | One arm extended from the body and bent at the elbow; the forearm is tilted at an angle, so the wrist is roughly in front of the collarbone but at a distance from the body. The other arm is brought down in a chopping motion, striking the first arm wrist-to-wrist. (Canadian) One arm extended to the side of the body in a pumping motion | 15 yards; automatic first down if committed by defense (penalty also counts regardless of how many yards the offense gained). |
| *Punt out of bounds in flight (special teams)* | A scrimmage kick goes out of bounds in flight untouched by the receiving team between the 20-yard lines. |  | 10 yards from the previous line of scrimmage and the down replayed |
| *Roughing the passer (defense)* | A defender continues an effort to tackle or "hit" a passer after the passer has already thrown a pass. (In the NFL, a defender is allowed to take one step after the ball is thrown; a defender is penalized if he hits the passer having taken two or more steps after the ball leaves the passer's hand, or if the passer is hit above the shoulders, or if the passer is targeted using the crown of the helmet.) | Open-fist arm extended above same-side shoulder, brought diagonally downward towards the opposite side waist. | 15 yards and an automatic first down (penalty also counts regardless of how many yards the offense gained). |
| *Roughing the kicker (special teams)* | A defender, having missed an attempt to block a kick, tackles the kicker or otherwise runs into the kicker in a way that might injure the kicker or his vulnerable extended kicking leg. This protection is also extended to the holder of a place kick. | Leg moved in a kicking motion preceded by the personal foul signal. | 15 yards and an automatic first down if committed by defense |
| *Roughing the snapper (special teams)* | On a punt or field goal attempt, the [long snapper](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_snapper) is allowed to regain his balance and assume a protective position before he is contacted by the defense. |  | 15 yards and an automatic first down |
| *Running into the kicker (special teams)* | On a kicking play where the defense fails to touch ("block") the kicked ball, the defense runs into the kicker/punter. If such an act occurs but is not intentional, this foul is assessed. If intentional, the personal foul of [roughing the kicker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penalty_(gridiron_football)#Roughing_the_Kicker) is assessed instead (see above). | Extending one leg, straight, up to about a 20-degree angle in front of the body. If the penalty is roughing the kicker, preceded by the personal foul signal. | 5 yards |
| *Sideline infraction* | A player is outside of the team box, a coach is outside the coaches' box (along the sideline in front of the team box), or too many coaches are in the coaches' box. (In high school, the penalty for a coach on the field of play is unsportsmanlike conduct, not a sideline infraction.) | Arms bent and extended to both sides, hands waved forward and backward in a pushing motion. Interference (NFHS): Both hands placed behind the back. | N/A |
| *Spearing (offense or defense)* | Tackling or otherwise contacting an opponent with one's head. | Arm extended, bent at the elbow, touching the side of his head with a closed fist | 15 yards; automatic first down if committed by defense. Penalty also counts regardless of how many yards the offense gained. |
| *Targeting* | A defensive player tackles with the crown of his helmet, by initiating contact to the opponent's head above the player's neck, or makes helmet-to-helmet collision. | Personal Foul, one arm bent to form a triangle, fist pointing at head. | 15 yards and automatic ejection. Penalty subject to video review. If hit is not deemed to be targeting by the video review, player allowed to stay in the game and yardage not enforced.[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penalty_(gridiron_football)#cite_note-22) |
| *Tripping* | A player trips another player with the lower leg. | One foot kicks the ankle of the other leg from behind | 10 yards, automatic first down if committed by defense. |
| *Unsportsmanlike conduct* | Any person (usually a player but occasionally a coach and very rarely one or more spectators) acts or speaks in a manner deemed to be intentionally harmful or especially objectionable by the game officials, or by rule. Unsportsmanlike conduct is a non-contact foul; if contact is involved it becomes a personal foul. | Both arms extended to the sides perpendicular to the body with open fists, palms down. | 15 yards, automatic first down if committed by defense (penalty also counts regardless of how many yards the offense gained). |

**Pricing Minimums (on a “per person” basis):**

All ticket prices are in 2017 US$ & must be adjusted for inflation.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type: | Individual: | Full-Season: | Group (1 game): |
| Adults (18-64) | $8 per person | $35 per person | $5 per person |
| Children (5 to 17; 4 & under are free), College Students (if sharing stadium),  & Seniors (ages 65+) | $5 per person | $20 per person | $3 per person |
|  | Includes only a single game | Includes all 5 home games | The group must include at least 5 people, regardless of their ages |

## Concessions:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Item: | Main Professional Pyramid Price: | Semi-Professional Pyramid Price: | CSL Pyramid Price: |
| Hot Dog | No more than $3.83 | No more than $3.15 | No more than $2.99 |
| Soda | No more than $3.43 | No more than $3.18 | No more than $2.79 |
| Beer | No more than $5.81 | No more than $5.33 | No more than $4.72 |
| Programs | No more than 83¢ | | |
| Parking | No more than $4.47 | No more than $2.50 | No more than $1.63 |

# **Broadcasting & Miscellaneous Rules:**

1. Game-day inactive players must be announced at the same time for all MPFL games regardless of when they kick off, unless an injury occurs during practice.
2. **Player Celebrations:**
   1. *All player celebrations (individual or group) for scoring are permitted only in the end zones or the bench areas:*
      1. However, the ball cannot be thrown or spiked into the fans as a celebration of a score because the ball is embedded with RFID tracking chips, allowing fans to “discover the speed, spin rate and trajectory” of the football.
      2. Doing so will result in a 15yd unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
   2. *Referees can no longer penalize players for celebrations as long as the following rules are adhered to:*
      1. Celebrations are not excessively long (i.e. more than 2 minutes in the end zone; no restrictions for bench areas).
      2. Celebrations are not obscene in any manner (examples = overtly racist, flashing genitals, etc.).
      3. So, if a player like Antonio Brown wants to twerk, let him. If Tajae Sharpe pretends to sleep, allow it. If Josh Norman wants to shoot a bow and arrow after a pick, allow it.
3. **Each end zone and 50-yard line will be decorated with either of the following:**
   1. The team logo.
   2. The MPFL logo (preferably for teams that share stadiums).
   3. The logo of the “main” host team (preferably for teams that share stadiums with either high school and/or college teams).
4. **National Anthem Policy:**
   1. Personnel who choose not to stand for the Anthem may stay in the locker room or in a similar location off the field until after the Anthem has been performed.
   2. All players and team personnel present on the sideline “shall stand and show respect for the flag and the Anthem.”
   3. Each franchise may develop its own work rules, consistent with the above principles, regarding its personnel who do not stand and show respect for the flag and the Anthem.
   4. *All PAFA teams must donate at least the following amounts listed below (in 2017 USD) toward LOCAL social justice initiatives (i.e. no national organizations) every fiscal year:*
      1. *Donation Requirements:*
         1. MPFL teams with all paid players = $5,000.
         2. MPFL teams with a mixture of paid & amateur/unpaid players =$2,500.
         3. MPFL teams with all amateur/unpaid players = $1,000.
      2. Half of the donation must come from the owners, with the other half coming from the players.
      3. If any MPFL player kneels during the national anthem while on the field, each individual player involved must donate at least another $500 respectively toward local social justice initiatives for each offense committed.
      4. These rates must be adjusted for inflation every year.
   5. *The leagues have the power to fine any player & their respective franchise that has representatives who do not stand or "show respect" while present on the sideline for the anthem:*
      1. These rates must be annually adjusted for inflation.
      2. The minimum fine is 2017 US $1,000 per player & $2,000 for per franchise which will double for each offense.
      3. Each individual player(s) will no longer eligible to play in any games after their 4th offense, but they will still be paid (if they are a paid player).