



BAFA Flag Football

Competition Rules and Regulations – 2025-26

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Preface

This document contains the rules which govern the British American Football (BAFA) Flag Football competitions for the 2025/26 playing season and come into effect from 5 April 2025 and remain in force until such time as an updated version is issued. These competition rules and regulations should be read in conjunction with the most recent [IFAF Flag Football rulebook \(2023\)](#) and [BAFA notes on flag rules 2024](#).

It is the responsibility of club management to ensure that all players, coaches and staff are aware of and comply with the rules and regulations of the game as detailed in this document, as well as the central [BAFA Regulations \(Updated March 2024\)](#).

In the event of a breach of the rules and regulations by a player, coach and/or staff, or in the event of improper behaviour by players, coaches, staff and/or spectators on a gameday, BAFA reserve the right to take action against the club and/or club management, in addition to any action it may take against the player, coaches, staff and/or spectator concerned.

These regulations may be updated and/or supported by additional guidelines for specific competitions.

1. Definitions

- 1.1. BAFA shall mean the British American Football Association.
- 1.2. Non-contact shall mean the non-contact version of the game where tackles are made by removing a flag from the belt of an opponent. The term can be used interchangeably with Flag Football.
- 1.3. Club shall mean an organisation which offers one or more teams in competition in the organised competitions of BAFA.
- 1.4. Team shall mean any team as required by the context of this document which plays host to an individual member or the BAFA registered for the purposes of taking part in competition.
- 1.5. Club administrator refers to those persons who hold an administration role for their club on BAFA's JustGo registration system.
- 1.6. Club Management refers to those persons who hold a designated role in the management of participating National Leagues clubs and teams. They are the nominated contacts for liaising with BAFA on matters that relate to their club and for ensuring that competition regulations are communicated and adhered to within their organisation.
- 1.7. Competition management refers to the official management personnel and structure for the Flag Football Leagues and any other associated BAFA mandated flag football competitions.
- 1.8. Contrasting colour shall mean a different colour or different shade of the same colour that contrast with each other as to be immediately differentiated one from the other. For example, black and white are contrasting colours, but dark grey and black are not contrasting colours. If in any doubt, guidance should be sought from competition management.
- 1.9. Official game shall mean a regular season game, playoff game or associate fixture, preseason game or tournament, plus any game which involves at least one team representing a BAFA organisation (or any other game or tournament as may be specified by the competition management from time to time).
- 1.10. Game Management means the whole of the process of managing, controlling and organising a gameday or tournament. It includes arranging everything necessary for a game or tournament to go ahead, including any gameday facility hire, field setup, changing accommodation, and field equipment, and all other matters referred to directly or indirectly (by implication) in these regulations. Gameday Management is the responsibility of the host team.
- 1.11. Gameday shall mean the scheduled games taking place between BAFA teams.
- 1.12. Game rules refer to the BAFA sanctioned rules which guide the playing of the game of American football and its recognized variants.
- 1.13. GDPR refers to the General Data Protection Regulation refers to the law enacted in 2016. For more information on GDPR see; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation>.
- 1.14. GDPR refers to the General Data Protection Regulation enacted in 2016. For more information on GDPR see: <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>

- 1.15. Referee and/or officials are those persons designated to take charge of the game or tournament and apply the game rules.
- 1.16. Registration Management refers to the dedicated administration team for the National Leagues registration system within BAFA.
- 1.17. These regulations apply to the competitions specified in 2.1 and do not apply to any events which may be organised by third parties. For the avoidance of doubt, therefore, the insurance cover provided as part of the BAFA membership does not apply to the participation of teams, coaches and players in such third-party events unless sanctioned and agreed by BAFA. Teams, coaches and players are wholly responsible for organising their own insurance for such events, or for ensuring that the organisers of such events have in place adequate insurance.

2. Organisation and Administration

- 2.1. The competitions detailed in this document shall be known collectively as the British American Football Association National Leagues & Competitions (herein referred to The National Leagues). These shall encompass:
 - 2.1.1. National Flag Football League (NFFL)
 - 2.1.2. Women's Flag Football League (WFFL)
 - 2.1.3. Youth Flag Football League (YFFL)
 - 2.1.4. Accreditation fixtures for either of the above
- 2.2. The competitions and all rights and properties associated with it shall be owned, controlled and managed by BAFA. From time to time, it may delegate its powers and authority in this respect to any sub-committee, company or individual(s).
- 2.3. The name of any or all those competitions, divisions or conferences which comprise the National Leagues shall be preceded by the name of such sponsor as BAFA may direct from time to time, as well as the specific round at which the matches are taking place (i.e. Playoffs and National Finals).
- 2.4. The decisions of BAFA, or its nominee(s), in respect of these regulations and on any other matter related to the National Leagues competitions which is not provided for below, shall be considered final and binding on all parties (subject to the right of appeal which is specifically provided for within the wider BAFA Regulations).
- 2.5. It is the responsibility of all participants within the National Leagues to ensure that they are conversant with these Competition Rules and Regulations.
- 2.6. The BAFA National Leagues are currently strictly amateur both by rule and as a condition of our insurance. Payment of players is forbidden. Any proven breach of this rule will lead to serious disciplinary action against both the club concerned and the player(s) involved. Such action may incur sanctions which include, but are not limited to fines, suspension, loss of league points or loss of league status.

3. Qualifications and Eligibility

- 3.1. BAFA's Competition Management reserves the sole right to decide which teams will be accepted to participate in the National Leagues and to set the division and conference in which they will compete, subject to its reasonable application of the regulations laid out herein or those identified in the Associate Process for emerging and developing teams.
- 3.2. BAFA will charge each team and/or individual players a competition entry fee and set a deadline for the payment of such, as a requirement for entry into the competition/league. Fees will vary depending on competition and service/scope of the competition provided and will be reviewed before each registration deadline. Full details of the current fees are available on the BAFA website.
- 3.3. For 2026 the entry deadline is:
 - 3.3.1. NFFL: 23:59 Saturday 31st January 2026
 - 3.3.2. YFFL: 23:59 Saturday 31st January 2026
 - 3.3.3. WFFL: 23:59 27th June 2026
- 3.4. By entering a team in the National Leagues, clubs agree that:
 - 3.4.1. They will abide by these Competition Rules
 - 3.4.2. They will abide by the Governing Body Regulations and wider policies.
 - 3.4.3. They are able and willing to fulfil the costs and commitments of participation in the competition.
- 3.5. To qualify to participate in the National Leagues both the club and the team must be recognised and accredited by BAFA.
- 3.6. To qualify to participate in the National Leagues, a player, coach or other club staff member must be a member of the BAFA. This is achieved by purchasing a membership and competition entry on the National Leagues registration system and having been accepted by the relevant club.
- 3.7. All players and coaches must meet the age ranges set for the respective competitions as set out by BAFA in these competition rules and published on the BAFA website.
 - 3.7.1. Adult Flag 16+ (NFFL/WFFL). To be eligible a player must be the age of 16 to be able to participate. 16- and 17-year-olds can play with parental/guardian consent.
 - 3.7.2. U17: Players must be under 17 on 31 August in the year preceding the playing season. The minimum age is 14 years.
 - 3.7.3. U14: Players must be under 14 on 31 August in the year preceding the playing season. The minimum age is 11 years.
 - 3.7.4. U11: Players must be under 11 on 31 August in the year preceding the playing season. The minimum age is 7 years.
 - 3.7.5. Players at each age level are permitted to move up one age group as per rule 3.8, for clarity, this means U11 can move up one age group to U14, U14 can move up one age group to u17 and U17 can move up one age group to Mixed Adult.
 - 3.7.6. For 2026 only, female athletes within one year of eligibility can play down to the age group below in the 2026 season as long as they meet the correct criteria (playing down female athletes to U14 must be under 14 on 31st August 2024, U11 must be under 12 on 31st August 2024). This process must follow the same rules as players moving up listed in rule 3.8.

- 3.8. Players with significant ability or talent to move up are permitted to do so in exceptional circumstances;
 - 3.8.1. The player demonstrates a significant level of talent or ability which would indicate that playing up poses a suitable level of challenge to progress their development rather than remaining at the lower age group.
 - 3.8.2. The player is within 12 months of moving up in age group currently and remaining at the current level would limit their ability to develop.
 - 3.8.3. Parents or Guardians and coaches agree that moving up is in the best interests of the players development and growth.
 - 3.8.4. Once a player moves up, they will be locked to that age group until they have aged up and will not be permitted to play in any other age group during the regular season or finals.
 - 3.8.5. Players should not move up to assist in making up numbers for a higher age range team who is struggling to meet the minimum numbers for gamedays.
- 3.9. Once a player moves up an age group, they are not permitted to move back down to a lower eligible age group unless approved by Competition Management in consultation with Registrations Management. Exceptions may be granted during the regular season only, where supported by clear evidence and agreed in advance, for reasons including but not limited to:
 - 3.9.1. Significant geographical relocation where a team for their current age group is not available;
 - 3.9.2. Withdrawal or closure of the linked team for their current age group;
 - 3.9.3. "Moving up" shall be defined as participating in any organised training session, scrimmage, or game at a higher age group. A player may attend up to three training sessions (not games or scrimmages) at the higher level on a trial basis, subject to:
 - 3.9.3.1. Consent from the coach, parent or guardian (if under 18), and player;
 - 3.9.3.2. The player being deemed suitable in size and/or ability; and talent level
 - 3.9.3.3. Approval by Competition and Registrations Management.
 - 3.9.4. A signed consent form created by the club must be uploaded to the player's JustGo profile prior to participation, and Competition and Registrations Management must be notified for approval before any activity takes place.
- 3.10. Dual eligibility is permitted for female players between U17 and the WFFL, subject to parental consent. Such participation shall not be considered a move out of the National Leagues age group.
- 3.11. To be eligible to participate in National Finals a player must be registered with their team prior to the final regular season game day of the season.
- 3.12. Mixed age ranges may practise alongside each other in the same facility or field but must operate distinctly from each other during any competitive drills. No game-like scenarios should take place across any age ranges.

- 3.13. Each age range should be supervised by dedicated coaches who are shown on the appropriate team roster. Coaches may appear on multiple rosters within the same club, this needs to be actioned by contacting the Registrations Team.
- 3.14. It is the responsibility of club management to make sure that age ranges are appropriately supervised by coaches and are not mixed during any practice session for any competitive drills. Failure to do so may result in penalties which could include but are not limited to fines and suspension of membership for club management and coaches involved.
- 3.15. Players must adhere to the BAFA Maternity Policy and guidelines.
- 3.16. Players or coaches with specific medical conditions should seek the advice and guidance of a general practitioner or other suitably qualified individual as to whether they should take part in the sport. It is recommended that all participants are subject to a health check prior to participation.
- 3.17. No restriction shall be applied to registration or play within the competitions by nationality for participants ordinarily resident in the UK. However, the competition management reserves the right to review this rule at any time for the purposes of ensuring the intended development of the competitions.
- 3.18. It is recommended that all teams designate and register a minimum of one Coach on BAFA Registration Systems. This Coach should be a minimum of 18 years of age, and in possession of (at minimum) a BAFA Coaching Level 1 qualification.
- 3.19. Where there is a crossover of ages from young person to adult the BAFA Welfare Guidance should be read to ensure that issues related to minors and vulnerable adults are assessed and addressed.

4. Team Registration

- 4.1. Clubs must register their teams and intention to compete on BAFA's registration system no later than the dates specified in rule 3.3 above. Failure to register on time may result in teams not being included, making them ineligible for the coming season. Competition Management may grant an exceptional time extension on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.2. Clubs can have no more than three teams in one format (e.g. Adult Mixed Flag). This will be reviewed with the Community ahead of the 2026 season.
- 4.3. Regular roster 'health checks' will be conducted by Competition Management and Registrations Management for each participating National Leagues team to ensure numbers are sustainable and that each team has the required number of players to be considered for schedule addition. These will take place during the scheduling process for all levels. Dates for these for 2026 entry are: 31 January, 28 February, and 15 March. Warnings will be issued to teams who do not make the 28 February deadline. Teams who do not meet the 15 March deadline will be issued a final warning and may be removed from the schedule. Factors impacting schedule removal for teams who do not meet minimum numbers may also include but are not limited to a review of their previous season's standings, geographical location and any yellow cards issued for forfeits.

- 4.4. The minimum numbers of registered players and coaches and cut-off date shall be as shown in the table below. Individuals who hold both player and coach licences will be counted towards the minimum number for players, but players registered on a trial membership only basis will not appear on the roster and not be included. Where a coach is a requirement, they must be present at kick-off and for the duration of the game on the team sideline and must be on the team's JustGo photo roster, unless by explicit permission from Competition Management.

Year of Competition Commencement	Min Registered Players	Min Sideline Players to commence a game or tournament	Minimum Registered and Qualified Coaches	Minimum Sideline Registered and Qualified Coaches
2026	8	5	1 x L1	1 x L1
2027	10	8	2 x L1	1 x L1
2028	12	8	2 x L1	1 x L1

- 4.5. For clubs that have an A and B team, or multiple teams participating within the same discipline, players may move between the two teams during pre-season, or as allowed under the clauses set out above. All players must be registered to the team they will compete in prior to the start of that competition's season. Players must then remain registered within that team unless the movement is approved by Competition Management. Players who move within their club to a different team are only allowed one move between the start of the season and the transfer deadline.
- 4.5.1. If a club reduces the number of their teams between seasons the remaining teams have to meet the obligations of their highest seeded team(s) the subsequent competition year. For example, if a club has two teams in 2025, one in the Premiership and one in Division 1, and they reduce to one team in 2026, they must fulfil the obligations of the Premiership Team in 2026).
- 4.6. If a club splits into multiple clubs (association/rebranding processes must be complete). In this instance the club/team which retains the most players from the highest rated squad will be required to fulfil the obligations of the previously highest rated squad in the old organisation
- 4.7. Clubs with multiple teams will be required to take all teams' rosters to all game days so the rosters and those playing on each day can be checked.
- 4.8. Clubs entering teams at U11, U14, U17 or in Adult Leagues with players under the age of 18 or with vulnerable adults must ensure they follow BAFA's safeguarding requirements at all times. This includes making sure an appropriately trained named safeguarding officer and a club safeguarding policy are in place. BAFA also requires any individual engaged in coaching young people or vulnerable adults to undertake a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) (or Protecting Vulnerable Groups, PVG, in Scotland) enhanced check.
- 4.9. Clubs are expected to maintain the following documents, which should be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an annual basis:
- 4.9.1. Governing document – usually in the form of a constitution or articles of association.
- 4.9.2. Club safeguarding policy and safeguarding commitment statement – this is required for working with both children and vulnerable adults
- 4.9.3. Anti-Bullying Policy.

- 4.9.4. Sample codes of conduct/player or coaches' agreement for players and coaches
- 4.9.5. A document or spreadsheet detailing your current club management structure, including names of officers and including the name of your designated club safeguarding officer
- 4.9.6. Copy of recent bank account statement in the name of the club or team as appropriate. Personal bank accounts in the name of an individual should not be used.

This can be done within the club details sections of the JustGo registration system

- 4.10. As part of registering their teams, clubs are requested to enter information about home and away jerseys and contact details, including coaches and team managers, for each of their teams. This can be done in the team profile sections of the JustGo registration system.
- 4.11. Clubs entering teams with young players under the age of 18, or WFFL or NFFL teams with members who are vulnerable adults must ensure they follow BAFA's safeguarding requirements at all times. This includes making sure an appropriately trained named safeguarding officer and a club safeguarding policy are in place. BAFA also requires any individual engaged in coaching young people or vulnerable adults to undertake a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) (or Protecting Vulnerable Groups, PVG, in Scotland) enhanced check.
- 4.12. Teams who have forfeited tournaments, dropped out of league competition or missed games may, at the discretion of Competition Management, be issued a yellow card and have to pay the League a surety that they will complete their next season, in which event the surety will be returned to the team.

This is tiered as follows:

£100 – NFFL and WFFL

£50 – YFFL

5. Registration of Members

- 5.1. As per 3.6 all players, coaches, club admins and staff present at training, gamedays and tournaments must be members of BAFA which provides Governing Body approved insurance (included in the BAFA Associate Membership).
- 5.2. Membership is achieved by registering and paying for a membership on BAFA's JustGo registration system. Members must only have one profile on the system and must not set up an additional new profile to register with another team. In the unlikely event of a technology issue preventing the purchase of membership, temporary membership may be granted on request, by submitting member details to Registrations Management. Temporary membership is only confirmed once the submission is acknowledged as being valid.

- 5.3. All new players at all age groups and disciplines are entitled to three trial sessions with a team – this does not cover scrimmages or games. A player is classed as new to National Leagues flag football if they have not previously registered on National Leagues System with a team. A player transferring between clubs, or a player returning to Flag competition after a period of absence or injury is not classed as a new player. After three trial practice sessions they must register and pay for a full BAFA Associate Membership to be covered by BAFA for injury and liability insurance. Please note, this will not cover them to participate in any games and will expire on the final weekend before the start of the season annually. They must purchase a full playing membership before the commencement of the season in order to appear on the team roster and be insured to participate in games.
- 5.4. It is the responsibility of club management to ensure that all players, coaches and sideline staff hold an appropriate active membership linked to the right team, so they are correctly registered and thus insured to practice as well as take part in games or tournaments. Any avoidance of this responsibility will be taken extremely seriously by Registrations Management and Competition Management. Clubs suspected of allowing unregistered players, coaches or other sideline staff to participate in training sessions without BAFA membership may be investigated. In the event of an investigation concluding that unregistered players, coaches or other side line staff were knowingly allowed to participate in team practises unregistered, penalties could, but may not be limited to, fines and suspension of membership for club management.
- 5.5. Any players or coaches who participate in team practice sessions, scrimmages or games after this point without registering or who are incorrectly registered for a format other than the one they participating in are not covered by BAFA injury or liability insurance, and their participation may impact on the insurance of all others present.
- 5.6. All membership costs are listed on the BAFA website. Players who wish to play for more than one BAFA non-contact format may be required to pay a membership upgrade fee, as detailed on the BAFA website.
- 5.7. All teams must be in in compliance with the official roster process, before taking part in an official BAFA game. Teams must be in possession of both an official BAFA photo roster downloaded from BAFA's JustGo system to use for a roster check, and a GDPR compliant non-photo roster of players, coaches and staff to provide to game officials. Only players, coaches and staff members listed on the official BAFA photo roster form are eligible to partake in game activity and be in the team sideline area unless there is written approval from Competition Management. The only exception to this rule is third party suppliers of gameday medical cover.
- 5.8. Rosters can be updated each week during pre-season and the regular season. A new addition to the roster must be added by 17:00 hours on the Friday prior to a fixture. Where the addition is a transfer, the request must be made via BAFA's JustGo registration system and must be approved by the club the member is leaving as well as the club the member is joining by 22:00 hours on the Tuesday prior to scheduled fixture. It is the members responsibility to submit their own transfer request. Transfers are not required between teams within the same club or from BUCS League teams
- 5.9. New players, coaches or other club staff members who have never previously registered with BAFA, who are returning from a period of absence with the club, or who have been registered with BUCS for university football may register with a team up until 17:00 hours on the Friday prior to the last game of the regular season for the relevant discipline and age bracket. Any change of status such as adding on a player membership on top of a coaching one, or vice versa, is also not permitted after this point

- 5.10. Each team, via their designated club administrator, must have downloaded a copy of their most recent roster by 19:00 hours on the Friday prior to a fixture. You will not be able to download a copy of the roster from BAFA's JustGo registration system after this time. Issues with rosters must be notified to Registrations Management no later than 48hrs prior to the download deadline.
- 5.11. An identity check of players and coaches against the photo game roster form is mandatory prior to the beginning of every gameday and must be signed by team management and the head coach. This may be done either inside or outside, but bad weather is not an acceptable reason for it being omitted. If there are any discrepancies these should be notified to officials and the head coaches at the earliest opportunity. Gameday Management should note the discrepancy and send a report to Competition Management and Registrations Management. Failure to conduct a thorough identity check is a disciplinary offence. Rosters should be signed by both teams. Teams should retain their signed rosters for 21 days and ensure secure disposal in compliance with GDPR regulations.
- 5.12. Competition management reserve the right to request a copy of the signed gameday photo roster at any point within the 21-day GDPR window and may require this to be submitted as supporting evidence in the event of a dispute.
- 5.13. Any player, coach or other club staff member not showing on the roster, or who is not easily identifiable by their roster photo is ineligible to play in that game or gameday, unless permission has been granted by a member of the Competition Management or Registrations Management. It is the club administrator's responsibility to ensure that all members photos are correct as per BAFA registration rule 5.17.
- 5.14. Roster discrepancies must be recorded and details sent directly to competition management. All evidence must be supplied within seven days of the game and resolved under the appeals procedure.
- 5.15. Teams are required to take a photo of their signed scoresheet and email to Competition Management and the resulting scores as soon as possible after a game.
- 5.16. A player, coach or other club staff member may not be eligible or active on a roster for a team in the following circumstances:
 - 5.16.1. They are already on the roster for another team at this level / age group and have not followed the transfer process as stipulated. For the avoidance of doubt, this means members may not play or coach in two levels of the same competition – for example, Mixed Adult Premiership.
 - 5.16.2. They are under ban or suspension as a result of disciplinary action.
 - 5.16.3. Incorrect registration procedure has been carried out.
 - 5.16.4. They do not meet the age eligibility requirements.
 - 5.16.5. They owe equipment or money to another team in any BAFA National League organisation or to BAFA.
 - 5.16.6. They are currently subject to a ban, suspension, or period of ineligibility from a governing body of another sport for a violation that would have been contrary to BAFA's own rules and regulations.
- 5.17. Any team knowingly playing an ineligible player or using an unregistered coach in an official game will result in the club facing disciplinary action.
- 5.18. Any player, coach or staff members knowingly taking part in an official game when they are not eligible will face disciplinary action.
- 5.19. Disciplinary action in respect of sections 5.16 and/or and 5.17 and 5.18 will be severe and may include:

- 5.19.1. A club fine of £100 for the first offence.
- 5.19.2. A one game suspension for the individual, the Head coach, team administrator.
- 5.19.3. A loss of 1-0 in the fixture.
- 5.20. A secondary offence during the same competitive season may result in further fines and/or the team being withdrawn from the competition. Competition Management may also take such disciplinary action as it deems appropriate.
- 5.21. Each member over 16 years old is responsible for completing their own registration. Where a player is under 18 years old, the registration must be undertaken by a parent or legal guardian (whose contact details must also be provided). A registration must not be completed on a player's behalf by any other person unless expressly authorized by Competition Management. The person registering must ensure that all information supplied is true and accurate.
- 5.22. A member's emergency contact information must be their next of kin or other designated individual and not club management. The only exception to this is when club management are a family member of the individual.
- 5.23. Profile photos uploaded onto the National Leagues registration system are used to create photo rosters so must be clear and the member must be instantly recognisable. Photos should be a clear head and shoulders, passport style picture, and be of the individual only and unobscured. Members should not be wearing helmets, hats, sunglasses or anything else than that can obscure their head/ face (this includes eye blackener). Photos must be of the individual being registered and must not be altered or have filters added in any way. The only exception to this is where head coverings are worn for religious purposes.
- 5.24. Should a roster photo be deemed unacceptable by either competing team during a roster check at a gameday or tournament, a complaint must be raised with the game day officials and Registration Management within 24 hours so the issue can be investigated. Should a team insist on fielding a player with a photo deemed unacceptable, the game result could be overturned, or the club fined should Competition and Registration Management agree that is unacceptable following further investigation.
- 5.25. Regular spot checks of roster photos will be undertaken by the National Leagues Registration Management (or appointed representative). In the event that any roster photo is deemed unsuitable, club administrators will be notified and will have five days to make sure a suitable replacement photo is uploaded. Should the original, unacceptable, photo remain after this time then a fine may be imposed and the membership licence of the individual concerned will be suspended until the fine is paid and the photo meets the standards required.
- 5.26. It is the club administrator's responsibility to ensure that all players and coaches registered on the National Leagues registration system have clear roster photos as defined in 5.23 and are eligible to register.
- 5.27. Individuals applying for BAFA membership must be able to produce proof of normal residency in the UK. Normal residency is defined by our insurers as having lived or planning to live in the UK for over 6 months, with permission to stay. Exceptions include those residents in the UK on military assignments and students on a valid Student Visa.
- 5.28. For the avoidance of doubt, outside of the specific exceptions detailed in 5.27, individuals visiting the UK on holiday or other short stay visits, including for study, are not eligible to become members of BAFA during their visit. Other individuals not normally resident in the UK will only be granted membership by exception and with permission granted by Competition and Registrations Management.

- 5.29. Players and coaches whose eligibility is in doubt should be highlighted to Registrations Management for investigation.
- 5.30. Competition management may from time-to-time request information from members regarding the details they have submitted on their membership forms. Failure to supply information when requested could result in disciplinary action and suspension of membership.
- 5.31. The registration system will require proof of residency from foreign nationals - examples (not exhaustive) of the suitable documentation are:
 - 5.31.1. A valid biometric residence permit (BRP) or current passport, endorsed to show they are allowed to stay in the UK. The permit of passport endorsement should be current, in the individual's name and issued by the Home Office, and needs to show that the individual has one of the following: indefinite leave to enter or remain in the UK, no time limit to their stay in the UK, a time limit to their stay in the UK of six months or more, a certificate of entitlement to the Right of Abode, exemption from immigration control
 - 5.31.2. A valid UKVI share code should be provided by individuals relying on an eVisa or EU Settlement Scheme (Settled or Pre-Settled Status). The share code can be obtained via the official UK government service at <https://www.gov.uk/view-proveimmigration-status>. Please note, only the proof of immigration share code will be accepted.
 - 5.31.3. A full and current UK photocard driving licence
 - 5.31.4. A recent HMRC letter confirming notice of tax coding or a P60.
 - 5.31.5. A local authority tax bill where the individual is named and the address is a match for the membership application
 - 5.31.6. A current benefit book or card or original notification letter from the Department of Work and Pensions
 - 5.31.7. A recent utility bill (gas, electricity or water) where the individual is named and the address is a match for the membership application
 - 5.31.8. A recent mortgage statement where the individual is named and the address is a match for the membership application.
 - 5.31.9. For members from within the common travel area, a valid passport or drivers licence issued in the Republic of Ireland, the Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands. (Please note – this does not include British Overseas Territories)
 - 5.31.10. Valid and current documentation proving that one of the two exceptions apply such as a student visa or copies of military orders
 - 5.31.11. For under 18s who may not have such documentation, any of the above in a parent/guardian's name showing the same address as the individual will be accepted.
 - 5.31.12. Any other documentation approved by BAFA Registrations on application
- 5.32. The following are examples of documentation that is NOT acceptable to prove residency:
 - 5.32.1. A tenancy agreement or rent card
 - 5.32.2. A bank statement
 - 5.32.3. A bill or statement for anything other than gas, electricity or landline telephone
 - 5.32.4. Any other letter sent through the post or any pictures of received mail
 - 5.32.5. A photo of an email from a school or university

5.32.6. A provisional driving licence

5.32.7. Membership cards – for example, gym membership or supermarket discount cards

- 5.33. BAFA reserves the right to ask for additional supporting evidence of proof of normal residence or of one of the two exceptions outlined in 5.23 at any point should they not be satisfied with any evidence produced or initially approved or should the validity of the evidence provided be in any doubt.
- 5.34. Non-UK nationals registering as players with BAFA will be required to complete either an international transfer or a self-declaration when registering on JustGo that they have not played for another federation previously without transferring or are exempt from a transfer. In particular, this may apply to any non-UK nationals who join a team from the BUCS league and / or are US citizens and have previously played for another federation of American football. This includes any US or Canadian nationals who may have played at high-school, college, semi-pro or professional level.

6. Transfers

- 6.1. Subject to proving that they are free of financial liability or subject to disciplinary action at their team of prior registration or the Governing Body, a player, coach or other club staff member, is free to request a transfer to join another team registered with BAFA from 1 October up until the transfer deadline day. This applies to both domestic and inward international transfers including self-declarations, and all clubs involved in the transfer must have approved and completed transfer requests by this time. In season transfers will not be accepted after this deadline has passed, but transfers initiated by the deadline will be permitted to run their course for both domestic and international transfers. In exceptional circumstances, appeals can be made through competition management. The transfer window opens at the commencement of competition and deadlines for Flag Leagues are stated below, transfers after this time will not be accepted.
- 6.1.1. NFFL and YFFL - Prior to the 1st Tuesday in June
- 6.1.2. WFFL - 2nd Tuesday in January
- 6.2. Domestic transfer requests must be submitted via BAFA's JustGo registration system and must be approved by both the leaving and receiving clubs prior to the weekly transfer deadline. A transfer must be completed by 22:00 hours on the Tuesday prior to the next scheduled fixture, for that individual to be eligible to participate. Transfers are only finalised, and players moved to their new club following each week's Tuesday deadline. It is the member's own responsibility to submit their transfer request in the National Leagues registration system.
- 6.3. Club administrators have five days after the transfer is submitted to acknowledge or reject/approve any transfer requests from members wishing to leave their club. Should there be no response from the club administrator, Registrations Management will approve the transfer on their behalf. Note – the five-day period does not include the day the transfer is submitted.
- 6.4. Members are only allowed two transfers during the active transfer window of each membership year, which runs from the period 1 October until the first Tuesday of June of each year. Exceptions to this may be permitted during the regular season only in agreement with Registrations and Competition Management for clearly evidencable reasons including, but not limited to:

- 6.4.1. A significant geographical relocation
- 6.4.2. The team they are linked to withdrawing from league competition or ceasing to exist
- 6.4.3. Where returning to the sport from a period of absence, a team not otherwise available for their age range within their existing linked club
- 6.5. An individual can only add themselves to one National Leagues club at any one time via BAFA's JustGo registration system. However, subject to the agreement of Registrations Management, and club management where appropriate, a member is permitted to join additional National Leagues clubs to coach or play for a team where no such discipline or age bracketed team exists in their primary club. For example, to play or coach for a Mixed Adult Flag team when already registered with another club for WFFL competition, where no Mixed Adult Flag team exists. Where an individual requests to join a second club that offers the same disciplines as their primary club, Club Management will be asked to give consent to ensure there are no conflicts of interest.
- 6.6. Individuals are not permitted to hold club administration privileges on BAFA's JustGo registration system for more than one club unless approved as an exception by Registrations Management.
- 6.7. All teams should ensure that any agreement entered between the team and an individual with respect to fees, equipment loans and other such relations should reflect the dates pertaining to the end of the season. BAFA, should it be called to review a case, does not endorse or recognise agreements which exist on a multi-season basis
- 6.8. The following procedures will be followed in the case of a dispute concerning the rejection of a transfer where there is debt or equipment owed to a previous club:
 - 6.8.1. Clubs can opt to reject a transfer request from a member who owes money or equipment. This must be done within five days of the transfer being submitted. Clubs should only reject a transfer for a valid reason
 - 6.8.2. Where a dispute arises over the rejection, the club wishing to register the member, the club claiming that the member owes equipment or money, or the member can make a written appeal to BAFA's Transfers and Debtors Manager to seek a ruling. This must be done within 72 hours of the transfer being rejected.
 - 6.8.3. Rejecting clubs must provide signed supporting evidence of debt or kit owed to the BAFA Transfers and Debtors Manager. Such evidence must bear a valid, verifiable signature, which may be handwritten or executed via an e-signature platform compliant with applicable legislation (e.g., DocuSign). Signatures via unverified electronic methods (e.g., Google Forms, typed PDFs, social media messages or emails) are not acceptable.
 - 6.8.4. BAFA's Transfers and Debtors Manager will mediate between the parties and attempt to seek an amicable resolution to the situation, which may include putting in place payment plans or other appropriate agreements. These must be agreed by all parties in writing. Agreeing to enter into such an agreement will be seen as acknowledgement of outstanding debt.
 - 6.8.5. If no conclusion is promptly reached, then BAFA's Transfers and Debtors Manager will arbitrate and deliver a ruling on the situation.
 - 6.8.6. Where a transfer has been submitted by the final transfer deadline of the transfer window of that membership year, it will be allowed to progress through the normal approval / rejection steps to completion. If a rejection is disputed and is subsequently found to have no validity or the reason for rejection has been amicably resolved, the transfer may proceed at the discretion of BAFA's Transfers and Debtors Manager and Registrations Management.

- 6.9. All players and coaches seeking to play or coach outside Great Britain with an international team linked to another IFAF member federation or vice versa, must complete an official IFAF International Transfer or Self-Declaration form as appropriate. Please note, this includes playing with teams in Northern or Southern Ireland, which are governed by American Football Ireland. These forms can be requested from Registrations Management and are available on the BAFA website. Players who have played overseas who wish to re-associate with BAFA should contact Registrations Management for further guidance. Players who have previously been registered with BAFA should use their existing profile and should not create a new profile. In addition, players and coaches transferring from a BAFA team to an overseas team should submit a transfer request through the registration system provided BAFA's JustGo registration system by requesting a transfer to 'ITC'.
- 6.10. Due to the nature of International Transfers, once cleared, a player or coach has until 19:00 hours on the Friday prior to a game to register.
- 6.11. Players or coaches must not register with a National Leagues team until their International Transfer has been completed and approved by the International Transfer Coordinator and Registrations Management.
- 6.12. Players, coaches and staff must go through the correct transfer process when moving clubs, and must not set up a new, additional profile to register. It is the club administrator's responsibility to ensure that this rule is upheld. If players were registered to another BAFA club before 2012, pre-dating the online registration system, they should contact Registrations Management for guidance.

7. Competition Structure and National Finals

- 7.1. The National Leagues will be comprised of competitions which have differing categories and formats as determined by the BAFA.
- 7.2. Each flag football format has competition conferences set out by Competition Management.
- 7.3. In order to rank teams, the following tie breakers will be used:
 - 7.3.1. Won / Loss / Tied record
 - 7.3.2. Head-to-Head points differential during regular season (when two teams tied on same W/L/T record)
 - 7.3.3. Lowest Average points conceded in games played (note – awarded games are excluded for the purposes of calculating tie breakers)
 - 7.3.4. Highest Won/Loss/Tied record for scheduled away games
 - 7.3.5. Lowest number of players ejected
 - 7.3.6. A coin toss by the Competition Management
- 7.4. If three or more teams are tied on a final W/L/T, then the tie breakers will be followed until a team is excluded. The tie breakers will then restart for the remaining two teams. The same tiebreakers are applicable for ranking teams threatened with relegation. The team with the superior performance remains in the division, or is awarded a place in the play offs, as the case may be.

7.5. In the event that it is not possible to play a playoff game or playoff game within a tournament due to circumstances beyond the control of both teams, the winner shall be decided by the following procedure:

7.5.1. Competitive record for both teams when facing each other during the season based upon win / loss / tied record and subject to that being equal, the cumulative lowest number of points conceded in those fixtures will be used.

7.5.2. Competitive record for both teams against common opponents during the regular season based upon win / loss / tied record and subject to that being equal, the cumulative lowest number of points conceded will be used.

7.5.3. Win / Loss / Tied record within the regular season in comparison to that of their opponents.

7.5.4. A comparison of average points conceded against the top three teams within the division.

7.5.5. A coin toss

8. Competition Properties

8.1. All rights and properties associated with the National Leagues are owned, controlled and managed by the BAFA.

8.2. Permission must be sought from competition management should any team seek to have their League fixtures broadcast (either via visual or audio means) by an external party. All broadcasters will be required to comply with terms and conditions as set by BAFA.

8.3. The Governing Body may elect to broadcast any play off or National Finals game at their discretion and without the consent of participating teams. They will organise broadcast of any particular league game by notifying the host team at least 10 days prior to the scheduled date for any such game during the regular season, and 5 days prior to the scheduled date for any such game during the post-season.

8.4. If your organisation plans to live stream any game played under the auspices of BAFA (such as National Leagues, friendly or exhibition matches), or you permit this to be done by a third party, you must notify your opponent of your intention to do at least 48 hours in advance of streaming and seek their consent. If sufficient notice and / or permission is not given, the game should not be streamed. Where games with players under the age of 18 are to be live streamed, you must ensure that consent is in place from the parents / guardians of all participants under 18. Where U17, U14 or U11 games are to be live streamed, you must work with the opposing team(s) to ensure that consent is in place from the parents / guardians of all participants under 18. Where notice and / or consent has not been given and a stream takes place, teams should consider this to be 'playing under protest' and should notify their opposition that this is the case and then notify Competition Management within 48 hours of the game taking place.

8.5. Teams may not attach monikers to official competition names without the approval of competition management. This encompasses sponsor names and any other title.

8.6. In maintaining copies of fixtures, results and tables on team websites or any other form of publication, teams must use the full titles and correct signage (if used) of the competition (incorporating sponsor names where appropriate).

- 8.7. Teams failing to comply with the above may face a fine of up to £500.

9. Fixture Arrangements

- 9.1. The schedules for all National Leagues shall have a centrally managed fixture calendar. Teams requesting changes to the schedule (gameday date or running order) need to seek approval of the relevant competition manager. These requests will only be accepted outside of the stated schedule challenge window for a given year in exceptional circumstances and where ample notice is provided.
- 9.2. The host team shall have first choice of uniform colour for game days.
- 9.3. It is the responsibility of the host team to ensure their gameday facility is of a high standard. The playing field should be large enough to accommodate the necessary number of pitches to fulfil the schedule (including ample run off around each pitch) and free of any unsafe elements (e.g. potholes). To ensure league play is not disrupted and participants have the best possible experience the preference for all pitches is 3/4G. Between September 1st and March 1st annually this surface is mandatory for all BAFA Competitions.
- 9.3.1. WFFL game days are required to be hosted on either 3G or 4G surfaces due to the time of year of the competition.
- 9.3.2. NFFL Premiership/Division 1 game days can be played on 3/4G surfaces, or superior quality grass fields. Should field quality dip below the minimum standard then disciplinary action may be taken against the host team.
- 9.3.3. NFFL National Division game days should be played on 3/4G surfaces where possible.
- 9.4. The host team shall notify their gameday opponent(s) of the following, no later than Two weeks before a gameday or tournament:
- 9.4.1. The gameday schedule (as laid out by Gameday Management).
- 9.4.2. Address of the gameday venue.
- 9.4.3. Nature of the field surface upon which the game is to be played (e.g. grass, artificial turf, etc.).
- 9.4.4. The length and width of the playing field and any unusual aspects to it or its surroundings. Field length must be 70 yards with width of 25 yards. There must also be a safety area surrounding the pitch of no less than 3 yards. The total required space for one regulation field is therefore 76 yards x 31 yards and any venue booked by teams/clubs should accommodate fully and properly measured fields. Minor amendments (no more than 5 yards in either direction) to these dimensions can be made in exceptional circumstances (e.g. for player safety reasons) and where all participating teams agree.
- 9.4.5. The number of available changing facilities, including the (mandatory) women's and disabled facilities.
- 9.4.6. The host team's choice of uniform colour for the gameday.
- 9.5. Changes to any of the above should be notified to competition management and the impacted teams as soon as the change is known. Any issues concerning the availability of pitch booking less than four weeks in advance, should be raised immediately.

10. Gameday Management

- 10.1. Regular season gameday management shall be the host team's responsibility. The management of the National Finals (or other fixtures as specified), will be the responsibility of competition management or its chosen agent, regardless of the host location.
- 10.2. Gameday management shall ensure that all games or tournaments are played in accordance with the administrative rules set out in these regulations. Teams are encouraged to meet the standards specified by rule wherever possible: where issues are faced competition management should be notified at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 10.3. Gameday management shall do everything necessary and supply everything necessary, whether or not specifically stated in these regulations or BAFA's game rules, to ensure that the gameday or tournament takes place and is satisfactorily concluded.
- 10.4. All teams shall designate a head coach or a team captain(s) to the referees. If a team has joint head coaches, they must designate one as having final responsibility for team discipline and adherence to all rules, regulations and ethical issues pertaining to the role of the head coach.
- 10.5. Any team that does not have a head coach who fulfils all the requirements contained within these Regulations shall forfeit all games until such time as these obligations are fulfilled.
- 10.6. Teams are encouraged to report any breaches of mandatory gameday management rules to competition management within 48 hours of the game or tournament.
- 10.7. Gameday management have the ability to cancel, delay, suspend or abandon a gameday or tournament, if the weather conditions prove unsafe (A Met Office weather warning of Amber or Red). Alternatives and delays should be exhausted before this decision is made – and competition management should be notified immediately. Competition management also reserve the right to review all decisions made to preserve the integrity of the competition.
- 10.8. Games should begin at the time stated by the schedule provided by the host team, as long as they are compliant with the timing criteria detailed in 12.4 and 12.5. If a team causes an excessive delay to a kick-off without good reason, they will forfeit the game.
- 10.9. Competition management shall impose sanctions on teams that breach game management rules. Such sanctions shall be at the discretion of competition management and may include warnings, restrictions on the use of a venue, or forfeits.
- 10.10. Competition management may from time to time arrange for a representative to attend a game to ensure minimum standards are being met. Representatives of the competition management should not be charged any entrance fee where the venue or club charges an entrance fee.

- 10.11. Gameday management are responsible for ensuring appropriate behaviour by all spectators, including non-rostered family members, affiliated with their club, in accordance with BAFA regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, preventing verbal or physical abuse directed at opposing teams, their supporters, and BAFRA officials. Spectators and non-rostered family members are not permitted in team areas during games. For tournament formats, they should, wherever possible, remain in a clearly designated spectator area separated by a physical barrier. Where this is not possible, gameday management must ensure spectators are supervised, particularly when in proximity to members of other clubs. For U11, U14 and U17 teams, parental/spectator codes of conduct are strongly encouraged and should be made available to Competition Management on request. Failure to adequately enforce such codes at club level may result in the club being charged with a disciplinary offence in the event of an incident.
- 10.12. Clubs must ensure that all music played by members including its staff, and players in public areas or audible to others during games and warm-ups adheres to appropriate standards. Music must not include racist language, hate speech, or other offensive content, and language must be suitable for all participants and spectators. It is the responsibility of Gameday Management to ensure compliance with this requirement. Where present, Competition Management may request that music be suspended or adjusted at any time. Clubs and all associated members must comply promptly. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

11. Incident Recording and Reporting

- 11.1. Clubs are required to keep an accident record and ensure that details of all accidents and incidents are recorded, both in terms of on-field activity and wider club-sanctioned activity. This will enable them to provide written evidence regarding the circumstances, nature and extent of any injuries sustained
This procedure should be followed for ALL injuries and accidents, regardless of whether medical treatment is given.
- 11.2. All clubs must have the following information for each player at every game:
- 11.2.1. Any specific medical information which would be useful to the emergency services in the event of necessary treatment.
 - 11.2.2. Contact details of next of kin and/or one other contact in case of emergency or assistance required. This can be downloaded by a club administrator from the reports section of the club area in the National Leagues registration system.

12. Officiating and Behavioural Management

- 12.1. Regardless of what roles they fulfil on game days, all participants have a responsibility to know the rules of the game and BAFA clubs have an overarching responsibility to ensure their members carry sufficient knowledge.
- 12.1.1. Officiating teams/crews must supply the following as part of their obligations -
Stopwatch, whistle, spot marker for ball and LoS and penalty flags.
- 12.2. In order of priority Officials are responsible for: Keeping the game and its participants/spectators safe, Ensuring the game is played in the right spirit, Keeping the game fair and reaching the right competitive outcome.

- 12.3. In all game situations, Officials have the responsibility to notify the gameday manager and the competition manager of any ejections which have taken place on the day.
- 12.4. Under no circumstances will abuse of officials, other players or sidelines be tolerated (verbal or otherwise). All league players as individuals and teams have a responsibility to ensure we keep a competitive but inclusive and respectful environment.
- 12.5. Even if a team wishes to appeal an ejection decision, the offending player must still be removed from the game immediately, the appeal will be reviewed between gamedays, and the player remains ineligible until a decision is made by BAFA Disciplinary.

13. Game Scheduling

- 13.1. Subject to full registration by the appropriate deadline, competition management shall allocate each team a set number of regular season fixtures. Each team will also be provided with details and fixtures for their home gameday(s).
- 13.2. BAFA's Competition Management reserves the sole right to determine the final playing schedule for all teams participating in National Leagues regular season, playoff and National Finals games or tournaments.
- 13.3. Unless otherwise specified, games will be played on Saturdays or Sundays. Saturday is the primary day for YFFL and NFFL National Division fixtures, there is currently no primary day for NFFL Premiership, Division 1 or WFFL fixtures.
- 13.4. Whilst host teams are responsible for the timings of their gameday, the kick-off time of the opening fixtures must not be before 10:00. The final kick-off time must be no later than 17:00 (without prior permission granted from the BAFA Competition Management and all affected teams accepting).
- 13.5. A time slot of 1 hour and 15 minutes must be allocated per single game to avoid run over. Changing facilities should ideally be available at least 45 minutes in advance of kick off and there should be at least 30 minutes between the time the pitch is accessible to teams and the first kick-off.
 - 13.5.1. For U11 Games, due to a shorter game length the allocation per game is 55 minutes.
- 13.6. Once a league schedule is finalised, teams are expected to book and communicate their hosting/venue details to competition management at the earliest opportunity. In the event that exceptional circumstances (out of the team's control) arise with a team's booking after release of the final schedule, they can apply to Competition Management for a reschedule assuming the following:
 - 13.6.1. Competition Management agree the circumstances are exceptional and provide written consent
 - 13.6.2. When surveyed by Competition Management, all impacted teams are in agreement to the reschedule or a supportive majority has been established where a team fails to respond on the matter. A team declining must also have a valid justification to do so and should otherwise show every courtesy and understanding to their league counterparts in these matters.
 - 13.6.3. At least two months' notice has been supplied by the hosting team
 - 13.6.4. Should any of this not be true then the originally scheduled date and approximate location remain in force. The hosting team will have to find a suitable alternative matching the criteria of the original booking.

- 13.7. Scheduling problems must be brought to the attention of competition management at the earliest possible time. Failure to do so may result in the game or tournament not being played and the rules on unplayed games enforced.
- 13.8. All teams must be available to participate in games or tournaments on all weeks of the regular season unless specifically exempted by the Competition Management prior to week one of the regular season. There are restrictions on games or tournament taking place on certain weekends. No games or tournaments may be scheduled on the same weekend as the BAFCA Coaches' convention except by exceptional consent from Competition Management. Restrictions may also be placed on games or tournaments taking place on National Team training or game weekends.
- 13.9. The regular playing season for the NFFL and YFFL competitions shall be determined by competition management but shall normally run from March through September while the WFFL runs September to March. All dates will be advised by competition management in advance and advertised on the shared calendar at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 13.10. Playoffs for all disciplines will usually consist of teams from each division going through a knock-out format culminating in the National Finals championship game. The format for the playoffs will be communicated by Competition Management prior to the start of the regular season.
- 13.11. All teams qualifying for a National Finals will be required to provide a full team numbered roster, club logo and any other information needed for inclusion in event promotional materials such as printed programmes.
- 13.12. As per 3.1, BAFA's Competition Management reserves the sole right to set the division and conference in which teams will compete. Where teams wish to 'self-relegate' to a lower division, this must be agreed with Competition Management and may mean payment of a surety is requested as per 4.17.

14. Cancellations, Forfeits and Abandoned games

- 14.1. If all teams and Competition Management agree, any regular season or playoff game or tournament may be rescheduled. Competition Management must be informed of any reschedule requests no later than ten working days prior to kick-off for any game or tournament.
- 14.2. Should a game or tournament be abandoned, and all teams agree it that it is practical or financially viable to be rescheduled, the proposed new date must be submitted for approval to the Competition Management within 14 days of the original scheduled date. Should there be no agreement to reschedule, or no suitable date can be agreed, Competition management reserves the right to award the game/s. Should any team be actively uncooperative or deemed vexatious in the process of attempting to reschedule a game, Competition management also reserves the right to class the game as a forfeit against the uncooperative or vexatious team.
- 14.3. If Competition Management does not give written consent to a change of date or location of a game or tournament, then the originally scheduled date and location remain in force.
- 14.4. Teams may not voluntarily cancel fixtures except in circumstances beyond their control. Evidence clearly showing specific circumstances were outside of the control of the team may be requested. Circumstances beyond a team's control include, but are not limited to:
 - 14.4.1. 'Act of Nature' – events outside of human control such as floods, other extreme weather or natural disasters.

- 14.4.2. Major incident that requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or more of the Emergency Services, the NHS or local authority for the initial treatment, rescue and transport of a large number of casualties
- 14.4.3. Venue booking cancellations within 5 days for games or tournaments
- 14.4.4. Government restrictions
- 14.4.5. Major travel incidents, such as serious traffic accidents resulting in significant road closures or curtailment to travel
- 14.5. Circumstances considered within a team's control include, but not limited to:
 - 14.5.1. Player unavailability due to holidays, social events or life events such as weddings.
 - 14.5.2. Insufficient player numbers
 - 14.5.3. Insufficient funds to cover travelling expenses.
 - 14.5.4. Venue booking issues with more than 5 days' notice for games and tournaments.
- 14.6. Teams must notify Competition management and their opponent no later than 22:00 hours on the Tuesday prior to kick-off for any game or tournament that they intend to cancel or forfeit any scheduled game or tournament. Exceptions to this rule include but are not limited to those outlined in section 14.4 due to the nature of the cancellation request.
- 14.7. Competition management must always be notified of any intended reschedule, cancellation or forfeit ahead of the rescheduling, cancelling or forfeiting team posting notice of this on social channels or websites. Teams are strongly encouraged to engage with Competition management as soon as they have a concern about their ability to fulfil a fixture. Teams that fail to observe this requirement may be subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to a fine.
- 14.8. If a fixture is not fulfilled due to a cancellation or default by one or more team or by the officials, Competition Management will decide whether to reschedule the fixture (or permit its rescheduling by the teams) or where not practical or financially viable to reschedule, to use their discretion to settle the result of the unfulfilled fixture.
- 14.9. If a team forfeits a game, including any single game within a tournament for their format (voluntarily or due to any reason deemed by competition management to be within their control as outlined in rule 14.5), they will be awarded a yellow card. Such teams will also not be eligible for progression to the play-offs. The League will also consider whether games have been forfeited to try and gain an unfair advantage for the offending team i.e., fewer points conceded

If this team is in the top two tiers of the Mixed Adult Flag football league structure or the game forfeited is a playoff game for the Mixed Adult Flag football league this will result in automatic relegation at the end of the season. This may result in demotion to a lower division or removed from competition as appropriate. Any team incurring two yellow cards in a rolling 24- month period will remove from the league and required to be reassessed for their suitability for re-entry to their level of football for the following season. Competition Management may also take any other such disciplinary action as it deems appropriate in regard to forfeits.

- 14.10. Teams that forfeit a game, including any single game within a tournament for their format (voluntarily or due to any reason deemed by competition management to be within their control as outlined in rule 14.5), may, at the discretion of the Competition Management, have to pay the League a surety that they will complete their next season, in which event the surety will be returned to the team.

This is tiered as follows:

£100 – Mixed Adult or WFFL teams
£50 – Mixed U11, U14 and U17 teams

- 14.11. Fixtures not played by the last week of the regular season will be deemed either 0-0 ties or 1-0 awarded games for the purposes of identifying playoff contenders and positions. All awards will be made at the conclusion of the regular season (unless awarded earlier at the sole discretion of the Competition Management). note – awarded games are excluded for the purposes of calculating lowest Average points conceded tie breaker.
- 14.12. Cancelling teams are liable for any costs or loss of revenue resulting from a fixture cancelled later than the notice period specified in 14.6, as determined by Competition Management in consultation with the affected teams. Only evidencable costs will be considered, including travel, game field and changing facilities hire, and medical provision, though other costs may be considered on a case-by-case basis. In the event of a referee cancellation or non-attendance, costs will be sought from BAFRA via Competition Management. All claims must be substantiated with receipts, invoices, or evidence of payment. Any outstanding debt must be settled before the registration cut-off for teams entering the league in the following season. Teams that fail to settle debts or reach an agreement with the team owed may not be admitted into the league and may be reverted to associate status.
- 14.13. Where revenue loss is speculated Competition Management will only consider amounts when provided with detailed financial evidence relating to the three preceding fixtures for the team claiming, such as receipts and bank statements.
- 14.14. Competition management will not be responsible for any of these costs, nor will it be responsible for any loss of revenue or costs as a result of teams folding or leaving the National Leagues.
- 14.15. Teams will be permitted to request a rescheduled fixture should they have three or more individuals involved in a BAFA sanctioned international representative fixture which coincides with a league game weekend. The individuals must be involved in either a playing or coaching capacity and appear on the official roster submitted to the international federation. Any rescheduling will be undertaken on a best endeavours basis.
- 14.16. A visiting or hosting team that, without reasonable excuse, fails to show up for a game or tournament, forfeits on the day of a game or tournament after arriving, or cancels a game our tournament for any reason within its own control may incur any or all of the following:
- 14.16.1. Forfeit the game or any games within a tournament 1-0; and
 - 14.16.2. Where the cancellation is advised later than the notice period detailed in 14.6, pay fees incurred for the game or a share of for a tournament, including travel costs where appropriate
 - 14.16.3. Be considered to be ineligible for the playoffs
 - 14.16.4. Be subject to review against wider Rules and Regulations should they be applicable.

- 14.17. If a fixture is not played for reasons beyond the control of the team involved, then Competition Management may use their discretion to reschedule the game or deem it a tie.
- 14.18. The venue for a rescheduled match shall be the choice of the home team, unless:
- 14.18.1. The visiting team/s have already travelled, in which case it will be the choice of the visiting team, OR
 - 14.18.2. The visiting team/s have incurred the cost of travel, in which case the home team will have the opportunity to reimburse the visiting team within one week, to retain their option of venue, otherwise the visiting team will have the choice.
- 14.19. All rescheduled gamedays or individual games must be approved by the competition management (see 14.1 - 14.2).
- 14.20. Any games or tournaments which are postponed for reasons beyond either team's control, or which cannot be rescheduled safely will be recorded as a 0-0 tie or have no result allocated. Where no result is awarded, competition management may decide league position (and relegation / promotion) on win percentage for games played.
- 14.21. In the event that it is not possible to play a playoff game or playoff game within a tournament due to circumstances beyond the control of both teams, the winner shall be decided on the following basis:
- 14.21.1. Competitive record for both teams when facing each other during the season based upon win / loss / tied record and subject to that being equal, the cumulative lowest number of points conceded in those fixtures will be used.
 - 14.21.2. Competitive record for both teams against common opponents during the regular season based upon win / loss / tied record and subject to that being equal, the cumulative lowest number of points conceded will be used.
 - 14.21.3. Win / Loss / Tied record within the regular season in comparison to that of their opponents.
 - 14.21.4. A comparison of average points conceded against the top three teams within the division.
 - 14.21.5. A coin toss
- 14.22. If a team forfeits a game in progress and provides an explanation that competition management later deem to be unreasonable, disciplinary action will be taken. Forfeitures of games in progress are still recognised as forfeits and carry the same sanctions.

15. Competition Complaints Procedure

- 15.1. On game days, all queries and complaints should be directed in the first instance to the host team/gameday management and then escalated to competition management if required.
- 15.2. Where the complaint relates to the opposing team, playing surface or other playing arrangements, a protest must be made before the match begins (or as soon as possible after the issue becomes apparent during the match) to competition management by the relevant team captain or head coach. As long as the conditions are safe, the match should continue. The complaint must be acknowledged by competition management, who will decide what action should be taken retroactively.

- 15.3. Where the complaint relates to the playing surface, photographic and video evidence must be submitted in order to justify the protest.
- 15.4. Where the complaint relates to the playing of a fixture, the scoring, and/or its result, the team captain or head coach, must do the following:
 - 15.4.1. Inform their opponents and the officials of their complaint.
 - 15.4.2. Explain the issue in full to the competition management.
- 15.5. Complaints relating to the governance or administration of the competition-by-Competition Management will be dealt with under the complaint's procedure detailed in the BAFA regulations.
- 15.6. Complaints relating to behaviour of an individual or team participating, volunteering or attending the competition that could be considered a disciplinary offence under BAFA's Disciplinary Regulations will be dealt with in accordance with the processes set out in BAFA's Disciplinary Regulations.

16. Appeal of Competition Management Decision

- 16.1. There are two strands of appeals relating to decisions made within National Leagues Flag competitions:
 - 16.1.1. The first is the Disciplinary Appeals process for players, coaches or others who are recipients of disciplinary action. This is managed via the BAFA Disciplinary process.
 - 16.1.2. The second is the Competition Appeals procedure detailed in the BAFA regulations. A party to a complaint submitted under Sections 15.2 and 15.4 shall have the right to appeal a decision made by the Competition Management in relation to that complaint if the decision has a potential impact on a game result, a league table, or the outcome of the competition.
- 16.2. These are the only grounds of appeal, and any appeal must be submitted in accordance with the appeals process set out in the BAFA regulations.

17. Miscellaneous Provisos

- 17.1. The performance of all Clubs with regard to their compliance with these and other relevant regulations issued by BAFA shall be regularly reviewed. Clubs will be advised in writing by competition management of any perceived shortcomings and the remedial action necessary and given a reasonable notice period to address these issues.
 - 17.1.1. Failure to comply with any regulation will result in a fine of £25.00 in the first instance, which will double in further instances. Additional sanctions outlined in this document may also be imposed.
 - 17.1.2. BAFA shall be entitled to take additional appropriate action for against clubs consistently failing to comply with appropriate rules and regulations. (This includes but is not limited to written warnings, the deduction of points, fines, suspensions and expulsions from the competition)
- 17.2. All participants acknowledge that participating in the sport of American Football involves a risk of personal injury and by taking part in the National Leagues competitions whether as a player, team member, team official, other official or spectator, each participant does so at their own risk.
- 17.3. A scoreboard is encouraged during the regular season and National Finals.

- 17.4. Approved ball size for each competition and age categories are as follows:
 - 17.4.1. U11: K2 (Size 5) or TDJ (Size 6)
 - 17.4.2. U14: TDJ (Size 6) or TDY (Size 7)
 - 17.4.3. U17: TDY (Size 7) or Adult (Size 9)
 - 17.4.4. NFFL: Adult (Size 9)
 - 17.4.5. WFFL: TDY (Size 7) or Adult (Size 9)
- 17.5. Host teams must submit the final scores of all gamedays matches no later than 12 hours after the final game has finished. All teams should verify the scores submitted and contact competition management should they need to query.
- 17.6. Teams should also collect and submit their own player statistics, for both performance and promotional reasons. This should be done no later than 48 hours after the gameday.
- 17.7. Competition management supports the ethical scouting and filming for coaching and officiating purposes in the interest of improving the game. All teams should accept and expect official games or tournaments to be scouted and/or filmed by BAFRA, potential opponents or representatives of the teams involved. It is not necessary to seek permission to film for the purposes of coaching unless there are minors involved. The BAFA Welfare Manager should be informed of any issues where there is a request for no filming.
- 17.8. Competition management mandates that if there are minors present, where possible they and their parents / guardians should be informed that filming is taking place and consent sought.
- 17.9. In event of a clash, the host team will always have first choice of shirt colour. The away team will then be expected to wear a jersey of contrasting colour. Teams with more than one year of National Leagues play are expected to have home and away jerseys of contrasting colour. If the visiting team does not have a change available and the home team does, the home team are encouraged to wear their alternate strip or offer it to the away team to wear in the interests of good sportsmanship.
- 17.10. BAFA recognises the right for teams to adopt a moniker. In regard to monikers, competition management reserve the right to refuse entry to National Leagues or endorsed Competitions for teams who choose monikers that could be viewed as bringing the sport into disrepute.
- 17.11. BAFA requires teams entering the National Leagues to have unique names. Teams will not be permitted entry if their proposed moniker is already in use. Competition management reserve the right to review any clashes.
- 17.12. BAFA encourages teams entering the National Leagues to differentiate themselves from other teams through their use of uniform colour and design.
- 17.13. BAFA requires emerging teams and current teams which may be rebranding to refrain from using the moniker 'Lions' as this is the moniker for the national teams. BAFA also requires emerging and current teams to refrain from using the moniker 'All-stars' (or a derivative thereof). Competition Management can be contacted to determine names suitable for emerging teams.
- 17.14. No team will be allowed to compete if they use the following names: Great Britain, Great British, Britain, British, England, English, Scotland, Scottish, Wales, Welsh, Northern Ireland, Irish, UK, United Kingdom, British Isles. Use of these names in the Scottish, Welsh, or Gaelic languages will also be prohibited.
- 17.15. Where teams use county names then there are a series of stipulations:

- 17.15.1. The team is located within the said county.
 - 17.15.2. The moniker does not include multiple counties or Regions.
- 17.16. Teams must gain approval of the Competition Management to change any or all of the following:
- 17.16.1. Club or Team Name (either the Institution, Town, City or Nickname part)
 - 17.16.2. Institution of representation
 - 17.16.3. Colour of the component parts of the team uniform. For the avoidance of doubt, no team may operate under a new Team Name, or use a new uniform, until prior approval has been received.
- 17.17. Competition Management may from time to time arrange for a representative to attend a game to ensure minimum standards are being met. BAFA representatives should be accorded free entry to any events when attending in an official capacity.
- 17.18. BAFA or its nominee(s) reserve the right to amend these regulations throughout the year.

