

# TOUCH FOOTBALL RULES

**8<sup>th</sup> Edition**



# Preamble

There is no compulsion for any TFA Affiliate or authorised competition provider to adopt these Rules at their local or park level competitions.

TFA encourages our member organisations to set varying features in the rules of their local competitions so that the player can experience a wide variety of enjoyment from the game. These Rules in no way restrict any TFA Affiliate or authorised competition provider from having different match conditions to these Rules. Any adaptation of or alterations to the Rules for local competitions should be clearly articulated in relevant competition guidelines and be readily available for players, coaches and referees alike.

These Rules are the official TFA Rules and will be referenced throughout TFA Coach and Referee Education and applied by TFA when conducting events.

For information on the rules associated with alternative formats such as League Touch, Beach Touch and junior competitions please contact Touch Football Australia.

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## Appendix 1 – Field of Play

# NRL TOUCH FOOTBALL



## ◀ Definitions and Terminology ▶

Unless the contrary intention appears, the following definitions and terminology apply to the game of Touch:

TERM/PHRASE	DEFINITION/DESCRIPTION
<b>Advantage</b>	The period of time after an Infringement in which the non-offending side has the opportunity to gain Advantage either territorial, tactical or in the form of a Try.
<b>Affiliate</b>	As defined by the TFA Constitution.
<b>Attacking Try Line</b>	The line on or over which a player has to place the ball to score a Try.
<b>Attacking Team</b>	The Team which has or is gaining Possession.
<b>Behind</b>	A position or direction towards a Team's Defending Try Line.
<b>Change of Possession</b>	The act of moving control of the ball from one Team to the other.
<b>Dead/Dead Ball</b>	When the ball is out of play including the period following a Try and until the match is recommenced and when the ball goes to ground and/or outside the boundaries of the Field of Play prior to the subsequent Rollball.
<b>Dead Ball Line</b>	The end boundaries of the Field of Play. There is one at each end of the Field of Play. See Appendix 1.
<b>Defending Try Line</b>	The line which a Team has to defend to prevent a Try.
<b>Defending Team</b>	The Team without or which is losing Possession.
<b>Dismissal</b>	When a player is sent from the Field of Play for the rest of the match.
<b>Drop-Off</b>	A procedure used to determine a Winner following equal scores at the expiration of normal Duration.
<b>Duration</b>	The length of time a competition match lasts, which is normally forty-five minutes, inclusive of a five (5) minute Half Time.
<b>End of Play</b>	When the Referee indicates completion of the match.
<b>Exclusion</b>	When a player is sent to the nearest Sin Bin Area following three (3) penalties by the Defending Team upon entering their Seven Metre Zone. The player is counted as a player on the Field of Play and cannot be replaced or interchanged.

<b>Field of Play</b>	The playing area bounded by the Sidelines and Dead Ball Lines, both of which are out of bounds. See Appendix 1.
<b>Forced Interchange</b>	When a player is required to undertake a compulsory Interchange for an Infringement ruled more serious than a Penalty but less serious than a Permanent Interchange, Sin Bin or Dismissal.
<b>Forward</b>	A position or direction towards the Dead Ball Line beyond the Team's Attacking Try Line.
<b>Full Time</b>	The expiration of the second period of time allowed for play.
<b>Half</b>	The player who takes Possession following a Rollball.
<b>Half Time</b>	The break in play between the two halves of a match.
<b>Imminent</b>	About to occur, it is almost certain to occur.
<b>Infringement</b>	The action of a player contrary to the Rules of the game.
<b>In-Goal Area</b>	The area in the Field of Play bounded by the Sidelines, the Try Lines and the Dead Ball Lines. There are two (2), one (1) at each end of the Field of Play. See Appendix 1.
<b>Interchange</b>	The act of an on-field player leaving the Field of Play to be replaced by an off-field player entering the Field of Play.
<b>Interchange Area</b>	A marked rectangle for each Team on opposite sides of the Field of Play usually measuring 20 metres long by no more than five (5) metres wide, extending ten (10) metres either side of the Halfway Line and not less than one (1) metre from the Sideline. It is the area in which all off-field players must remain until an Interchange is initiated. See Appendix 1.
<b>Kick</b>	Strike or propel forcibly with the foot, a blow or forceful thrust with the foot to the ball. A Tap to commence or recommence play or a Penalty Tap is not defined as a kick.
<b>Line Markings</b>	Markings of the Field of Play. See Appendix 1.
<b>Link</b>	The player beside the Wing player.
<b>Mark (for a Tap)</b>	The centre of the Halfway Line for the commencement or recommencement of play, or the position where a Penalty Tap is awarded as a result of an Infringement.
<b>Mark (for a Touch)</b>	The position in the Field of Play where the player in Possession was at the time the Touch was made.
<b>Middle</b>	The player inside the Link player.

<b>Obstruction</b>	A deliberate attempt by either an attacking or defending player to gain an unfair Advantage by interfering with the opposition to prevent them from gaining a rightful Advantage.
<b>Offside (Attacker)</b>	An attacking player in a position forward of the ball.
<b>Offside (Defender)</b>	A defending player in a position closer than seven (7) metres from the Mark of the Rollball; or ten (10) metres from the Mark of a Tap.
<b>Onside</b>	A position whereby a player may legitimately become involved with play. A player with both feet on or behind their Defending Try Line.
<b>Pass</b>	The act of changing Possession between individual attacking players by propelling the ball laterally and/or backwards and may include a flick, knock or throw.
<b>Perimeter</b>	A border not less than five (5) metres from the boundary of the Field of Play. See Appendix 1.
<b>Penalty</b>	The Ruling by a Referee to award a Tap when a player or Team infringes the Rules of the game.
<b>Possession</b>	Refers to the player or Team that has control of the ball. Providing other Rules do not apply, the Team with the ball is entitled to six (6) Touches.
<b>Referee</b>	The match official(s) appointed to make Rulings during the conduct of a match.
<b>Rollball</b>	The act of bringing the ball into play following a Touch or a Change of Possession.
<b>Ruck/Rollball Area</b>	The area, not exceeding one (1) metre in distance, between the player performing a Rollball and the Half.
<b>Ruling</b>	The decision made by a Referee as a result of particular circumstance and may result in a Play On, a Tap Penalty, a discipline option, Change of Possession or a Try.
<b>Seven Metre Zone</b>	The area between the seven (7) metre line and the Try Line. See Appendix 1.
<b>Sidelines</b>	The side boundaries of the Field of Play. See Appendix 1.
<b>Sin Bin</b>	A player sent to the Sin-Bin Area for a period of four (4) completed Possessions. The player is counted as a player on the Field of Play and cannot be replaced or interchanged.
<b>Sin Bin Area</b>	The area between the Dead Ball Line and the Perimeter where players are sent for either a Sin Bin period or Exclusion for repeated Seven Metre Zone Infringements. There are four (4) Sin Bin Areas. See Appendix 1.
<b>Spirit of the Game</b>	The act of good sportsmanship and fair play.

<b>Substitute Player</b>	The player who replaces another player during Interchange. There is a maximum of eight (8) substitute players in any Team and except when interchanging, in the Sin Bin, dismissed or on the Field of Play, they must remain in the Substitution Box.
<b>Tap and Tap Penalty</b>	The method of commencing the match, recommencing the match after Half Time and after a Try has been scored. The Tap is also the method of recommencing play when a Penalty is awarded. The Tap is taken by placing the ball on the ground at or behind the Mark, releasing both hands from the ball, tapping the ball gently with either foot or touching the foot on the ball. The ball must not roll or move more than one (1) metre in any direction and must be retrieved cleanly, without touching the ground again. The player may face any direction and use either foot. Provided it is at the Mark, the ball does not have to be lifted from the ground prior to a Tap being taken.
<b>Team</b>	A group of players constituting one (1) side in a competition match.
<b>TFA</b>	Touch Football Australia Limited
<b>TFA Affiliate Member</b>	As defined by the TFA Constitution
<b>Touch</b>	Any contact between the player in Possession and a defending player. A Touch includes contact on the ball, hair or clothing and may be made by a defending player or by the player in Possession.
<b>Touch Count</b>	The progressive number of Touches that each Team has before a Change of Possession, from zero (0) to six (6).
<b>Try</b>	The result of any attacking player, except the Half, placing the ball on or over the Team's Attacking Try Line before being Touched.
<b>Try Lines</b>	The lines separating the In-Goal Areas from the Field of Play. See Appendix 1.
<b>Voluntary Rollball</b>	The player in Possession performs a Rollball before a Touch is made with a defending player.
<b>Wing</b>	The player outside the Link player.
<b>Winner</b>	The Team that scores the most Tries during the match.



## ◀ Mode of Play ▶

The object of the game of Touch is for each Team to score Tries and to prevent the opposition from scoring. The ball may be passed, knocked or handed between players of the Attacking Team who may in turn run or otherwise move with the ball in an attempt to gain territorial Advantage and to score tries. Defending players prevent the Attacking Team from gaining a territorial Advantage by touching the ball carrier.

## ◀ Rules of Play ▶

### 1 The Field of Play ▶▶

- 1.1** The Field of Play is rectangular in shape measuring 70 metres in length from Try Line to Try Line, excluding the In-Goal Areas and 50 metres in width from Sideline to Sideline excluding the Interchange Areas.
  - 1.1.1** Variations to the dimensions of the Field of Play may be made but must be included in relevant competition, event or tournament conditions
- 1.2** Line Markings should be 4cm in width but must be no less than 2.5cm. Line Markings are to be laid out as shown in Appendix 1 - The Field of Play. Sidelines extend seven (7) metres beyond the Try Lines to join the Dead Ball Lines and define the In-Goal Areas which measure fifty (50) metres wide by seven (7) metres in length.
- 1.3** The Interchange Areas are located no closer than one (1) metre from each Sideline.
- 1.4** Suitably sized markers, cones or corner posts of a distinguishing colour and made from safe and pliable material should be positioned at the intersections of the Sideline and Halfway line and the Sideline and the Try Line.
  - 1.4.1** Markers, cones or corner posts placed on the junction of the Sideline and Try Line are deemed to be in the Field of Play.
  - 1.4.2** All other markers or cones are deemed to be out of the Field of Play.
- 1.5** The standard playing surface is grass. Other surfaces including synthetic grass may be used but shall be subject to TFA approved standards.
- 1.6** The Field of Play boundary lines are deemed to be out of play. Play becomes Dead when the ball or a player in Possession touches the ground on or over a Sideline or Dead Ball Line.

### 2 Player Registration ▶▶

- 2.1** Participating players are to be registered with a TFA Affiliate Member or with an approved TFA competition provider.
- 2.2** Teams playing unregistered players are liable to forfeit any match in which unregistered players have competed.

### 3 The Ball ►►

- 3.1 The game is played with an oval, inflated ball of a shape, colour and size approved by TFA.
- 3.2 The ball shall be inflated to the manufacturers' recommended air pressure.
- 3.3 The Referee shall immediately pause the match if the size and shape of the ball no longer complies with clauses 3.1 or 3.2 to allow for the ball to be replaced or the issue rectified.
- 3.4 The ball must not be hidden under player attire.

### 4 Playing Uniform ►►

- 4.1 Participating players are to be correctly attired in matching Team uniforms
- 4.2 Playing uniforms consist of shirt, singlet or other item as approved by the TFA Affiliate Member or TFA competition provider, shorts and/or tights and socks.
- 4.3 All players are to wear a unique identifying number not less than 16cm in height, clearly displayed on the rear of the playing top.
  - 4.3.1 Identifying numbers must feature no more than two (2) digits.
- 4.4 Hats or caps are permitted to be worn during a match provided they are safe and meet TFA regulations.
- 4.5 Safe footwear must be worn with exceptions allowed for game variants such as Beach Touch.
- 4.6 Light leather or synthetic boots with soft moulded soles are permitted.
  - 4.6.1 Shoes with screw-in studs are not to be worn by any player or Referee.
- 4.7 Players are not to participate in any match wearing any item of jewellery, chain, identification band/bracelet or similar item that may prove dangerous. Any jewellery or other items that cannot be removed are to be taped to the satisfaction of the Referee.
- 4.8 Long (extend beyond the finger flesh when viewed from the palm) or sharp fingernails are not allowed.
- 4.9 Referees and players may wear spectacles or sunglasses provided they are safe and securely attached.
- 4.10 Referees and players may wear sport monitoring equipment and medical supports such as knee or ankle braces provided, at the sole discretion of competition's controlling body, the items are not dangerous.

### 5 Team Composition ►►

- 5.1 A Team consists of a maximum of 14 players, no more than six (6) of whom are allowed on the field at any time.

***Ruling = A Penalty awarded to the non-offending Team at the time the offence is identified seven (7) metres infield on the Halfway Line or the position of the ball, whichever is the greater Advantage.***

- 5.2** A Team must have a minimum of four (4) players on the field for a match to commence or continue, except during a Drop-Off.
- 5.3** Where the number of players on the field from one Team falls below four (4), the match is to be abandoned and the non-offending Team is to be declared the Winner.
- 5.3.1** This does not apply for players sent to the Sin Bin Area.
- 5.4** In mixed gender competitions, the maximum number of males allowed on the Field of Play is three (3), the minimum male requirement is one (1) and the minimum female requirement is one (1).

## **6 Team Coach and Team Officials ▶▶**

- 6.1** The Team coach(s) and Team officials may be permitted inside the Perimeter but shall be required to be positioned either in the Interchange Area or at the end of the Field of Play for the duration of the match.
- 6.2** The Team coach(s) and Team officials may move from one position to the other but shall do so without delay. While in a position at the end of the Field of Play, the Team coach(s) or Team official must remain no closer than five (5) metres from the Dead Ball Line and must not coach or communicate (verbal or non-verbal) with either Team or the Referees.

## **7 Commencement and Recommencement of Play ▶▶**

- 7.1** Team captains are to toss a coin in the presence of the Referee(s) with the winning captain's Team having the choice of the direction the Team wishes to run in the first half; the choice of Interchange Areas for the duration of the match, including any extra time; and the choice of which team will commence the match in Possession.
- 7.2** A player of the Attacking Team is to commence the match with a Tap at the centre of the Halfway Line following the indication to commence play from the Referee.
- 7.3** For the recommencement of play following a Half Time break, Teams shall change directions and the Team not commencing the match with Possession is to re-start the match with a Tap.
- 7.4** For the recommencement of play following the scoring of a Try, the Team against which the Try was conceded will recommence play with a Tap.
- 7.5** A Tap may not be taken until all attacking Players are in an Onside position.

***Ruling = The Player will be directed to return to the Mark and to take the Tap again.***

**7.6** A Tap may not be taken until at least four (4) defending players are in an Onside position or unless directed to so by the Referee. Where the number of players on the field from the Defending Team falls below four (4), all players must be in an Onside position for a Tap to be taken unless directed to do so by the Referee.

**Ruling = The Player will be directed to return to the Mark and to take the Tap again.**

**7.7** The Tap to commence or recommence play must be performed without delay.

**Ruling = A Penalty to the non-offending team at the centre of the Halfway line.**

## **8 Match Duration ▶▶**

**8.1** A match is 40 minutes in duration, consisting of two (2) x 20 minute halves with a Half Time break.

**8.1.1** There is no time off for injury during a match.

**8.2** Local competition and tournament conditions may vary the duration of a match.

**8.3** When time expires, play is to continue until the next Touch or Dead Ball and End of Play is signaled by the Referee.

**8.3.1** Should a Penalty be awarded during this period, the Penalty is to be taken.

**8.4** If a match is abandoned in any circumstances other than those referred to in clause 24.1.6 the TFA Affiliate in its sole discretion shall determine the result of the match.

## **9 Possession ▶▶**

**9.1** The Team with the ball is entitled to six (6) Touches prior to a Change of Possession.

**9.2** On the Change of Possession due to an intercept, the first Touch will be zero (0) Touch.

**9.3** Following the sixth Touch or a loss of Possession due to any other means, the ball must be returned to the Mark without delay.

**Ruling = A deliberate delay in the changeover procedure will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending Team ten (10) metres Forward of the Mark for the Change of Possession.**

**9.4** If the ball is dropped or passed and goes to ground during play, a Change of Possession results.

**Ruling = The Mark for the Change of Possession is where the ball makes initial contact with the ground.**

**9.5** If the ball, while still under the control of the Half, contacts the ground in the In-Goal Area, Possession is lost.

***Ruling = Play will restart with a Rollball at the nearest point on the seven (7) metre line.***

9.6 If a player mishandles the ball and even if in an effort to gain control, the ball is accidentally knocked Forward into any other Player, a Change of Possession results.

## 10 The Touch ▶▶

10.1 A Touch may be made by either a defending player or a player in Possession.

10.2 A defending player may not claim a Touch if contact has not been made. If a player claims a Touch has been made but the Referee is unsure the Touch will count.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Attacking Team at the point of the Infringement and the offending player sent to the Sin Bin.***

10.3 Players of both Defending and Attacking Teams are to use the minimum force necessary to make a Touch. Players must ensure that the method employed in making a Touch does not pose an unnecessary risk to player safety.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the non-offending Team at the point of the Infringement.***

10.4 If the ball is accidentally knocked from the hands of a player in Possession during a Touch, the Touch counts and the Attacking Team retains Possession.

10.5 The defending player must not deliberately knock the ball from the hands of a player in Possession during a Touch.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Attacking Team at the point of the Infringement.***

10.6 A player must not pass or otherwise deliver the ball after a Touch has been made.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Defending Team at the point of the Infringement, or if In-Goal the nearest point on the seven (7) metre line.***

10.7 The Half may pass or run with the ball but cannot get Touched while in Possession of the ball.

***Ruling = A Change of Possession occurs at the point of the Touch, or if In-Goal the nearest point on the seven (7) metre line.***

10.8 If a Touch is made in the In-Goal Area before the ball is grounded, the player in Possession is to perform a Rollball seven (7) metres from the Team's Attacking Try Line, provided it is not the sixth Touch and the player is not Half.

10.9 If a player in Possession is Touched while on or behind their Defending Try Line, the Touch counts and once the Referee sets the mark seven (7) metres directly forward of the contact point from the Defending Team's Try Line, a Rollball is performed.

10.10 If a player in Possession intentionally makes a Touch on an Offside defender who is making every effort to retire and remain out of play, the Touch counts.

- 10.11** If a Touch is made on a player in Possession while the player is juggling the ball in an attempt to maintain control of it, the Touch counts if the attacking player following the Touch retains Possession.
- 10.12** If a player in Possession is Touched and subsequently makes contact with either the Sideline, a field marker or the ground outside the Field of Play, the Touch counts and play continues with a Rollball at the Mark where the Touch occurred.
- 10.13** When a player from the Defending Team enters its defensive Seven Metre Zone the Defending Team must move forward at a reasonable pace until a Touch is Imminent or made.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Attacking Team at the point of the Infringement.***

- 10.14** When a player in Possession enters the Defending Teams' Seven Metre Zone the Defending Team is not obliged to move Forward but cannot retire back towards their Try Line until a Touch is Imminent or made.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Attacking Team at the seven (7) metre line in line with the point of the Infringement.***

## **11 Passing ▶▶**

- 11.1** A player in Possession may not kick, pass, flick, knock, throw, hand-off or otherwise propel the ball in a Forward direction, either intentionally or otherwise to another player.

***Ruling = A Penalty will be awarded to the Defending Team at the Mark where the ball was propelled Forward unless Advantage is applied.***

- 11.2** A player in Possession may not intentionally kick, pass, flick, knock, throw, hand-off or otherwise propel the ball in a Forward direction over an opposition player and regain Possession.

***Ruling = A Penalty will be awarded to the Defending Team at the Mark where the ball was propelled Forward.***

## **12 Ball Touched in Flight ▶▶**

- 12.1** If a player from the Defending Team deliberately makes contact with the ball in flight and the ball goes to ground, the Attacking Team retains the ball and the Touch Count restarts as zero (0) Touch.
- 12.2** If a player from the Defending Team deliberately makes contact with the ball in flight and the ball is retrieved by an attacking player, without touching the ground, play continues and the next Touch is zero (0) Touch.
- 12.3** If a player from the Defending Team deliberately makes contact with the ball in flight, propelling it forward and an attacking player, in an attempt to regain possession, drops the ball, the Attacking Team retains Possession and the Touch Count restarts as zero (0) Touch.

- 12.4** If a player from the Defending Team deliberately makes contact with the ball in flight, propelling it towards the Defending Team's Dead Ball Line and an attacking player, in an attempt to regain possession drops the ball a Change of Possession occurs.
- 12.5** If a player from the Defending Team unintentionally makes contact with the ball in flight and the ball goes to ground a Change of Possession occurs.
- 12.6** If a player from the Defending Team unintentionally makes contact with the ball in flight and the ball is retrieved by an attacking player, play and the Touch Count continues.
- 12.7** A player from the Attacking Team cannot pass the ball into a defending player intentionally seeking a rebound or a restart of the Touch count.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Defending Team at the point of the pass.***

### **13 The Rollball ▶▶**

- 13.1** The attacking player is to position on the Mark, face the opponent's Try Line, make a genuine attempt to stand parallel to the Sidelines, place the ball on the ground between the feet in a controlled manner and:
- 13.1.1** step forward over the ball; or
- 13.1.2** roll the ball back between the feet no more than one (1) metre; or
- 13.1.3** pass a foot over the ball.

***Ruling = A Change of Possession to the Defending Team at the point of the Infringement.***

- 13.2** A player must perform the Rollball on the Mark.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Defending Team at the point of the Infringement.***

- 13.3** A player must not perform a Voluntary Rollball.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Defending Team at the point of the Infringement.***

- 13.4** A player must not delay in performing the Rollball.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Defending Team at the point of the Infringement.***

- 13.5** A player may only perform a Rollball at the Mark under the following circumstances:

- 13.5.1** when a Touch has been made; or
- 13.5.2** when Possession changes following the sixth Touch; or
- 13.5.3** when Possession changes due to the ball being dropped or passed and goes to the ground; or
- 13.5.4** when Possession changes due to an Infringement by an attacking player at a Penalty, a Tap or a Rollball; or

**13.5.5** when Possession changes after the Half is Touched or when the Half places the ball on or over the Try Line; or

**13.5.6** in replacement of a Penalty Tap; or

**13.5.7** when so directed by the Referee.

**13.6** A player is to perform a Rollball seven (7) metres in-field under the following circumstances:

**13.6.1** when a Change of Possession takes place due to a player in Possession making contact with the Sideline or any ground outside the Field of Play, prior to a Touch being made; or

**13.6.2** when the ball not in possession of a player makes contact with the Sideline or any ground outside the Field of Play.

**13.7** A player may not perform a Tap in replacement of a Rollball.

**Ruling = The offending Team must return to the Mark and perform the Rollball.**

**13.8** An attacking player, other than the player performing the Rollball, may receive the ball at the Rollball and shall do so without delay. That player is referred to as the Half.

**13.9** The Half may control the ball with a foot prior to picking up the ball.

**13.10** A player ceases to be the Half once the ball is passed to another player.

**13.11** Defending players are not to interfere with the performance of the Rollball or the Half.

**Ruling = A Penalty to the Attacking Team at a point ten (10) metres directly forward of the Infringement.**

**13.12** Players of the Defending Team must not move Forward of the Onside position until the Half has made contact with the ball, unless directed to do so by the Referee or in accordance with 13.12.1.

**13.12.1** When the Half is not within one (1) metre of the Rollball, Onside players of the Defending Team may move forward as soon as the player performing the Rollball releases the ball. If the Half is not in position and a defending player moves forward and makes contact with the ball, a Change of Possession results.

**13.13** If in the act of performing the Rollball, the Attacking player makes contact with the Sideline or any ground outside the Field of Play a Change of Possession will occur with the Rollball to be taken seven (7) metres in field.

**13.14** After a Touch is made between the Dead Ball Line and the seven (7) metre line, an Attacking Team is permitted to Rollball on the seven (7) metre line at a point directly in line with where the Touch was made.



## 14 Scoring ▶▶

- 14.1** A Try is worth one (1) point.
- 14.2** A Try is awarded when a player, other than the Half, places the ball on or over the Try Line without being Touched.
- 14.3** In attempting to score a Try, a player must have control of the ball prior to placing it on or over the Try Line.
- 14.4** If a Player places the ball on the ground and releases it short of the Try Line while attempting to Score a Try, the Player is required to perform a Rollball to restart play and a Touch is counted. If a Player does not release the Ball from their hands, the match continues and no Touch is counted.
- 14.5** At the End of Play the team that has scored the most Tries is declared the Winner. In the event of neither team scoring, or in the event of both teams scoring the same number of Tries, a draw is declared.

## 15 Offside ▶▶

- 15.1** At a Rollball, all players from the Defending Team must retire a distance of seven (7) metres or to the Defending Try Line as indicated by the Referee.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Attacking Team at the point of the Infringement or on the seven (7) metre line directly forward of the Infringement.***

- 15.2** At a Tap, all players from the Defending Team must retire a distance of ten (10) metres from the Mark or to the Defending Try Line as indicated by the Referee.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Attacking Team at the point of the Infringement or on the ten (10) metre line directly forward of the Infringement.***

- 15.3** At a Rollball or Tap, players from the Defending Team must not retire an unreasonable distance beyond the Defending Try Line.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Attacking Team at the point of the Infringement or on the seven (7) metre line directly forward of the Infringement.***

- 15.4** When a Rollball occurs within Defending Team's Seven Metre Zone or a Penalty Tap within ten (10) metres of the Defending Team's Try Line, all players from the Defending Team must have both feet on or behind their Try Line and no other part of the body in contact with the ground forward of their Try Line.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Attacking Team at the seven (7) metre line directly forward of the point of the Infringement.***

- 15.5** After effecting the Touch, the defending player must retire the required seven (7) metres or to the Defending Try Line as indicated by the Referee without interfering with the Attacking Team.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the Attacking Team ten (10) metres forward of the Infringement or if on the Defensive Try Line, on the seven (7) metre line.***

## **16 Obstruction ►►**

**16.1** A player in Possession must not run or otherwise move behind other attacking players or the Referee in an attempt to avoid an Imminent Touch.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the non-offending Team at the point of the Infringement.***

**16.2** The player in Possession is not to hold or otherwise impede a defending player in any way.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the non-offending Team at the point of the Infringement.***

**16.3** An attacking player in support of the player in Possession may move as necessary to achieve a supporting position but must not grab, hold, push or otherwise deliberately interfere with a defending player attempting to make a Touch

***Ruling = A Penalty to the non-offending Team at the point of the Infringement or on the seven (7) metre line if the Infringement occurs in the In-Goal Area.***

**16.4** Players in the Defending Team may not obstruct or interfere with an attacking player.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the non-offending Team at the point of the Infringement or on the seven (7) metre line if the Infringement occurs in the In-Goal Area.***

**16.5** Should a supporting, attacking player cause an apparent and involuntary or accidental Obstruction and the player in Possession ceases movement to allow a Touch to be made, the Touch is to count.

**16.6** If the Referee causes Obstruction on either an attacking player or a defending player including when the ball makes contact with the Referee, play should pause and recommence with a Rollball at the Mark where the interference occurred and the Touch count remains unchanged.

## **17 Interchange ►►**

**17.1** Players may Interchange at any time.

**17.2** There is no limit to the number of times a player may Interchange.

**17.3** Interchange players must remain in their Interchange Area for the duration of the match.

**17.4** Interchanges may only occur after the player leaving the Field of Play has entered the Interchange Area.

**17.5** Players leaving or entering the Field of Play shall not hinder or obstruct play.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the non-offending Team at the point of the Infringement.***

**17.6** Players entering the Field of Play must take up an Onside position before becoming involved in play.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the non-offending Team at the point of the Infringement.***

**17.7** When an intercept has occurred or a line break made, players are not permitted to Interchange until the next Touch has been made or ball becomes Dead.

***Ruling A = If a player enters the Field of Play and prevents the scoring of a Try, a Penalty Try will be awarded and the offending player sent to the Sin Bin.***

***Ruling B = If a player enters the Field of Play but does not impede the scoring of a Try the offending player will be sent to the Sin Bin.***

**17.8** Following a Try, players may Interchange at will, without having to wait for the player to enter the Interchange Area, but must do so prior to the Tap being taken to recommence play.

## **18 Penalty ▶▶**

**18.1** The Tap must be performed in accordance with the Definitions.

***Ruling = The Referee will instruct the offending Team to return to the Mark and perform the Tap again.***

**18.2** For Infringements that occur between seven (7) metre lines, the Mark for the Penalty Tap is at the point of Infringement unless otherwise indicated by the Referee.

**18.3** For Infringements that occur within the Seven Metre Zone the Tap must be taken at the nearest seven (7) metre line.

**18.4** For Infringements that occur beyond the Field of Play or in the In-Goal Area the Mark is seven (7) metres infield from the Sideline, or directly forward of the Infringement on the seven (7) metre line nearest the Infringement or at a position indicated by the Referee.

**18.5** The Mark must be indicated by the Referee before a Penalty Tap is taken.

**18.6** The Penalty Tap must be performed without delay after the Referee indicates the Mark.

***Ruling = A Penalty to the non-offending team at the point of Infringement.***

**18.7** A player may perform a Rollball instead of a Penalty Tap and the player who receives the ball does not become the Half.

**18.8** If the Defending Team is penalised three (3) times upon entering their Seven Metre Zone during a single Possession, the last offending player will be given an Exclusion until the end of that Possession.

**18.9** A Penalty Try is awarded if any action by a player, Team official or spectator,

deemed by the Referee to be contrary to the Rules or spirit of the game clearly prevents the Attacking Team from scoring a Try.

## 19 Advantage ▶▶

- 19.1 Where a Defending Team player is Offside at a Tap or Rollball and attempts to interfere with play, the Referee will allow Advantage or award a Penalty, whichever is of greater Advantage to the Attacking Team.
- 19.2 Should the Attacking Team in the act of taking the Advantage subsequently infringe, the Ruling on the initial Infringement will apply.

## 20 Misconduct ▶▶

- 20.1 Misconduct warranting Penalty, Forced Interchange, Sin Bin or Dismissal includes:
  - 20.1.1 Continuous or regular breaches of the Rules;
  - 20.1.2 Swearing towards another player, Referee, spectator or other match official;
  - 20.1.3 Disputing decisions of Referees or other match official(s);
  - 20.1.4 Using more than the necessary physical force to make a Touch;
  - 20.1.5 Poor sportsmanship;
  - 20.1.6 Tripping, striking, or otherwise assaulting another player, Referee, spectator or other match official; or
  - 20.1.7 Any other action that is contrary to the spirit of the game.

## 21 Forced Interchange ▶▶

- 21.1 Where the Referee deems it necessary to implement a Forced Interchange following an Infringement, the Referee is to stop the match, direct the ball to be placed on the Mark, advise the offending player of the reason for the Forced Interchange, direct that player to return to the Interchange Area, display the relevant signal and award a Penalty to the non-offending Team.

## 22 Sin Bin ▶▶

- 22.1 The on-field Referee is required to indicate the commencement and the end of the Sin Bin time.
- 22.2 Any player sent to the Sin Bin must stand in the Sin Bin Area at the opposition's end of the Field of Play and on the same side as their Interchange Area.
- 22.3 Any player sent to the Sin Bin must return to the Interchange Area prior to re-entering the Field of Play.
- 22.4 Any action that causes the Touch Count to restart will result in a continuation of that Possession. For the avoidance of doubt, should a defender knock the ball down or give away a Penalty, this does not mean that the Possession has been completed, but rather the Possession continues.

## 23 Dismissal ▶▶

- 23.1** A player or official dismissed for misconduct is to take no further part in that match and is to move to and remain outside the Perimeter for the remainder of the match.
- 23.2** The dismissed player or official cannot be replaced and, in accordance with TFA Disciplinary Regulations, that player shall receive an automatic two (2) match suspension.

## 24 Drop-Off ▶▶

- 24.1** Should a Winner be required in drawn matches, the following Drop-Off procedure is used to determine a Winner.
- 24.1.1** Each Team will reduce their on-field Team to four (4) players and within 60 seconds take up a position to restart play from the Halfway Line, defending the same end of the field as at the End of Play.
- 24.1.2** The Drop-Off commences with a Tap from the centre of the Halfway Line by the Team that did not commence the match with Possession.
- 24.1.3** The Drop-Off will commence with a two (2) minute period of extra time.
- 24.1.4** Should a Team be leading at the expiration of the two (2) minute period of extra time then that Team will be declared the Winner and Match complete.
- 24.1.5** Should neither Team be leading at the expiration of two (2) minutes, a signal is given and the match will pause at the next Touch or Dead Ball. Each Team will then remove another player from the Field of Play.
- 24.1.6** The Match will recommence immediately after the players have left the field at the same place where it paused (i.e. the Team retains Possession at the designated number of Touches, or at Change of Possession due to some Infringement or the sixth Touch) and the Match will continue until a Try is scored.
- 24.1.7** There is no time off during the Drop-Off and the clock does not stop at the two (2) minute interval.
- 24.1.8** Substitution during the Drop-Off is permitted in accordance with normal Interchange Rules.
- 24.2** Mixed gender Teams may have no more than (2) males on the field during the Drop-Off.
- 24.2.1** In the case of a male player serving time in the Sin Bin at the commencement of the Drop-Off the offending Team will start with no more than one (1) male on the field.
- 24.2.2** Where a male player has been dismissed for the remainder of the match, the offending Team will be permitted to have no more than one (1) male on the field for the duration of the Drop-Off.
- 24.3** At the commencement of the Drop-Off, if there is a player serving time in the Sin

Bin and is yet to complete the required time, their Team commences the Drop-Off with one (1) less player on the field than their opposition and continues to play with one (1) player less until the Sin Bin period has been completed.

**24.4** At the commencement of the Drop-Off, if a Team has had a player dismissed for the remainder of the match that Team continues to play with one (1) player less than the opposition Team for the duration of the Drop-Off.

**24.5** For the avoidance of doubt for clauses 24.3 and 24.4 the non-offending Team will retain a numerical advantage on the Field of Play during the Drop-Off.

## **25 Match Officials ▶▶**

**25.1** The Referee is the sole judge on all match related matters inside the Perimeter for the Duration of a match, has jurisdiction over all players, coaches and officials and is required to:

**25.1.1** Inspect the Field of Play, Line Markings and Markers prior to the commencement of the Match to ensure the safety of all participants.

**25.1.2** Adjudicate on the Rules of the game;

**25.1.3** Impose any sanction necessary to control the match;

**25.1.4** Award Tries and record the progressive score;

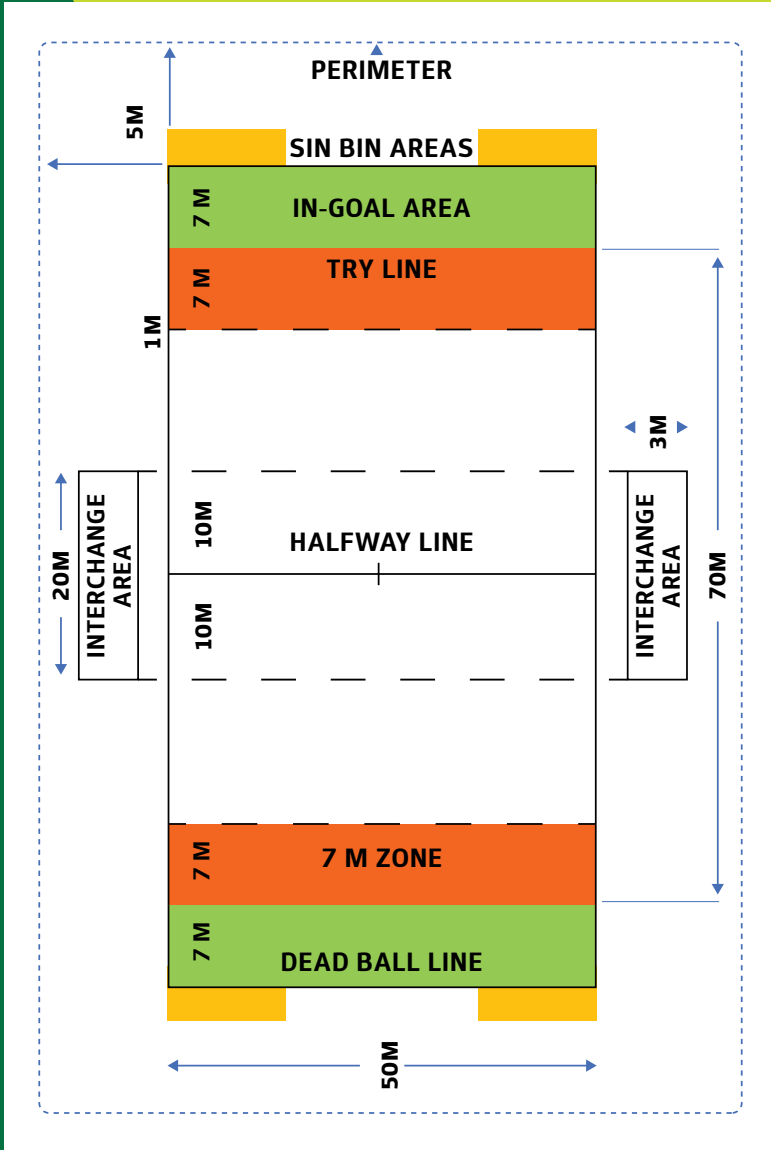
**25.1.5** Maintain a count of Touches during each Possession;

**25.1.6** Award Penalties for Infringements against the Rules; and

**25.1.7** Report to the relevant competition administration any Sin Bins, Dismissals or injuries to any participant sustained during a Match.

**25.2** Only Team captains are permitted to seek clarification of a decision directly from the Referee. An approach may only be made during a break in play or at the discretion of the Referee.

## Appendix 1 – Field of Play





**TOUCH FOOTBALL AUSTRALIA**