

## 2021 RULE CHANGES AND CLARIFICATIONS THAT AFFECT THE NON-TOURNAMENT PLAYERS

Here are a few of the rule changes and clarifications that affect the everyday non-tournament player. **Each of you should get a rule book (a printable book exists on the USA Pickleball web site.) Those of you that play in tournament competition really need to study the changes.** There are a boat load that affect you.

### SECTION 1 – THE GAME

Players (Pages 1 & 2) Pickleball is a game that requires cooperation and courtesy. A sense of fair play from giving the opponent the benefit of any doubt is essential in maintaining the game's underlying principles of fun and competition. To that end:

- All points played are treated the same regardless of their importance; the first point of the match is as important as the last match point.
- Either partner in doubles can make calls, especially the line calls; there is no place in the game for one partner telling another, “that was my call, not yours.”
- Prompt calls eliminate the ‘two chance option’. For example, a player cannot claim a hinder from a ball rolling on the court after they hit the ball out; they gave up their ability to call the hinder by choosing to hit the ball.
- Players strive to cooperate when confronted with a situation not covered by the Rulebook. Possible outcomes can be a replay, allowing the rally to stand, or in extreme cases, asking for the referee to resolve the dispute. (*in our play there is no referee.*)
- Where possible, rules accommodate players with various adaptive needs.

### SECTION 3 – DEFINITIONS

3.A.15 (page 12)

**HINDER** – Any transient element or occurrence not caused by the player that adversely impacts play, not including permanent objects. Examples include, but are not limited to, balls, flying insects, foreign material, players or officials on another court, that, in the opinion of the referee, impacted a player's ability to make a play on a ball. (Transient definition: a momentary variation in current play.)

3.A.20 9page 13)

**MOMENTUM** – Momentum is a property of a body in motion, such as player executing a volley, that causes the player to continue in motion after contacting the ball. The act of volleying produces momentum that ends when the player regains balance and control of their motion or stops moving toward the non-volley zone.

## SECTION 4 – THE SERVE, SERVICE SEQUENCE, AND SCORING RULES

4.A.6 (page 18)

**PLACEMENT** – The server must serve to the correct service court (the court diagonally opposite the server). **The serve may clear or touch the net and must clear the NVZ and the NVZ lines.** The serve may land on any other service court line.

4.A.8 (page 19)

**PROVISIONAL DROP SERVE** – In addition to the standard serve sequence described in Rules 4.A.1 to 4.A.7, players may opt to use an alternative “drop serve” method.

4.A.8.a (page 19) **Servers must release the ball from one of the server’s hands or dropped off of the server’s paddle face from any natural (unaided) height and hit the ball after the ball bounces on the playing surface.** The server’s release of the ball must be visible to the referee and the receiver. A replay shall be called before the return of the serve if the release of the ball is not visible. The rules for feet placement (4.A.2 and 4. L) still apply.

4.A.8.b (pages 19 & 20) **Before bouncing on the ground, the ball shall not be propelled (thrown) downward or tossed or hit upward with the paddle. Failure to drop the ball properly will result in a fault.** There is no restriction on where the ball can land on the playing surface after it is dropped (providing 4.A.2 is satisfied) nor how many times within the 10 seconds after the score is called the server may drop the ball.

4.A.8.c (page 20) **If the drop serve is used, the ball may be struck with either a forehand or backhand motion without any other restrictions; i.e. the locations restrictions of the ball and the paddle in Rules 4.A.3, 4.A.4 and 4.A.5 do not apply.**

4.D (page 23)

CALLING THE SCORE – The score shall be called after the server and receiver are (or should be) in position and all players are (or should be) ready to play.

**4.D.2 (page 24) In non-officiated play, the server normally calls the score, but the server’s partner may call the score if the server is unable to call the score. The person calling the score shall not change during the game.**

## SECTION 6 – LINE CALLS

6.D (page 29) Code of Ethics for Line Calling. Pickleball is played according to specific rules. It also requires a code of ethics for line-calling responsibilities when performed by players.

The line-calling responsibilities of players are different from those assigned to referees or line judges. The officials make impartial judgment calls with all players’ interest in mind. The player, when assigned line-calling duties, must strive for accuracy and operate under the principle that all questionable calls must be resolved in favor of the opponent.

The Basic Elements are:

**6.D.7 (page 31) Players shall not call a ball “out” unless they can clearly see a space between the line and the ball as it hit the playing surface.**