

## **PDF Houston 7 vs 7 playing Guidelines and Rules**

### **Law 1 – The Field of Play**

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 55 yards maximum 65 yards

Width: minimum 35 yards maximum 45 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of eight (8) yards is marked around it.

The Goal area: Conform to FIFA.

The Penalty Area: A penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, fourteen (14) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of fourteen (14) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made ten (10) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

Flagposts: Conform to FIFA.

The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA.

Goals: Conform to FIFA with exception that the maximum distance between the posts is eighteen (18) feet and the maximum distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet.

### **Law 2 – The Ball: Size four (4).**

**Law 3 – The Number of Players:** A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than seven players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start if either team consists of fewer than five players.

Substitutions: At any stoppage and unlimited.

**Law 4 – The Players Equipment:** Conform to FIFA. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

**Law 5 – The Referee:** Registered referee.

**Law 6** – The Assistant Referee: Use U.S.S.F. registered referees or club linesmen/women.

**Law 7** – The Duration of the Match: Conform to FIFA with the exception of the match being divided into two (2) halves of thirty (30) minutes each. There shall be a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

**Law 8** – The Start and Restart of Play: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

**Law 9** – The Ball In and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

**Law 10** – The Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

**Law 11** – Offside: Conform to FIFA.

**Law 12** – Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA with the exception that an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the center spot on the halfway line if a goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball in the air from his/her penalty area into the opponents penalty area.

**Law 13** – Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents are at least eight (8) yards from the ball.

**Law 14** – The Penalty Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that the penalty mark is at ten yards and that players other than the kicker and defending goalkeeper are at least eight (8) yards from the penalty mark.

**Law 15** – The Throw-In: See Addendum 1.

**Law 16** – The Goal Kick: See Addendum 2.

**Law 17** – The Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents remain at least eight (8) yards away from the ball until it is in play.

**Addendum 1:** Out of Bounds Rule: PDF rules will incorporate this ruling for out of bounds plays on the sideline and for corners. Once the ball is out of bounds a player may retrieve the ball and bring it back to the side of the field. Once the ball has fully stopped the player has 2 options:

Option 1 - player can pass the ball inbounds keeping it below the referees waist height

Option 2 - player can make the decision to dribble the ball inbounds, once they have touched the ball the game is live.

Defenders must try to retreat 8 yards away from the ball once the ball has been stopped, players can be offside from an inbound pass.

**Addendum 2:** Goal Kick Rule: The restraining line is the edge of the center circle.

Players must wait for the receiving player to make their first touch before crossing the restraining line. Violation of this rule will result in a retake.

**Addendum 3:** No Punt Rule: Keepers can not punt the ball. Defensive team must drop back to the goal kick restraining line before the keeper is required to distribute the ball. Players must wait for the receiving player to make their first touch before crossing the restraining line. If the keeper places the ball on the ground to kick, opponents may cross the restraining line immediately. Violation by either team results in a retake.

**Addendum 4:** Add a player or players to the team that is getting beat until the score becomes more balanced.

**Addendum 5:** Remove a player from the team that is dominating the game. Not ideal for playing time if the team has several subs.

**Addendum 6:** Teams can also borrow players from other teams playing to make the game more balanced.

**Addendum 7:** Per USSF recommendations, no player is permitted to head the ball. Heading the ball will result in an indirect free kick for the other team from the spot of the infraction. If the player heads the ball in the penalty box, then the kick is taken from the top of the box.