Howard County
RECREATION & PARKS

HCRP 7on7 Football League Rules

Officials

- Referees serve as the field authority and/or field judge for all games. Their calls and decisions are final regarding all game rulings.

Field Dimensions

- The length of the game field is 40yds long (first downs at the 25- and 10-yard lines) with a 10yd end zone and the width is sideline to sideline.

Time

- Two 20-minute halves (continuous clock for each half). Half-time is 3 minutes.
- 1 time out per game. The clock will not stop for injuries.
- Offenses may finish a drive started before time has expired only if they have a chance to win or tie.

Rosters/Team Members

- Each team roster can have a maximum of 16 players. Players not on the roster are not allowed to play. 13U teams may have up to four 14-year-old per team.
- All players must have a State issued ID card, Military ID or MMYFCL ID card that was valid for the fall 22 season, or a passport or birth certificate.
- Each team is allowed a maximum of 4 coaches on the sidelines during games. Coaches must wear masks.
- Offensive coaches are allowed on the field to call the play. Once the huddle breaks, the coach on the field will not be allowed to speak and must be a minimum of 5 yds behind the play at the snap. Violation of these rules will result in the loss of down and the ball returned to the previous LOS. Coaches on the sideline can instruct the team. Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field.
- Age Determination is August 1, 2022.

Game Start

- Teams must be on opposite sidelines of the playing field. Teams are required to wear same color shirts/jerseys. The Home Team must change (or wear pinnies) if both teams are wearing the same color jersey.
- Standard rubber or plastic football cleats are permitted. No metal cleats are allowed.
- Visitors will have the 1st possession to begin the game and the home team will have the possession to begin the 2nd half.
- The ball is always placed at the 40yd line when beginning each offensive drive.
- Each team must use its own football. The 13U division has the option to use a youth size (TDY) or a high school size football. The 12U division uses TDY sized footballs, 11U division uses TDJ sized footballs, and the 10U division uses K-2 sized footballs.

- Offenses must have at least 1 back/receiver lined up within imaginary tackles upon snap of ball. More than 1 player is permissible within the imaginary tackles upon the snap of the ball. Players can line up outside of the "tackle box" and can motion in prior to the snap of the ball.
- Offenses may have only 5 Eligible, plus QB and Center (Center is optional AND NOT ELIGIBLE). A Center would be used to hike the ball to a QB that is in a Shotgun formation. "Covered" receivers are not eligible as teams should attempt to be in "legal" formations.
- Teams must be onsite and ready to start 10 minutes before start time. If a team is late or does not have enough players to start on time, the game clock will begin and whatever time is left on the clock will be where the game starts. • If a team is late by 10 minutes or more, they will forfeit the game, 21-0.

Advancing the Ball

- The offensive possession always begins on the 40-yard line. The ball should always be placed in the center of the field.
- Teams have 3 downs to make it across the 25yd line for a 1st down, an additional 3 downs to make it across the 10yd line for a 1st down, and then 3 downs to make it into the end zone.
- There are no running plays.
- The QB is allowed 4.0 seconds to throw the ball. Teams can use a QB tee or center to start the play. If the ball is thrown after 4 seconds, there is a loss of down and the ball comes back to the line of scrimmage.

Penalties

Offense

- Offside is a 5yd penalty
- Delay of game is a loss of down (each team has 25 seconds to snap the ball)
- Pass interference is a 5yd penalty and loss of down.
- No penalty may be assessed in excess of the 40yd line. If a penalty would move the offense behind the 40yd line, the offensive team shall be charged with a loss of down.
- Passes thrown after the 4 second count are dead balls, the ball is returned to the original line of scrimmage (a "sack").
- Offensive team is responsible for retrieving and returning the ball to the previous spot or the new line of scrimmage

Defense

- Offside is a 5yd penalty
- Defensive holding is a 5yd penalty. If defensive holding occurs on the same play as a sack, the defense will be penalized, and the sack is void.
- Defensive pass interference is a spot foul (1st down at the point of infraction). Pass interference rules follow IHSA football rules.
- Any dead ball penalty on the defense after a change of possession results in a loss of down for that team's offense when they begin their ensuing possession.
- Responsibility to avoid contact is with the defense. The defense is allowed an initial disruption, and then must cover. Excessive or prolonged contact will result in a tack on penalty at the end of the play (5 yards).

Additional Rules

- Receiver/Ball carrier is down when touched below the neck with one or both hands. Excessive force or shoving will be penalized by a 5yd penalty and an automatic first down. The player will be ejected if ruled unsportsmanlike and/or flagrant.
- Fumbles are dead balls at the spot with the last team retaining possession. A muffed snap is not a fumble/dead ball, the 4 second count remains in effect.
- There is no blocking.
- Each team will have 25 seconds to snap the ball once it has been marked ready for play.
- Responsibility to avoid contact is with the defense. There will be no deliberate bumping or grabbing beyond initial contact.
- Interceptions are dead balls and may not be returned. The defensive team receives 3 points and the ball on the 40yd line to start an offensive possession.
- The offensive team is responsible for retrieving and returning the ball to the line of scrimmage. The clock does not stop and any delay by the offense in retrieving and returning the ball to the referee will result in a delay of game penalty.
- All passes must be thrown forward (passes can be thrown behind the line of scrimmage, but must go forward). The only laterals allowed are ones that occur after the completion of a forward pass. Double passes are illegal.

Behavior

- No taunting or trash talking. (10-yard penalty & expulsion if flagrant or repeated).
- Fighting: the player(s) involved will be ejected from the game. If a team fight occurs, the Teams involved will be ejected from the league.
- Any defensive dead ball foul on a play that results in the defense getting the ball will result in a loss of down penalty on the resulting offensive possession.

Scoring

- 6 points for TD,
- 1 point automatic PAT, teams can elect to go for 2
- 2 points for PAT from 10-yard line
- 2 points are awarded to the Defense for a Turnover on Downs
- 3 points for an INT. (Dead ball)

Overtime Rules

- After a coin flip to determine first possession, each team gets one play starting at the 40-yard line. The team that gains most yards wins

Tiebreakers for Standings

- If teams are tied at the end of the regular season, the first tiebreaker is head-to-head competition
- If teams are still tied, then standings will be determined by a coin flip.