

# **West Allis-West Milwaukee Recreation & Community Services Department**

## **League Rules | Flag Football | Grades 2-8**

### **Game Play**

- At the start of the game, both teams will meet at midfield for a coin toss. The winner of the coin toss gets the choice to receive or defer possession until the second half.
- Games will be played 7 vs. 7. A minimum of 5 players is required to start the game.
- Players must play equal playing time. It is encouraged for players to play more than one position.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its own eight (8) yard line. Teams will receive four (4) downs to gain a first down at midfield. Once a team crosses midfield it has four (4) downs to score a touchdown. No punting on fourth down.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield or score a touchdown, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its eight (8) yard line. Possession begins at the spot of the ball after an interception is returned.

### **Playing Field**

- The field will be 70 yards long and 30 yards wide with 10 yard end zones (25 yd halves)
- Pylons will be set up at the corners of each end zone and midfield

### **Length of Game**

- Games start on the hour. There will be two 25 minute halves with a 3 minute halftime.
- Each team is entitled 2 time-outs per half. Time-outs will not carry over from half to half. A time-out will not exceed 1 minute in length.

### **Scoring**

- Score will be kept for both levels. Standings will be kept for 4-5 grade league only.
- Touchdowns are worth 6 points - teams must announce their point after decision
- The ball will be placed on the two (2) yard line for the extra point try (1 point).
- The ball will be placed on the eight (8) yard line for two-point attempts (2 point).
- If a safety occurs: when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her end zone or there is an offensive penalty in the end zone. The defensive team is awarded two (2) points and the ball.

### **Game Rules**

- All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage
- Quarterbacks must hand the ball off or attempt a pass – no running
- The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion to the side of his/her legs to the QB only.
- Ball carriers may not leave their feet. Diving for a first down or a touchdown is not permitted
- Receivers must have one foot in bounds to complete pass

- There are no fumbles. If a ball carrier, after having full possession of the ball, drops the ball to the ground, the offensive team retains possession at the spot of the fumble. Defensive players cannot attempt to strip the football.

### **Rushing the Quarterback**

- Players who rush the passer must line up a minimum seven yards from the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend 1 yard off the line of scrimmage and cannot pass the line of scrimmage unless the ball is handed off to a running back.
- Once the ball is handed off, the seven yard rule is no longer in effect, all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- Either a coach or referee will stand to designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage.
- Any defender lined up 7 yards back with the intention of rushing cannot make a forward move before the snap. If they jump too early they will have to retreat back to their original spot before they can rush.
  - *A legal rush is:* any rush from a point 7 yards from the line of scrimmage. If a rusher leaves the rush line early, they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush
  - *A penalty may be called if:* The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass.

### **Blocking**

- Blocking is not allowed
- Players are not allowed to purposely cause contact with another player
- Blocking shall be done by the use of the body without hands or arms. Arms and hands must be crossed behind their back. Extending arms to block is not permitted.
- Defensive players may not use their hands to push offensive players out of the way
- All players must remain on their feet, unless incidental contact knocks them down

### **Flag Pulling**

- A player is considered down when:
  - o A defensive player pulls a flag from the ball carriers belt
  - o If any part of the ball carriers body (other than hands or feet) touches the ground
  - o The ball carrier steps out of bounds
  - o The ball carrier's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the play is dead at that point. Should a player's flag fall off during the play in the back field, the ball is dead and spotted at the line of scrimmage.
  - o A player who catches the ball whose flag already fell off, the ball will be spotted at the catch.
- The defense only needs to take one flag from the ball carriers belt to stop progress
- The ball carrier's flags must be accessible at all times and in all ways.
  - o Flag Guarding - an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags either using their arms, hands, ball, stiff arming, dropping their head or shoulder, or intentionally covering flags with their jersey. Flags must be on the hips.

- After scoring a touchdown, the referee will remove the ball carriers' flags to make sure no violations occurred.

## Uniforms and Equipment

- All participants will be provided with a team shirt which must be worn at all games. Shirt must be tucked in at all times.
- All players must wear tennis shoes, or rubber molded cleats. Rubber cleats are recommended, but not required. (Metal spike are not allowed)
- Pants or shorts may not have belt loops or pockets
- Flags and footballs will be provided by the Recreation Department

## Penalties:

### Offensive Penalties

- False Start: A player who moves before the ball is snapped, or makes contact with a defensive player before the ball is snapped. **Dead ball foul, three yard penalty.**
- Offensive Pass Interference: Occurs when the offensive receiver physically prevents a defensive player from intercepting the ball by making contact. **Three yard penalty, loss of down.**
- Illegal Forward Pass: Any pass made from ahead of the line of scrimmage. **Loss of down.**
- Illegal Use of the Hands: Any offensive player who uses his hands in the act of blocking, but not flagrant or intentional. **Three yard penalty from the line of scrimmage.**
- Offensive Holding: defined as grasping the opponents clothing or body, thus preventing movement. **Five yard penalty from the line of scrimmage.**
- Flag Guarding: Any action that prevents the defensive player from taking the ball carrier's flag, including arm swipes and protecting the flag with the ball, hand or arm. **Player is down as the spot of the flag guard.**

### Defensive Penalties

- Offsides: Any player lined up in the neutral zone (the length of the ball) after the snap. **Dead ball foul, three yard penalty, repeat the down.**
- Encroachment: Contact with an offensive player before the snap. **Dead ball foul, three yard penalty, repeat the down.**
- Pass Interference: Occurs when the defensive back physically prevents an offensive player from receiving the ball by making contact. **Offensive possession at the spot of the foul.**
- Holding: defined as grasping the opponents clothing or body, thus preventing movement. Hurling an opponent falls in this category. **Five yard penalty, repeat the down.**