

2023 VALLEY VIEW FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

Before becoming involved in the specific rules, it is important to understand the basic aim of this program. The real purpose is to instruct the youngsters in the fundamentals of football and to emphasize that football is fun, and that the game involves teamwork, and the game should develop spirit and self-determination. The league shall be defined as having players in grades 3, 4 and 5, and 6.

GOVERNMENT

The flag football program organized by the Village of Valley View Recreation Department shall be under the supervision and control of the Recreation Director.

RULES

1. Report all injuries to the coaches or the Recreation Director.
2. No jewelry of any kind can be worn during the game
3. Players are not allowed to wear steel or fiberglass spikes, rubber only.
4. Team jerseys must be worn during games, or a similar color jersey.
5. All players present for games are required to play.
6. Mouth guards must be worn during the game.
7. Referees will not tolerate any outbursts from players, coaches, or spectators.
8. There will be eight (8) players on the field at one time. **Coaches will determine pregame if teams will "play down" in case the number of players present for the teams dictates a smaller format.** Teams must have a minimum of five (5) players to start a game, otherwise the game will be a forfeit. A 10-minute grace period from the **scheduled** game time will be provided before a forfeit is declared.
9. The game is intended to be non-contact, so blocking is not permitted. Offensive players can attempt to help shield defenders from ball carriers but should not engage or initiate physical contact. Likewise, ball carriers must make an effort to avoid running through or initiating contact on defensive players. Depending on the severity of the offense, an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty may be assessed for blocking/initiating contact.
10. Two (2) coaches per team are permitted on the field. Huddles/play calls need to happen quickly to maximize game play. The coaches are there only to **INSTRUCT THE PLAYERS**; any negative comments made toward the officials or any game participant will result in a penalty and possible ejection from the game.
11. All players must wear flag belts with flags positioned on the hips. One (1) flag must be pulled from the strap in order to stop play.
12. Player must go for flag, not the player. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in an unnecessary roughness penalty (10 yards and possible temporary removal or permanent dismissal from the game).
13. Players cannot use a stiff arm or flag guard. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty (10 yards and loss of down).
14. The game shall consist of four (4) twelve (12) minute quarters, with the clock running continually, except during an official time out. There is a one (1) minute break between quarters, and a five (5) minute break at halftime.
15. There is no overtime. Games tied at the end of regulation end in a tie.
16. Each time the ball is spotted, teams have thirty (30) seconds to snap the ball. One warning for delay of game will be permitted, but additional violations will result in a five (5) yard penalty.

17. All fumbles will be whistled dead and the ball will be spotted at the location of the fumble. The only exception is if there is an obvious bad snap, in which case the play will still be whistled dead, but the ball will be returned to the previous line of scrimmage with a loss of down.
18. If the game score is within 8 points or less, the clock will stop in the last two (2) minutes of the fourth quarter when:
 - a) There is an incomplete pass
 - b) A ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - c) Change of possession occurs
 - d) There is a penalty (unless declined)
19. The teams will NOT switch sides of the field at the quarter breaks. The teams can switch ends for the 2nd half if coaches would like to do so. This can be decided upon by agreement of the coaches on a game-by-game basis.
20. Each team receives two (2) 30-second timeouts per half which do NOT carry over to the 2nd half.
21. The ball must be snapped to a player in the offensive backfield; no center sneaks. The ball can be snapped between the legs OR at the side of the player to begin play.
22. The field of play will be eighty (80) yards long, including two (2) ten (10) yard end zones.
23. The offense will start play at its own five (5) yard line, and has six (6) plays to cross midfield for a first down.
24. If a first down is not achieved, a team can:
 - a) Punt, which results in the other team taking possession on its own five (5) yard line
 - b) Go for it on "fourth down". However, if the offensive team does not achieve a first down or score on the play, the other team will take possession at the spot where the fourth down play ended.
25. Once a team crosses midfield, it has six (6) plays to score a touchdown
26. For a one (1) point conversion, the ball is placed on the five (5) yard line and the play MUST be a pass.
27. For a two (2) point conversion, the ball is placed on the ten (10) yard line and can be a run or pass.
28. Interceptions can be returned for touchdowns, or receive the distance returned when changing possession. Interceptions on a PAT attempt result in a dead ball.
29. No kick-offs; instead the ball is placed on the five (5) yard line following a touchdown.
30. No more than one (1) player from the offense may line up within three (3) yards of the center
31. All players are eligible to catch a pass.
32. The quarterback has a seven (7) second "pass clock". If the quarterback does not get rid of the ball within this time, the play is dead with a loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
33. The quarterback cannot run with the ball
34. All coaches should strive to have all players present take at least one snap at quarterback during the game.
35. "Pass Only" zones are set five (5) yards out from the goal line, and the five (5) yards before midfield. These are in effect when the line of scrimmage is located within the zone. The purpose is to lower the chance of contact/injury by preventing teams from running the ball with potential blockers.

36. All forward passes in the “pass only” zones must travel beyond the line of scrimmage in the air, or the play will be ruled dead and loss of down will occur.
37. All players who rush the quarterback must be a minimum of ten (10) yards off the line of scrimmage (as marked by the referee) when the ball is snapped.
38. Any number of players can rush the quarterback, but any player not rushing cannot cross the line of scrimmage until the ball has left the quarterback’s hands. Once the ball has left the quarterback’s hands, the ten-yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
39. Leaving your feet to pull a flag is not permitted. If a flag is pulled by a player who leaves his/her feet, the referee(s) can allow the play to continue until another flag is pulled. Additionally, a 10-yard unnecessary roughness penalty will be enforced from the end of the play. The officials will closely watch for diving for flags, and they will call penalties for diving as they see fit. **Please help your players understand the injury risk involved when diving for a flag for both the diver and any players in the path of the diver.** Also, keep in mind that this is a judgment call for the referees. This is a rule that is good to discuss prior to the game with the referees and your team in an effort to eliminate questions during the game.

40. PENALTIES

Offsides – 5 yards, repeat down

Illegal contact (blocking, running into QB, etc.) – 5 yards, repeat down

Defensive Pass Interference – 5 yards, repeat down

Illegal flag pull (i.e. pull flag before player has ball) – 5 yards, repeat down

Illegal rushing (leaving early from 10-yard rush mark) – 5 yards, repeat down

Illegal motion (false start, multiple players in motion) – 5 yards, repeat down

Illegal forward pass (thrown from beyond line of scrimmage) – 5 yards, loss of down

Offensive Pass Interference – 5 yards, loss of down

Delay of Game – clock stops, 5 yards and repeat down. If two penalties consecutively, an additional 5 yards and loss of down

Pass clock violation (QB does not get rid of ball in seven seconds) – loss of down and ball spotted at previous line of scrimmage

Blocking/shielding with contact (offensive player intentionally blocks/shields a defender and makes contact) – 5 yards from spot and loss of down

Charging (not making an attempt to avoid the defender, thus causing contact) – 5 yards from spot and loss of down

*Unnecessary roughness - 10 yards and automatic first down if on defense; loss of down if on offense

*Unsportsmanlike conduct (including offensive language, flag guarding, and contact with QB’s throwing arm) – 10 yards and automatic first down if on defense; loss of down if on offense

*Unsportsmanlike conduct and unnecessary roughness penalties can also result in temporary removal from game, or permanent dismissal.

41. Officials have the right to determine what constitutes offensive language. Any offensive language towards officials, players, teams, or spectators is unacceptable. A first offense can be met with a warning, or with immediate ejection from the game (referee’s discretion). Any warning to any individual will apply to ALL players, coaches, and spectators alike. Any additional violation will result in the immediate ejection of the offender, and the game will not be permitted to resume until the individual leaves the premises. If a violator refuses to leave, the game will be forfeited to the opposing team.
42. Any individual (player, coach, spectator) who is ejected from a game for any reason will not be permitted on the premises for the team’s next game. Any additional ejection for that individual will result in their suspension for the rest of the season, and an appeal to attend or participate **in any future season in any youth athletic activity** will need to be heard and granted prior to future registration or attendance.

NOTE: The coaches are to meet with the officials prior to the start of each game to clarify any rules questions or interpretations. Also, the manner in which the 3rd-4th grade players will be matched up against one another in the offensive/defensive alignments should be discussed pre-game.