



Flag Football Guidelines 2021



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Article 1: Mission/Vision Statement

City of Harrisonburg Mission Statement

The mission of the Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation is to enhance the quality of life and meet the needs of the community by providing comprehensive leisure service opportunities and to develop and maintain a safe system of open spaces and public facilities for the use and enjoyment by the public.

Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Values

Integrity

We are committed to taking initiative, being accountable, and adhering to our mission vision and values.

Teamwork

We engage in effective communication to build professional and respectful relationships while being open minded to and welcoming of diverse perspectives.

Innovation

We utilize technology, processes, and protocols of operation to enhance efficiency and pride in our organization's ability to be a leader in Parks and Recreation.

Safety

We are proactive in creating a safe working and recreational spaces for our employees and community.

Public Service

We provide consistent quality service by building relationships through diverse opportunities that appeal to our community.

Article 2: League Contact

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Athletics Coordinator
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Article 3:

Flag Football League Guidelines (Ages 5-7): Below are the standards and rules in which this league will operate. These rules shall serve as guidelines for those playing, coaching, officiating, and administering. Some rules may be modified during the season if the league administrator's see it is in the best interest of the participants.



Equipment and Field Specifications

Size of Ball	Pee-wee (K2)
Field Size	50 yards (40 yards and endzone)
Game Format	8v8
Roster Size	10-12

Game Structure

Game Length	4 10-minute quarters
Substitutions	On any dead ball
Time Between Quarters	5 minutes
Extra Period	None
Scoring	Touchdowns- 6 points PAT Options: (Cannot be returned) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-yard line- 1 point • 5-yard line- 2 point
Timeouts	Two 60 seconds
Start of Game Possession	Coin toss
Coaches	1-2 coaches will be allowed on the field during play
Penalties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-yard penalties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offsides • Illegal flag pull (if player is not in possession of the ball) • Illegal rushing • Illegal motion • Illegal forward pass (additional loss of down) • Flag guarding • Delay of game • 10-yard penalties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illegal contact (holding, tackling, hitting, etc.) [automatic first down] • Defensive pass interference (automatic first down) • Offensive pass interference (additional loss of down) • 15-yard penalties- "unsportsmanlike" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players who receive 1 in a game will be ejected. • Coaches who receive 1 in a game will be ejected and must vacate the facility.

Game tactics and game play rules continue on next page...

Game Tactics

Motion (before play)	Only 1 player can be in motion at a time
Players on the Line of Scrimmage	Each team must have 5 players on the line of scrimmage to snap the ball
Blocking	Blocking will be allowed in a modified form. Players may “shield” the way of a defender by standing and moving laterally. A blocker must have his/her hands at their sides or behind their back (preferred) when blocking.
Rushing	All players who rush must start 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, pitched, or lateraled all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
Running	Ball carriers are not allowed to intentionally leave the ground to avoid a defender, get out of bounds, or gain yardage. (No hurdling, diving, leaping, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ball will be spotted where the ball carrier left his/her feet.
Turnovers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interceptions are dead (reset on 40) • If a ball carrier fumbles the ball, the play is blown dead at the spot of the fumble.

Highlighted Game Play Rules

Running Clock/ Clock Stoppage	There will be a running clock. The clock will stop on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substitutions • Timeouts • Injury
Flag Guarding	A player will not be allowed to run with the ball in one hand and “guard” their flags with the other. If this happens, the play will be blown dead, the referee will then spot the ball where the flag guarding occurred. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a player’s flag falls off, the play will be blown dead at the spot of the lost flag
Checked Flags	All flags will be checked after every score to ensure they are not tied in a knot, tucked in, or anything that would prohibit a defender from being able to pull them off.
First Downs	Each team will start their possession from the 40-yard line. They will have 4 plays to get to each of the following yardage lines to continue their possession: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start - 40-yard line • First down - 20-yard line • End - Touchdown
Possession changes	All possession changes including interceptions will return and begin at the 40-yard line.

Article 4: Coaching Guidelines and Expectations

1. Coaches serve as role models for our participants. They are responsible not only for teaching the fundamentals of football, but also teaching character building values such as teamwork, respect, effort, and good sportsmanship.
2. All coaches are required to pass a background check through a third-party provider. These are provided at no cost to the individual. These background checks are good for two calendar years.
3. Coaches should follow all Harrisonburg Parks & Recreation Flag Football League Guidelines. The official rulebook will be sent to coaches prior to the beginning of the season and may also be found at www.harrisonburgva.gov/football.
4. **Please be prompt to all practices and games.** Because of the abbreviated schedule, we want to provide as much instructional time as possible. All practices should start and finish at their designated times. Also, be constructive with the short amount of practice time you are given. Please make sure all players have left with their parent/guardian before leaving.
5. Only coaches who have been approved by the league administrator may be on the practice field, game field, or sidelines during program activities. This is for the safety of our participants.
6. Coaches are responsible for all correspondence with team members. The league administrator cannot contact every single player. Please make sure parents are aware of practice and game schedules.
7. In case of a weather delay/cancellation, schedule change, etc. the coach is the primary person responsible for contacting participants and their parents. Parents may also be directed to the Athletics Division Facebook page at www.facebook.com/hprathletics for league cancellations.
8. All coaches are expected to provide their contact information to parents. This includes a phone number and email address. This way parents can contact you in case of emergency, or in the event that their child may miss a practice or game.
9. Coaches are responsible for supervising all games and practices. While each player should have a parent or guardian in attendance, the coach needs to be the primary supervisor.
10. Coaches will be given footballs, jerseys, and flags prior to the start of the season. It is their responsibility to keep track of this equipment and return it at the conclusion of the season to the Harrisonburg Parks & Recreation in good condition and in a timely manner.
11. As one of our primary missions is instruction, it is important that all players receive playing time. Players having fun and learning the game, is more important to us than winning.
12. If there is an issue with a player on the field, the coach is expected to manage it in the appropriate manner. If a coach is uncomfortable with a particular situation, they should contact the league administrator.
13. All coaches should conduct themselves in a professional manner in all activities associated with this league. This includes refraining from using profanity, arguing with officials, or violating any other rule outlined by the Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation.
14. **Remember, coaches serve as role models for our participants.** Please act in a manner that is in accordance with the conduct policies of the Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation.

Article 5: Rationale

1. Substitution Rules: This helps ensure all participants are having an opportunity to experience the game with equal and fair playing time.
2. Unsportsmanlike Penalties: Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation has a "0" tolerance policy when it comes to any actions that are not within the normal actions of said sport.
3. Checked Flags: This is to prevent players from gaining an advantage over a defender by tying, tucking, etc. their flags so that they are harder/impossible to pull off easily.
4. Flag Guarding: This is to ensure the defense has a fair opportunity to pull flags.
5. Rushing: This is to allow for a defender to disrupt an offensive play. It will prepare both defenders and offensive players for the next level (tackle).
6. Blocking: This is to allow for the offense to defend against rushing, and to introduce the concept before the next level (tackle)

Article 6: Sportsmanship Policy

1. Spectators that show poor sportsmanship including booing, harassing officials, arguing calls, disruptive behavior, negative comments, threats, or obscene gestures shall be given one warning. If the undesirable behavior continues after the warning, the individual(s) shall be ejected from the facility. Play will not resume until the spectator has vacated the facility. If they refuse to leave, the game will end, and the individual will be issued a trespass notice which will apply to all Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation facilities and parks.
2. Cheering in a positive manner for both teams is highly encouraged. Remember, it takes a lot of courage for our players to get in front of a crowd and play. Please remember this during the game and help us build the positive experiences through the game of football.
3. Please refrain from coaching our players from the bleachers during games. We have coaches who volunteer their time to do this, let them coach! This is also very distracting to our players. Again, do not be the reason for increased anxiety to our players.

Article 7: Registration

1. All league information can be found at www.harrisonburgva.gov/football.
2. Please make sure all requested information has been completed.
3. Ages are based on the age of the player as of September 1st.
 - a. Ex. A child born on Sept. 2nd who is 8 years old will be allowed to participate.
 - b. Ex. A child born on Sept. 2nd who is 5 years old will not be allowed to participate.
 - c. Moving up & down in age divisions is not permitted. Players must play in their designated age division. No exceptions.

Article 8: Practices

1. Please arrive no more than 20 minutes prior to the start of practice
2. Practices will be held on Tuesday evenings throughout the season. Thursday evening practices will only pertain to the first two weeks of the season.
3. Teams practice schedules can be found at www.harrisonburgva.gov/football.

4. All practices will take place on Pad #3 at the Smithland Athletic Complex.
5. No shared food or beverages will be permitted during activity. All players must supply their own.
6. Parents/guardians are responsible for the supervision of their children that accompany them to league activities.

Article 9: Game Day

1. Please arrive no more than 20 minutes prior to the start of the game.
2. Uniforms will be provided for each team at the start of the season. Parents/Players will be responsible for keeping up with their uniforms throughout the season.
 - a. There will be a fee for replacement jerseys.
3. It will be the responsibility of each participant or parent to have their uniform washed following each day's activity.
4. Games will be scheduled for Thursday evenings. A game schedule will be distributed prior to the season and can also be found at www.harrisonburgva.gov/football
5. All games will take place on Pad #3 at the Smithland Athletic complex.
6. No shared food or beverages will be permitted during activity. All players must supply their own.
7. Parents/guardians are responsible for the supervision of their children that accompany them to league activities.

Article 10: Game Cancellations or Postponements

1. An email will be sent out to all participants.
2. For inclement weather notifications, please use the following resources:
 - a. Facebook: www.facebook.com/HPRathletics
 - b. Twitter: www.twitter.com/HburgParks

Article 11: Team Selection

1. Teams will be generated from each middle school. Participants will be placed on their team based on which school they attend or will attend. Participants cannot request to be on any team.
 - a. Teams 1-4 → Smithland, Stone Spring, Spotswood → Skyline
 - b. Teams 5-8 → Waterman, Keister, Bluestone → Thomas Harrison
2. Volunteer coaches, who have children in the program, will be automatically assigned their own children.
3. Siblings will be placed together on the same team.

Article 12: Resources

1. Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Football Webpage: www.harrisonburgva.gov/football
2. Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Athletics Division Phone: 540-433-9168
3. Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Athletics Division Facebook: www.facebook.com/HPRathletics.

4. Flag Football Program Coordinator Email: Nathan.Almarode@harrisonburgva.gov.