



# **2024 Playing Rules, Bylaw and Resolution Proposals**

## **2024 Playing Rule Proposals Summary**

1. By Detroit; amends Rule 15, Section 1, Article 1, to protect a club's ability to challenge a third ruling following one successful challenge.
2. By Philadelphia; amends Rule 9, Section 2, Article 2, to eliminate the first touch spot after the receiving team possesses the ball.
3. By Philadelphia; amends Rule 6, Section 1, Article 1, to permit a team to maintain possession of the ball after a score by substituting one offensive play (4th and 20 from the kicking team's 20-yard line) for an onside kickoff attempt.
4. By Indianapolis; amends Rule 15, Section 3, to permit a coach or replay official (inside of two minutes) to challenge any foul that has been called.
5. By Competition Committee; amends Rule 14, Section 5, Article 2, to allow for an enforcement of a major foul by the offense prior to a change of possession in a situation where there are fouls by both teams.
6. By Competition Committee; amends Rule 15, Section 3, Article 3, to include a ruling of a passer down by contact or out of bounds before throwing a pass as a reviewable play.
7. By Competition Committee; amends Rule 15, Section 3, Article 9, to allow a replay review when there is clear and obvious visual evidence that the game clock expired before any snap.
8. By Competition Committee; amends Rule 12, Section 2, to eliminate a potentially dangerous tackling technique.
9. By Competition Committee; amends Rule 12, Section 2, Article 6, to expand the crackback prohibition to players who go in motion and move beyond the center to block a defender at or below the knee.
10. By Competition Committee; for one year only, amends Rule 6, to create a new form of a free kick play that is designed to: (1) resemble a typical scrimmage play by aligning players on both teams closer together and restricting movement to reduce space and speed; and (2) promote more returns. Permits the Replay Official automatically review whether a free kick legally touched the ground or a receiving team player in the landing zone.

## 2024 PLAYING RULE PROPOSAL NO. 1

Amend Rule 15, Section 1, Article 1 (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

### SECTION 1 INITIATING A REPLAY REVIEW

**ARTICLE 1. COACH CHALLENGES.** Each team is permitted a minimum of two challenges that will initiate Instant Replay reviews:

- (a) The Head Coach can initiate a challenge by throwing a red flag onto the field of play before the next legal snap or kick.
- (b) A team that commits a foul that prevents the next snap can no longer challenge the previous play. The non-fouling team can still challenge the previous play, and both teams can benefit from the review.
- (c) The Head Coach may challenge on-field rulings listed in Section 3, except for those plays that only the Replay Official can challenge (Article 2).
- (d) Each challenge requires an available team timeout. A team that is out of timeouts, or has used all its available challenges, may not attempt to initiate a challenge.

A team that initiates a challenge when the team is not permitted to challenge will be charged a team timeout.

**Penalty: For initiating a challenge when a team has exhausted its timeouts: Loss of 15 yards enforced as a foul between downs.**

- (e) If a challenge is unsuccessful, the team will be charged a timeout.
- (f) A team will be permitted a third challenge if it is successful on at least one ~~both~~ of its challenges. A fourth challenge will not be permitted.

Submitted by Detroit

*Effect:* Protects a club's ability to challenge a third ruling following one successful challenge.

*Reason:* Integrity of the Game.

## 2024 PLAYING RULE PROPOSAL NO. 2

Amend Rule 9, Section 2, Article 2 (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

**ARTICLE 2. FIRST TOUCHING BEYOND THE LINE.** “First touching” is when a player of the kicking team touches a scrimmage kick in the field of play that is beyond the line of scrimmage before it has been touched by a player of the receiving team beyond the line. If the ball is first touched by a player of the kicking team, it remains in play. First touching is a violation, and the receivers shall have the option of taking possession of the ball at the spot of first touching, provided the ball is not possessed by the receiving team and/or no live ball penalty is accepted on the play, or at the spot where the ball is dead. First touching does not offset a foul by the receivers; if there is a live ball foul by the receivers that is enforced, either before or after the first touching violation, or any changes of possession, the violation is disregarded, and the penalty is enforced as customary.

**Notes:**

- ~~(1) If the receiving team gains possession, subsequently loses possession, and fouls after the kicking team gains possession, the spot of first touching is disregarded, and the kicking team retains possession. Enforcement of the receiving team’s foul is as customary.~~
- ~~(2) (1) There may be multiple “first touch” spots if the kicking team touches the ball multiple times before it is touched by a player of the receiving team.~~
- ~~(3) (2) A Team B player is deemed not to have touched a kick if such touching occurs in the immediate vicinity of the line in an attempt to block the kick.~~
- ~~(4) (3) If a player of the kicking team touches the goal line with any part of his body while touching the ball, the ball is dead, and the result of the play is a touchback.~~
- ~~(5) (4) The spot of first touching is normally the yard line at which the ball is when touched. If the first touching occurs while the ball is in the air above or beyond the goal line, and prior to the ball touching the goal line or the ground beyond the goal line, the spot of first touching is deemed to be the spot from which the touching player left the field of play, but in no event inside the receiving team’s one-yard line.~~

Submitted by Philadelphia

**Effect:** Eliminates the first touch spot after the receiving team possesses the ball.

**Reason:** Player safety.

## 2024 PLAYING RULE PROPOSAL NO. 3

Amend Rule 6, Section 1, Article 1 (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

**ARTICLE 1. FREE KICK.** A free kick is a kickoff or safety kick that puts the ball in play to start a free kick down. It must be made from any point on the kicking (offensive) team's restraining line and between the inbounds lines.

- (a) A kickoff puts the ball in play at the start of each half, after a try, and after a successful field goal. A dropkick or placekick may be used for a kickoff.

*Note: During a placekick on a kickoff, the kicking team may use a manufactured tee that is one inch in height and approved by the League. Once the ball has been placed on the kicking tee, the kicking tee cannot be moved. If the ball falls off the tee, or the tee is moved, the covering officials must stop play and restart the timing process without penalty to the kicking team. If the ball falls off the tee a second time during the same free kick down, the kicking team then must either use a player to hold the ball or must kick it off the ground. The ball may be placed on the ground leaning against the tee, provided the tee is in its normal upright position.*

- (b) A safety kick puts the ball in play after a safety. A dropkick, placekick, or punt may be used for a safety kick. A tee cannot be used for a safety kick.

- (c) As an alternative to a kickoff after a touchdown or successful field goal, a team ("scoring team") may elect to retain possession, subject to the following rules:

1. A team may elect to retain possession no more than two times during the game, and must have fewer points than its opponent;
2. The scoring team must notify the Referee of its intention to forego a kickoff and retain possession. The Referee will then notify the opponent of the scoring team's election;
3. The ball will be spotted on the scoring team's 20-yard line, and the scoring team will possess the ball with the down and distance being fourth and 20 (Line to gain is the scoring team's 40-yard line);
4. If either team commits a personal foul during the preceding score, the spot of the kickoff alternative is the succeeding spot if the penalty is not enforced on the Try (See 14-2-3);

5. Play clock will be set to 25 seconds and winds on the ready for play signal. Game clock starts on the snap, and normal NFL timing rules apply;
6. Standard rules apply for a play from scrimmage;
7. If the offense reaches the line to gain, the result of the play is a first down and all customary rules, including timing rules, are in effect. If the offense fails to reach the line to gain or if the defense scores on the play, customary rules for a change of possession (turnover on downs) or a scoring play are in effect.
8. If the offense is penalized on the one scrimmage down (4<sup>th</sup> and 20), the offense cannot elect to then kick off after the penalty is enforced. Example: the kicking team may not elect to kick after incurring a holding penalty on the one scrimmage down; and
9. Scrimmage kicks are prohibited;

Nothing in this exception prohibits a team from attempting a legal onside kickoff under Rule 6.

**Penalty: For illegal kick on a free kick down: Loss of five yards.**

Submitted by Philadelphia

*Effect:* Permits a team to maintain possession of the ball after a score by substituting one offensive play (4<sup>th</sup> and 20 from the kicking team's 20-yard line) for an onside kickoff attempt.

*Reason:* Competitive equity and fan engagement.

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## 2024 PLAYING RULE PROPOSAL NO. 4

Amend Rule 15, Section 3 (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

### SECTION 3 REVIEWABLE RULINGS

**ARTICLE 1. PLAY SITUATIONS.** The Replay System will cover the following play situations:

- a. Plays involving possession (see Section 3, Article 2).
- b. Plays involving touching of either the ball or the ground (see Section 3, Article 3).
- c. Plays governed by the goal line (see Section 3, Article 4).
- d. Plays governed by the boundary lines (see Section 3, Article 5).
- e. Plays governed by the line of scrimmage (see Section 3, Article 6).
- f. Plays governed by the line to gain (see Section 3, Article 7).
- g. Number of players on the field (see Section 3, Article 8).
- h. Game administration (see Section 3, Article 9).
  1. Penalty enforcement.
  2. Proper down.
  3. Spot of a foul.
  4. Status of the game clock.
- i. Disqualification of a player (see Section 3, Article 10).
- j. Other reviewable plays (see Section 3, Article 11).
- k. Fouls that have been called on the field.

**ARTICLE 12. FOULS CALLED ON THE FIELD.** Whether a foul called by the on-field officiating crew was incorrect.

Submitted by Indianapolis

Effect: Permits a coach or replay official (inside of two minutes) to challenge any foul that has been called.

Reason: Corrects Officiating Error.

## 2024 PLAYING RULE PROPOSAL NO. 5

Amend Rule 14, Section 5, Article 2 (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

### **SECTION 5 FOULS BY BOTH TEAMS (DOUBLE FOULS)**

**ARTICLE 2. DOUBLE FOUL WITH A CHANGE OF POSSESSION.** If there is a double foul during a down in which there is a change or changes of possession, including if one of the fouls is a post-possession foul by Team B during a scrimmage kick, the team last gaining possession will keep the ball after enforcement for its foul, provided it did not foul prior to last gaining possession (“clean hands”).

#### **Exceptions:**

- (1) If Team A fouls during a kickoff, punt, safety kick, fair catch kick, or field goal attempt prior to the change of possession, Team B may elect to replay the down at the previous spot.
- (2) If a safety results from the enforcement of a foul by Team B, the down is replayed at the previous spot.
- (3) If both teams foul after the last change of possession (double foul after change of possession), or the offense commits an unnecessary roughness or an unsportsmanlike conduct foul before the change of possession, the penalties are offset, and the team last in possession shall retain the ball at the spot where its foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. If the spot is normally a touchback, the ball is placed on the 20-yard line, or the 25-yard line if the impetus was from a free kick. If it is normally a safety, the ball is placed on the one-yard line. On kicking plays, if Team A fouled prior to the change of possession, Team B shall also have the option in (1) above.

If the team last in possession does not have “clean hands” when it establishes possession, the penalties offset, and the down is replayed at the previous spot.

Submitted by Competition Committee

*Effect:* Allows for an enforcement of a major foul by the offense prior to a change of possession in a situation where there are fouls by both teams. Currently major fouls (ex. unnecessary roughness) by the offense in this situation are ignored.

*Reason:* Consistency with an effort to enforce all major fouls. Competitive equity.



## 2024 PLAYING RULE PROPOSAL NO. 6

Amend Rule 15, Section 3, Article 3 (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

### ARTICLE 3. PLAYS INVOLVING TOUCHING OF EITHER THE BALL OR THE GROUND.

**Item 1. Down by Contact.** Whether a player was down by contact while in possession of the ball.

**Item 2. Pass or Down by Contact.** Whether the ball was thrown before the passer was ruled down by contact.

**Note:**

- (1) When an on-field ruling is down by contact, and the passer clearly throws the ball before being down by contact, the ball will be awarded at the spot of completion or interception. No advance is permitted. If the pass is incomplete, the down counts.

**Item 23. Touching of a Forward Pass.** Whether a player touched a forward pass.

**Notes:**

- (1) Only the fact of touching, and not intent, is reviewable.
- (2) A player touching a pass will remove a foul for offensive or defensive pass interference if the touching occurs away from and noticeably before the interference.

**Item 34. Touching of a Kick.** Whether a player touched a kick and the spot of touching.

**Note:** A foul for running into or roughing the kicker or holder can be removed if the kicked ball was touched before the contact. If a pre-review announcement was made that there was no foul because the ball was ruled to be touched, a foul for running into or roughing the kicker or holder can be created in replay if the ball was not touched before the contact.

### ARTICLE 5. PLAYS GOVERNED BY THE BOUNDARY LINES.

**Item 1. Runner Inbounds.** A ruling that a runner was out of bounds is reviewable only to determine: (a) the spot of the ball in relation to the line to gain or the goal line at the spot where the runner was ruled to have touched out of bounds; (b) if the runner fumbled the ball before taking two additional steps beyond the spot where he was ruled out of bounds; or (c) if the ball broke the plane of the goal line in the runner's possession before taking two additional steps beyond the spot where he was ruled out of bounds.

**Item 2. Receiver Out of Bounds.** Whether a receiver touched out of bounds is reviewable to determine whether he was eligible to touch the ball and whether a

defender could legally contact him.

**Item 3. Passer Out of Bounds Before Throwing Pass.** A ruling that a player stepped out of bounds before throwing a pass is ~~not~~ reviewable to determine if he was inbounds when he threw the pass.

**Note:**

*(1) When an on-field ruling is out of bounds, and the passer clearly threw the ball before touching out of bounds, the ball will be awarded at the spot of completion or interception. No advance is permitted. If the pass is incomplete, the down counts.*

**Item 4. Player Out of Bounds on Scrimmage Kick.** Whether a player was out of bounds during a scrimmage kick is reviewable to determine the spot of the ball and whether the ball was illegally touched.

Submitted by Competition Committee

*Effect:* Includes a ruling of a passer down by contact or out of bounds before throwing a pass as a reviewable play.

*Reason:* Consistency with similar reviewable plays. Competitive equity.

## 2024 PLAYING RULE PROPOSAL NO. 7

Amend Rule 15, Section 3, Article 9 (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

**ARTICLE 9. GAME ADMINISTRATION AND CONSULTATION.** The Replay Official and designated members of the Officiating department may consult with on-field officials, or conduct a replay review, or advise the game officials on specific, objective aspects of a play when clear and obvious video evidence is present, and/or to address game administration issues, including, but not limited to:

- (a) penalty enforcement;
- (b) the proper down;
- (c) spot of a foul and timing of a foul in relation to a turnover or a score;
- (d) the game clock;
- (e) possession;
- (f) completed or intercepted pass;
- (g) touching of a loose ball, boundary line, goal line, or end line;
- (h) location of the football or a player in relation to a boundary line, the line of scrimmage, the line to gain, the goal line, or the pocket; or
- (i) down by contact (when a player is not ruled down by contact on the field).

Nothing in this Article precludes a head coach or Replay Official from initiating a challenge or review otherwise allowed under Rule 15, Section 1.

**Item 1. Game Clock.** The game clock is reviewable for purposes of restoring time to the clock but not for purposes of taking time off the clock.

***Notes:***

- (1) *Time can be restored to the game clock if the clock operator incorrectly starts the game clock when it should remain stopped, provided that the correction occurs before the next legal snap or kick.*
- (2) *An on-field ruling that time expired during or after the last play of any half, or of an overtime period in the preseason or regular season, or of an overtime half in the postseason, is reviewable by the Replay Official only when the visual evidence demonstrates that the clock should have stopped with two or more seconds remaining. In the first half, time shall be restored only if the additional play will be a snap from scrimmage. In the second half, time shall be restored only if the next play will be a snap from scrimmage by a team that is trailing by eight points or less, or by*

*either team if the score is tied.*

(3) *The game clock is reviewable to determine if it properly expired when on-field officials restore time after the last play of any half, or of an overtime period in the preseason or regular season, or of an overtime half in the postseason. Visual evidence that a clock should have stopped includes any situation when the clock stops by rule after the ball becomes dead. Visual evidence that the clock should have stopped for a team timeout occurs when an official starts to raise his or her arm to signal a stopped clock.*

(4) *The game clock is reviewable to determine if the period expired before any snap.*

Submitted by Competition Committee

*Effect:* Allows a replay review when there is clear and obvious visual evidence that the game clock expired before any snap.

*Reason:* Permits Instant Replay to correct an obvious officiating error.

## 2024 PLAYING RULE PROPOSAL NO. 8

Amend Rule 12, Section 2, adding a new Article 18 (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

**ARTICLE 18. HIP-DROP TACKLE.** It is a foul if a player uses the following technique to bring a runner to the ground:

- (a) grabs the runner with both hands or wraps the runner with both arms; and
- (b) unweights himself by swiveling and dropping his hips and/or lower body, landing on and trapping the runner's leg(s) at or below the knee.

**Penalty: For a Hip-Drop Tackle: Loss of 15 yards and an automatic first down.**

Submitted by Competition Committee and  
Health & Safety Advisory Committee

*Effect:* Eliminates a potentially dangerous tackling technique.

*Reason:* Player Safety.

## 2024 PLAYING RULE PROPOSAL NO. 9

Amend Rule 12, Section 2, Article 6 (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

**ARTICLE 6. CRACKBACK BLOCK.** All Crackback Blocks are illegal.

**Item 1. Definition.** It is a Crackback Block if the following conditions are fulfilled:

The block occurs within an area five yards on either side of the line of scrimmage, including within close-line play by an offensive player who is moving toward the position from which the ball was snapped; and

- (a) the offensive player was in a set position and aligned more than two yards outside an offensive tackle (flexed) when the ball was snapped;
- (b) the offensive player was in a backfield position when the ball was snapped and moved to a position more than two yards outside an offensive tackle;
- (c) the offensive player was in a backfield position and in motion when the ball was snapped;
- (d) the offensive player was in a backfield position and in motion when the ball was snapped, and the block occurred beyond the position from which the ball was snapped.

**Item 2. Prohibited Contact.** The following is prohibited against a player who is the recipient of a Crackback Block:

- a. In (a), (b), and (c), contacting him below the waist;
- b. In (d), contacting him at or below the knee;
- ~~a. c.~~ forcibly hitting his head or neck area with the helmet, facemask, forearm, or shoulder, even if the initial contact is lower than the player's neck;
- ~~b. d.~~ lowering the head and making forcible contact with any part of the helmet against any part of the defensive player's body; or
- ~~e. e.~~ illegally launching into him. It is an illegal launch if a player (i) leaves one or both feet prior to contact to spring forward and upward into his opponent, and (ii) uses any part of his helmet to initiate forcible contact against any part of his opponent's body. (This does not apply to contact against a runner, unless the runner is still considered to be a defenseless player, as defined in Article 9).

*Note: A player who initiates contact against such an opponent is responsible for avoiding an illegal act. A standard of strict liability applies for any contact against an opponent, even if his body position is in motion, and irrespective of any acts by him, such as ducking his head or curling up his body in anticipation of contact.*

**Penalty: For a crackback block: Loss of 15 yards.**

Submitted by Competition Committee

*Effect:* Expands the crackback prohibition to players who go in motion and move beyond the center to block a defender at or below the knee. Expanded definitions for (a), (b), and (c) will be included in the rulebook clarifications of this report.

*Reason:* Player safety.

## 2024 PLAYING RULE PROPOSAL NO. 10

For one year only, amend Rule 6 as follows:

### SECTION 1 PROCEDURES FOR A FREE KICK

**ARTICLE 1. FREE KICK.** A free kick is a kickoff or safety kick that puts the ball in play to start a free kick down. It must be made from any point on the kicking team's restraining line and between the inbounds lines.

- (a) A kickoff puts the ball in play at the start of each half, after a Try, and after a successful field goal. A dropkick or placekick may be used for a kickoff.

*Note: During a placekick on a kickoff, the kicking team may use a manufactured tee designed to hold the ball no more than one inch from the ground and approved by the League. A holder or tee cannot be used to elevate the ball more than one inch above the ground. Once the ball has been placed on the kicking tee, the kicking tee cannot be moved. If the ball falls off the tee, the covering officials must stop play and restart the timing process without penalty to the kicking team. If the ball falls off the tee a second time during the same free kick down, the kicking team then must kick it off the tee with the use of League-approved kicking sticks to hold the ball in place. Immediately after the kick is made with the use of sticks, the nearest game official will retrieve the sticks while the kick is in the air. The ball may be placed on the ground leaning against the tee, provided the tee is in its normal upright position.*

- (b) A safety kick puts the ball in play after a safety. A dropkick, placekick, or punt may be used for a safety kick. A tee may be used for a safety kick.

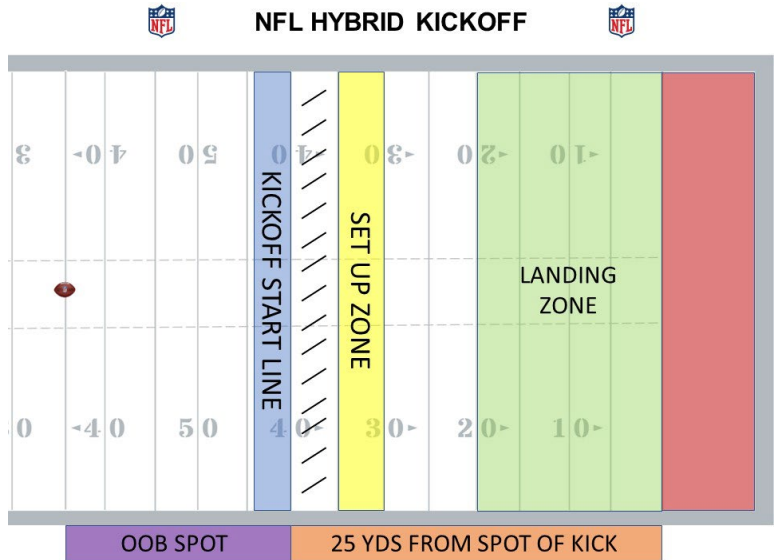
**Penalty: For illegal free kick: Loss of five yards.**

**ARTICLE 2. RESTRAINING LINES AND ZONES.** The restraining lines and applicable zones for a free kick shall be as follows, unless they are adjusted because of a distance penalty:

- (a) "Kicker's Restraining Line" - the restraining line for the kick by the kicking team shall be its 35-yard line for a kickoff and its 20-yard line for a safety kick.
- (b) "Kickoff Team's Restraining Line" - the restraining line for the remaining 10 players of the kicking team shall be the yard line 25 yards in advance of the kicker's restraining line (Team B's 40-yard line on a normal kickoff play).
- (c) "Receiving Team's Restraining Line" - the restraining line for the receiving team shall be the yard line 30 yards in advance of the kicker's restraining line and five yards in advance of the kicking team's restraining line (Team B's 35-yard line for a normal kickoff play).



- (d) The “setup zone” for the receiving team is the 5-yard area between their restraining line and 5 yards behind their restraining line (Team B’s 35-yard line to its 30-yard line for a normal kickoff play). See Article 6 below for the setup zone for an onside kick.
- (e) The “landing zone” shall be the area from the Team B 20-yard line extending to the receiving team’s goal line.



*(Images for illustration purposes only)*

**ARTICLE 3. FREE KICK FORMATION.** When the ball is kicked on a free kick down:

- (a) From the time the kicker begins his approach to the ball and until the ball touches the ground or a player in the landing zone or the end zone, all kicking team players must be inbounds and:

- (1) all kicking team players other than the kicker must be lined up with their front foot on the kicking team's restraining line, and both feet must remain on the ground; and
  - (2) no more than five players of the kicking team may be on either side of the ball; and
  - (3) at least two players must be lined up inbounds between the sideline and the bottom (outside) of the yard-line number, at least two players must be lined up between the top (inside) of the yard-line number and the inbounds lines, and at least two players must be lined up inside the inbounds lines.
  - (4) the kicker may be beyond the kicker's restraining line, provided his kicking foot is not beyond the line. After the kick, the kicker may not cross the yard line 15 yards from the kicker's restraining line (50-yard line for normal kickoff) until the ball touches the ground or player in the landing zone or the end zone.
- (b) Until the ball is kicked, all receiving team (Team B) players must be inbounds and behind their restraining line, and at least nine players must be positioned in the setup zone. The following applies to the receiving team players in the setup zone:
- (1) At least seven of the players must be lined up with their front foot on the receiving team's restraining line. If the receiving team elects to have more than nine players in the setup zone, then at least eight players must be lined up with their front foot on the receiving team's restraining line.
    - a. Two players must be lined up between the sidelines and the inbounds lines on each side of the field; one of those two players on each side must be lined up inbounds between the sideline and the bottom (outside) of the yard-line number.
    - b. One receiving team player must be lined up between the inbounds lines.
  - (2) The remaining two players in the setup zone must be lined up between the sidelines and the inbounds lines on each side of the field.
- (c) All players on the kicking team other than the kicker, and all receiving team players in the setup zone, must have both feet remain on the ground until the ball touches the ground or player in the landing zone or the end zone.

**Penalty: For a player being beyond the restraining line when the ball is kicked (offside), a player being out of bounds when the ball is kicked, either team being in an illegal formation when the ball is kicked, kicking team players (other than kicker) or receiving team players in the setup zone moving before permitted, or kicker moving beyond 15 yards from the kicker's restraining line before permitted: Loss of five yards.**

- (d) Prior to the end of the kick, it is a foul if a kicking team player voluntarily goes out of bounds (without being contacted by a receiving team player) to avoid a block.

**Penalty: For voluntarily going out of bounds without contact: Loss of 5 yards.**

**ARTICLE 4. CATCH OR RECOVERY OF A FREE KICK.** The following applies to the catch or recovery of a free kick:

- (a) If a player of the receiving team catches or recovers the ball in the landing zone or inbounds in the end zone, he may advance.
- (b) If the ball is declared dead while in the simultaneous possession of two opposing players, the ball is awarded to the receiving team.
- (c) A player of the kicking team may legally touch, catch, or recover the ball if it lands in the landing zone or in the end zone and it is not possessed by a receiving team player.
- (d) The ball is dead if:
  - (1) it is caught or recovered by a player of the kicking team in the landing zone or in the end zone. If the catch or recovery is legal, the ball belongs to the kicking team at the dead ball spot.
  - (2) it is downed by the receiving team in the end zone or goes out of bounds in the end zone (touchback).
  - (3) it does not reach the landing zone.
  - (4) the receiving team signals for a fair catch (valid or invalid). See 10-2-2 for penalty;
  - (5) the receiving team catches or recovers the kick anywhere in advance of the front yard line (receiving team's 20-yard line) of the landing zone.
- (e) If the live ball comes to rest anywhere in the landing zone or in the end zone, and no player attempts to possess it, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team at the dead ball spot.

**Notes:**

- 1. *A player is deemed to have not touched the ball if it is batted or illegally kicked into him by an opponent. Such touching is ignored, though the bat or kick could be a foul for an illegal bat or illegal kick.*
- 2. *For illegal catch or recovery, see 6-2-4.*

**ARTICLE 5. FREE KICK CROSSES GOAL LINE.** A free kick into the end zone that remains inbounds must be returned or downed by the receiving team, otherwise it is a live ball. It is a touchback and the dead ball spot is the 20-yard line if a free kick:

- (a) touches the ground or a player in the landing zone, rolls beyond the goal line and is downed in the end zone;

The dead ball spot is the 35-yard line if a free kick:

- (b) goes out of bounds behind the receiving team's goal line;
- (c) strikes the receiving team's goal post, uprights, or cross bar; or
- (d) lands at or beyond the goal line and is downed in the end zone by the receiving team.

**ARTICLE 6. ONSIDE KICK.** At any time during the fourth period, the kicking team, if trailing its opponent, may declare an onside kick by notifying the Referee prior to the start of the play clock (25-second play clock after the Back Judge hands the kicker the ball). The Referee will then notify the receiving team before starting the play clock and the following rules will apply:

- (a) An onside kick is defined as a free kick that the kicking team attempts to legally recover from its restraining line to the furthest point downfield within the onside kick setup zone (See definition of onside kick setup zone in (f) below).
- (b) All kicking team players other than the kicker must be lined up with at least one foot on the yard line that is one yard behind the kicker's restraining line, and both feet must remain on the ground until the ball is kicked.
- (c) The kicking team may line up in a five-by-five formation (see Article 3(a)(2) and (3) above).
- (d) A player of the kicking team may legally touch, catch, or recover the ball if:
  - 1. It first touches a receiving team player; or
  - 2. It reaches or crosses the receiving team's restraining line.
- (e) The restraining line for the receiving team shall be the yard line 10 yards in advance of the kicker's restraining line.
- (f) Until the ball is kicked, all receiving team (Team B) players must be inbounds and behind their restraining line, and at least eight, but no more than nine, players must be positioned between their restraining line and a spot 15 yards behind their restraining line (the "onside kick setup zone").
- (g) If the onside kick goes untouched beyond the onside kick setup zone, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team.

**Penalty: For a player being beyond the restraining line when the ball is kicked (offside), a player being out of bounds when the ball is kicked, or either team being in an illegal formation when the ball is kicked: Loss of 5 yards.**

**Penalty: For an onside kick that goes untouched beyond the onside kick setup zone: Loss of 15 yards from the kicker's restraining line.**

**ARTICLE 7. END OF FREE KICK.** A free kick ends when either team possesses the ball, or when the ball is dead, if that precedes possession. A running play begins when the receiving team establishes possession of the ball.

## **SECTION 2 OTHER FREE KICK FOULS**

### **ARTICLE 1. BLOCKING.**

**Item 1. Kicking Team.** After the ball hits in the landing zone, end zone, or is legally touched, a kicking team player may legally block an opponent, and he may use his hands and arms to push or

pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball or a receiver who is actively attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield.

During the kick, the kicking team is subject to the blocking restrictions of the defense.

### **Item 2. Receiving Team.**

- (a) Until the ball is legally touched or hits the ground or a player in the landing zone or end zone, no player on the receiving team may initiate a block against the kicking team.
- (b) After the ball is kicked and hits the ground or a player in the landing zone or end zone, receiving team players are subject to the blocking restrictions of the offense (see 12-1-1 through 12-1-3), and they may use their hands/arms legally to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball.

**Penalty: For illegal blocking or use of hands by either team: Loss of 10 yards.**

- (c) A “double team block” is permissible only by players who were initially lined up in the setup zone at the time of the kick. A double team block is defined as two or more players who contact an opponent at the same time. Any other players may not participate in a double team block at any time during a kick or during a return.
- (d) A “wedge block” is not permitted by any players at any time. A wedge block is defined as two or more players intentionally aligning shoulder-to-shoulder within two yards of each other, and who move forward together. The foul for a wedge block occurs at that point; actual contact with an opponent is not necessary.

**Penalty: For an illegal wedge block or an illegal double team block: Loss of 15 yards. If the foul occurs during the kick, enforcement is from the spot of the foul. If the foul occurs during the return, the penalty is enforced as customary. If the foul occurs in the receiving team’s end zone during the kick, it is enforced from the previous spot.**

## **ARTICLE 2. BLOCKING DURING ONSIDE KICK.**

### **Item 1. Kicking Team.**

- a. **Between the Restraining Lines (10 Yards).** Until the ball is legally touched, a kicking team player may not block or use his hands or arms against an opponent between the restraining lines, except to push or pull aside a receiver who is actively attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield. After the ball is legally touched, a kicking team player may legally block an opponent, and he may use his hands and arms to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball or a receiver who is actively attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield.
- b. **At or Five Yards Beyond Receiving Team’s Restraining Line (Next Five Yards).** Until the ball is legally touched or touches the ground, a kicking team player may not block or use his hands or arms against an opponent in the area that is at or no more than five yards

beyond the receiving team's restraining line, except to push or pull aside a receiver who is actively attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield. After the ball is legally touched or touches the ground, a kicking team player may legally block an opponent anywhere, and he may use his hands and arms to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball.

- c. **More than 15 Yards Beyond Kicking Team's Restraining Line.** The kicking team may legally block more than 15 yards beyond its restraining line.

## **Item 2. Receiving Team.**

- (a) **First 15 Yards.** Until the ball is legally touched or the ball hits the ground no player on the receiving team may initiate a block against the kicking team in the 15-yard area between the kicking team's restraining line and five yards behind the receiving team's restraining line.
- (b) **More than 15 Yards Beyond Kicking Team's Restraining Line.** The receiving team may legally block more than 15 yards beyond the kicking team's restraining line.
- (c) After the ball is kicked, receiving team players are subject to the blocking restrictions of the offense (see 12-1-1 through 12-1-3), and they may use their hands/arms legally to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball.
- (d) **Double Team and Wedge Blocks.** Restrictions in Article 1, Item 2(c) and (d) above and penalty enforcement for those blocks also apply to onside kicks.

**Penalty: For illegal blocking on an onside kick or use of hands by either team: Loss of 10 yards.**

**ARTICLE 3. RUNNING INTO FREE KICKER.** A player of the receiving team is not permitted to run into the kicker before he recovers his balance. See also 12-2-8-i for personal fouls against the kicker.

**Penalty: For running into the kicker: Loss of five yards.**

**ARTICLE 4. FREE KICK OUT OF BOUNDS.** The kicking team may not (a) kick the ball out of bounds, (b) be the last to touch the ball before it goes out of bounds between the goal lines, or (c) kick the ball in the air short of the landing zone. If the receiving team is the last to touch the ball before it goes out of bounds, the receiving team puts the ball in play at the inbounds spot.

**Penalty: For a kickoff out of bounds or a kickoff that lands short of the landing zone: The receiving team may elect to take possession of the ball 25 yards from the spot of the kick at the inbounds line on the side of the field where the ball went out of bounds, or at the out of bounds spot.**

**Penalty: For a safety kick out of bounds or a safety kick that lands short of the landing zone: The receiving team may elect to take possession of the ball 30 yards from the spot of the kick at the inbounds line on the side of the field where the ball went out of bounds, or at the out of bounds spot.**

#### **ARTICLE 5. FREE KICK ILLEGALLY TOUCHED.**

**Item 1. Ball Reaches Landing Zone/End Zone.** A player of the kicking team may not touch, catch, or recover the ball before it has reached the receiving team's landing zone or end zone, unless it has first been touched by a receiving team player.

**Penalty: For illegal touching of a free kick by the kicking team: Loss of five yards, or the receiving team takes possession of the ball at the spot of the illegal touch.**

**Item 2. Player Out of Bounds.** If a kicking team player goes out of bounds during the kick, either of his own volition or by being legally forced out of bounds, he may not touch or recover the ball beyond the receiving team's restraining line on an onside kick or in the landing zone or end zone on all other free kicks, unless it has first been touched by a receiving team player. If a kicking team player touches the ball before re-establishing himself legally inbounds, it is a free kick out of bounds.

**Penalty: For illegal touching of a free kick by the kicking team: Loss of five yards.**

**ARTICLE 6. FAIR CATCH SIGNAL.** No member of the receiving team may fair catch a free kick. If a member of the receiving team signals for a fair catch, the play will be blown dead immediately.

**Penalty: For a valid or invalid fair catch signal of a free kick by the receiving team: Loss of five yards.**

### **SECTION 3 ENFORCEMENT OF FOULS**

**ARTICLE 1. ENFORCEMENT FROM PREVIOUS SPOT.** If there is a foul during a free kick, enforcement is from the previous spot, and the free kick is made again. However, if the kicking team commits a foul prior to the end of the kick, and the receiving team retains possession throughout the down, it will have the option of enforcing the penalty at the previous spot and replaying the down or adding the penalty yardage to the dead ball spot. The dead ball spot for free kicks that result in a touchback is the 20-yard line (See Section 1, Article 5(a) above) or 35-yard line (See Section 1, Article 5(b-d) above).

**Exceptions:**

- (a) A foul for an illegal double team block, or an illegal wedge block, during the kick is enforced from the spot of the foul or the previous spot if it occurs in Team B's end zone;
- (b) For a free kick out of bounds, see Section 2, Article 3; or
- (c) For a free kick illegally touched, see Section 2, Article 4.

**Note:**

- (1) *In (a) above, if the foul is not part of a double foul and the opponent has possession at the end of the down, the foul may be enforced from the dead ball spot. See 14-2-4.*

**RULE 15    INSTANT REPLAY**  
**SECTION 1    INITIATING A REPLAY REVIEW**

**ARTICLE 2. REPLAY OFFICIAL REQUEST FOR REVIEW.** Only the Replay Official or the Senior Vice President of Officiating or his or her designee may initiate a review of a play:

- (a) that begins after the two-minute warning of each half;
- (b) throughout any overtime period;
- (c) when points are scored by either team;
- (d) that is a Try attempt (successful or unsuccessful); and
- (e) when on-field officials rule:
  - (1) an interception by an opponent;
  - (2) a fumble or backward pass recovered by an opponent or that goes out of bounds through the opponent's end zone;
  - (3) that the offense failed to reach the line to gain on fourth down;
  - (4) possession by the kicking team at the end of any free kick or scrimmage kick down;
  - (5) a disqualification of a player; or
  - (6) a free kick touched the ground or a receiving team player in the landing zone.

Such plays may be reviewed regardless of whether a foul is committed on the play that, if accepted, would negate the on-field ruling.

The Replay Official may only challenge a play until the next legal snap or kick. The Replay Official may consult with a designated member of the Officiating department at the League office regarding whether to challenge a play.

Submitted by Competition Committee



*Effect:* Creates a new form of a free kick play that is designed to: (1) resemble a typical scrimmage play by aligning players on both teams closer together and restricting movement to reduce space and speed; and (2) promote more returns. Permits the Replay Official to automatically review whether a free kick legally touched the ground or a receiving team player in the landing zone.

*Reason:* Player Safety. Provides excitement and competition in the game.

## SUMMARY OF KICKOFF PLAY PROPOSAL (PROPOSED FOR ONE YEAR ONLY)

The Special Teams working group has proposed the following ideas as an alternative to the current kickoff play:

- The ball is kicked from the A35 yard line (same as current rule)
- Safety kicks would be from A20 yard line (same as current rule)

### ALIGNMENT

- All kicking team players other than the kicker will line up with one foot on the receiving team's B40 yard line
  - Kicker cannot cross the 50-yard line until ball touches the ground or player in landing zone or end zone
  - The 10 kicking team players cannot move until the ball hits the ground or player in the landing zone or the end zone
- The receiving team will line up as follows:
  - Setup Zone – a 5-yard area from the B35 to the B30 yard line where at least 9 receiving team players must line up
    - At least 7 players with foot on the B35 yard line (restraining line) with alignment requirements (outside numbers, numbers to hashes, and inside hashes)
    - Players not on the restraining line must be lined up in setup zone outside the hash marks
    - All players in the setup zone cannot move until the kick has hit the ground or a player in the landing zone or the end zone
  - A maximum of 2 returners may line up in the landing zone and can move at any time prior to, or during, the kick

### LANDING ZONE

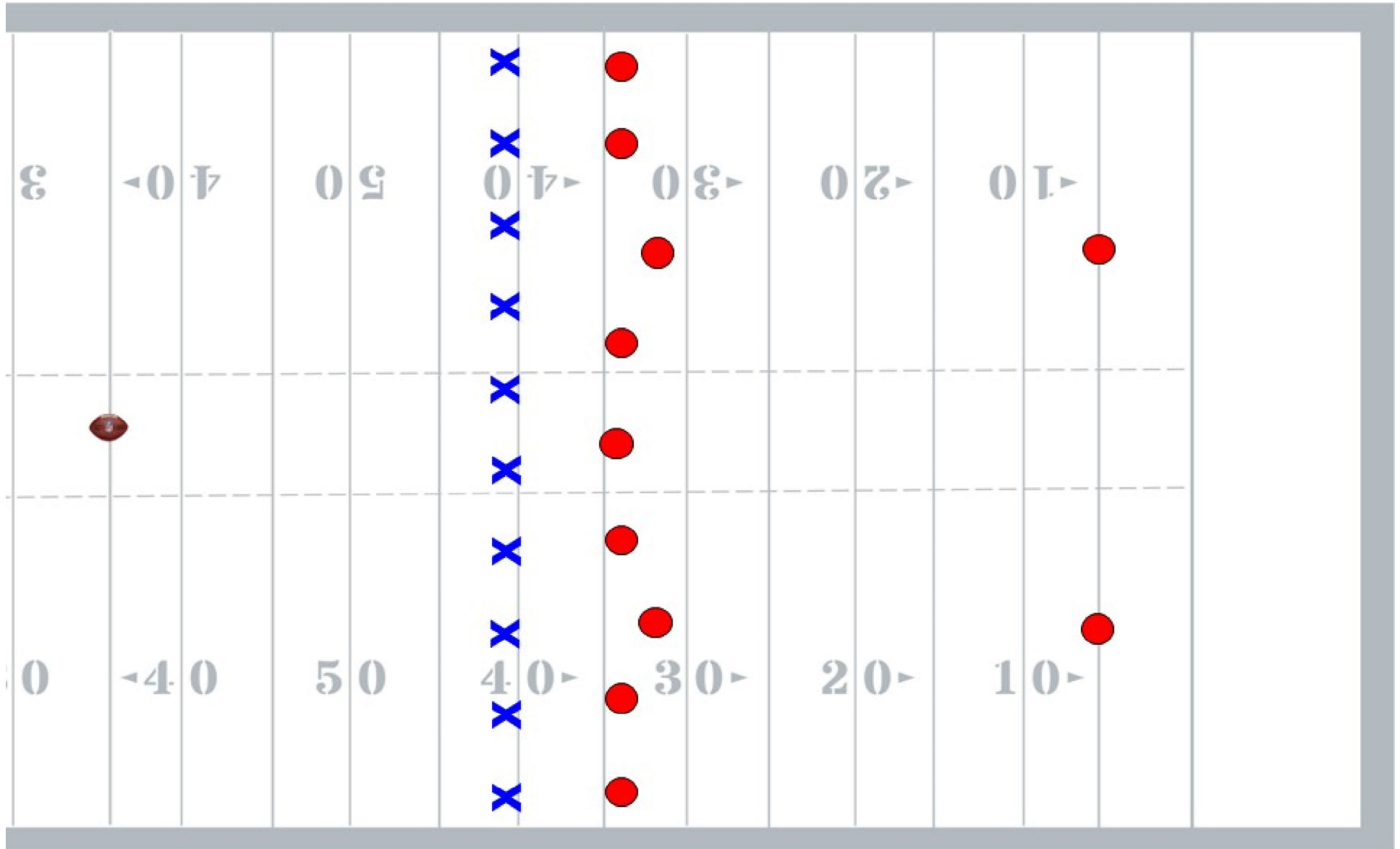
- Landing zone is the area between the receiving team's goal line and its 20-yard line.
- Any kick that hits short of the landing zone – treated like kickoff out of bounds and ball spotted at B40 yard line; play would be blown dead as soon as kick lands short of the landing zone
- Any kick that hits in the landing zone - must be returned
- Any kick that hits in the landing zone and then goes into the end zone – must be returned or downed by receiving team – if downed then touchback to B20 yard line
- Kick hits in end zone, stays inbounds - returned or downed – if downed then touchback to B35 yard line
- Any kick that goes out of the back of the end zone (in the air or bounces) – touchback to B35 yard line

### MISCELLANEOUS

- No fair catch or signal is allowed. Officials will blow the play dead
- If conditions cause ball to fall off tee twice, then kicker will be allowed to use kicking stick to keep the ball in place. The closest covering official will pick up the stick immediately after the kick
- Onside kick:
  - 4<sup>th</sup> quarter begins, the team trailing has the opportunity to declare an onside kick to the officials
  - Current onside kickoff rules would apply. If onside kick goes beyond the setup zone untouched, kicking team penalized for UNS; return team would start the drive at the A20 yard line
- Penalties:
  - The setup zone and landing zone will not change with any penalties that carry over to kickoffs. Alignment of 10 kickoff team players and all receiving team players would not change – only the spot of the kick would move
  - Penalties on scoring plays will not carry over and will be taken on the Try
  - Penalties on the Try may carry over, and if they do, only the placement of the kicker will change
- Safety Kick:
  - The kick will be from the 20-yard line, and the kicker will have the option to use a tee; the setup zone and the landing zone will not change
- Approved Rulings: The special teams working group will continue to work with the Officiating department to examine any necessary approved rulings and/or additional language that may be necessary to support this new rule. This language will be vetted with the clubs, circulated for comment to all the clubs, and finalized by the May meeting for the membership

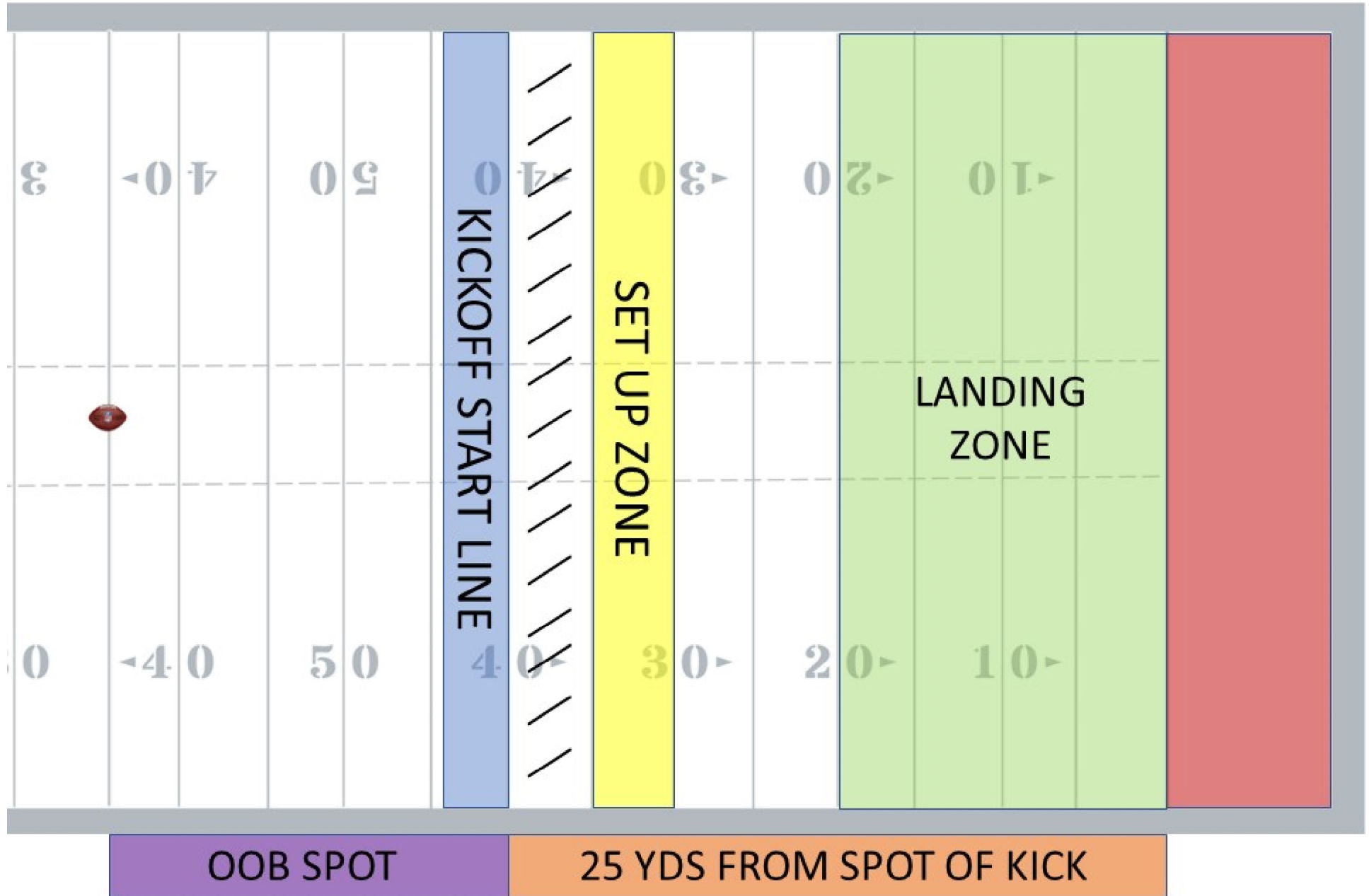


# NFL HYBRID KICKOFF





# NFL HYBRID KICKOFF



## **2024 Bylaw Proposals Summary**

1. By Detroit; amends Article XVII, Section 17.16 (C) of the Constitution & Bylaws, to remove the requirement that a player must spend at least one day on the Active roster following the final roster reduction in order to become eligible to be designated for return.
2. By Detroit; amends Article XVII, Section 17.16 (C) of the Constitution & Bylaws, to provide clubs with an unlimited number of designated for return transactions in the postseason.
3. By Buffalo; amends Article XVII, Section 17.3 of the Constitution & Bylaws, to expand the Standard Elevation rules to permit clubs to elevate a third player from its practice squad who is a bona fide quarterback to be an Emergency Third Quarterback.
4. By Pittsburgh; amends Article XVI, Section 16.6 of the Constitution & Bylaws, to move the trading deadline to the Tuesday after Week 9 games.
5. By Cleveland, Detroit, New York Jets, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington; amends Article XVI, Section 16.6 of the Constitution & Bylaws, to move the trading deadline to the Tuesday after Week 10 games.
6. By Competition Committee; amends Article XVII, Section 17.16(C), to permit each club to place a maximum of two players who are placed on an applicable Reserve List on the business day of the final roster reduction to be designated for return. Such players will immediately count as two of the club's total designations.
7. By Competition Committee; amends Article XVII, Section 17.3, to expand the Standard Elevation rules to permit clubs to elevate a bona fide Quarterback an unlimited number of times from its practice squad to its Active List to be its Emergency Third Quarterback.

## 2024 BYLAW PROPOSAL NO. 1

Amend Article XVII, Section 17.16 (C) of the Constitution and Bylaws to read (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

### **Reserve/Injured**

17.16 The following rules govern Reserve/Injured:

- (C) **Designated Free Activation from Reserve Injured and Reserve Non-Football Injury/Illness.** During each season a club will be permitted to return eight players from either the Reserve/Injured or Reserve/Non-Football Injury/Illness List to its 53-player Active/Inactive List, or from Practice Squad; Injured to the Practice Squad. Such players must have suffered a major injury (defined as an injury that renders the player physically unable to practice or play football for a period of at least four weeks [28 calendar days] from the date that the injury occurred) after reporting to training camp, subject to the following procedures: and must have been placed on the applicable Reserve List after 4:00 p.m., New York time, on the day after the roster reduction to 53 players. A player who is eligible to return must be noted as “Designated for Return” on the first day that the player returns to practice.
- (1) Clubs are permitted to designate for return a maximum of two players who are placed on an applicable Reserve List during the business day of the final roster reduction. A player who is eligible to return must be reported as “Designated for Return” and “Returned to Practice” on the first day that the player returns to practice.
- (2) Clubs are permitted to designate for return players who are placed on an applicable Reserve List after 4:00 p.m., New York time, on or after the day following the final roster reduction. A player who is eligible to return must be reported as “Designated for Return” and “Returned to Practice” on the first day that the player returns to practice.

[The remainder of Article 17.16 (C) remains unchanged.]

Submitted by Detroit

*Effect:* Removes the requirement that a player must spend at least one day on the Active roster following the final roster reduction in order to become eligible to be designated for return.

*Reason:* Roster management.

## 2024 BYLAW PROPOSAL NO. 2

Amend Article XVII, Section 17.16 (C) of the Constitution and Bylaws to read (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

### **Reserve/Injured**

17.16 The following rules govern Reserve/Injured:

- (C) **Designated Free Activation from Reserve Injured and Reserve Non-Football Injury/Illness.** During each season a club will be permitted to return eight players during the regular season and an unlimited number of players during the postseason from either the Reserve/Injured or Reserve/Non-Football Injury/Illness List to its 53-player Active/Inactive List, or from Practice Squad; Injured to the Practice Squad. Such players must have suffered a major injury (defined as an injury that renders the player physically unable to practice or play football for a period of at least four weeks [28 calendar days] from the date that the injury occurred) after reporting to training camp and must have been placed on the applicable Reserve List after 4:00 p.m., New York time, on the day after the roster reduction to 53 players. A player who is eligible to return must be noted as “Designated for Return” on the first day that the player returns to practice.

A player is ineligible to practice until four games have elapsed since the date he was placed on Reserve or Practice Squad; Injured, whichever is applicable, and is not eligible to return to the Active/Inactive List until four games have elapsed since the date he was placed on Reserve or Practice Squad; Injured, whichever is applicable. (A regular season bye week does not count as a game. Conversely, a postseason bye week counts as a game.)-The business day (prior to 4:00 p.m., New York time) that a player is placed on Reserve or Practice Squad; Injured counts as the first day.

At any time after the conclusion of the fourth game after the date upon which a player was placed on Reserve/Injured or Reserve/Non-Football Injury/Illness, a club is permitted to return him to practice for a period not to exceed 21 calendar days. Clubs are required to notify the League office on the first day of such 21-day practice period that the player has returned to practice and that he is being “Designated for Return.” The transaction will be promulgated to clubs on that day’s Personnel Notice. Players on Practice Squad; injured are not eligible for a 21-day practice period.



If a player is not returned to the Active/Inactive List prior to 4:00 p.m., New York time, on the day after the conclusion of the 21-day period, he is not eligible to return to that club's Active/Inactive List for the remainder of the season and postseason. If the club elects to continue to carry the player on Reserve/Injured or Reserve Non-Football Injury/Illness, whichever is applicable, the player shall not be permitted to practice or to participate in team or individual drills (contact or non-contact) during the remainder of the season, including postseason. Such players are limited to non-contact rehabilitative work under the supervision of the club's trainer or physician. Pads and helmets are prohibited during such rehabilitative activities. Such players are permitted to attend team meetings, and may also attend, but not participate in, practice sessions.

During the regular season, Aafter a club has designated eight players for return from its applicable Reserve List or Practice Squad; Injured, no other players on Reserve/Injured or Reserve/Non-Football Injury/Illness shall be permitted to practice or return to the club's 53-player Active/Inactive List, and no player from Practice Squad; Injured shall be permitted to return to the Practice Squad unless the designation is made by a participating club during the postseason, when there is no limit on such transactions. **A club will be charged one of its eight regular season designations on the day it designates a player for return to practice (or to the Active List if it does not start a practice period), or activates a player, or restores a player to Practice Squad from Practice Squad; Injured, whichever occurs first. If a club starts a practice period for a player, but does not activate the player, the club is still charged the designation.**

A club may designate a player for return twice in a season; however, each designation will count as one of the eight available regular season designations unless it is made by a participating club during the postseason. A player may be designated for return twice in a season by multiple clubs.

Submitted by Detroit

*Effect:* The limit of eight designated for return transactions will only apply to the regular season. Such transactions will be unlimited for the postseason.

*Reason:* Roster flexibility.

## 2024 BYLAW PROPOSAL NO. 3

Amend Article XVII, Section 17.3 of the Constitution and Bylaws to read (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

### Active/Inactive Lists

17.3 One hour and 30 minutes prior to kickoff, each club is required to establish its Active List for the game by notifying the Referee of the players on its Inactive List for that game. Each club may also designate one ~~e~~Emergency ~~†~~Third ~~q~~Quarterback from its Active/Inactive List (~~*i.e., elevated players are not eligible for designation*~~)(as described below) who will be eligible to be activated during the game, if the club's first two quarterbacks on its game day Active List are not able to participate in the game due to injury or disqualification (activation cannot be a result of a head coach's in-game decision to remove a player from the game due to performance or conduct). If either of the injured quarterbacks is cleared by the medical staff to return to play, the ~~e~~Emergency ~~†~~Third ~~q~~Quarterback must be removed from the game and is not permitted to continue to play quarterback or any other position, but is eligible to return to the game to play quarterback if another ~~e~~Emergency ~~†~~Third ~~q~~Quarterback situation arises.

Prior to the transaction deadline on the last business day prior to a club's game, each club may elevate a bona fide quarterback from its Practice Squad (this is in addition to the two Standard Elevations a club receives each week.) This player must be designated the club's Emergency Third Quarterback. There is no limit to the number of times a club may elevate such a practice squad quarterback to be its Emergency Third Quarterback; however, elevation limits under the Standard Elevation agreement will apply if a club elects to elevate a practice squad quarterback as one of its two weekly elevations.

[The remaining language of Section 17.3 is unchanged.]

Submitted by Buffalo

*Effect:* Expands the Standard Elevation rules to permit clubs to elevate a third player from its practice squad who is a bona fide quarterback to be an Emergency Third Quarterback.

*Reason:* Integrity of game. Quarterback may be the most important position in sports. Decreases the risk of having a non-bona fide quarterback play the position, which is detrimental to the quality of the game.

## 2024 BYLAW PROPOSAL NO. 4

Amend Article XVI, Section 16.6 of the Constitution and Bylaws to read (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

### **Trading Deadline**

16.6 By definition, a trade in the League is a transaction involving two or more clubs resulting in an outright or conditional assignment or exchange of player contracts, rights to players, selection choices, which transaction is not effected through the waiver system, the first refusal/compensation system of an operative collective bargaining agreement, or other special assignment procedures of this Constitution and Bylaws. There shall be no trades for past, future, or nominal consideration. Trades are permissible within the following period:

Trades involving selection choices, player contracts and/or rights to players from club Reserve lists may be made only on days during which the League office is open to accept player personnel transactions from the period beginning on the first such day after the expiration of NFL Player Contracts and continuing until 4:00 p.m., New York time, on the day after the date that the final game of the ~~eighth~~ ninth regular season weekend begins (i.e., Tuesday if the final game of such weekend's schedule of games begins on Monday).

Submitted by Pittsburgh

*Effect:* Moves the trading deadline to the Tuesday after the ninth weekend.

*Reason:* Sets the trade deadline one week later at the mid-point of the 18-week regular season.

## 2024 BYLAW PROPOSAL NO. 5

Amend Article XVI, Section 16.6 of the Constitution and Bylaws to read (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

### Trading Deadline

16.6 By definition, a trade in the League is a transaction involving two or more clubs resulting in an outright or conditional assignment or exchange of player contracts, rights to players, selection choices, which transaction is not effected through the waiver system, the first refusal/compensation system of an operative collective bargaining agreement, or other special assignment procedures of this Constitution and Bylaws. There shall be no trades for past, future, or nominal consideration. Trades are permissible within the following period:

Trades involving selection choices, player contracts and/or rights to players from club Reserve lists may be made only on days during which the League office is open to accept player personnel transactions from the period beginning on the first such day after the expiration of NFL Player Contracts and continuing until 4:00 p.m., New York time, on the day after the date that the final game of the ~~eighth~~ tenth regular season weekend begins (i.e., Tuesday if the final game of such weekend's schedule of games begins on Monday).

Submitted by Cleveland, Detroit, New York Jets,  
Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington

*Effect:* Moves the trading deadline to the Tuesday after the tenth weekend.

*Reason:* Accounts for 2021 change to 17-game season. Provides clubs with more roster options, specifically as it relates to player injuries. More closely aligns the NFL trade deadline with the other major US sports leagues. Provides the league with a better opportunity to put its best product on the field for the stretch run of the regular season and into the postseason.

## 2024 BYLAW PROPOSAL NO. 6

Amend Article XVII, Section 17.16 (C) of the Constitution and Bylaws to read (new language underlined, deleted language struck through):

### Reserve/Injured

17.16 The following rules govern Reserve/Injured:

- (C) **Designated Free Activation from Reserve Injured and Reserve Non-Football Injury/Illness.** During each season a club will be permitted to return eight players from either the Reserve/Injured or Reserve/Non-Football Injury/Illness List to its 53-player Active/Inactive List, or from Practice Squad; Injured to the Practice Squad. Such players must have suffered a major injury (defined as an injury that renders the player physically unable to practice or play football for a period of at least four weeks [28 calendar days] from the date that the injury occurred) after reporting to training camp, subject to the following procedures: and must have been placed on the applicable Reserve List after 4:00 p.m., New York time, on the day after the roster reduction to 53 players. A player who is eligible to return must be noted as “Designated for Return” on the first day that the player returns to practice.
- (1) Clubs are permitted to designate for return a maximum of two players who are placed on an applicable Reserve List during the business day of the final roster reduction. Such designation must be reported at the time of the Reserve List placement and will count against the club’s maximum number of designations. Such a player must be reported as “Returned to Practice” on the first day that the player returns to practice.
- (2) Clubs are permitted to designate for return players who are placed on an applicable Reserve List after 4:00 p.m., New York time, on the day following the final roster reduction, or any business day thereafter. A player who is eligible to return must be reported as “Designated for Return” and “Returned to Practice” on the first day that the player returns to practice.

[The remainder of Article 17.16 (C) remains unchanged.]

Submitted by Competition Committee

*Effect:* Permits each club to place a maximum of two players who are placed on an applicable Reserve List on the business day of the final roster reduction to be designated for return. Such players will immediately count as two of the club's total designations.

*Reason:* Roster flexibility

## 2024 BYLAW PROPOSAL NO. 7

Amend Article XVII, Section 17.3 of the Constitution and Bylaws, to reflect the following (new language underlined; deleted language struck through):

### Active/Inactive Lists

17.3 One hour and 30 minutes prior to kickoff, each club is required to establish its Active List for the game by notifying the Referee of the players on its Inactive List for that game. Each club may also designate one ~~e~~Emergency ~~†~~Third ~~q~~Quarterback from its Active/Inactive List ~~(i.e., elevated players are not eligible for designation)~~(as described below) who will be eligible to be activated during the game, if the club's first two quarterbacks on its game day Active List are not able to participate in the game due to injury or disqualification (activation cannot be a result of a head coach's in-game decision to remove a player from the game due to performance or conduct). If either of the injured quarterbacks is cleared by the medical staff to return to play, the ~~e~~Emergency ~~†~~Third ~~q~~Quarterback must be removed from the game and is not permitted to continue to play quarterback or any other position, but is eligible to return to the game to play quarterback if another ~~e~~Emergency ~~†~~Third ~~q~~Quarterback situation arises.

Prior to the transaction deadline on the last business day prior to a club's game, each club may elevate a bona fide quarterback from its Practice Squad to be its Emergency Third Quarterback in conjunction with the two Standard Elevations a club receives each week. However, there is no limit to the number of times a club may elevate such a practice squad quarterback to be an Emergency Third Quarterback.

[The remaining language of Section 17.3 is unchanged.]

Submitted by Competition Committee

*Effect:* Expands the Standard Elevation rules to permit clubs to elevate a bona fide Quarterback an unlimited number of times from its practice squad to its Active List to be its Emergency Third Quarterback.

*Reason:* Roster flexibility.

## **2024 Resolution Proposals Summary**

- G-1. By Buffalo; to make the injury reporting rules for players who do not travel with their clubs to games away from their home city competitively fairer.
- G-2. By Jacksonville; to make available the “working box” Hawk-Eye replay feed in the coaches booth.
- G-3. By Philadelphia; to require game clocks to display tenths of seconds for the final 60 seconds of each half.



## 2024 RESOLUTION G-1

*Whereas*, the intent of the Personnel (Injury) Report Policy (“Policy”) is to provide full and complete information on player availability, it is imperative that information for dissemination to the public on all injured players be reported in a satisfactory manner by clubs to the League office, the opposing team, local and national media, and broadcast partners each game week of the regular season and postseason, and

*Whereas*, the information must be credible, accurate, timely, and specific within the guidelines of the Policy, and

*Whereas*, the legalization of sports betting makes it imperative to balance clubs’ competitive interests with the public’s confidence in knowing that what fans see on the field is not improperly influenced by any outside factors, such as undisclosed information concerning practice participation or game-day availability, and

*Whereas*, the League must ensure that the Policy’s established rules and procedures continue to protect the integrity of the game in this evolving, more challenging, environment.

*Whereas*, the Section 2, of the Policy titled *Game Status Report* has a subsection titled *Players Who Do Not Travel with the Team* that describes the required reporting procedures in the event one or more players do not travel with the team to an away game.

- a. If a player who is listed as “Questionable” or “Doubtful” on the Game Status Report does not travel to an away game due to injury, the club must report that fact immediately prior to departing the club’s home city and update its Game Status Report by listing the Player as “Out.”
- b. If a player does not travel to an away game with his team for non-injury reasons, that fact must be reported immediately prior to departing the club’s home city, and the club must indicate whether or not the player will be available for the game. If the player will not be available for the game the club must update its Game Status Report by listing the player as “Out.”
- c. If the club is traveling prior to submitting its Game Status Report, any non-traveling players – whether due to injury or for a non-injury reason – must be reported as required by the Policy immediately and prior to the team’s departure from its home city. Any further update must be made in accordance with normal Game Status Report procedures.

*Be it Resolved*, that the above-quoted provision of the Policy be revised as follows:

**Players Who Do Not Travel with the Team.** The following describes the required reporting procedures in the event one or more “reportable players” (i.e., players on the Active List, or Exempt and/or Reserve lists who have returned to practice) do not travel with the team to an away game (defined as any game away from a club’s home city regardless of which team is the designated home club).

a. **For Travel After Filing Game Status Report:**

If a player who is listed as “Questionable” or “Doubtful” on the Game Status Report is not traveling to an away game, the club must update its Game Status Report immediately and prior to departing the club’s home city, as follows:

- If there is a chance that the player will travel to the game at a later time, the club must update the player’s game status to “Questionable” or “Doubtful,” whichever is most applicable to the player’s potential travel. If the player was already listed with that game status, the club must immediately update all required parties regarding the player’s traveling status.
- If there is no chance that the player will travel to the game, the club must update the player’s game status to “Out.”

b. **For Travel Before Filing Game Status Report:**

- If a club is traveling to an away game prior to the deadline for establishing its Game Status Report, it is required to immediately provide a game status for any player who is not traveling with the club prior to the team’s departure from its home city. The club must indicate whether the player will be available for the game by declaring the player’s game status as “Questionable,” “Doubtful” or “Out.” As soon as the club knows that the player will not be available for the game, it must update the player’s game status to “Out.” Any further update must be made in accordance with normal Game Status Report procedures.
- A club that is traveling to an away game and will not return to its home city prior to its next game (for example, an East Coast team that chooses to stay on the West Coast between back-to-back West Coast games or a club playing back-to-back international games) must immediately report the game status of any “reportable player” who is not traveling with the team to its initial away game prior to departure from its home city as required above. Following its first away game, on the first

day that the club has to report its practice participation, it must also report the game status of any “reportable players” who did not make the initial trip and have yet to rejoin the team, and any “reportable players” who have returned to the club’s home city after the initial game. If the opposing club in the second game is playing in its home city, its Game Status Report deadline operates under normal game procedures. If the opposing club in the second game is playing an away game, its Game Status Report deadline is subject to the rules in a. or b. above, whichever is applicable.

Submitted by Buffalo

*Effect:* Provides clubs a fair and consistent procedure for reporting a game status for players who do not travel with their teams to a game away from its home city.

*Reason:* Competitively fairer.

## 2024 RESOLUTION G-2

*Whereas*, the NFL Football Operations department successfully conducted a trial of providing the Replay Officials' "working box" Hawk-Eye feed in all coaches booths for every game of the 2023 preseason.

*Whereas*, the feedback from both an implementation and club user perspective was overwhelmingly positive.

*Be it Resolved*, that the NFL Football Operations department will make available the Replay Official's "working box" Hawk-Eye feed in the coaches booths for every game of the 2024 NFL season.

Submitted by Jacksonville

*Effect:* Expands the 2023 preseason trial of providing a specific Hawk-Eye feed in the coaches booths to the entire 2024 season.

*Reason:* To help clubs make more informed coaching challenge decisions.

## 2024 RESOLUTION G-3

*Whereas*, the NFL's Game Operations Manual requires every stadium to install game clocks in both end zones and at each 50-yard line, and

*Whereas*, game clocks are required to display game time in accordance with all NFL Playing Rules,

Be it *Resolved*, that the Policy Manual for Member Clubs – Game Operations will be amended to reflect the following change:

### **O. IN-STADIUM CLOCKS**

1. **Game Clocks** — Game clocks must be located in both end zones and at each 50-yard line in all NFL stadiums so that the quarterback and Game Officials are able to see the game clock at all times, no matter which end zone they are working toward.

Each 50-yard line clock must be installed in a way that allows easy viewing by television, radio, other media, stat crews, Game Officials, and club video personnel. Clocks should be located near a down and distance display to aid club video personnel who must record game time, down, and distance prior to each play.

Game clocks in each of the required locations may never be turned off during any part of the game (including halftime and timeouts). This also applies to game clocks that are displayed within the ribbon boards.

The game clocks will display game time in accordance with all NFL Playing Rules and will count down in one second increments except in the last 60 seconds of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, when the clocks will transition to a countdown in tenths of seconds.

At 90 minutes prior to kickoff, the NFL game clock operator will set a countdown clock to be displayed in the stadium.

Submitted by Philadelphia

*Effect:* Requires the game clocks to display tenths of seconds for the final 60 seconds of each half.

*Reason:* Competitive Equity – Clubs have complete information about remaining time in the half or game when weighing strategic considerations; Fan engagement