



**CANADA**

## **2026 TACKLE RULE CHANGES FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The following rule changes, clarifications, and corrections, approved by the Tackle Rules Committee, are for immediate distribution and implementation. ***(The changes are italicized and in bold type)***. They will be added to the next printed edition of the Rule Book due in May 2026.

### Rule 1 Section 3 Article 6(b) page 3

#### Article 6 – Tie Game

b) The officials will escort captains to the centre of the field for the coin toss. The winner of the toss shall choose one of the following options:

- 1) Offense or defense, with the offense at the opponent's 35-yard line to start.
- 2) Which end of the field shall be used for the overtime period.

Replace with

*b) The officials will escort captains to the centre of the field for the coin toss. The winner of the toss shall choose one of the following options:*

- 1) Offense or defense.*
- 2) Which end of the field shall be used for the overtime period.*

Reason for change: Editorial for clarity

### Rule 1 Section 3 Article 6(e) page 4

e) Scoring: The team scoring the greater number of points during an extra period shall be declared the winner. If the score is still tied after three extra periods having been played, any subsequent touchdown must be followed by a two-point conversion.

Replace with

*e) Scoring: The team scoring the greater number of points during an extra period shall be declared the winner. Any touchdown must be followed by a two-point conversion attempt.*

Reason for change: Promotes player safety by reducing the possibility of multiple overtime periods. Simplifies the explanation of the overtime procedures and conduct.

### Rule 1 Section 8 Article 1(h) page 7

h) Any part of a ball carrier, other than hands or feet, touches the ground, even without contact by an opponent. The ball shall be declared dead AT THE POINT WHERE IT WAS HELD when the ball carrier touched the ground. Exception: The ball is not dead when a player is holding the ball for a field goal or convert attempt.

Replace with

h) Any part of a ball carrier, other than hands or feet, touches the ground, even without contact by an opponent. The ball will be declared dead AT THE POINT WHERE IT WAS HELD when the ball carrier touched the ground. Exception: The ball is not dead when a player is holding the ball for a field goal or convert attempt. *The player holding the ball for a field goal or convert attempt may receive the snap with their knee down, then stand up to throw, run, lateral or kick the ball.*

Reason for change: Clarification Have the interpretation of the rule reflected in the rule.

**Rule 1 Section 11 Article 2(f) page 11**

f ) If any player loses their helmet the player must stop participating in the play. Penalty: L10 PBD or PBH.

Replace with

f ) If any player loses their helmet the player must stop participating in the play. Penalty: L10 PBD, **PLS** or PBH.

Reason for change: Clarification to cover if opponent is penalized behind the line of scrimmage

**Rule 1 Section 13 Article 5 page 14**

Article 5 – Injuries

During a stoppage in play for injury, or other reason, personnel of each team shall be allowed to enter the field with the Referee’s permission. Such personnel may attend to the injured player or bring water to the players on the field. Personnel shall not undertake any coaching activities while on the field.

The Referee need not permit the attendants of both teams to enter the field in case of injury to a player of 1 team only. When play has been stopped for a player injury or for equipment repair, that player shall be required to leave the game for at least three plays for the case of an injury or at least one play for equipment.

Penalty: L10, no option.

Replace with

Article 5 – Injuries

During a stoppage in play for injury, or other reason, personnel of each team shall be allowed to enter the field with the Referee’s permission. Such personnel may attend to the injured player or bring water to the players on the field. Personnel shall not undertake any coaching activities while on the field.

The Referee need not permit the attendants of both teams to enter the field in case of injury to a player of 1 team only. When play has been stopped for a player injury or for equipment repair, that player shall be required to leave the game for at least three plays for the case of an injury, **half-time will nullify the need to sit out any further plays due to injury, the time between the end of the game and overtime will not break the continuity of sitting out due to injury** or at least one play for equipment.

Penalty: L10, no option.

Reason for change: Clarification Purpose of time off is so player can be accessed Half time provides more then enough time for this reason.

**Rule 5 Section 2 Article 5(c) page 29**

c) On a kick off, Team A players may use their hands and arms to ward off blockers and may use their bodies in blocking against players protecting the ball carrier, provided that the initial contact is made at or above the waist. Any other form of blocking by Team A players is illegal interference.

Penalty: Ball in flight:

1. Foul in area of PP, or which affects the gaining of possession by B – Possession to Team B at PF.
2. Foul in area remote from PP, where the A player is not attempting to prevent possession from being obtained – L10 PP.

Note: If, after the foul, possession is gained in the end zone by B, the penalty shall be applied from the B 10 yard (10 metre) line, or option.

Ball in possession – L10 PBH.

Replace with

c) On a kickoff, Team A players may use their hands and arms to ward off blockers and may use their bodies in blocking against players protecting the ball carrier, provided that the initial contact is made at or above the waist. Any other form of blocking by Team A players is illegal interference.

Penalty: Ball in flight:

- Foul against an opponent who is playing or attempting to recover the ball – Possession to Team B at PF.
- Foul against any other opponent – L10 PP.

Ball in possession – L10 PBH.

Reason for change: Editorial for clarity

## **Rule 5 Section 4 Article 1 page 30**

### Article 1 – Offside beyond Line of Scrimmage (Restraining Zone Foul)

This article does not apply to a dribbled ball, or to a kick which does not cross the LS.

When on a kick from scrimmage (ball crosses the line of scrimmage), return kick or on an open-field kick, a player is offside in relation to the kicker, such player:

a) shall not touch or be touched by the ball.

Penalty: – in field of play – L15 from PBT (point ball touched)

– in goal area – L15, penalty applied at 10-yard line

b) shall allow 5 yards to an opponent attempting to gain possession of the kicked ball. The five-yard zone is determined by a circle with a five yard radius, with the centre point being the ball at the instant it is first touched.

Penalty: – in field of play – L15 from PBT

– in goal area – L15, penalty applied at 10-yard line

If the ball strikes the ground before being touched by the receiving team:

Penalty: – in field of play – L5 PBT or PBD

– in goal area – L5 penalty applied at 10-yard line or PBD..

c) If the kicking team player is making no effort to withdraw from the 5 yard zone, and is hovering over the ball or the receiving team player about to take possession of the ball:

Penalty: – L15 will apply at normal point of application regardless whether the ball bounced.

d) If the kicking team player interferes with a receiving team player attempting to gain possession of the kicked ball, with or without contact:

Penalty: – L15 from the normal point of application

A player of the kicking team who invades the five-yard zone, and contacts a receiving team player, who is attempting to play the ball in an unnecessarily rough manner, will be subject to an additional 15- or 25-yard penalty, regardless of whether the ball had struck the ground.

### Replace with

### Article 1 – Offside beyond Line of Scrimmage (Restraining Zone Foul)

This article does not apply to a dribbled ball, or to a kick which does not cross the LS.

When on a kick from scrimmage (ball crosses the line of scrimmage), return kick or on an open-field kick, a player is offside in relation to the kicker, such player:

a) shall not touch or be touched by the ball.

Penalty: – in field of play – L15 from PBT (point ball touched) **or L5 PBD**

– in goal area – L15, penalty applied at 10-yard line **or L5 PBD**

b) shall allow 5 yards to an opponent attempting to gain possession of the kicked ball. The five-yard zone is determined by a circle with a five-yard radius, with the centre point being the ball at the instant it is first touched.

Penalty: – in field of play – L15 from PBT **or L5 PBD**

– in goal area – L15, penalty applied at 10-yard line

If the ball strikes the ground before being touched by the receiving team:

Penalty: – in field of play – L5 PBT or PBD

– in goal area – L5 penalty applied at 10-yard line or PBD.

c) If the kicking team player is making no effort to withdraw from the 5-yard zone, and is hovering over the ball or the receiving team player is about to take possession of the ball:

Penalty: – L15 will apply at normal point of application regardless of whether the ball bounced **or L5 PBD**

d) If the kicking team player interferes with a receiving team player attempting to gain possession of the kicked ball, with or without contact:

Penalty: – L15 from the normal point of application **or L5 PBD**

A player of the kicking team who invades the five-yard zone, and contacts a receiving team player, who is attempting to play the ball in an unnecessarily rough manner, will be subject to an additional 15- or 25-yard penalty, regardless of whether the ball had struck the ground.

Reason for change: Safety A player inside the restraining zone while the ball is in the air is considered a dangerous situation, the possibility for the team to add 5 yards to end of run provides better option and may encourage less violations to the rule. It provides consistency with the 5-yard application option

**Rule 5 Section 4 Article 2(g) page 31**

g) On any kick from scrimmage (which excludes kickoffs) where the ball enters the end zone, the receiving team being able to successfully advance the ball legally out of the end zone and retain possession without returning the ball into the end zone, may choose to scrimmage at their own 20 yard (20 metre) line on or between the hash marks or where the ball becomes dead.

Note: When the ball has been legally advanced out of the end zone, the point ball held will be classed the B 20 yard (20 metre) line until the ball is carried beyond the B20, for any penalties to be applied at PBH.

Replace with

g) On any kick from scrimmage **or kickoff**, where the ball enters the end zone, the receiving team being able to successfully advance the ball legally out of the end zone and retain possession without returning the ball into the end zone, may choose to scrimmage at their own 20 yard (20 metre) line on or between the hash marks or where the ball becomes dead.

Note: When the ball has been legally advanced out of the end zone, the point ball held will be classed the B 20-yard (20 metre) line until the ball is carried beyond the B20, for any penalties to be applied at PBH.

Reason for change: Consistency and encourages a team to attempt to get ball out of end zone.

**Rule 6 Section 2 Article 10 page 35**

Section 2: Hand Off Pass (CB25)

A Hand Off Pass is made on a scrimmage play, when the ball is handed in any direction but not thrown, by one Team A player to another, behind the line of scrimmage.

The player receiving the pass must not at that point be occupying the position of a lineman.

There are no restrictions on the number of hand off passes on any one play.

A hand off pass in a forward direction is illegal following a completed Forward Pass.

Replace with

Section 2: Hand Off (CB25)

A Hand Off is made on a scrimmage play, when the ball is handed in any direction but not thrown, by one Team A player to another, behind the line of scrimmage.

The player receiving the hand off must not at that point be occupying the position of a lineman.

There are no restrictions on the number of hand-offs on any one play.

A hand off in a forward direction is illegal following a completed Forward Pass.

Reason for change: Editorial for clarity

**Rule 6 Section 4 Article 10 page 39**

Article 10 – Illegal Interference Penalties

Penalty: 2. By Team B

a) Behind the line of scrimmage – 1D at PLS

b) Across the line of scrimmage

– 1D at PF if less than 15 yards (15 metres) in advance of the PLS

– 1D plus 15 from the PLS, if the PF is more than 15 yards (15 metres) in advance of the PLS

Replace with

Article 10 – Illegal Interference Penalties

Penalty: 2. By Team B

**– 1D plus 15 from the PLS**

Reason for change: Consistency

**Rule 7 Section 3 Article 11 page 44**

Article 11 – Delayed Knee Blocking

It shall be illegal for a player to block an opponent, at or below the knees, at the time that the opponent is already being engaged by a team mate of the blocker, with or without physical contact.

Penalty for Unnecessary Roughness:

Team A – L15 from the appropriate spot, as per Rule 8, Section 5.

Team B – L15 from the appropriate spot, and 1D to Team A.

Replace with

**Article 11 - Chop Block**

**Occurs when two or more members of a team combine to block an opponent; one above the waist and the other below the waist. It is illegal whether the contact is simultaneous or it is delayed while the opponent is engaged with another player, be it high-low or low-high. That engagement may be visual or already established.**

**Team A – L15 from the appropriate spot, as per Rule 8, Section 5.**

**Team B – L15 from the appropriate spot, and 1D to Team A.**

Reason for change: Safety

**Rule 7 Section 4 Article 1 page 46**

**Section 4: Objectionable Conduct (CB35)**

**Article 1 – Objectionable Conduct**

- a) The use of profane, obscene, insulting language or gestures to an opponent, official, or spectator by any player, or occupant of the team bench is prohibited.
- b) Unsportsmanlike conduct, such as throwing the ball at an opponent, an official, or occupant of the team bench is prohibited.
- c) Tactics by players which delay or hinder the smooth operation of the game shall be penalized under this section. These tactics include spiking the ball, and/or deliberately throwing or kicking the ball away after it has been declared dead on a play.
- d) Running into, or contacting an official is to be avoided.

Penalty: 1) L10 from point where the ball would have been put into play if no other foul occurred, or added to the penalty for any other foul.

2) If an objectionable conduct penalty is called after the Referee has whistled time in for any down, the penalty will be L10 PLS DR, and the distance chains will not be moved (unless a first down is gained from a penalty against Team B).

If the foul is of a serious nature, the player or occupant of the bench may be disqualified with no distance penalty. A disqualified player or occupant of the bench may be banished from the game site at any time at the discretion of the Referee.

- e) If a player throws a punch at an opponent, without contact, it is considered Objectionable Conduct.
- f) A coach who is playing with the team shall be considered as a player when on the field. A coach who is operating as a trainer shall be restricted to trainer’s duties while attending an injured player on the field, and refrain from performing coaching duties at that time.
- g) If a player, coach, or any member of a team is assessed a second Objectionable Conduct penalty during a game the offending individual shall be removed from play.

Replace with

**Section 4: Objectionable Conduct (CB35)**

**Article 1 – Objectionable Conduct**

- a) The use of profane, obscene, insulting language or gestures to an opponent, official, or spectator by any player, or occupant of the team bench is prohibited.
- b) Unsportsmanlike conduct, such as throwing the ball at an opponent, an official, or occupant of the team bench is prohibited.
- c) Tactics by players which delay or hinder the smooth operation of the game shall be penalized under this section. These tactics include spiking the ball, and/or deliberately throwing or kicking the ball away after it has been declared dead on a play.
- d) Running into or contacting an official is to be avoided.

Penalty: 1) L10 from point where the ball would have been put into play if no other foul occurred or added to the penalty for any other foul.

2) If an objectionable conduct penalty is called after the Referee has whistled time in for any down, the penalty will be L10 PLS DR, and the distance chains will not be moved (unless a first down is gained from a penalty against Team B).

- e) If a player throws a punch at an opponent, without contact, it is considered Objectionable Conduct.
- f) A coach who is playing with the team shall be considered as a player when on the field. A coach who is operating as a trainer shall be restricted to trainer’s duties while attending an injured player on the field, and refrain from performing coaching duties at that time.
- g) If a player, coach, or any member of a team is assessed a second Objectionable Conduct penalty during a game the offending individual shall be removed from play.

*Note If the foul is of a serious nature, the player or occupant of the bench will be disqualified with a 25-yard penalty applied. A disqualified player or occupant of the bench may be banished from the game site at any time at the discretion of the Referee.*

Reason for change: Consistency of rules and enforce severity of this rule

**Rule 8 Section 6 Article 2(b) page 53**

b) If both penalties are accepted, in general, the distance penalties will be adjusted at one of 4 points. These points, as shown in the following articles are – PLS, PBH at the time of the first foul, the Point of Possession (PP) or PBH at time of second foul if the first foul was No Yards, 5-yard version.

**Replace with**

b) If both penalties are accepted, in general, the distance penalties will be adjusted at one of 4 points. These points, as shown in the following articles are – PLS, PBH at the time of the first foul, the Point of Possession (PP) or PBH at time of second foul if the first foul was No Yards, 5-yard version **or Team A offside on a kickoff**

Reason for change: Editorial to correct an error