



Parks, Recreation & Tourism

2022 Youth Tackle Football Rules and Policies

Chesapeake Parks, Recreation, and Tourism
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YOUTH TACKLE FOOTBALL RULES

GOVERNING RULES – Virginia High School Rules will govern play with the exceptions covered herein.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- **Ages and Weights**
 - Players’ ages will be determined by their age as of **July 31st** of the current year and the player’s division will be determined by the following chart below.

Division	Age*	Minimum Weight (lbs.) *	Maximum Weight (lbs.)*
Flag	5	N/A	N/A
	6	N/A	N/A
	7	N/A	N/A
	8	N/A	N/A
U10	9	55	125
	10	55	125
U13	11	80	145
	12	80	145
	13	80	125

It is the recommendation of the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department that children do not move between age divisions but may do so with written parent and City staff approval along with meeting all other requirements

*An 8-year-old may move up to the next age division (U10-Tackle) if they desire and meet all the following criteria:

- Has at least one year of tackle football experience in any organized league **or** one year of experience in the City of Chesapeake flag football league.
- Meet the proper weight restrictions: Minimum Weight 70lbs, Maximum Weight: 120lbs.
- Written parent approval via the parent waiver form.
- Written verification and approval by City staff.
- Parents must provide proof that the child has played at least one year of tackle football in any organized league with documentation.

*A 10-year-old may move up to the next age division (U13-Tackle) if they desire and meet all the following criteria:

- Meet the proper weight restrictions: Minimum Weight 126lbs, Maximum Weight: 145lbs.
- Written parent approval via the parent waiver form.
- Written verification and approval by City staff.

*If a player does not meet the minimum weight requirement for their age division, they may participate in that division if they have at least one year of verified tackle football experience in any organized league, along with written parent approval via the parent waiver form and city staff approval. Parents must provide proof that the child has played at least one year of tackle football in any organized league with documentation.

WEIGH IN PROCEDURES

- The Department will conduct two weigh-ins: during registration and prior to any post-season game.
- **Registration Weigh-in** – Participants who are no more than 5 pounds over the weight requirement or no more than 5 pounds below the weight requirement for their league during the scheduled registration dates may reweigh within five (5) business days by 5 P.M. after the last registration date. Those who do not meet these weight requirements are ineligible to participate in the program.
- **Pre-Post/Post Season Weigh-Ins**– Players not meeting their league’s weight requirements at the pre-season/post season weigh-ins will be dropped from the team for the remainder of that season.
- **Players will be allowed to weigh a maximum of 5 lbs. above the maximum weight limit only at playoff time.**

TEAMS

- Each U10 and U13 team will normally consist of a maximum of approximately 18-22 players per team with 11 players as a fielded team.

SCHEDULE

- **Number of Games** – Games shall be played in accordance with the schedule set by the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department. Teams will play as close to 8 games as possible.
- **Play-off Games** – The top two teams in the 13U and 10U Divisions may participate in a one game end of the season playoff game. Additional fees apply. If two teams are tied at the end of the regular season for second place, head-to-head play will determine the advancing team. If head-to-head was a tie, a one-game play-off will be held. If three teams are tied for the second spot, with no clear head-to-head determination, a bye will be decided by a blind draw. The bye team will play the winner of the other two teams’ game to decide the advancing team. A four-team tie for first place will be decided by two play-off games. The opponents of the first games will be decided by a blind draw.
- **Tie Breaker Format** – If a play-off or tournament game ends in a tie, the following procedure will be used to decide a winner.
 - Each team has four downs to score from the ten-yard line to establish a winner. If at any point there is a turnover to the defense, the play is dead at that point and cannot be advanced by the defensive team. However, it will result in the loss of the remaining offensive downs, if any exist.
 - Extra point tries will be made. Coin flip will determine which team has first try.
 - Field goals may not be kicked.
 - If a tie exists after each team has had the ball, the teams will try again in the same order, until a winner is established.
 - **Time Outs** – Each team will be allowed one time-out lasting one minute during each tie breaker four down series. No time-outs will be carried over if not used during regulation play or first series of four downs.

- **Regular Season Game Ties** – The above play-off tie system will be used with exception that if the game is still tied after this procedure is used once, the game will be over and remain a tie.
- **Coaches** – There will be a limit of four coaches per team allowed on the sideline: one head coach and three assistant coaches. Those who are not coaches or have not been through the background check procedure will not be allowed on the bench or playing field.

PRACTICE

- **Conditioning Practices** – Every player must have four 2-hour conditioning practices prior to practicing in uniform. Appropriate warm-ups, and water breaks are essential. Each of four conditioning practices must have 2 hours of conditioning-type drills during the 2-hour practice session. There will be absolutely no tackling or contact of any kind during the first four (4) conditioning practices. **Tackle football players must be present within the nine (9) day period for required conditioning practice.**
- **Uniformed Practices** – Every player must have a minimum of 3 practices in uniform before their first played game.
- Players released from school teams are waived from the conditioning practices.
- **Practice Limits** – During the academic year, teams are limited to three - 2-hour sessions, including scrimmages and chalk board sessions, within a calendar week. If teams have one game within a calendar week, teams are limited to two - 2-hour sessions. If teams have two games within a calendar week, teams are limited to one - 2-hour session. During the summer session, prior to the public schools beginning classes, one (1) additional 2-hour outing can be added to each calendar week.
- **Drills for Practice** – Drills that are determined to be unsafe by the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department will be prohibited. “Bull in the Ring” is an example of the type of drill that is unsafe and prohibited.
- Teams may scrimmage against teams in their age category and gender within the Chesapeake Parks, Recreation and Tourism Leagues at approved city practice sites within the city.
 - Scrimmages between parents and players are prohibited.
 - Scrimmages with teams outside your respective athletic area must be approved by the Athletic Recreation Specialist who oversees the area hosting the scrimmage. Requests must be made at least two working days prior to the scrimmage. Scrimmages against non-City of Chesapeake Parks Recreation and Tourism program participants are prohibited.
 - There will be no tackle football scrimmages during the regular season or prior to the post-season tournament **without prior approval of the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department. Scrimmages against non-City of Chesapeake Parks Recreation and Tourism program participants are prohibited.**

PLAYING RULES

- **Points After Touchdown** – Two points will be awarded for a kick or pass and one point for run.
- **Required Playing Time and Penalty**
 - Each player is required to be assigned on the player line-up card and play on either an offensive squad or defensive squad during the 1st quarter, 2nd quarter, and 3rd quarter of each game. Participation must be uninterrupted while that offensive squad or defensive squad is on the field unless injury or sickness occurs. No special teams' assignments. (Exception) Kick-off and kick-off receiving team. This playing time will not count as playing time and any players may be used.
 - If a player arrives after the line-up card is turned in or after the start of the game, the coach will play the tardy player in the 2nd and 3rd quarters. The coach has the option to play this player in the 4th quarter. If a player arrives after the start of the 2nd quarter, the coach will play this player in the 3rd quarter. The coach has the option to play this player in the 4th quarter. If a player arrives during or after halftime, the coach has the option to play this player.
 - During the fourth quarter if all playing time requirements have been met, unlimited substitutions may be used.
 - In the event roster size exceeds 22 players, in accordance with Youth General Rule VII. C., it may be necessary for some players to achieve their required playing time in the 4th quarter.
 - **Mercy Rule** - At the beginning of the 4th quarter if a team is ahead by 3 touchdowns a running clock will be in effect except for injuries or time outs. In the event a team comes back within 2 touchdowns or less, the regulation clock will be in effect at the time.
 - Coaches may use hand signals or a card system to relay information from the sidelines to the team on the field. Coaches also have the option to use a messenger to run plays on to the field and this player will return to the sidelines. The player or players designated as the messenger during the 1st, 2nd or 3rd quarter must not be assigned to the squad on the field since a messenger must receive his required playing time while in the game as specified for all players. This player will be designated by wearing a penny provided by the department. No electronic equipment will be used.
 - Violation of this rule will result in the forfeiture of the game to be determined by the department at a later date. The game in question will be played in its entirety except for tournament play when a decision will be made at the field.
- **Punting**
 - In the U10 league only, punts will not be live. Punting will only be done from a dead ball situation. If a team elects to punt, they must announce they are punting. Teams will not be allowed to rush or block. Once the ball is kicked it will be spotted where the ball totally stops or where, if applicable, where it went out of bounds. Teams are not permitted to advance or “down” any announced punt. Possession of the ball goes over to the receiving team.

- **Line-up Cards**

- Line-up cards will be filled out and turned in prior to each game. The line-up cards are to be turned in to the opposing coach no later than the pre-game coin toss. No changes to line-up card will be made except for injuries, tardiness or absences. These changes will be made known to the opposing coach as changes occur.
- Failure to submit a line-up card prior to the start of the game will result in head coach being ejected by Parks, Recreation and Tourism staff.
- Improper completion or failure to submit a line-up card could result in a protest being upheld and the game in question could be forfeited.

LENGTH OF GAMES

- All games will consist of four quarters, eight minutes each. Regulation clock will be in effect.
 - **Grace Period** – There will be no grace periods.
 - **Pause between Quarters and Halves** – There will be a two-minute period between quarters. The time between halves will be 10 minutes.
 - In the event a game must be suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue to play, the head referee shall declare it an official game if one complete half or more of the game has been played. If less than one-half of the game has been played, the game will be rescheduled from the start. If the score is tied after being declared an official game, the game will remain a tie during regular season play. During tournament play if the score is tied after being declared an official game, the game will be rescheduled in the tie breaker format.

EQUIPMENT

- **Care and Return** – The Chesapeake Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department furnishes necessary equipment to operate football teams. It is the coach's responsibility to make sure this expensive equipment is properly cared for and returned to the department immediately following each season. Any parent unable to return any football equipment will be charged the department's cost for replacing unreturned items. All approved stickers on head gear must be removed prior to turning in the helmet to the department.
- **Shoes** - Players may use rubber-molded cleats. Tennis shoes are acceptable, but not recommended.
- **Mouthpieces** – Players must furnish their own mouthpieces, which are to be used at all times. Mouthpieces must meet requirements as approved by the Virginia High School League rules.
- **Proper Equipment** – A coach must remove and outfit any player found not wearing all of the proper equipment during practices or games.
- **Ball Types:**
 - U6 & U8 – Pee Wee
 - U10 & U13 – Junior size

- **Football Helmets**

- Helmets will be one “solid “color with no tape or other foreign substance allowed to be placed on them. All team members must wear the same color helmet. **Exception: Static Decals provided or approved by the Chesapeake Parks, Recreation and Tourism.**
- Helmets may never be painted other than by the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department.
- Absolutely no alterations may be made to helmets such as drilling holes for different types of face guards, etc.
- Parents who furnish their own helmets must have them approved by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism before the first practice. These helmets must be white and meet required standards.
- Parents who wish to furnish special face guards for department owned helmets must have them approved and replaced by the Department staff.
- Also, we would like for coaches to make sure the helmets are properly fitted on each individual player.
- Children must not be allowed to wear at any time, helmets or any other equipment, that is unsafe. Problems of this nature must be reported immediately to the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department staff for correction.

- **Football Pants**

- Parents will be required to furnish their child’s football pants.
- Coaches may select a color of their choice and should assist parents in locating a vendor.
- It is recommended that two pairs of football pants be purchased, a pair for practices and a pair for games.
- Parents are not required to purchase a specific color/style if not available or the cost is prohibitive.
- The department will provide the 7-piece snap on pad sets so the pants must have snaps to attach the hip and tail pads. Any other style pants purchased will require the purchase of an appropriate style pant pad set.