

WEST VALLEY YOUTH FOOTBALL

LEAGUE RULES

(Revised 9/7/2023)

Official National High School Federation (NFHS) rules shall be followed with the following exceptions and/or clarifications:

A. GENERAL LEAGUE RULES:

1. League Format

- a. Junior Level is defined by players in the 3rd & 4th grades.
- b. Senior Level is defined by players in the 5th & 6th grades.
- c. The West Valley Youth Football League (WVYFL) will be made up of Commissioners and Members. A school/program will have member status for their first year/season participating in the league. Commissioner status will be obtained after a school/program has entered its second year/season. Commissioners will be the only voting program directors on rule changes, waivers, and disciplinary issues.
- d. The WVYFL Program Directors meeting must be held before the end of July. League participation, as well as individual or collective insurance policy information must be confirmed before the end of August. League schedules must also be finalized and approved by the end of August.
- e. Program directors are required to inform the league of their resignation and must provide the name and contact information for their replacements.

2. Team Formation

- a. Programs with multiple teams must divide their teams as equally as possible. It is the desire of the league to give all players equal opportunity.
- b. There will be no All-Star teams and players may only participate on one team throughout the course of the season – once teams are formed, players may not be moved to a different team.
- c. Players must play on the appropriate grade level roster for their school/program. Waivers may be requested by a school/program in unique circumstances. Waivers must be presented by the Monday before Labor Day to be considered. A vote by commissioners will decide the final approval on all waivers.

3. Weight Limits for Ball Carriers

- a. 3/4th Grade: 110 lbs. 5/6th grade: 130 lbs.
- b. If a player is suspected to be over the weight limit, the coach should bring it to the attention of the officials at the game and then report it to the director for the organization where the game was played. The player will then be weighed prior to their team's next scheduled game and the findings reported to the league. There will be a ten-pound weight variance allowed from the original weight listed on weigh-in/gear issue day.
- c. The penalty for using an overweight player to carry the ball will be an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and a one game suspension at the next scheduled game, of the player.
- d. Blatant disregard for the weight limit will result in a forfeit of the game and a one game suspension at the next scheduled game for the head coach.

4. Weigh-Ins:

- a. Official weigh-ins will be conducted for all players at the time their equipment is issued. The weight established at this time will be the official weight for the season.
- b. Organization directors are required to provide complete "official" rosters with team name, team color, player's names, numbers, and weights to pyac@peak.org no later than the Thursday prior to the season start. All players over the ball carrying weight must be identified by a colored stripe running over the center of their helmet. Reminder: With the exception of the tight end and the kicker, no player over the weight limit may line up in a position to receive the ball (i.e., the full back position). A tight end over ball carrying weight may not handle the ball.

5. Playing Time

- a. All players who have good attendance, good attitudes, and try their hardest, must start on offense or defense in either the 1st or 2nd half of each game played.
- b. Every player who suits up **MUST** play a minimum of (10) ten plays excluding special teams. Special teams are defined as kick-off, kick return or PAT. **Requirements for minimum playing time are not intended as recommendations for maximum playing time or to limit a player's time due to ability. Do not sacrifice a child's positive experience by not playing that child as much as possible beyond the minimum requirements in every game.**

6. Season Timeline

- a. Conditioning may begin at the designated season start date as set by the OSAA. Full contact practices may not start until the Tuesday after Labor Day.

7. Coach / Player / Spectator Expectations

- a. It is strongly encouraged that all organizations require coaches to pass a background check and complete all football related NFHS coaching training. These include Concussion in Sports, Heat Illness Prevention, Sudden Cardiac Arrest, and Football Tackling.
- b. Coaches are expected to be a role model for their team in word and action.
- c. Coaches are expected to deal appropriately with any parent or spectator from their team that may behave in a disrespectful manner.
- d. Any player that "cheap shots" or shows continued unsportsmanlike conduct during a game shall be ejected from the game.
- e. For safety reasons and to allow coaches the chance to coach the players, all parents and spectators will be asked to stay at least five yards beyond the field boundary lines wherever possible. Coaches are asked to encourage cooperation of this rule.
- f. Any individual who swears, fights, or becomes disruptive during a game may be given a warning and/or ejected from the game. Warnings and/or ejections can be imposed by officials or program directors. Ejected individuals can request a hearing with the league commissions to discuss the issue.

8. Officials

- a. A minimum of two officials will be provided for each game and, where possible, should be assigned by a High School Football Officials Association. The home team must provide the chain gang/down markers. Officials will keep the time on the field. If there are no officials at a game, it cannot be played as an official game. It may be played as a scrimmage with that format.
- b. Officials will be provided with these rules by the home team and should be aware of all playing rules.
- c. Coaches and officials will meet prior to the start of every game to review rules. Officials should be made aware of any potential problems that may occur during the game.
- d. Absolutely NO yelling at officials by players, coaches, or spectators.

9. Cheerleaders

- a. Cheerleaders are encouraged to participate in designated cheer areas where they must not impede the vision or traffic flow areas of parents and spectators. It will be left up to the discretion of the home director to designate a safe and adequate area specific for cheerleaders. If a school/program does not have an adequate space for cheerleaders, the home director may deny a designated area.

B. GAME REGULATIONS:

1. Playing Field

- a. Programs shall make every effort to use a standard football field: 100 yards long and 35 yards wide.
- b. If the standard is not available, the minimum playing field shall be 80 yards long and 35 yards wide.
- c. Junior teams may use a field that is 60 yards long and 30 yards wide if no other option is available.
- d. If using a field smaller than the standard, the home team shall communicate the field dimensions to the visiting teams at least one week in advance of their contest.

2. Game Ball

- a. Juniors: Junior size ball. Teams may use the intermediate size ball at their discretion.
- b. Seniors: Intermediate size ball.
- c. A Pee Wee size ball will not be allowed for any level.

3. Start of Game

- a. All teams must be ready to play on their designated field and at the start time. No exceptions.
- b. A coin toss will determine who kicks and who receives the ball to start the game. Visiting teams will call the coin toss. The team that receives the ball in the first half will kick-off to start the second half.

4. Game Clock

- a. Games will have four 15-minute quarters, running clock.
- b. Halftime will be 15 minutes.
- c. Each team will be given two timeouts per half.
- d. The game clock will stop for timeouts and official injury timeouts.
- e. When there is an official injury timeout, regardless of the nature of the injury, the player must remain out of the game for at least three consecutive plays. All bleeding must be stopped, and all blood must be removed from the uniform. Wounded areas must be covered with the appropriate dressing with no blood visible. Before an injured player may re-enter the game, the coach shall notify an official before the player takes the field.
- f. The Kansas Plan will be in effect in case of a tie for no more than one series. In case of a tie, each team will have four downs to attempt to score. The ball will be placed on the 10-yard line. If neither team scores in their one possession, or both teams score, the game is considered a tie.
- g. Mercy Rule
 - i. Once the point spread is 17 or more, after each touchdown or field goal, the team that is trailing will get possession at their own 25-yard line again off until the score is less than 17 points.
 - ii. If the point spread becomes 45 points or more the game will be ended.
 - iii. If a team wins a game by 45 points or more, the head coach for the winning team is required to write a letter to the opposing team's organization explaining the score difference. This letter must be received by the winning team's host organization within 72 hours of the game. The penalty for failing to write the letter and submit it within 72 hours will be a one game suspension to be served by the head coach at their team's next scheduled game.

5. Kick-Offs / Punting / PATs

- a. **Kick-offs:** To help reduce the risk of injury, this league will follow sub varsity rules and NOT utilize kick-offs. The receiving team will automatically get the ball and start their possession on their own 25-yard line.
- b. **Punting:** All punts must be declared by the punting team. There will be no rushing at the Junior level until the ball is punted. Rushing is allowed at the Senior level, but only by the defensive guards and tackles. No rushing from the outside is permitted.
- c. **PATs:** When facilities permit, teams may attempt PATs. Running or a pass will be worth 1 point, while a kick will be worth two points. Field goal kicks must be declared. No rushing is permitted at the Junior level and rushing is permitted at the Senior level by defensive guards and tackles only. If the ball is fumbled, it is ruled dead.

6. Nine-Man Games:

- a. In the event that a team's roster falls under 14 players and they need to go to "nine-man football" in order to complete their schedule, the league will be obliged to accommodate them. Where at all possible it would be ideal to give the opponents at least one week's notice in this situation. To play nine-man football, the offense will simply drop their tackles and the defense will drop their defensive ends.

C. OFFENSE:

1. Juniors

- a. Coaches must be five yards behind the deepest player once the offensive formation has been set and before the play starts. Only one coach is allowed on the field for offense. No vocal coaching will be allowed by the offensive coach on the field after the snap count starts. Vocal coaching from the sideline is permitted.
- b. If a team gets ahead of its opponent by three touchdowns, coaches of the leading team must leave the field and coach from the sideline, or they must rotate in less skilled players at this point. If a team gets ahead by four touchdowns after doing one of the previous options, the coaches must come off the field and coach from the sideline and rotate in less skilled players.

2. Seniors

- a. No coaches are allowed on the field except for the first game of the season. Vocal coaching from the sidelines will be permitted.
- b. Hurry up offense is allowed at this level only.

3. BOTH

- a. Teams may use any offensive formation that is legal. They may have no more and no less than seven players on the line of scrimmage during all offensive plays.
- b. Quarterbacks may run the ball but cannot sneak the ball more than two times in a game. Sneak is defined as the QB running up the middle between the guards.
- c. No offensive player over the weight limit may line up in the backfield regardless of whether they are carrying the ball. Offensive ends may be over the weight limit but cannot catch or handle the ball. If they do, it shall result in a 5-yard penalty and loss of down.
- d. Pulling is when a blocking player leaves his usual spot to pick up another assignment on the opposite side of the field, running behind the other offensive linemen, to sprint out in front of a running back and engage a defensive player beyond the initial width of the offensive line. Pulling is not considered running the ball.
- e. All linemen must start in a 3- or 4-point stance on the line of scrimmage. A 2-point stance will not be permitted.
- f. Offensive huddles will be no longer than 45 seconds. Coaches will be given one warning for taking too much time in the huddle. After the first warning, it shall be a 5-yard penalty.

D. DEFENSE:

1. Juniors

- a. Juniors shall use a 6-2-2-1 defense formation at all times.
- b. Defensive coaches shall stay five yards behind the deepest defensive player. Only one defensive coach is allowed on the field. No vocal coaching is permitted from the defensive coach once the snap count starts. Vocal coaching from the sideline is permitted.
- c. There will be no blitzing/stunting from any position at the Junior level.

2. Seniors

- a. Seniors shall use a 6-2-2-1 or a 4-4 formation.
- b. No coaches are allowed on the field except for the first game of the season. Vocal coaching from the sidelines is permitted.
- c. Seniors may blitz with the following conditions:
 - i. Only one defensive linebacker is allowed to blitz and is only allowed to blitz inside the defensive tackles. No blitzing is allowed from outside the defensive tackles by any player.
 - ii. Any blitzing player must align no closer than three yards off the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap.
 - iii. Defensive linemen are not allowed to blitz.

- iv. No player can initiate a blitz before the ball is snapped.
- v. Blitzing is not permitted by any team that is up by more than two touchdowns.

3. BOTH

- a. Defensive linemen shall line up head-to-head with offensive linemen as long as the line gaps are a reasonable distance (1 yard max).
- b. All linemen must start in a 3- or 4-point stance on the line of scrimmage. A 2-point stance will not be permitted except for the defensive ends.
- c. Linebackers must line up at least three feet behind the defensive line and are not allowed to line up inside the defensive guards.
- d. Defensive ends must line up on the line of scrimmage. Defensive ends may line up head-to-head with the offensive player or as far off as the offensive players outside shoulder (shading). Outside shading will be permitted. There will be no inside shading. Defensive ends left uncovered may read and pursue the play from their position; the offense leaves the defensive player uncovered at their own peril.
- e. Lining up in gaps is not permitted at either level.
- f. Eight defensive players will be allowed on the line of scrimmage on or inside their own ten-yard line.
- g. Any defensive player over the established ball handling weight who intercepts or recovers the ball on a fumble may not advance the ball. It shall be ruled down at the point that the defensive player established control of the ball.

E. PENALTIES:

1. 5-Yard Penalties (*3 yards on shorter fields*)

- a. Each team will receive one warning for the first offsides encroachment per game.
- b. Delay of game – taking more than 45 seconds in a huddle.
- c. Player not having mouthpiece in or not strapped to helmet.
- d. Illegal motion – more than one back in motion or a back moving toward the line of scrimmage prior to the ball being snapped.
- e. More than one coach on the playing field.
- f. Coach on playing field after the first game (Senior level only).
- g. Coaching during a play by the coach on the field.
- h. A player over the weight limit who handles the ball (plus loss of down).
- i. Pass interference from the spot of the foul or the line of scrimmage, whichever is greater. Defensive pass interference automatically results in a first down. Must be judged to be catchable by the official before pass interference can be called.

2. 10-Yard Penalties (*7 yards on shorter fields*)

- a. Illegal formation – too many or too few players on the line of scrimmage (+/-7)
- b. Illegal formation – lining up in the gaps or over the center.
- c. Holding or gripping another player in such a way as to stop or impede their movement offensively.
- d. Blocking below the waist ten yards past the line of scrimmage.

3. 15-Yard Penalties

- a. Head tackling, face masking, chop blocks (all tackles must be made at shoulder or below).
- b. Clipping or blocking in the back.
- c. Any unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of a player, coach, parent, or spectator of a team.

F. JAMBOREES:

1. No game will last more than one hour.
2. Jamborees scheduled with one game per team will have two 30-minute running clock halves.
3. Jamborees scheduled with two games per team will have two 25-minute running clock halves.
4. Halftime will be only ten minutes in either format.
5. All jamboree games will have a shotgun start. One blast of the horn will signify a game starting, half ending and beginning, and a game ending. Two blasts of the horn will signify two minutes before a game starts and ends, and two minutes before a half starts and ends.
6. The clock will not stop for official team timeouts, extra points, kick-offs, or for injuries.

2023 League Directors: Contact Info & League Status

Community	Contact	Email	Phone	3/4 th	5/6 th
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