

2019 LOS (Head Linesman & Line Judge) POSITION GUIDE

Pre-Game Conference/Duties

1. **Both**, arrive no less than 90 minutes prior to start of the game.
2. **Both**, respond back to Referee's email during the week.
3. **Both**, be Professional.
 - a) Dress appropriately when arriving at the game site.
 - b) Show respect for the school's program and our association.
 - c) Remember perception is important.
4. **Both**, play a role and provide feedback during the pre-game conference.

On Field Pre-Game Duties

1. The **HL** will meet with Chain Crew and ball persons.
 - a) The Chain Crew shall meet with the **HL** on the sideline opposite the press box at least 15 minutes before game time.
 - b) The **HL** shall make certain that the chains and the official down box have been placed opposite the press box or the designated sideline and that all are in good working order.
 - c) The Chain Crew must refrain from showing any partisan reaction to the events taking place on the playing field. The Chain Crew must be prepared to act immediately on taking instructions from the **HL** so that teams will know the exact situation concerning the down and yards to be gained. The Chain Crew shall not move or change the number of the down until signaled to do so by the **HL**.
 - d) On the **HL** signal, the Chain Crew must move as quickly as possible to the next position.
 - e) When a runner or pass receiver is going out of bounds in the immediate vicinity, the involved Chain Crew member is to move quickly, drop the marker and move away from the sideline keeping his eye on the spot of the marker. The Chain Crew member away from the play should hold his position if possible.
 - f) The **HL** will set the spot (with his heel) of all first downs by going to the sidelines and marking, while facing the field, the exact spot where the rear stake will be set. The front crew member will then be sure the chain is fully extended before setting his stake.
 - g) The Down-Box Operator is to show the number of the down just completed and shall not indicate the new down until so notified. On instruction, the Down-Box Operator will move the down marker to a new position with the marker placed at the forward point of the ball and change the marker to the correct down.
 - h) On all measurements for first down when the chain is moved onto the field, the Down-Box Operator is to place his marker at/off the spot of the front rod until a new series of downs is declared or the chain is returned to its previous position.
 - i) The Down-Box Operator should be aware of any penalty markers.
 - i. If the game is delayed for any reason, the Chain Crew will stay with the officials.

- ii. Operating the equipment outside and within 6 feet of the sideline is for the protection of players, coaches and all persons who are part of the game.
2. The **LJ** will instruct ball personnel on their sideline.
3. **Both**, introduce yourself to your Head Coach prior to start of the game.
4. Familiarize yourself with both teams during pre-game warm-up and be involved with their snaps.

Coin Toss Procedures

1. Make sure the team captains and teams are on the field at the appropriate time. Escort captains to middle of the field; make sure you stop once you have reached the bottom of the numbers which is the nine yard mark. If the **HL** needs assistance due to Chain Crew responsibilities, ask the **BJ** to assist.
2. After the toss, all officials will meet in the middle of the field, record results, then jog to their specific kickoff positions.

Time Out Procedures

1. **HL** - stay with team or Chain Crew near the sideline, inside nine-yard markers and away from team huddle.
2. **LJ** – stay with team near their sideline, inside nine-yard markers and away from team huddle.
3. **THIS IS NOT A TIME TO TALK WITH OTHER OFFICIALS, UNLESS THERE IS SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO DISCUSS. ABSOLUTELY NO B.S. DURING TIME OUTS.**

Measurement Procedures

1. HEAD LINESMAN

- a. To measure, instruct box person to place box at the forward stake.
- b. Ensure the clip is on the proper five-yard line and securely fastened to the chain.
- c. While holding the clip, jog onto the field with the Chain Crew and place the clip at the spot on the field indicated by the **R**.
- d. If it is a first down, drop the clip, move to sideline and mark the spot. If it is not a first down, return clip to the correct spot on sideline.
- e. If there is a possibility that the down may be replayed due to an inadvertent whistle or when penalty enforcement is involved, the box shall remain at the previous spot.

2. LINE JUDGE

- a. Alert the **R** to plays ending close to first downs.
- b. **BE VOCAL**. Let the **R** know Close, Close, Close or that you have a **First Down**. The **R** will stop the clock if a measurement is required.
- c. Clear area of players so chains can be brought in unhindered.
- d. If a measurement is needed mark the spot for the **HL** to place the clip with your foot in line with the tail of the football.
- e. Stop the clock on obvious first downs, then alert the **R**.

Foul Procedures

Both

1. Do not pick up or move any flags until foul has been enforced.
2. Make certain that down box and chains are not moved until penalty is enforced.
3. If player is disqualified, the official making the call will be accompanied by the **R** to the disqualified player's sideline to report to the coach the ejection and reason for ejection. If the **R** is the official making the call, the **R** will be accompanied by the respective flank on the disqualified player's sideline.
4. **LOS Official** closest to the penalty flag will cover the flag to make certain it is not moved.
5. Give a preliminary signal whenever possible. The goal is to enforce the penalty as quick as possible.
6. **HL** will walk off penalty with **U** and **LJ** will verify they walked off correct yardage.

FREE KICKS

ALWAYS BE READY FOR SHORT/ON-SIDE AND/OR POOCH KICK

Head Linesman

1. Go to your position, **opposite the press box**, on the **receiving team's** restraining line at the sideline. Have your team on the field within one minute following a score. Be in the vicinity of the huddle to bring the team out.
2. Count the receiving team (use eyes not finger's). Signal accordingly for less than/greater than/or equal to 11 players.
3. Hold the bean bag in your hand. Anticipate first touching.
4. Provide the ready signal **only when** the team count is correct, the receiving team is in position, the sideline is clear, you are ready and the **BJ** signals he is ready. Be ready before the whistle

Line Judge

1. Go to your position, **press box side**, on the **receiving team's** restraining line at the sideline. Have your team on the field within one minute following a score. Be in the vicinity of the huddle to bring the team out.
2. Count the kicking team (use eyes not finger's). Signal accordingly for less than/greater than/or equal to 11 players. Confirm with **BJ**.
3. Hold bean bag in hand. Anticipate first touching
4. Provide ready signal only when count is correct, kicking team is in position, sideline is clear, you are ready, and the **BJ** signals he is ready. Be ready before the whistle

Both

1. Identify your keys, which are the nearest four players of the kicking team.
2. Watch the receiver's restraining line for encroachment by receiving team.
3. Quickly check the direction of the ball (short, long, left, or right). If it is a short kick, look for first touching by kicking team and use your bean bag as needed. On a kick out of bounds, throw flag to the out of bounds spot. If the team on your sideline is the offended team, get the enforcement choice from the coach and advise the **R**.

4. Drift to the R40 watching play in front of the runner. Assume coverage of the runner and determine progress after the runner reaches the R30. You have progress to the goal line.
5. On plays to the opposite side, mirror **LJ** movement downfield. With wide vision, watch blocking and look for illegal acts. Use cross-field mechanics where appropriate.
6. When the runner is downed in your coverage zone, stop the clock. Place the ball at your feet until the incoming ball is spotted. Duplicate other official's signals if play does not end in your coverage zone.
7. **On anticipated short free kicks (during onside kick), when the ball is kicked to your side of the field, you have primary responsibility for the ball. Be prepared to rule on whether the ball has advanced beyond R's restraining line and team possession at the end of the play.**
8. On anticipated short free kicks, when the ball is kicked away, take a wide view and assist with backside blocks.
9. You are responsible for the runner and action in front of the runner when plays are coming to you.
10. Your responsibility when the runner goes to the opposite side of the field is clean up and safety related fouls.

SCRIMMAGE PLAY

Head Linesman and Line Judge

Acknowledge that the **R** has 11 players on offense. Read the offensive formation and know your eligible receiver responsibilities. Be alert for obvious movement of restricted linemen, especially Tackles on your side and be prepared to help with other linemen who are not detected by other officials. Watch for illegal formations, including encroachment prior to the snap and false starts by the Tackle and players outside the Tackle on your side. Indicate the offensive line of scrimmage by extended foot, then take final position straddling the neutral zone. If a player goes in motion, observe them if they are on your side of the ball (direction of the motion does not matter) to ensure the motion is legal. That does not relieve the opposite official from making an obvious call. The basic starting position is just outside the sideline and on the line of scrimmage. The width varies depending on the game situation (on short yardage plays, the **HL** and **LJ** may choose to pinch the ends; however, at no time should you allow players to line up behind you. The **LJ** or **HL** assist the **R** regarding the status of the game clock as needed.

2019 Mechanic change - covering officials will use the dead ball signal (s7) when the play clearly ends and there is no other reason to stop the clock.

Running Play

Head Linesman and Line Judge:

Observe the initial action on or by the offensive player who is your key, especially if he is pressed. Observe the blocking in front of the runner behind the line of scrimmage on runs to your side or in the neutral zone. Determine forward progress when necessary. When the flow of play is away from your position, clean up action behind the play.

Passing Play

Head Linesman and Line Judge:

The basic responsibility for preliminary action on the line is the same as during a running play. When you read a forward pass, your primary responsibility is to your receiver, so be prepared to move downfield along the sideline at a pace that allows you to stay in control and maintain focus on your keys. This could be quickly, more slowly or not at all depending on how the play develops and the pace and routes of the receivers. Keep in mind that you can still maintain coverage of your key even if reading the play would position you closer to the line of scrimmage. Movement should be deliberate and with purpose and avoid any preset distance that you feel you should always achieve. Rarely will your drift be more than ten yards downfield prior to the pass being thrown; however, that could be extended in certain situations such as the long pass at the end of a half to the end zone, or fourth and long when all receivers are going a greater distance. **Note:** The drift should only take place if your key takes you downfield. For example, if your key stays in to block, you should not move downfield. If your key does move downfield, do not advance beyond him. Once the pass is thrown, especially if thrown in your area of responsibility, reducing movement while the ball is in the air will improve your ability to see the play more accurately.

If your receiver is not threatened, assist with the tackle on your side or other receivers in the 0 to ten yard belt if they are threatened. You are responsible for covering pass receptions in the area between the line of scrimmage, from your sideline to the closest hash mark. If the pass is thrown out of your area, observe the action of players other than the pass receiver after you have observed the pass being caught, intercepted or incomplete. The offside line of scrimmage official has primary responsibility for ineligible downfield. When a pass is thrown to your side of the field, be prepared to rule on whether the pass is forward or backward behind the line of scrimmage. Also, be prepared to punch either forward or backwards when ruling on this play.

Scrimmage Kick

Both

1. Take your basic position and officiate as on a scrimmage play
2. Count the team on your sideline and look for confirmation from **R** and or **BJ** that he has eleven players, depending on whether the team on your sideline is K or R.
3. View formation to see that they have at least seven (7) players on the line of scrimmage.
4. View the position of the outside kicking team players. Know who is eligible to catch a pass.
5. Look to see that the ball has been kicked and quickly see where the ball is headed (i.e. short, long, right, left). **DID THE BALL CROSS THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE, HIT THE GROUND OR A PLAYER?**
6. **Normal Kick** – View the blocking and action around the kicking team's eligible players (the widest players on your side) and view line action until the ball clears. After the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage, quickly release down the field and parallel the play from the outside with wide vision. Continue to watch the action as the players and ball move toward the receiver. Observe blocking down the field and in front of the runner. Mark first touching with a bean bag.

7. **Bad Snap** – When there is a bad snap on a scrimmage kick and the play goes deep into the backfield, **the flank facing the Referee** will follow the ball back and bracket the ball with the R.
8. **Kick Out of Bounds** – Medium to short kicks going out of bounds on the bounce, you are responsible for your side of the field.

2019 Update - Both flanks should adjust going down field depending on the distance of the kick and on which side of the field. Flanks need to assist back judge for fair catch signals and if a player blocks after giving a fair catch signal. For kicks under 20 yards should be covered by the flanks.

Field Goal and TRY

THE FLANK OFFICIAL FACING THE REFEREE WILL STAY ON THE LOS. THE OTHER FLANK OFFICIAL WILL BE UNDER THE GOAL POST WITH THE BACK JUDGE

- **Under Goal Post**

1. As the ball arrives at the goal post, step-up and look straight-up to determine if the ball was kicked between the uprights and not directly over the goal post.
2. Verbally communicate with the **BJ** as to the success or failure of the kick.
3. On fake plays, be ready to cover passes or runs as usual. You are responsible for the goal line and sideline

- **On LOS**

1. After the snap, observe the legality of the blocks of the backs protecting the kick
2. You are responsible for the goal line plane.
3. If it is a pass, observe any illegal lineman downfield. This is your responsibility along with the umpire.
4. If a field goal is blocked, you are responsible in determining if the kick crossed the neutral zone or the goal line and where it is recovered and by whom.
5. After the kick, hustle in to the hash to dead ball officiate.

- **Swinging Gate**

When a team comes out in a swinging gate formation, **you will stay on the LOS the entire play**. No matter if they shift back to a Try formation

Goal Line Procedures

1. **Don't** ever get beat to the Goal Line. That being said, don't be in such a hurry on a long play to the goal line that you miss a safety foul on your way down field.
2. From the **Ten-Yard line going in**, your first movement is to the goal line and you must stay there until the play is over. Even if the line to gain is in question, **STAY ON THE GL.**
3. When there is a close play at the goal line and you are pinching in to determine the spot. You must **ALWAYS** pinch in the field of play and **NEVER** pinch in the end zone. Once you've determined TD you may then step into the end zone and signal.
4. When players are coming toward your pylon, step back as far as possible in order to get the best look at the play.

Reverse Goal Line

1. From the **Ten-Yard line going out**, you need to communicate with the **R** who is responsible for the **GL**.
2. From the **Five-Yard line going out**, your first move is to the **GL** and hold that spot until the **GL IS NO LONGER THREATENED**.
3. Remember, when at all possible the ball carrier has made it out of the **END ZONE** as opposed to the result of the play being a **SAFETY**.

Additional Items

1. Know where you are at on the field in relationship to the first down marker. **HL**, eliminate using the winding the clock signal along with stopping clock after a first down is gained.
2. Instruct the ball boys to get a ball to the closest official when one is needed from your sideline. They don't always have to look for you.
3. The goal is to get a ball down on the field and keep the pace of play rolling.