



Bylaws

The governing document of the National Gay Flag Football League

Date: May 2023

VISION

Proudly foster community, camaraderie, and inclusivity by providing LGBTQ+ individuals with opportunities to compete, connect and unite through flag football competition.

SUPPORTING AGENDA FOR VISION

Share flag football with more and more LGBTQ+ people, advancing excellence in our sport while embracing our sense of community to enrich the lives of all involved. We will:

- Elevate the Gay Bowl experience
- Drive membership growth and local leagues
- Develop national partnerships
- Give back more than we take

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is a fundamental principle of National Gay Flag Football League that all social and athletic activities are to be inclusive in nature and that no individual shall be excluded from participating based on sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, political beliefs, athletic ability, physical challenge, HIV status, or gender identity.

The National Gay Flag Football League promotes gender inclusion by allowing players to self-identify gender; the gender that a player identifies with is considered to be that player's gender.



1. ORGANIZATION

These bylaws set out the rules of the National Gay Flag Football League (NGFFL) – a nonprofit membership organization with voting members.

2. PRELIMINARY

In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires:

- a. The singular includes the plural and vice versa.
- b. “Board” means the NGFFL governing body and is comprised of “Officers” as stated in Section 9.
- c. “Member Organization” means a city, state or regional organization that is officially recognized by, and registered with, the NGFFL. A Member Organization that is comprised of more than one or multiple “sub-organizations” (e.g., traveling teams, local leagues, other affiliated clubs) in a given local market will have only one vote on NGFFL Member Organization Voting Matters. The Board will maintain a list of who the designated points of contact (See Section 4.6) is for each member organization.
- d. “Register” means the Register of Members including relevant information.
- e. “Month” means calendar month.
- f. “Year” means NGFFL financial year ending on December 31.
- g. “Roster” means the player names, addresses and any other relevant information that comprises a member team.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of NGFFL are:

3.1. Educate and encourage community through amateur flag football.

To be a nonprofit organization dedicated to changing communities through amateur flag football. To present amateur flag football as a means to educate, change attitudes, promote self-discovery, and build esteem within the LGBTQ+ community, and in the communities in which LGBTQ+ people work, live, and play.

3.2. Affiliate broadly.

Support, ally, and partner with other entities seeking to achieve similar aims.

3.3. Promote local leagues to advance that education.

Foster formation of Member Organizations in locations where they do not exist and support those organizations’ growth and success as the primary method of pursuing the aim of Section 3.1 above. Provide programs and resources to help member organizations recruit, educate and retain players to achieve broader impact in educating, changing attitudes, and promoting self-discovery.

3.4. Promote national and international competition.

Achieve the above aims by planning, promoting and carrying out or supporting flag football tournaments and other competition opportunities.



4. MEMBERSHIP IN THE NGFFL

4.1. Eligibility for Membership

Any organization in a city, state, or region interested and/or engaged in amateur flag football for and interested in pursuing the Aims and Objectives of NGFFL may apply to become a Member Organization of the NGFFL.

4.2. Approval of Membership

Any organization that meets the above criteria, and is willing and able to be a Member Organization in Good Standing, may be accepted as an NGFFL Member Organization by a simple majority vote of the Board.

4.3. Expectations of Membership

All Member Organizations are expected to adhere to and support the NGFFL vision and non-discrimination policy. All Member Organizations are expected to serve, first and foremost, the LGBTQ+ community.

4.4. Expectation of Member-Organization Maturation

The goal of the NGFFL is the formation of local LGBTQ+ flag football leagues, per the Aims and Objectives outlined in these Bylaws. (See Section 3.) While fledgling organizations may become NGFFL Member Organizations and participate in the Gay Bowl and other tournaments before they achieve critical mass to form a league, the local league is still the goal of NGFFL membership. Thus, incoming Member Organizations that are not yet local LGBTQ+ flag football leagues are provided a finite amount of time to establish a local league, one that is governed by bylaws and led by elected leaders.

4.5. Allowable Timetable for Maturation.

By December 31 of the calendar year following a local entity's acceptance as an NGFFL Member Organization, that entity must provide the NGFFL with bylaws that have been passed by a voting process and that demonstrate that a league is in place, representative of the local LGBTQ+ community, and led by elected leaders.

4.6. Implication of Missed Milestone.

Member Organizations that fail to meet the requirement of 4.4.1 shall be deemed "Member Organizations in Probate Standing" and relinquish their vote on all NGFFL Member Organization Voting Matters. That vote shall be relinquished until the time at which the requirements of 4.4.1 are met and affirmed by a simple-majority Board vote.

4.7. Unachieved Maturation.

Once a Member Organization has been in Probate Standing for two years, the Board may call a vote among Member Organizations in Good Standing to dismiss that Member Organization. The intent is that such situations are considered on a case-by-case basis.



4.8. Grandfathering.

December 31, 2018, NGFFL Member Organizations in Good Standing must meet the requirements of Section 4.4.1 above or become a Member Organization in Probate Standing.

4.9. Rejected Memberships

An application to become a Member Organization may be rejected by the Board if the Board believes the applicant does not fully support the Aims and Objectives of the NGFFL, or for any other reason supported by a majority vote of the Board. Where the Board votes to reject an application, a designated Director must inform the applicant of the reason for rejection. Rejected applicants may appeal in writing at the next Board Meeting.

4.10. Member Organization Designated City Leaders and Gay Bowl Delegates

By January 31 of each calendar year, each Member Organization is required to submit to the NGFFL identification of the designated City Leader and the Gay Bowl Delegate. The City Leader is the individual responsible for representing the Member Organization in Voting Matters other than Gay Bowl matters for that calendar year; the Gay Bowl Delegate is the individual responsible for representing the Member Organization in Voting Matters relating to Gay Bowl for that calendar year (see section 11.1). If the Member Organization so chooses, the same individual may fill both roles.

Even if there is no change, the Member Organization must provide an update, which includes accurate and up-to-date contact information. Should a Member Organization's City Leader or Gay Bowl Delegate change during the calendar year, the Member Organization is responsible for providing the NGFFL with updated information. The NGFFL will hold responsibility for maintaining an up-to-date database of City Leaders and Gay Bowl Delegates for Member Organizations, but is not responsible for incomplete, late, or inaccurate information provided by Member Organizations.

4.11. Member Organization Additional Points of Contact

Member Organization may provide the NGFFL with up to three (3) Additional Points of Contact, which the NGFFL will gladly copy on official communications related to voting matters. But Member Organizations may only have one City Leader and one Gay Bowl Delegate.

4.12. Member Organization Proxy

A Member Organization may appoint a proxy on Member Organization Voting Matters to serve as either proxy City Leader or proxy Gay Bowl Delegate on associated Voting Matters. That proxy may be a related LGBTQ+ flag-football team, club, or similar entity from the Member Organization's PAUGA that represents the local league. For instance, it may be an entity focused specifically on fielding teams at national-level competitions. The Member Organization must certify to the Board in writing annually that it has appointed said proxy. That appointment must then be approved by a simple majority vote of the Board. Any Proxy organization must meet the requirements of Section 4.6.



5. SUSPENSION OR CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP

5.1. Good Standing

A Member Organization is considered "In Good Standing" as long as it is current on its annual membership dues to the NGFFL (per Section 7.1), is not in conflict or violation of the NGFFL Vision, or Aims and Objectives, and is not in temporary suspension or dismissal (see Section 5.5 below.) and has met the local-organization requirements as spelled out in Section 4.4.

5.2. Probate Standing

A Member Organization is considered "In Probate Standing" if it has failed to meet the requirements of Section 4.4.1. A Member in Probate Standing must continue to meet the requirements of being a Member In Good Standing; it must remain current on its annual membership dues to the NGFFL (per Section 7.1), not be in conflict or violation of the NGFFL Vision, or Aims and Objectives, and not be in temporary suspension or dismissal. (see Section 5.5 below.)

5.3. Resignation

A Member Organization may cease to be a Member Organization of the NGFFL by notifying the league in writing of its resignation.

5.4. Nonpayment of Dues

The Board may recommend temporary suspension of a Member Organization, or outright removal of a Member Organization, that does not pay its membership dues the NGFFL.

5.5. Temporary Suspension

The Board reserves the right to call a vote to temporarily suspend a Member Organization from participating in a league-sponsored event such as the Gay Bowl national championship tournament if that Member Organization is found by the Board to be in conflict with the Vision, or Aims and Objectives, of the NGFFL. Temporary suspension requires a two-thirds majority vote of the Board.

5.6. Dismissal

The Board reserves the right to call a vote to permanently dismiss a Member Organization if that Member Organization is in violation of the Vision, or Aims and Objectives, of the NGFFL. Dismissal requires a three-fourths majority vote by the board.

6. LIABILITIES

6.1. Liability of Member Organizations

The liability of a Member Organization to contribute towards the payment of the debts and liabilities of NGFFL or the cost, charges and expenses of dissolving NGFFL is limited to the amount of the annual membership dues paid to the NGFFL. Member Organizations will not be responsible for any outstanding debt of the NGFFL beyond this membership fee.

6.2. Liability of the NGFFL

NGFFL is not responsible for any obligations and/or liabilities of its Member Organizations.



7. FINANCES

7.1. Membership Dues

The annual membership dues payable by a Member Organization will be set by majority vote of the Board. Dues may be assessed and vary depending on level of participation.

Membership dues are to be invoiced to each Member Organization by the Board sixty (60) calendar days before payment is due. Dues will be due annually on the last day of April. The Board may not increase dues by more than twenty percent (20%) of the previous year's amount without majority approval of Member Organizations.

7.2. Other Fees

The Board may elect to charge additional fees to Member Organizations, as necessary and as approved by a majority vote of the Board. Any additional fees that would represent a fifty percent (50%) or more increase over what the NGFFL charged Member Organizations in Membership Dues the previous calendar year must be approved by the Member Organizations by a majority vote.

7.3. Annual Operating Budget

At the beginning of each calendar year, the Treasurer shall prepare an operating budget for review and approval by the Board. The Board will approve the operating budget by a three-fourths majority vote. The Board will make it available to Member Organizations at any time.

7.4. Monthly Treasurer's Reports

The Treasurer will produce Treasurer's Reports to be reviewed and approved at each regularly scheduled monthly Board Meeting. Treasurer's Reports will be based on best practices for nonprofit organizations of the NGFFL's size and will include basic elements such as revenue, expenses, cash on hand, and actual revenue and expenses compared to budget. Approval of the Treasurer's Report requires a two-thirds majority vote of the Board.

7.5. Cash Management

At all times, no less than two members of the Board must have full visibility into and access to the NGFFL's bank account(s) and other assets. That includes bank-account usernames and passwords.

8. GOVERNANCE AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

8.1. Composition

The NGFFL will be governed by its Board of Directors, accountable for all aspects of NGFFL operations. The Board shall consist of the positions indicated in Amendment A.

8.2. Election of Commissioner

On every even-numbered calendar year, the Commissioner of the NGFFL shall be elected by majority vote by the Member Organizations, via secret ballot, at the organization's annual national-championship tournament, the Gay Bowl. By a date 28 calendar days prior to the start of on-field play at Gay Bowl, the Board shall have collected and announced to the Member Organizations the candidates for Commissioner. The candidate that receives the



most votes shall win. In the event of a tied vote, the sitting Commissioner shall cast the deciding vote. The election will be facilitated and completed, and the results announced, during Gay Bowl weekend while Member Organizations are gathered in person.

Candidates for Commissioner must meet the following criteria:

- not currently holding a leadership or similar position within another organization at beginning of term.
- has prior or existing experience with local leagues or non-profit.

8.3. Election of Board Members

On every calendar year immediately following the Gay Bowl, but no later than November 30, the Board will facilitate an election via secret ballot to fill open Director positions. Candidates will not run for a specific position on the Board; assignments and responsibilities will be determined by each Board.

The Board will announce results no later than 48 hours following the completion of the election. New Directors, including the new Commissioner when applicable, will assume office by the December Board meeting of that year.

8.4. Qualifications

Any individual that is or has been a Member in Good Standing of an NGFFL Member Organization, or who is not part of a Member Organization Not in Good Standing, is eligible to serve on the Board of Directors.

It is strongly recommended but not required that individuals who have served in leadership positions in Member Organizations stand for election to the Board of Directors.

8.5. Term

Directors will serve two-year, staggered terms. Approximately one-half of the Board will be up for reelection every year.

8.6. Resignation

Any Director may resign in writing to the Board at any time. Any Director who is proven to have fallen out of good standing with a Member Organization, or is incapable of serving, shall be deemed to have resigned as a Director.

8.7. Removal

Any Director may be removed at any time by a vote of two-thirds of the Directors then in office, including the one being considered for removal.

8.8. Replacement

The Board may appoint a replacement for a resigned Director by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board to fill out the remainder of that Director's term.

9. OFFICERS

9.1. Positions and Roles



Director and officer positions and their roles are described in Amendment A.

10. MEETINGS

10.1. Annual Meeting

The NGFFL shall hold an Annual Meeting every calendar year in the form of an open conference call no later than the end of April of that year.

The purpose of the meeting shall be to inform Member Organizations and their individual members and players of the state of the NGFFL, the organization's financial position, opportunities and plans for the calendar year, and to solicit input on those topics.

The Board shall give Member Organizations thirty (30) days' notice of the Annual Meeting.

10.2. Quorum for Annual Meeting

The Quorum for the Annual Meeting shall be a simple majority of the City Leaders from NGFFL Member Organizations in Good Standing.

10.3. Board Meetings

The Board shall meet quarterly at minimum, or as otherwise called by the Commissioner (who serves as Chairperson of Board meetings), to conduct NGFFL business.

10.4. Notice of Board Meetings

The Commissioner or meeting Chairperson shall give seven (7) days' notice of upcoming Board Meetings to fellow Directors.

10.5. Quorum for Board Meetings

The quorum for Board Meetings shall be greater than 50% of Board Members then in office. A quorum must be present in order to hold a vote.

10.6. Chairperson and Agenda

The Commissioner serves as Chairperson of Board Meetings and sets the agenda.

10.7. Chairperson's Absence

In the absence of the Chairperson of Board Meetings, the Chairperson shall appoint from among the Board a person to preside as Chairperson at the meeting.

10.8. Minutes

The Board shall record and make available upon request minutes of its Board meetings, and the Annual Meeting, to keep Member Organizations fully informed.

The Board shall appoint a Director to take those Minutes. The Director who takes the Minutes shall circulate the Minutes for approval within one week following the Board Meeting. Any Director may request a correction to facts as stated in the draft minutes. But, in order to ensure complete transparency, the Board shall not alter nor delete content from the Minutes, nor purposefully exclude discussions nor content from the Minutes.

11. VOTING



11.1. Member-Organization Voting Matters

As a nonprofit organization with voting members, Member Organizations shall vote on Voting Matters that are mission-critical to the NGFFL.

Member Organization Voting Matters which the City Leaders will vote on include, but are not limited to:

- Changes or revisions to the Bylaws
- Directors to serve on the Board
- Disputes brought by Member Organizations against Board decisions
- Other business as requested by the Board

Member Organization Voting Matters which the Gay Bowl Delegates will vote on include:

- Matters specific to the Gay Bowl national championship tournament (described in Amendment B)
- Other business as requested by the Board

11.2. Member Organization Voting and Designated Points of Contact

The NGFFL will count the vote by a Member Organization's City Leader or Gay Bowl Delegate (see Section 4.4) as the official vote of a Member Organization on Member Organization Voting Matters. The NGFFL encourages the City Leader or Gay Bowl Delegate at each Member Organization to caucus with relevant stakeholders in his or her local gay flag-football community before casting votes on Member Organization Voting Matters. But the NGFFL will not count any vote other than that cast by a Member Organization's City Leader or Gay Bowl Delegate.

11.3. Recognition of Designated Points of Contact.

The NGFFL encourages its Member Organizations to elect or appoint leaders who are committed to the vision of the NGFFL and the Aims and Objectives set out in Section 3 of these bylaws. But the NGFFL has no control over how Member Organizations select their leaders to serve as City Leaders or Gay Bowl Delegates on Voting Matters. The NGFFL recognizes and respects that each Member Organization and its processes will be different, though the NGFFL encourages Member Organizations to select City Leaders and Gay Bowl Delegates that, when casting votes, are willing and able to comprehensively represent the views of that Member Organization and its entire gay flag football community.

11.4. Process for Member-Organization Voting

On Member Organizations Voting Matters, the Board shall extend to Member Organizations the opportunity to vote via secret ballot, and facilitate the voting process accordingly. When voting in person, that may be a manual process of the Board's choosing. When not in person, that may be an electronic process using online survey instruments or equivalent tools.

11.5. Member Organization Voting and Conflicts of Interest

On Member Organization Voting Matters in which an individual Member Organization's league, Gay Bowl national-championship team(s), Gay Bowl national championship team



player(s), or a Gay Bowl national championship team player's business concerns or other vested personal interests might directly benefit from the outcome of that Member Organization's vote, that Member Organization's City Leader or Gay Bowl Delegate shall not be allowed to vote. In situations in which a Member Organization does not believe a conflict of interest exists and seeks to vote anyway, the Board shall vote by simple majority to suspend the Member Organization's vote on that topic.

11.6. Board of Directors Voting

On all matters other than Temporary Suspension, or Dismissal, of a Member Organization (see Sections 5.5 and 5.6), the Board shall operate by simple majority vote. Quorum (see Section 10.5) must be present.

11.7. Board of Directors Voting Matters

The Board of Directors shall vote on Board Voting Matters. Board Voting Matters include all matters that are not Member Organization Voting Matters and on which a decision from the NGFFL is required.

11.8. Board Voting and Conflicts of Interest

On Board Voting Matters in which an individual Director's Member Organization, Gay Bowl national-championship team(s), Gay Bowl national championship team player(s), or a Gay Bowl national championship team player's business concerns or other vested personal interests might directly benefit from the outcome of that Director's vote, that Director shall recuse himself or herself from voting. In situations in which a Director does not believe a conflict of interest exists and / or is not willing to recuse himself / herself, the Board shall vote – not including the Director in question – by simple majority to suspend the Director's vote on that topic.

11.9. Proxy

A Member Organization's City Leader or Gay Bowl Delegate may appoint a proxy to vote on his or her behalf at a meeting.

12. NOTICES

Wherein these rules notices are required to be sent to Member Organizations, they shall be deemed to be duly served if delivered by hand or sent electronically. In the case of notices of meetings required by these rules, the accidental omission to provide a notice to any Member Organization, or the non-receipt of such notice, shall not prejudice or invalidate the proceedings or decisions of such meetings.

13. AMENDMENTS, ADDITIONS TO THESE BYLAWS

These bylaws may be modified, altered or added to by a two-thirds vote of the Member Organizations. The rules will be deemed to have been amended accordingly and all Members shall be bound by the amended rules.

14. INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

The Board shall ensure that the Minutes to all Board Meetings and the Annual meeting, as well as operating budgets, reconciled budgets and financial reports, are publicly available for Member Organization review.



15. DISPUTES

Any dispute between Member Organizations may be referred to the Board for a determination. The Board may vote to settle the dispute by a majority vote.

16. APPEALS

Any dispute between a Member Organization(s) and the Board may become a Member Organization Voting Matter. The dispute becomes a Member Organization Voting Matter upon official dispute in writing submitted to the Board by a Member Organization. The official dispute must be submitted in writing to the Commissioner; if the dispute is directly tied to the Commissioner the official dispute may be submitted in writing to the Commissioner and an additional Board Member. The Board shall facilitate a vote among Member Organizations, and the dispute shall be settled by a majority vote.

17. DISSOLUTION

NGFFL shall be considered dissolved with a two-thirds majority approval of the Board and two-thirds vote of approval by Members at the next Annual Meeting. In such an event, all properties and possessions of NGFFL are to be sold, and all proceeds are to be used to pay all outstanding debts of NGFFL. All remaining assets including any endowments shall be disbursed to charitable organizations at the discretion of the Board.



Amendment A: Board of Directors: Roles and Responsibilities

The descriptions of roles below are not exhaustive; they are intended only to provide top- line guidance. Each Board shall collectively determine specific Board member responsibilities, its annual operating plan and budget, the programs and projects to implement that operating plan, and the individual goals and objectives necessary to execute those programs and projects.

Election Positions

Commissioner

- Set the vision and agenda for the organization.
- Drive the NGFFL's long-term vision.
- Oversee and be accountable for implementation of the NGFFL's annual operating plans.
- Oversee and be accountable for adherence to Board-approved annual operating budget.
- Chair meetings of the Board.
- Organize and supervise annual NGFFL Board retreat.
- Chair Annual Meetings.
- Coordinate with other Officers to ensure successful implementation of programs, projects, and other initiatives.
- Serve as the primary point of contact and liaison between the Board and the City Leaders and Gay Bowl Delegates at Member Organizations.
- Serve as primary spokesperson for the NGFFL and the national LGBTQ+ flag- football community.

Director of Operations and Special Projects

- Maintain the organization's bylaws.
- Ensure that NGFFL operations, procedures, voting, and other matters are consistent with the organization's bylaws.
- Oversee projects and programs to implement the Vision, in line with Section 3 of these bylaws.
- Oversee appropriate distribution of projects and allocation of responsibilities and effort among Directors on the Board.
- Make recommendations to the Board on the appointing of Task Forces to recruit non-Board leaders and representatives of NGFFL Member Organizations into the work of the organization, to both achieve greater inclusiveness and distribute effort.
- Serve as facilitator of the NGFFL Hall of Fame.
- Execution of partnership engagements.
- Establish and enforce league privacy policy.

Director of Women's+

- Shall provide a voice and point of contact for the Women's Division at the Gay Bowl.
- Shall support the recruitment of women's teams at other tournaments supported by the NGFFL.



Director of Media & Public Relations

- Oversee communications with Member Organization leaders and other members and stakeholders of the national gay flag football community.
- Publish and grows the 2-Minute Drill e-newsletter: oversees editorial calendar, recipient database, scheduling, writing, approvals and delivery.
- Develop and implement strategies to raise awareness of gay flag football (a) in the gay sports community, (b) in the broader LGBTQ+ community, and (c) in the national sports community generally.
- Oversee the NGFFL website and blog, ensuring content is up to date, timely and relevant.
- Oversee the NGFFL's social media properties, ensuring content and dialogue is up to date, timely, relevant, and consistent with a social-media participation policy of the NGFFL's choosing.
- Establish and maintain local media relationships.

Director of Outreach and Membership

- Collaborate with Director of Operations and Special Projects to advance NGFFL Vision, in line with Section 3 of these bylaws, particularly as it relates to helping grow and establish local leagues.
- Drive and support the establishment of local flag football leagues, and ensures the development and delivery of NGFFL resources to assist in the long-term health of those leagues.
- Maintain the NGFFL's database of Member Organization's City Leaders and Gay Bowl Delegates (Section 4.4) and Additional Points of Contact (4.5).

Director of Tournaments

- Oversee the NGFFL's stewardship of all NGFFL tournaments
- Facilitates the solicitation of bids to host the tournament, and Member Organizations voting on those bids.
- Coordinate with and provide support to host cities.
- Oversee process of extending invites to and securing participation from Member-Organization team(s).
- Oversee the work of an appointed "Gay Bowl Progress & Evolution Task Force" to provide annual recommendations to the Board on how to evolve and improve tournament format and structure.

Director of Partnerships

- Oversee all aspects of the pursuit and maintenance of corporate and other funding partners in line with the NGFFL.
- Conduct ongoing prospecting for new corporate and institutional funding partners.
- Ensure NGFFL delivery on its commitments as part of corporate partnerships, including local-league commitments.
- Drive new ideas and innovative approaches to making NGFFL philanthropy a part of partnerships.



Board-Appointed Positions:

Treasurer

- Shall be appointed by the Board, once diligence complete in a simple majority vote.
- Shall serve a two-year term, appointed in January of even years.
- Ensure professionalism and transparency of NGFFL financial management.
- Maintain basic best-practices bookkeeping system.
- Develop, secure input and approval, and maintain operating budget.
- Generate monthly financial reports for monthly board review and approval.
- Invoice and collect Member Organization membership dues.
- Serve as steward of corporate-partnership funds.
- Ensure that the NGFFL adheres to all applicable IRS and state tax and filing requirements.

Director of Officials

- Shall be appointed by the Board in a simple majority vote.
- Shall serve a two-year term, appointed in January of the respective year.
- Shall ensure the provision of quality referees at the Gay Bowl national championship tournament.
- Shall support the recruitment of referees at other tournaments supported by the NGFFL, as needed.
- Oversee maintenance of and updates to the NGFFL Rules of Play for the Gay Bowl National Championship Tournament.
- Oversee the provision of referees for the Gay Bowl National Championship Tournament.



Amendment B: Gay Bowl National Championship Tournament

1. PURPOSE OF GAY BOWL

The "Gay Bowl" national championship tournament is the flagship annual event of the NGFFL and the genesis of the organization. Its purposes are:

- 1.1.** Gay Bowl shall aspire to be the best amateur flag football competition in the world.
- 1.2.** Gay Bowl shall serve as the leading edge of the NGFFL's aim to change LGBTQ+ communities through the sport of amateur flag football.
- 1.3.** Gay Bowl shall demonstrate the greatness of amateur flag-football competitions in order to foster formation of NGFFL Member Organizations in locations where they do not exist.
- 1.4.** Gay Bowl shall showcase the best ways in which amateur flag football educates, changes attitudes, promotes self-discovery, and builds esteem within the LGBTQ+ community and in the communities in which LGBTQ+ people work, live, and play.

2. TIMING, SIZE, PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. Timeframe.** The Gay Bowl will be held in the fall of each calendar year on Columbus Day weekend. (Exceptions outlined in Sections 5.3 and 5.4 of Amendment B.)
- 2.2. Size.** The size of the competitive field will vary based on the availability of facilities available to the host city.
- 2.3. Participation.** The Gay Bowl shall endeavor to provide the opportunity for at least one team from each Member Organization in Good Standing to participate.

3. TEAM ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

- 3.1. Requirement to be in Good Standing.** The Gay Bowl is limited to teams representing Member Organizations that are in Good Standing (See Section 5.1 above).
- 3.2. Documentation.** Participation in Gay Bowl is recognizable if/when said Member Organization has submitted the required documents by published deadline. Member Organization Gay Bowl Delegates own the responsibility of submitting tournament participation documents. Failure to comply may result in automatic disqualification for current year tournament.
- 3.3. Failure to Present.** A Member Organization that registers a team to compete in Gay Bowl, but then that team does not show up, forfeits its voting privileges on Voting Matters specific to the Gay Bowl for the following calendar year.



- 3.4. Second or More Teams Representing a Member Organization.** If the host city can accommodate more than one team per Member Organization, then Member Organizations in Good Standing may apply to send a team to fill one of those second or more team slots. The Board has the first right of refusal for a second or more teams.
- 3.5. Teams Returning from Failure to Present.** A Member Organization that loses its voting privileges per Section 3.3 above will be treated as a new team but for purposes of rankings for the following year's Gay Bowl, they will receive priority over a new Member Organization team as it relates to seeding.

4. TEAM CONSTITUTION, ROSTER, INTEGRITY

- 4.1. Guiding Principle.** The principle of the Gay Bowl is to feature the best teams from Member Organizations, and the cities / locales they represent, competing against one another for the national championships of amateur gay flag football. The objective is that the teams that compete in the Gay Bowl, first and foremost, be comprised of LGBTQ+ individuals from the locale represented by each Member Organization and their respective team(s).
- 4.2. Exceptions.** At the same time, because it may not be possible for Member Organizations and their respective Gay Bowl teams to compile a full roster of LGBTQ+ individuals from within the locales they represent, the Bylaws allow for exceptions. Those exceptions are described in Sections 4.3 through 4.16 below.
- 4.3. Individual-Player Eligibility.** Individuals on Member Organization teams are eligible for play as part of said teams only if they are in good standing according to that Member Organization and / or team's bylaws. Any individual not in good standing must have received a notification in writing from the Member Organization or Team Board prior to Gay Bowl to be deemed ineligible.
- 4.4. PAUGAs.** Each Member Organization seeking to participate in the Gay Bowl will propose to the Board the geographic area that it represents. After allowance for discussion, a simple majority vote of the voting quorum in favor of said proposal will establish that member's "Previously Agreed-Upon Geographic Area," or PAUGA.
- 4.5. Roster Declaration Timetable.** All rosters must be submitted by the date communicated by either the Board or the host city. The date for submission may change from year to year, to be determined by either the Board.
- 4.6. PAUGA Cap.** No fewer than eighty percent (80%) of the players on the roster of a Member Organization's team(s) must reside within a team's PAUGA. The requirement that no more than twenty percent (20%) of a Member Organization team's roster reside outside its PAUGA shall be called the "PAUGA cap."
- 4.7. Players Who Reside in No PAUGA.** When an individual who does not reside in any Member Organization's PAUGA seeks to join the roster of a Member Organization's team, he or she may do so as long as the Member Organization's team continues to meet the eighty percent (80%) requirement of Section 4.6. The Member Organization's team must not exceed its PAUGA Cap.
- 4.8. Request to Play with Another PAUGA's Team.** If an aspiring Gay Bowl player resides within a Member Organization's PAUGA, but seeks to be included on the roster of a team representing another Member Organization's PAUGA, the player must request a release in writing from the Gay Bowl Delegate of the Member Organization that represents the PAUGA



in which he or she lives. The player request must be made to the PAUGA in which he or she lives no less than ninety (90) days prior to the Gay Bowl.

4.9. Scenarios in Which Players May Be Released. The NGFFL's objective is for players to play for teams that represent the geographic areas in which they live. But a player may request and must be granted release to play with another PAUGA's team at the Gay Bowl if one or more of the below requirements are met:

- a. The player lived in the other team's PAUGA within 12 months of the previous Gay Bowl and played for that same team in the previous Gay Bowl.
- b. The player's partner/spouse plays for a team representing another PAUGA, and the player seeks release to play on the same team as his/her partner/spouse.
- c. The player has never played for the Gay Bowl team representing the PAUGA in which he/she lives.
- d. The player is unable to earn a spot on the Gay Bowl team representing the PAUGA in which he/she lives or otherwise is not sought by the leaders of that PAUGA's Gay Bowl team(s).
- e. The player seeks release to play with a team that competes in a different division.
- f. The player seeks release to play with a team that due to extenuating circumstances expects to field a roster with 10 or fewer players at Gay Bowl.
- g. The Member Organization representing the PAUGA which the player lives is a Member Organization in Probate Standing.

4.10. Denial of Release. A Member Organization may deny a request for release if none of the above requirements are met, or if the player seeking release has practiced with the home city's Gay Bowl team that year and requests a release after the first practice.

4.11. Extenuating Circumstances and Waiver Wire. If a player requesting release meets none of the requirements of 4.9 and thus is denied release by his/her PAUGA's team, but still seeks release for reasons such as irreconcilable differences with team leadership, that player shall be made available to teams that compete in a lower division than the previous year's Gay Bowl. The Board will orchestrate a Waiver Wire to make that player available to teams that meet one or both of the above two criteria and thus seek to attain a player(s) available from another PAUGA. If no team selects that player, he/she shall be excluded from Gay Bowl play.

4.12. Timeframe for Responding to Requests for Release. Upon receipt of a request to be released to play with another Member Organization's team, a Member Organization's Gay Bowl Delegate will have fourteen (14) calendar days to grant or deny the request for release. If the Member Organization's Gay Bowl Delegate does not reply within that fourteen day window, the release will be considered granted.

4.13. Dispute of Denial. The NGFFL respects the right of Member Organizations and their Gay Bowl team(s) to cultivate and retain their rosters. But should a player who has been denied a request for release by the Gay Bowl Delegate at the Member Organization whose PAUGA in which the player resides wishes to challenge the denial, that player may submit a request in writing to the Gay Bowl Liaison of the NGFFL Board to review the denial. That request must clearly demonstrate that the release was denied even though requirements of 4.9 have been met.



- 4.14. Process for Board Intervention.** Within seven (7) days of receiving a written request from a player to consider taking up the denial of a release, the Board will hold a simple majority vote on whether or not to take up the topic. If the Board votes not to take up the topic, it will inform the player and relevant PAUGA leaders in writing that the denial of release is final. If the Board votes to take up the issue, then it will address the issue at its next Board Meeting. The Board will hear both sides either live or in writing, then cast a majority vote to affirm or overturn the denial of release. If a Director on the Board hails from either of the Member Organizations or locales involved in the dispute, he or she will not vote per Section 11.8.
- 4.15. Appeal.** A Member Organization may appeal the Board decision per Section 16 of the Bylaws.
- 4.16. Consideration of New Teams from within Existing PAUGAs.** Should a request to participate in a Gay Bowl come from a city or locale within an existing PAUGA but that is separate from that PAUGAs Member Organization, the Board shall consider that request. Depending on the expected the availability and roster slots, the Board may vote by simple majority to grant that team the opportunity to become a Member Organization in Good Standing and compete in the Gay Bowl.
- 4.17. Player Identification.** Upon registration at Gay Bowl, all players must provide standard government identification that matches the legal address provided on the roster submitted per the deadline as described in Section 3.4 above. The host city will be responsible for crosschecking the submitted address with the aforementioned identification. In the event of a player's interim change of address, the essential factor is the player's current residence. If the current residence remains within the PAUGA represented by that team, the address change is immaterial. If the current residence is outside the PAUGA, the player must be counted against the PAUGA cap.
- 4.18. Minimum Number of LGBTQ+ Players on Field.** The purpose of the Gay Bowl is to provide a place for LGBTQ+ people to compete. While the NGFFL also welcomes to the Gay Bowl players who identify as straight, the organization seeks to be responsive to the wishes of the majority of Gay Bowl players as articulated in the January 2011 Gay Bowl Player Survey. That is to ensure that the majority of players on the field at any given time during the Gay Bowl are LGBTQ+.



In addition, the NGFFL seeks to encourage Member Organizations and their Gay Bowl team(s) to award slots on their rosters, first and foremost, to qualified LGBTQ+ players – the people who the tournament was founded to serve and feature.

Therefore:

- a. At registration time, players will be asked to identify as LGBTQ+ or straight. The NGFFL requests and expects honesty in that self-identification and adherence to the honor system by its Member Organizations and their Gay Bowl team(s). Self-identification will be accepted; that self-identification will not be questioned by the NGFFL.
- b. The NGFFL requires that no fewer than four of the seven players on the field for a team participating in any Gay Bowl game at any time be people who identified during registration as LGBTQ+. As many as three of the seven players on the field for a team participating in any Gay Bowl game at any time may be people who identified during registration as straight.
- c. To accommodate local needs, particularly for locations that have difficulty recruiting LGBTQ+ players, and to accommodate the straight players who have been longtime Gay Bowl loyalists, Gay Bowl teams are free to include on their rosters an unlimited number of players who identify as straight during registration. But those teams must still meet the requirement of 4.18(b) during the entirety of every game played.
- d. Teams that register more than three (3) players who identified during registration as straight will be allowed to play as many as five (5) of those individuals during any given game. Those individuals must be declared eligible for that game at game time. The declaration will take place at the coin toss. The declaration must be made to the head referee and the opposing-team captains. (Teams that bring to Gay Bowl no more than three
- e. (3) players who identify as straight will avoid the administrative burden of game-time declarations of eligibility.) Even if a team declares eligible for any given game as many as five (5) players who identified during registration as straight, the requirements of Section 4.18(b) above still apply.
- f. Any team that is found during the game not to be in compliance with any portion of Section 4.18 shall be forfeited. But once that game is complete at the final whistle, the on-field results of the game shall stand.

4.19. Other Issues. Any other issues regarding a Member Organization or individuals on its roster that could potential impact the purpose our outcome of the Gay Bowl may be submitted in



writing to the Board, or in person, by a Member Organization Gay Bowl Delegate, or team leaders, no later than close of day on the first day of the tournament.

5. BIDDING TO HOST GAY BOWL

5.1. Who May Bid. Any city or group within a city that has an NGFFL Member Organization in Good Standing may submit a bid to host the Gay Bowl. They shall be called “Bidding Organizations.”

5.2. Format and Structure Accountability. Bidding Organizations are free to propose new ideas for Gay Bowl. But all aspects of the tournament including the playing schedule are to be approved by the Board.

5.3. Timing of Bidding and Selection. Starting with the hosting of Gay Bowl XVIII (2018), bids to host will be submitted in the summer of the calendar year for the Gay Bowl to occur two years out. For example, to host Gay Bowl XVIII (2018), a bidding organization must submit a bid in the summer of 2016. The Board will facilitate an official call for bids from aspiring Bidding Organizations. On a timeframe established by the Board for that calendar year, the Board will provide the bids to Member Organizations, facilitate a question and answer process, and facilitate Member Organization voting, ideally at the Gay Bowl tournament, two years prior. The bid that secures the majority of votes will win and officially be deemed Gay Bowl host for the proposed year. **For Gay Bowl XVII (2017), the bids will be submitted in the spring of 2016, with the same path described above used. An announcement on that Gay Bowl will come shortly thereafter

5.4. Proposing Major Changes to Tournament. Any proposal by a Bidding Organization that might result in major changes to the timing or format of Gay Bowl shall be brought to the Board no less than forty-five (45) days prior to the date the Board has established as the due date for official bids from Member Organizations to host the Gay Bowl. The Board shall review and approve or deny the proposed change by a simple majority. To give the Bidding Organization ample time to adjust their bids accordingly, the Board must deliver its decision back to the bidding city in question no less than thirty (30) days prior to the date the Board has established as the due date for official bids from Bidding Organizations.

6. GAY BOWL RANKINGS

Factors contributing to rankings. Team seeding / rankings for Gay Bowl will be based on how a team or teams representing a member city (when applicable) have finished in the prior year's Gay Bowl.



7. ON-FIELD ISSUES AT GAY BOWL

7.1. Player conduct. If a player at Gay Bowl is deemed to have behaved on the field in a way that is not consistent with the Vision, or Mission and Objectives, of the NGFFL, then the Board will appoint a Player Conduct Committee comprised of non-NGFFL Board members that will establish and manage the process, protocols and requirements for reviewing and adjudicating specific incidents of player conduct. The NGFFL Board will act as an appeal body for any decisions made by the Player Conduct Committee.

7.2. Player Conduct Committee. Because these decisions need to be acted upon timely, the NGFFL will have a dedicated group focused solely on player conduct, overseen by a selected Board Member, but led by an individual appointed by the Board. The structure and process will be designed by the Board but approved by member cities with a majority vote.

As of Feb 2020, the idea of a Player Conduct Committee has been approved by member cities, but the process for how it will be designed and operated has yet to be presented to City Leaders for approval.

8. GAY BOWL-SPECIFIC DECISIONS

On Voting Matters specific to Gay Bowl, each Member Organization shall have a single vote on any question, regardless of how many teams they may be sending to Gay Bowl. A simple majority of those in attendance shall resolve all matters at any meeting at the Gay Bowl. In the event of a tied vote, of the chair of the meeting shall have an additional vote.

9. RULES OF ON-FIELD PLAY

9.1. Rules of Play. Rules of Play will be established by the Board and ratified by a simple majority of Member Organizations' Gay Bowl Delegate. Rules of Play will be made available to all Member Organizations and will be distributed as needed.

9.2. Amendments to Rules of Play. Amending the Rules of Play requires a recommendation from the Board but must be ratified by a simple majority of Member Organizations' City Leader or Gay Bowl Delegate. The Director of Rules, on a biennial basis will seek the advice and consent of Member Organizations' Gay Bowl Delegate in recommending changes in Rules of Play to the Board.



BYLAWS REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approval Date	Description of Changes:
1	12/02/2011	Original version
2	06/05/2014	[Changes not documented]
3	10/06/2016	
4	10/05/2017	Added new self-identification of gender policy; updated existing language for conciseness or clarity; removed outdated mission statement; moved Women's Division Liaison role to a voted position of the Board
5	3/30/2018	Non-material change to Vision (first page) to align with 2018 Board goals
6	2/20/2020	Changes as voted on by member cities in Nov 2019
7	5/22/2023	Changes as voted on by member cities in May 2023