



Welcome to the 2023 VMFL Spring Flag Commissioner Clinic

Commissioner Paperwork

- Field #
- Broken into field A, B, C, D
- Match ups listed per game (25 minutes)
- Names of refs on field
- Cheat sheet

Referees

- Must check in and out with you. You can note on the game sheets when refs left and when they returned.
- The referee scheduler will assign refs to their field when they check in before their shift. If you have a concern about refs being together (chatting instead of watching the game, on their phone, etc.) Call the Referee Scheduler on the radio and ask for assistance at the field.
- Each field will have 8 refs, 2 per game and a floater if possible. If a break is needed, call the Referee scheduler to request a break-coverage ref for the field. Please make sure that all day refs get a couple of breaks in a day.
- Make sure that refs are dressed appropriately, wearing a pinny and runners/cleats (not sandals) and that they all have a whistle.
- Remind them to eat and drink lots of water

Duties

- Ensure fields are set up with cones and bean bags, make sure they are kept neat & tidy – remind people to take their garbage when they leave.
- If you are on the field at the end of the day instruct the referees to collect the bean bags, cones and signs and pile them all together, neatly at the corner of the field. There is usually a blue tote near the field number – please gather everything at this spot. If there is not a bin, collect everything where the field number sign was located
- Manage the fields
- Manage and support the refs
- Collect scores – refs and head coaches should come to you with scores at the end of the game, the referees score is however the final score, do not be convinced by a coach to change a score

Field Management

- 2 coaches ONLY per team on the sidelines.
- Sidelines are only for team members and coaches
- NO parents/photographers/water boys on sidelines – end zones only.
- Walk the fields, make your presence known, make sure the refs know that you are there to support them
- Remind everyone of the time – 3 minute warning, last play – yell if you have to
- Keep your eye on things like hats, mouth guards, flags etc
- Ensure refs are not on phones, chit-chatting, keep on top of them



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In Conflicts

- Speak to the refs first, without the players or coaches nearby, get their view on things and trust their perspective.
- Ask ref to explain their decision (if necessary) to the coach/player. They usually know exactly what has happened throughout the game, therefore making it very difficult to argue with them
- If you are unsure or things escalate, radio for a VMFL executive and pause the game

First Aid

- Ask the player and/or coach if help is needed but also trust your gut
- Radio for first aid



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Introduction

As the official on the field you are the authority for the game and are pivotal in keeping the day's events moving. It is your responsibility to be aware of Player Safety & Player focus in game play. You are representing the Vancouver Mainland Football League when you are on the field – make sure you conduct yourself accordingly.

Before Your Shift

Check in to the VMFL tent 30 minutes before your first game is scheduled. You will need to sign out a referee pinnie and get your field assignment. Once you have your field assignment report to your field and check in with the Field Commissioner. The Field Commissioner will be the person responsible for recording the games you referee, and get paid for, so this is very important.

You will be responsible for supplying the following items for every game you referee:

- A whistle
- A flag
- A notebook and pen/pencil to write scores

During the Game

As a two man Referee Crew, one should be on the teams sideline at the line of scrimmage focusing on the Quarterback and Rusher. The second should be on the spectators sideline across from the 7 yard bag focusing on the downfield play. After the ball is snapped, the referees must move with the play to ensure they are within 5 yards of the reception / flag pull / score.

While you are refereeing a game, here are some things you need to remember

Do's

● Start and end the game on time	● Speak loudly and clearly to players and coaches
● Answer coaches questions respectfully	● Ensure you keep the game pace going
● Ensure that players are safe at all times	● Ensure there are only 2 coaches per team sideline
● Ask your Commissioner for assistance if needed	● Wear a shirt, shorts or pants, ref pinnie and shoes

Don'ts

● Have a phone in your hand – talking or texting	● Be more than 5 yards from the play action
● Talk with your partner about non-game issues	● Leave the field before checking with the Commish
● Argue with Coaches or Players	● Let Parents/Coaches/Players antagonize you

After the Game

Write down the scores for both teams and go with your partner to the Field Commissioner to report the score. Tell the Field Commissioner your name for the referee payroll report. If you are a referee for the next game call captains and get ready to start the game on the horn.



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At the End of the Shift

Check out at the VMFL tent and return your pinnie. If your pinnie isn't returned, or is not recorded as returned \$10 will be deducted from your cheque. Cheques for Weeks 1-3 will be ready for pick up at the Jamboree on Week 4. Cheques for Weeks 4-6 will be prepared for pick up after the last game on Week 6.



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Game Start

Before the start of each game, the referees need to call a captain from each team to decide who obtains possession first. This will be decided by rock paper scissors, and in the case of a tie, another round is completed until a winner is determined. The winner gets possession for the first play of the game. Place the ball on the line of scrimmage and wait for the timer's horn to indicate the start of the game.

Player Equipment

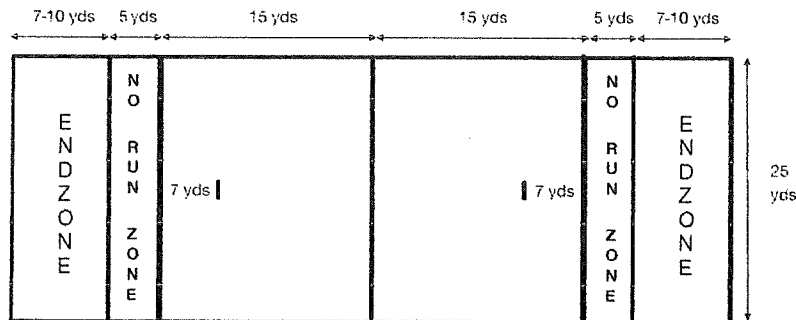
For a player to be on the field during the game they must have the following equipment:

- Protective Mouthpiece/Mouthguard – THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE. Referees will stop the game and ask the player to leave the field. The player can return when they have a mouthguard.
- Flags – 2 to be worn at each hip with 2" of white flag showing.
- Shorts or pants WITHOUT POCKETS
- Hat – a soft brimmed hat without any attached string. No hard brimmed hats, or hats with attached strings

Game Play

The VMFL plays a 5 on 5 format, however, if there is a team that has less than 5 players at a game, the game can go ahead and the opposing team has the option to play with 5 players or match the number of players the team that is short players is able to field.

If there is an injury during the game, the injured player must leave the field for one play. If there is a major injury that appears may need additional medical attention, contact the field commissioner immediately.



The team with possession of the ball will start on their home 5 yard line. That team has 3 downs (4 downs for the U-10 division) to make it past mid field.

- If they make it past mid field in 3 (or 4) downs, they have another 3 (or 4) downs to get a score.
- If they DON'T make it past mid field in 3 (or 4) downs, it is a turnover on downs and the opposing team takes possession at their 5 yard line and the process starts again.

If an interception occurs, the ball will be placed where it was intercepted and advanced to (at least the intercepting team's 5 yard line)



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Exchanges/Hand-offs

- Once the ball carrier has passed the line of scrimmage the ball cannot be handed off, tossed, pitched or passed forward in any way.
- An offence may use multiple hand-offs behind the line of scrimmage.
- Only backward and lateral handoffs are allowed during the down.

Passing

- The quarterback has 7 seconds to throw the ball once it's snapped.
- If a pass is not thrown, or a hand-off completed within 7 seconds the play is dead.
- Once the ball is handed-off, tossed, or fake hand-off the 7 second rule is no longer in effect.
- Once a player catches a ball past the line of scrimmage they are no longer allowed to lateral the ball.
- All forward passes MUST go past the line of scrimmage.
- Once a team is in the "No Run Zone" (5 yards of their opponents end zone) all plays must be pass plays.
- In the case of a tipped pass
 - If it is offence to offence or defence to defence the play is dead where it is caught/intercepted.
 - If it is offence to defence or defence to offence the play continues.

Game Scoring

- Touchdown – 6 points
- Convert from 5 yard line – 1 point (must be a pass play)
- Convert from 10 yard line – 2 points (can be a run or pass play)
- Safety – 2 points

Ball Carrier

- It is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender.
- Spinning is allowed, but at least one foot must remain in contact with the ground at all times.
- The ball carrier cannot dive forward or jump to avoid a defensive player or gain yards (no diving).
- If a ball carrier's flag falls off, the player becomes "touch" and play continues as usual until the player is touched at the hip by an opposing player or a score is made.

Rushing

- Any number of players can rush the quarterback.
- The rusher must be 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped (behind the rush bag).
- The rusher must be at least 1 yard to the side of the rush bag to have a clear path.

GAME END

The timer will send out 3 horn blasts to indicate there are 3 minutes of play left – repeat "3 minutes left" to coaches
The timer will send out 1 horn blast to indicate the end of the game.

IMPORTANT

- If you have placed the ball on the line of scrimmage BEFORE the last play horn is sounded, the play can continue for ONE PLAY ONLY – call out last play and whistle the play in.
- If you have NOT placed the ball on the line of scrimmage when the last play horn is sounded, the game is ended – wave your flag.