

TRI-VALLEY CHRISTIAN ATHLETIC LEAGUE FLAG FOOTBALL RULES - 2023

Rules:

1. CIF Rules will apply for any rule not covered in this document.

Field:

1. Field dimensions are to be 80 yards long x 40 yards wide, with 10 yard end zones. First down zones are every 20 yards.
 - a. First downs are awarded when the ball is moved from line to gain to the next.

Length of Games:

1. The game will be made up of four 10-minute running quarters, with a 5-minute halftime. Official time will be kept by the referees.
2. The referees will make an effort to keep coaches informed of the time remaining throughout the game. (Coaches can ask for time updates as well)
3. The clock will stop for officials time-outs, point after touchdowns, and coaches time outs.
4. CIF stop-clock procedures will be used in the last two minutes of the game.
5. Teams on offense will have 30 seconds to run a play after the ball has been spotted and ready for play. A Delay of Game penalty is 5 yards.

Time Outs:

1. 3 (1 minute) time-outs are available to start the game. However, a team can only carry two time-outs into the 2nd half.

Running Clock / Mercy Rule:

1. A running clock will begin at any point in the fourth quarter when there is a 24 point differential.

Number of Players:

1. Each team will have a maximum of 7 players on the field at any given time. The offensive team must have a minimum of 4 players on the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. All offensive players can wear flags and are eligible.

Equipment:

1. Each team will bring a regulation ball for their offensive possessions. (Youth size for Junior High and junior size for Elementary)
2. All players MUST wear a mouthpiece. A player will not be allowed to participate without one.
3. All jerseys must be tucked in.
 - a. First infraction –warning
 - b. Second infraction – player sent off
 - c. Third infraction – Unsportsmanlike conduct (15 yd. penalty)
4. All players must wear rubber cleats or rubber soled shoes.
5. Each team is required to bring their own flags.
 - a. Each belt must have 3 flags. Flags must be worn with one on each hip and one at the back of the waist.
 - b. When a flag is pulled, the entire belt should be able to be removed. If a team is altering their equipment to not allow a belt to be removed, it will result in an “Unsportsmanlike Conduct” penalty of 15 yards.
 - c. Flags must be worn with one flag located at each hip and one at the center of the back at the waist.
 - d. Flags must be in contrast to the jersey color.
6. No pads are allowed, but protective padded headgear is permitted.
7. No adhesive products such as stickum or hairspray can be applied to a player’s hands.

Kickoffs:

1. There are NO kickoffs.
2. Receiving team will begin play at their own 30 yard line.

Punts:

1. There are no punts.
2. Teams will have the option to go for a 1st down in a 4th down situation or declare a "punt".
3. If the offense goes for a 1st down on 4th down and fails to convert, the defensive team will gain possession at the spot of the ball.
4. If the offense declares a "punt", the defensive team will gain possession at their own 20 yard line.

Scoring:

1. Standard CIF Rules Apply

Point After Touchdown:

- a. From 10 yards – 2 points
- b. From 3 yards – 1 point

Ball Placement After Safety:

1. The ball will be placed on the offensive team's 30 Yard Line.

Ball Carrier:

1. The ball will be spotted at the point of the ball when a flag is pulled.
2. The ball is dead if any of the ball carrier's body parts other than the hand or foot contacts the ground.
3. A player that has received the ball who does not have flags (fell off accidentally) will be downed by "two-touch". This rule will also apply to a ball carrier whose flags have accidentally fallen off while running. The players should be coached to play the whistle.

4. If a defender removes the flag of an offensive player before they have received the ball, the offensive player will be downed by “two hand-touch” and a 15-yard penalty against the defense.
5. The ball carrier can only make 1 spin per defender. Ball carriers may not initiate contact with defenders prior to the spin. (This is a 10 yard penalty from the spot of the foul.)
6. No stiff/straight arms are allowed. (This is a 10 yard penalty from the spot of the foul.)

Fumbles:

1. There are no fumbles.
2. The ball is dead at the spot where it touches the ground.

Starting with a Snap:

1. After the snapper touches the ball, the snapper may not lift the ball, move it forward or simulate the start of the snap.
2. A legal snap is handing or passing it backward from its position on the ground with a quick and continuous backward motion of the hand or hands and actually leaving the hand or hands in this motion. The snap need not to be between the snapper’s legs.
3. An errant snap that touches the ground is considered dead.

Laterals:

1. Laterals are legal. There is no limit as to how many times a team in possession of the ball may lateral on any given play.
2. If a lateral hits the ground, it is dead immediately.
3. An illegal (Forward) lateral is a five yard penalty from the previous spot and a loss of down.

Roughing the Passer:

1. No contact can be made with the thrower. Defenders can attempt to deflect a ball thrown by a passer, but if they make any contact with the passer, a 15 yard roughing the passer penalty will be assessed. This results in an automatic first down.

Illegal Contact:

1. Defenders must attempt to pull the flag and NOT try to strip the ball or hold the ball carrier at any point.

Between the Bean Bags Penalties:

1. Two bean bags approximately two yards apart will be placed at the spot of the ball to begin each down.
2. No ball carriers or defensive players are allowed to run in between the bean bags. If a ball carrier runs through the bean bags, the ball will be blown dead immediately and a penalty of 5 yards will be assessed.
3. If the defense rushes through the bags, the offense may accept a five yard penalty against the defense or take the result of the play. The play will not be blown dead immediately.

Backward Pass:

1. A backward pass that touches the ground is dead at the spot where the ball hits the ground.

Blocking / Screening:

1. Any contact by the offense or defense that displaces an opponent will be penalized.
2. An offensive player may not use any part of their body to push, pull, or grab as a means of gaining an advantage (A penalty of 10 yards will be assessed for any illegal contact unless it is deemed to be excessive, which may result in a 15 yard penalty).

Line of Scrimmage:

1. The Defensive must line up two yards off the line of scrimmage prior to the snap.
2. The Offense must have four players on the line of scrimmage prior to the snap.

Touchbacks:

1. If the ball is intercepted by the defense in their own endzone, the play is ruled a touchback and they will begin a new set of downs on their own 30 yard line.

Penalties of 15 Yards:

1. Tackling, shoving, tripping, or unnecessary roughness of any kind.
2. Unsportsmanlike Conduct.
3. This will be left to the discretion of the officials.

Hurdling and Diving:

1. Hurdling is permitted to avoid injury. However, the play will be blown dead and the ball will be spotted at the point of the hurdle.
2. An offensive player may not dive forward to reach the line to gain. He or she must remain in the running position at all times.
3. A defensive player may dive in an attempt to pull a flag.

Flag Guarding:

1. Flag guarding is illegal, which results in a 10 yard penalty from the spot of the foul.

Overtime:

1. A coin flip will determine who will get the ball first. (Coin flip winner will choose possession)
2. The team on offense will start from the 20-yard line and have 4 downs to score. After the first team is on offense, the opposing team will get a chance to be on offense as well.
3. If the score remains tied, the same process will continue until there is a determined winner. (First possession of each overtime period will switch each time. Whoever started on offense will then start on defense and vice versa).
4. Each team will be granted one time-out per overtime period. Time-outs do not carry over from the regulation game or from each overtime period.