

Pass Interference

To have pass interference (PI), either offensive or defensive, on the down in question, there must be a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone that is catchable. There must also be contact, but contact alone does not determine PI, there must be a restriction by the offending player.

Offensive Pass Interference – Contact beyond the neutral zone by a Team A player that interferes with a Team B eligible player. The three categories of OPI are:

- 1) Blocking downfield before the ball has been touched (pick play).
- 2) Shoving or pushing off of defender and creating separation.
- 3) Driving through a defender who has established position.

Defensive Pass Interference – Contact beyond the neutral zone by a Team B player whose intent to impede an eligible opponent is obvious and it could prevent the opportunity of catching a legal forward pass. The six categories of DPI are:

- 1) Arm Bar – Where the defender places his arm across the body of the receiver, restricting him from moving where he wants to go, there must be restriction.
- 2) Cutoff – Where the defender places his body in a position that restricts or prevents an opponent from moving toward a pass, even while looking back for the ball.
- 3) Hold – Where the defender physically grabs an opponent, typically the arm keeping him from being able to reach a pass, could also be grasping the jersey and restricting or slowing the player down.
- 4) Hook and turn – Where the defender hooks his arm around the waist or shoulders of the opponent and twists the opponent, restricting him from touching the pass.
- 5) Not playing the ball – When the defender is not making an actual effort to reach the pass, is not looking back for the ball and contacts the opponent, restricting his ability to get to where he wants to go or off his path to the ball.
- 6) Playing through the back – Where the defender contacts the receiver from behind in an effort to get to the ball, prior to the ball getting to the receiver.

Penalty Enforcement

Offensive Pass Interference (OPI) - 15 yards from previous spot, replay down.

Defensive Pass Interference (DPI) – (Automatic First Down)

- a. Team A's ball at spot of foul if spot is fewer than 15 yards beyond previous spot.
- b. Team A's ball 15 yards from previous spot if spot is greater than 15 yards beyond previous spot.
- c. Team A's ball at the two yard line, if the previous spot is on or inside the 17 yard line and outside the two yard line and the spot of the foul is on or inside the two yard line.
- d. No penalty enforced outside the two yard line may place the ball inside the two yard line. If the previous spot was on or inside the two yard line, first down halfway between the previous spot and the goal line.
- e. Penalties for DPI fouls on a try from the three yard line are enforced one-half the distance to the goal line. If the try is successful, the penalty is declined by rule.