

# NFFLA Travel Program Bylaws (2024)

## I. Mission & Vision

**NFFLA Mission.** The mission of the National Flag Football League of Atlanta, Inc. (hereafter referred to as NFFLA) is to offer individuals of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual or aromatic (hereafter referred to as LGBTQIA+) communities and straight allies, across all genders, an opportunity to meet and compete without fear of discrimination. The NFFLA is committed to providing the opportunity for these individuals to participate in flag football competitions at the local and national level.

**Travel Program Vision.** Through our Travel Teams Program, we aim to enhance the league's mission by building teams that compete with integrity and unity. Our focus is on selecting players who not only demonstrate skill and sportsmanship but also embody the core values of inclusivity and teamwork. With a "One Atlanta" mindset, our goal is to support each other, achieve collective success, and proudly represent the NFFLA in all endeavors, on and off the field.

## II. Travel Committee

**A. Travel Committee.** The NFFLA Travel Program is administered by the Travel Committee, which acts as a general manager of the travel team process by assisting teams with logistical issues, administering drafts, and communicating to the Board and NGFFL. The Travel Committee shall be responsible for implementing and managing the selection process of captains and players for the annual Pride Bowl and Gay Bowl tournaments.

**B. Travel Committee Composition.** The Travel Committee shall comprise of the Travel Committee Chair (Assistant Commissioner of NFFLA), two (2) Open Division representatives, and two (2) Women's+ (WTNB) Division representatives ("Divisional Representatives"). Committee members must have played or refereed in at least two (2) tournaments, one being sanctioned by the NGFFL.

1. The Board will appoint the Travel Committee to serve one year, March 1 - February 28/29.
2. The Travel Committee Chair shall nominate members to be appointed by the Board and serve as the liaison between the Board and Committee.
3. The Travel Committee Chair reserves the right to change the size of the Committee and have Board members serve as advisors.
4. The Chair will nominate additional members to be appointed by the Board.

**C. Travel Committee Member Resignation.** Travel Committee members can

resign at any time by written notice to the NFFLA Commissioner and the Committee Chair.

- D. Member Removal.** Any member of the Travel Committee can be removed at any time by a simple majority vote of the Board. The Travel Committee Chairperson will recommend to the Board a replacement to fill the vacancy. This recommendation must be made within two (2) weeks of the vacancy.
- E. Member Voting.** All members will have an equal vote. All votes pass by a simple majority. The NFFLA Commissioner will serve as a tie breaking vote. When collaborating with captains, each captain should have an equal vote.

### III. Teams & Player Eligibility

- A. Sanctioned Teams.** The NFFLA Board shall determine the number of teams for each tournament - Pride Bowl & Gay Bowl. The teams will be structured so that the most competitive team is fielded first (Team 1), followed by a second team and so on.
- B. Additional Teams.** In the event there is sufficient and sustainable interest within the NFFLA travel community for another team in any division and, contingent upon available capacity of the aforementioned tournaments, the NFFLA Board shall obtain feedback from the Travel Committee, before voting, on whether to sanction that team by majority rule. If approved, the Travel Committee Chair shall notify the greater community about the new team and its captain vacancy.
- C. Active Member Eligibility.** Any active NFFLA league member in good standing is eligible to participate in the travel program. Active Members must meet one of the following criteria:
  - 1. Played a minimum of four (4) games in the most recent or prior season.
    - a) For further clarity, a league member who does not meet the criteria at the time of the draft is ineligible, but if such league member then plays four (4) games during an active season, a captain could add them to the team off the Undrafted Reserve List, if a roster spot is available.
  - 2. Refereed a minimum of four (4) games in the most recent or prior season
    - a) For further clarity, a referee who does not meet the criteria at the time of the draft is ineligible, but if such referee then referees 4 games during an active season, a captain could add them to the team off the Undrafted Reserve List, if a roster spot is available.
  - 3. Currently serving on the NFFLA or NGFFL Board of Directors, or currently serving on any affiliated Governance Boards or Committees related to each.
- D. Appeals.** Appeals must be made to the TTGC, in writing, for consideration of special circumstances.
  - 1. **Pre-draft Appeals.** A team captain may make an appeal prior to the draft to select a player who doesn't meet the Active Member Eligibility under the

following circumstances:

- a) **Injury.** The player was an NFFLA Active Member and was injured and could not play in the most recent or prior season due to that injury. Must be in good standing.
  - b) **Relocation.** The player was an NFFLA Active Member, relocated, then moved back. Must be in good standing.
  - c) All pre-draft appeals must be made (7) days prior to the team selection deadline set by the Assistant Commissioner of the NFFLA.
2. **Post-draft Appeals. Captains must consider the Undrafted Reserve List before recommending and submitting a player** who has not previously expressed interest in order to validate their appeal. Any appeal under this section must include an explanation for why no player on the Undrafted Reserve List can fit the need. A team captain may make an appeal after the draft has closed to add a player who doesn't meet the eligibility requirements for Active Members or Pre-draft appeals under the following circumstances:
- a) **Loss of QB.** The drafted QB, due to an injury or extenuating circumstances can no longer play QB for the team.
  - b) **Roster depletion.** The drafted team roster drops below fourteen (14) players.

Post-draft appeals will be heard within (7) days from receipt of the appeal, timing permitted.

3. A maximum of (2) tournaments can be played by any player who is on a roster due to an appeal. The player must become an Active Member, as defined in the travel bylaws, in order to continue playing on our travel teams.
4. Meeting the above criteria does not guarantee a player will be added to a roster. The Travel Committee has the right to deny any appeal based on the best interest of the league. The Travel Committee decision is final and not subject to appeal.

#### IV. Drafts

- A. **Draft Schedule.** The Travel Committee will hold two (2) drafts each year. One (1) for Pride Bowl and one (1) for Gay Bowl. All team rosters will dissolve after Pride Bowl and the draft will begin anew for Gay Bowl. A supplemental draft will be held if necessary.
- B. The Travel Committee will publish all deadlines related to draft declaration, eligibility, and timing to the entire NFFLA.
- C. **Player Declaration.** Players entering the draft must indicate whether they want to enter the draft pool as a QB or Position Player. A player who submits their name for the QB draft pool but isn't selected as a QB is eligible to be selected as

Position Player.

**D. Drafted Players.** Once the draft is complete and rosters are approved by the Travel Committee, a player must play for the team that selected them.

1. A drafted player is prohibited from switching teams after the draft is complete, unless both captains of the affected teams and the Travel Committee approves of this change. No changes may be made within 30 days of a tournament under this provision.

**E. Draft Process.** The Travel Committee will establish the draft process for each tournament. The Board will approve the process.

## **V. Undrafted Players**

**A. Undrafted Players.** Undrafted players will go on an Undrafted Reserve List (“URL”).

**B. Undrafted Reserve List (“URL”).** The Divisional Representatives will reach out to the players who are not initially chosen for a travel team to gauge their interest in staying involved and create an Undrafted Reserve List (“URL”).

1. The Divisional Representatives will be responsible for keeping the Undrafted Reserve List (“URL”) up-to-date and available to the Travel Committee.

**C. Player Release.** The NFFLA’s objective is for players to play for teams that represent One Atlanta. If a player of good standing seeks a release, it must be in compliance and meet the requirements of the NGFFL bylaws and occur no less than ninety (90) days from Gay Bowl.

## **VI. Roster Changes**

**A. Player Unavailability.** A player may be determined ‘unavailable’ due to season-ending injury or definite absence (i.e. moving away from Atlanta area, work conflict, etc.)

1. Captains may remove ‘unavailable’ players from their roster by notifying the TTGC Chair.
2. Players removed from a roster due to unavailability shall not re-join any other team for that tournament.

**B. Replacement Players.** If a roster spot becomes available after the initial draft, the captain of the affected team has the right to fill that spot with any Active Member from the URL. The captain must submit their request to the Travel Committee. The requests will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis and must go through the post-draft procedures established by the Travel Committee.

## **VII. Team Captains**

**A. Captain Selection** The Board shall issue an all call for captains at the beginning of each calendar year. The Board shall vet the applicants and provide the list to the Travel Committee. The Travel Committee will then select the captains through the process established by the committee.

- B. Captain Term.** Captains are selected to serve for both Pride Bowl and Gay Bowl for that year. The term will automatically end after Gay Bowl.
- C. Co-captains.** Captains may appoint their own co-captains or leadership group.
- D. Captain Review.** The Travel Committee shall distribute a player survey to review captain performance at the end of each tournament (within two weeks of the last day of tournament). The Travel Committee will review the surveys with each captain.
- E. Captain Removal.** At any time, a captain may be removed by a majority vote of the Travel Committee. If there is a tie in the Travel Committee voting, the captain is retained. The Travel Committee shall give great deference to team input before taking this action. Teams may also petition the Travel Committee to remove a captain. This petition must be signed by half of its drafted team. Mid-year removal should only be enacted for cases of gross misconduct, negligence, and/or incompetence.
  - 1.** Any captain who **resigns** or is removed is still eligible to remain with the team as a player in that tournament, pending approval by a majority vote of the respective team.
  - 2.** If the team **removes** a captain from the roster, that player has the option of joining another team pending approval by that team's captain.
- F. Captain Replacement.** The Travel Committee will appoint new captains. This will be done by first looking within the current team for a replacement and giving great deference to team input. If a captain cannot be selected from within the team, the Board shall issue an all-call for a replacement captain and vet the list. The Travel Committee will then select the new captain.

**VIII. Recruitment.** The Tournament Committee will organize open tryout sessions for players interested in joining the travel program.

**IX. Sponsorship.** Individuals or teams intending to solicit sponsorship funds for travel teams must obtain approval in advance from the NFFLA Board of Directors to ensure no conflict of interest with existing league sponsorships.

**X. Changes To Bylaws.** These bylaws may be modified, altered, or added to by the Travel Committee. The Travel Committee will endeavor to drive consensus on any changes.

**A.** Changes to the bylaws require at least three-fourths vote by the Travel Committee members. In the case of a tie vote, the changes do not pass.

**B.** Every scenario that may arise cannot possibly have been addressed by these bylaws. If a scenario does arise that is not addressed here, The Travel Committee will address it in as fair a manner as possible.

<b>Change</b>	<b>Date</b>
Added new drafting processes (removed A and B in favor of Teams 1, 2, etc.	February 2019
Changed draft process for Team 3	July 2019
Remove language around Pride Bowl being an “open” tournament	July 2019
Modified/Reorganized	January 2023
Updated Wild Card (First team gets 3, others get 1, narrowed scope of who could be a Wild Card)	July 2023
Replacement Players -added must go through post draft procedures established by TTGC	July 2023
Roster Injury - removed this section. Replaced by language in Drafted Players section. All changes must be approved by TTGC, captains of both teams, and the player involved	July 2023
TTGC service - changed from Jan - Dec to match tournament cycle (March 1 - Feb 28/29)	December 2023
TTGC - changed to Travel Committee	July 2024
Committee Composition - 2 reps per division + AC chair	July 2024
Travel Vision - new	July 2024
Wild Card - removed	July 2024
Active Member Eligibility - defined, expanded criteria	July 2024
Appeals - Defined process and criteria for pre and post-draft appeals	July 2024

Player Release - must meet NGFFL guidelines	July 2024
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