2026

VMFL HANDBOOK

Mission Statement:

To foster and promote minor football in conjunction with our member Associations with the emphasis on participation and competition

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VMFL Mission Statement, Goals, Objectives and Guiding Principles

Mission Statement:

To foster and promote minor football in conjunction with our member Associations; placing the emphasis on participation and competition.

Goals:

- Having as many Associations, teams and participants in all divisions as we have resources available.
- To be competitive while at the same time having the participants enjoy football and learn team spirit through a league structure.
- To operate the annual football program with a balanced budget including a $5,000 scholarship contingency fund.
- To promote Community Football through our affiliation with BC Football.
- To coordinate and organize the VMFL League Schedule for spring flag and fall seasons, the VMFL Championship Schedule (s) and the VMFL cheerleading Competition.

Objectives:

- FUN
- LEARN SKILLS
- TEAM - SOCIAL - CO-OPERATIVE
- SAFETY
- EQUAL COMPETITION
- ASPIRATIONS OF YOUTH

Guiding Principles of the VMFL and its member Associations:

- To provide and promote minor football and community cheerleading, through our member Associations, to youth aged 5 -18.
- To provide youth the opportunity to play football and cheerleading to their capabilities.
- To provide youth the opportunity to play contact football at the competitive level.
- To provide youth the opportunity to play flag football at the recreational and competitive level.
- To provide youth the opportunity to do cheerleading at a community and competitive level.
- To ensure that our program is enjoyable and safe for all participants.
- To ensure an educational process for the learning and development of team concepts, community spirit and good sportsmanship are entrenched in our program.
- To provide youth the opportunity to appreciate the game of football and cheerleading, enjoy recreational sport and learn the fundamentals of the sport.
- To give the opportunity for players, coaches and officials to develop their skill sets through proper certification programs.
- To ensure safety equipment is utilized properly and adequate playing fields or spaces for practice and games are made available.

Our 2026 Handbook

The Vancouver Mainland Football League (VMFL) is composed of member Associations, from the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island, playing Canadian rules football. The VMFL also has associate members who participate in the spring flag and fall leagues. The VMFL's mandate is to provide an environment for children aged 5 to 18 to learn the skills of Football and Cheerleading in a competitive environment, and to learn the skills of flag football in a recreational environment.

The VMFL has 6 divisions in the fall season - U8 Tyke Flag, U10 Atom, U12 Peewee, U14 Junior Bantam, U16 Bantam, and U19 Midget. The VMFL has 6 divisions in the spring flag season – U8, U10, U12, U14, U16, and U19. The VMFL also provides a structured cheerleading program and organizes the VMFL Cheerleading Competition every year.

The VMFL schedules games for the regular season and organizes the VMFL Championships at a location or locations as determined pursuant to this Handbook for the fall season. The spring flag season consists of jamborees to be hosted by member clubs. Through the VMFL each team in the U8 Atom to U19 Midget divisions may have the opportunity to play in the Provincial Championships. The spring flag season allows for the opportunity for play in the Provincial championships as well as the VMFL tournaments every season.

The following pages, the VMFL Handbook, contain rules that the VMFL play by to allow children to participate in the sport of football to the best of their ability.

1 DEFINITIONS & INTERPRETATION

1.1 DEFINITIONS

In this Handbook, the following words and phrases when used in this handbook have ascribed to them the following meanings:

a) "Associations" means the societies, clubs, Associations or other legal organizations that are from time to time members of the VMFL pursuant to the Constitution and bylaws of the VMFL; and "Association" means one of the Associations, as the context may require;
b) "Association Presidents" means the persons who are, from time to time, the presidents of the Associations and "Association President" means one of such persons as the context may require;
c) "BCPFA" means the BC Provincial football Association, the Provincial governing body;
d) "CARBTF" means the current edition of the Canadian Amateur Rule Book For Tackle Football as approved for use by Football Canada, and as amended or replaced from time to time
e) "Days" means calendar days irrespective of weekends or holidays;
f) "Executive Director" means:
    i. the person who is the president of the VMFL or
    ii. if the person who is the president of the VMFL is absent or due to other circumstances is unable to act in the capacity of president of the VMFL in respect of any matter (including circumstances which by this Handbook, the president of the VMFL opts not to act or is deemed to be in a conflict of interest), then the person who is the authorized designate of the president of the VMFL as determined by the VMFL Executive, from time to time; or for the purposes of a specific matter or task, the person who is a vice–president of the VMFL or
    iii. Another member of the VMFL Executive, and who is expressly designated in writing by the president of the VMFL to act on behalf of president of the VMFL in connection with that specific matter or task, including but not limited to the receipt or review of a complaint pursuant to the VMFL's Discipline and Complaints Policy.
g) "Football BC" is the Provincial governing body
h) "Handbook" or "VMFL Handbook" means this edition of the VMFL Handbook, as it may be amended or supplemented from time to time, inclusive of all appendices and schedules, and the expressions "hereof", "herein", "hereto", "hereunder", "hereby" and similar expressions refer to this Handbook and not to any particular section, subsection, paragraph or other portion of this Handbook.
i) "in writing" includes a written or typed communication given by electronic mail, facsimile transmission or other electronically produced means (including a photo scanned copy of

an original document) and a consent, communication or notice as executed, given and/or received by the requisite person(s) in such manner shall be legally binding and effective as if an original, manually executed in writing was presented in lieu of such written or typed communication executed, given and/or received by electronic mail, facsimile transmission or other electronically produced means (including a photo scanned copy).

j) "Majority Resolution" means a resolution of the Association Presidents:
   i. passed at a general meeting by a simple majority of the votes cast by or on behalf of those Association Presidents having the right to vote at the general meeting, or
   ii. passed, after being submitted to all of the Association Presidents in writing, by being consented to in writing by or on behalf of at least a majority of the Association Presidents having the right to vote at a general meeting (if a general meeting were called at the time to address the resolution);

k) "Officials" means game officials, field officials, sideline officials as approved by the VMFL from time to time, including members of the BCFOA or the VIFOA;

l) "on behalf" of means in respect of an Association President a vote, communication or submission made by an alternate decision maker acting for that Association president (in his or her absence) as expressly designated in writing delivered to the VMFL by the applicable Association President before the applicable vote is cast or communication or submission is made.

m) "Person in Authority" means for the purposes of an infraction of the rules, policies, procedures or other provisions of this Handbook, a member of the VMFL Executive or in the event that an incident requiring immediate action occurs solely at a field or other the facility operated by or on behalf of an Association and involves only persons who are members of that Association then "Person in Authority" may include the president of that Association or a designated officer or member of the board of directors or executive of that Association unless otherwise determined by the VMFL Executive on a case by case basis.

n) "Respondent" means a person, Association or other legal entity that is the subject of a complaint, incident report or who is subject to an investigation or potential discipline or sanctions by reason of an alleged violation of the rules, policies, procedures or other provisions of this Handbook for which discipline or sanctions may be imposed;

o) "VIFOA" means the Vancouver Island Football Officials Association;

p) "VMFL" means the Vancouver Mainland Football League;

q) "VMFL Activities" means activities and events conducted by or through the VMFL as contemplated by this handbook, including but not limited to, competitions, games, practices, training camps, travel associated with VMFL activities, and any meetings or communications by or on behalf of the VMFL;

r) "VMFL Commissioner" means the person or persons appointed by the VMFL Executive to serve and perform the duties of commissioner for the VMFL or specified divisions of the VMFL such as but not limited to a 12-Man Division Commissioner and/or a 9-Man Division Commissioner including the distribution of information, notices, reports, rule changes, administration and enforcement of the applicable rules and policies as provided in this handbook, and application of applicable discipline and sanctions in accordance with this handbook and such other duties as may be assigned or designated by the VMFL Executive from time to time. Commissioner also refers to the person who represents the VMFL on the field during spring flag jamborees who is responsible for submission of the scores as well as the above duties.

s) ”VMFL Executive" means collectively those persons who are from time to time the directors of the VMFL or their duly appointed and authorized alternates, and includes without limitation the Executive Director, VMFL Secretary, VMFL Head Coach, VMFL Commissioners, VMFL Treasurer, Vice-presidents and others.

t) "VMFL Head Coach" means the person or persons appointed by the VMFL Executive to serve and perform the duties of head coach for the VMFL or specified divisions of the VMFL, including communications with coaches on behalf of the VMFL, distribution of information, rule changes, administration and enforcement of the Coaches Code of Conduct, policies and application of applicable discipline and sanctions in accordance with this handbook and such other duties as may be assigned or designated by the VMFL Executive from time to time.

u) "VMFL Participant" means all categories of persons who participate in VMFL activities, as well as all individuals employed by or engaged in activities with the VMFL, including but not limited to, Associations, their officers or directors, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, officers, team managers, trainers, medical personnel, administrators, spectators, parents of athletes, and employees of the VMFL.

v) “VMFL Fall Tackle Season” means in any calendar year the time period beginning on 12:01 a.m. of the date on which the first regular season Fall Tackle VMFL game is scheduled by the VMFL Executive to be played and ending at 12:01 a.m. on the date immediately after the date on which the last regular season game in the VMFL is played, is deemed to have been played or is forfeited (including such later date as may be determined by the VMFL Executive by reason of the postponement, continuation or suspension of games or otherwise as provided or contemplated by this Handbook)

w) “VMFL Spring Flag Season” means in any calendar year the time period beginning on 12:01 a.m. of the date on which the first regular season Spring Flag VMFL game is scheduled by the VMFL Executive to be played and ending at 12:01 a.m. on the date immediately after the date on which the last regular season game in the VMFL is played, is deemed to have been played or is forfeited (including such later date as may be

determined by the VMFL Executive by reason of the postponement, continuation or suspension of games or otherwise as provided or contemplated by this Handbook

x) "VMFL Rules" means the rules set out in this Handbook as such may be amended or supplemented from time to time pursuant to this Handbook, inclusive of all appendices and schedules.

1.2 INTERPRETATION

a) Headings and Table of Contents. The division of this handbook into parts, articles, sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, appendices or schedules, the insertion of headings and the provision of any table of contents are for convenience only and shall not affect the construction or interpretation of this Handbook.

b) Number and Gender. Unless the context requires otherwise, words importing the singular include the plural and vice versa and words importing gender to include all genders.

c) Section References, etc. Unless the context requires otherwise, references in this Handbook to one or more parts, articles, sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, appendices or schedules are to parts, articles, sections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, appendices or schedules of this Handbook.

d) All rules associated with game play not covered in this handbook are covered in the CARBTF.

e) The intent or interpretation of any rule shall only be decided by the VMFL Executive unless otherwise provided by this Handbook or otherwise determined by Majority Resolution.

f) A VMFL Executive review committee shall be formed to review situations or incidents not covered by the VMFL Handbook or irregularities of which they become aware.

1.3 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

“Associate Member” means any organized football club registered with VMFL for the purposes of participating in Spring Flag jamborees, Fall Football games, and other events hosted by the league, outside of the fall tackle season. Associate Members may attend VMFL meetings, but are not entitled to vote.

Admission of Associate Members

No entity will be admitted as an Associate Member of the VMFL unless:

The candidate member has made an application for membership in a manner prescribed by the League;

The candidate member has been approved by majority resolution;

If, at the time of applying for membership the candidate member is currently a Member, the candidate Member is a Member in good standing;

If the candidate member was at any time previously a Member, the candidate member was a Member in good standing at the time of ceasing to be a Member;

The candidate member has paid dues as prescribed by the League.

2 CONDUCT OF THE GAME

2.1 PARTICIPATION OF MEMBER CLUBS

All member clubs of the VMFL must play all club teams in the VMFL league play from ages 5yr old U8 Tyke Flag to U19 Midget. Teams may NOT play in other leagues, including in house leagues as clubs choose. Only exception that will be made is if the VMFL does not offer a division, i.e. if a club has enough players to field a U12 Peewee 9-man team and the VMFL is not holding a VMFL U12 Peewee 9-man division then said club would be able to move that 1 team to another league.

2.2 RULES

Except to the extent modified or replaced by the provisions of this handbook, the CARBTF, or in the case of Flag divisions, Football Canada's "The Canadian Rule Book for Flag Football" will apply to the conduct of the games in the VMFL, as appropriate.

2.3 PRACTICES

a) Full contact is limited to no more than 3 practices per week. Full contact should also be limited to no more than 30 minutes in one day and no more than 90 minutes in one week. Full contact is defined by contact levels 4 ("thud") and 5 ("live")

b) There will be no physical outdoor practices or games if the air quality index is 7 or above in the club's region based on the BC Government website.

2.4 PRE-GAME

a) **Providing copies of rosters on game day.** Before the start of each game, each participating team must provide a copy of its Official Team Roster to the game commissioner and to the opposing team and shall retain one copy. If a player is not playing due to absence, injury, discipline or illness, then the reason shall be printed in the status column next to the player's name. If a player is no longer on the team, the name shall have a single line drawn through it. **Any name that is crossed off an Official Roster is off for the season [See Subsection PART 7.2c).** The official roster will be the official roster that has been signed and verified by either an Association president or designate or a VMFL executive member.

b) **Late arriving players.** Teams who have players arrive late to a game shall report the arrival to the Game Commissioner to have the official roster adjusted to show late arriving player as present.

c) **Announcer Sheets.** As some parks have public address systems, all teams shall have numerical roster sheets (players listed in sequential order by their jersey numbers from lowest to highest) with players given name first and surname second. Announcing sheets shall be printed (or typed) and provided by each team to the game announcer at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the game.

2.5 THE FIELD AND FACILITIES

a) Playing fields shall be marked as required under the rules set out in the CARBTF, or in the case of Flag divisions, Football Canada's *"The Canadian Rule Book for Flag Football",* unless otherwise approved by the VMFL Executive. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in discipline (including but not limited to warnings, directions or sanctions) issued by the VMFL Executive to the Association concerned.

b) All amenities available at the field of play shall be made available to both the home team and the visiting team on an equal basis, i.e. dressing rooms, shelters, etc.

c) Team benches shall be on the same side of the field and opposite the spectator's side except where there are spectator stands on each side of the field. When spectator's stands are provided on the same side of the field, the team benches shall be separated from the spectators.

d) Team benches shall be a minimum of five (5) yards and an optimum of ten (10) yards from the side lines.

e) Spectators are to be confined to the opposite side of the field from the team benches, (except as noted in subsection 2.5 c).

f) All VMFL fall tackle playing fields shall be deemed to have twenty (20) yard end zones for scoring purposes. Missed field goals, kickoffs and punted balls going out of the back of the end zone score one point regardless of whether or not the ball touches the ground in the end zone. Non-standard fields must be approved by the VMFL.

g) Yard markers shall be placed on the opposite side of the field from the team benches. Yard markers shall be placed one (1) yard outside the field of play.

h) Cheerleaders shall be a minimum of three (3) yards from the sidelines at all times.

i) For safety reasons, all goal posts shall be properly padded. In case of a neutral field, the home team shall be responsible to see that the posts are padded.

j) Commissioner Area -. An area clearly marked off by cones or other clear markings and designated as a "commissioner area" shall be set-up on the same side of the field as the team benches and shall be set up between the 45 yard lines (which area may be narrowed to depending on field configuration but provided that a reasonable separation of at least 10 yards between the team benches is maintained).

2.6 PERSONS PERMITTED IN THE GAME COMMISSIONER AREA

Officials, the game commissioner, VMFL Executive, PSO Executives, Association Presidents whose teams are participating in the game, the host field's Association President in the case of a game where both teams come from different Associations, and game related required personnel (such as but not limited to play counters and persons operating score clocks, or other required game equipment) are the only people permitted in the commissioner area. For regular season games only, any team related personnel such as film crew or photographers must have approval from the game commissioner before the start of the game. All persons in the commissioner box must act in a sportsmanlike and respectful manner towards all participants in the game (including players, coaches, team staff, Officials and game related required personnel).

2.7 THE BALL

a) The game is played with the VMFL game ball as indicated in Table T2-A or as defined by section 2 "the ball" in FC rule book. otherwise determined or approved from time to time by a Majority Resolution:

Division	Size	Nike	Wilson Brand
U8 Tyke Flag, U10 Atom	Size 5	JR Peewee	K2
Pee Wee	Size 6	Vapor Junior Size	TDJ
U14 Junior Bantam	Size 7	Vapor One Youth Size	TDY
U16 Bantam	Size 9	Vapor One Youth Size	TDS
U19 Midget	Size 9	Vapor One Official Size	F2000CIS Leather

Table T2-A

b) The home team will supply the game ball(s) or equivalent for use during each game.

c) All footballs used in the game will be controlled by the Officials.

d) U8 Tyke through U14 Junior Bantam to use composite balls and U16 Bantam and U19 Midget to mandatorily use Leather only for game day.

2.8 UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

a) Mouth guards are mandatory for every football player in all divisions. Mouth guards must have tabs and be attached to the face guard for U10 Atom Tackle, through to U14 Junior Bantam. No tether is required for U8 Tyke Flag, U10 Atom Flag, U16 Bantam and U19 Midget. The Officials will monitor to make sure that each player has the proper mouth guard. If a player does not have a proper mouth guard, the Officials may determine that the player concerned cannot play in the game until that player is equipped with a proper mouth guard.

b) Teeth Braces. If the player is wearing teeth braces, he or she may wear a special mouth guard; however, he or she must inform the Head Official.

c) A new Association must apply in writing to the VMFL for the form found in the Appendix P section of the fall handbook before being approved for Association colours. All existing/current Associations colours will be grandfathered in based on previous acceptance by the VMFL.

d) No team shall wear uniforms that blend closely with the opposing team. The visiting team shall change to an alternate colour. The team not wearing the designated colour by the league shall change to an alternate colour Jerseys should be tucked in at all times.

e) Gloves may be worn by players but no "stickum" or other adhesive substance shall be used by any player in any VMFL game. Violators will receive an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and will be suspended for the remainder of the game.

f) It shall be compulsory that all helmets be NOCSAE approved.

g) Clear visors are permitted without documentation. Visors must comply with CARBTF Rule #1, Section 11, Article 2(b). Medical exemptions for clear visors only (no tint) may be submitted to the VMFL for league approval.

h) NO player will be allowed on the playing field wearing a cast or splint. However, A PLASTIC AIR CAST WILL BE ALLOWED WITH A DOCTOR'S CERTIFICATE and provided that the Officials determine that it does not present a risk of injury to any other players. No other exceptions are permitted.

i) Teams shall allow the use of specific wireless communications devices between coaches and players. Devices between coaches and players include electronic arm bands. Coaches may also communicate with each other using electronic arm bands, cell phones, watches, walkie talkies and headsets. Quarterbacks are not permitted to wear in-ear devices or communication through the helmet. (No communication devices for U8.)

j) U8 Tyke Flag and U10 Atom players are not required to conform to the Canadian Numbering rules by position as defined in the CARBTF (see CARBTF Rule 6, Section 4, Articles 4 and 5).

k) All players on the bench of the playing team including injured (Unless player is too injured) and discipline must be in their rostered number jersey.

2.9 THE GAME

a) Starting the Game. Prior to the start of the game, the Officials will call the captains of the 2 participating teams together near mid-field and conduct a coin toss to determine which team will have the first choice to receive, kick or defend at the start of the game. The Home Team calls the coin toss by declaring "Heads" or "Tails" before the coin is tossed. The captain of the team winning the coin toss shall declare whether he wishes to have first choice at the start of the first or second half (e.g. defer). The captain of the team

having first choice at the start of the first half shall have the option of one of the following three choices:

i. Kicking Off;
ii. Receiving the kick off; or
iii. Defending an end of the field

b) The captain of the other team shall have the option of the remaining choices. At the start of the second half, (unless the Mercy Rule is then in effect per subsection 2.10(c) – Mercy Rule below) the procedure shall be reversed. Unless the Mercy Rule is then in effect per subsection PART 5 2.10c) below, the team captain having the first choice for the 2nd half shall have the option of the 3 choices above, and the captain of the other team the option of the remaining choices.

2.10 TIMING OF THE GAME

a) The following table summarizes the timing for game in the applicable divisions:

Division	Quarters/Halves	Time per quarter or half	Half time rest period*	Time outs per half
U8 Tyke Flag	2 Halves	20 mins Run Time	5	No Time Outs
U10 Atom Flag (Fall)	4 quarters divided into 2 halves	10 minutes/ quarter	10 minutes	As per CARBTF
U10 Atom 6 Man Tackle	4 quarters, divided into 2 halves	10 minutes/ quarter	10 minutes	As per CARBTF
U12 Peewee	4 quarters, divided into 2 halves	10 minutes/ quarter	10 minutes	As per CARBTF
U14 Junior Bantam	4 quarters, divided into 2 halves	12 minutes/ quarter	12 minutes	As per CARBTF
U16 Bantam	4 quarters, divided into 2 halves	12 minutes/ quarter	12 minutes	As per CARBTF
U19 Midget	4 quarters, divided into 2 halves	12 minutes/ quarter	12 minutes	As per CARBTF

** As determined by the Head Official or such other period as the VMFL may otherwise determine.*

*** For U8 Tyke Flag (Fall) Division — The length of game shall be in accordance with Football Canada's "The Canadian Rule Book for Flag Football" for 5v5 provided that each game must end*

before the time that the next scheduled game is to start. (Referees may have to shorten playing time to accommodate the next game scheduled for the field).

a) The Head Official may call an Official's time out and a time out for injury. In all games a three minute warning will be given at the Three (3) minute mark before half time and before the end of the fourth quarter.

b) The Head Official of the game has the right to rule where the time of the game is to be kept; on the field or on the sidelines. The decision of the Head Official in this regard is final.

c) The Head Official may call (end) a game on account of darkness, severe weather or other conditions (if safety of the participants is at risk as a result of such conditions). If the Head Official calls a game in these circumstances and if more than three quarters of the game have been completed, the score at the time the game is called will be deemed for all purposes to be the final score of the game. If less than three quarters of the game have been played, either team may within 24 hours apply in writing to the VMFL for a determination as to whether the continuation of game be rescheduled. Upon such application, the VMFL may either cause the continuation of the game to be rescheduled (if time and field availability reasonably allow rescheduling) or determine or confirm that the score at the time the game was called will be deemed to be the final score of the game.

2.11 PLAYER PARTICIPATION RULE (PPR)

a) Minimum Play Requirement: A 10 play count per player will be enforced for U10 Atom, U12 Pee Wee and U14 Junior Bantam during the season. Each player is to be included in a minimum of 10 plays, excluding kick off, kick off return, and non-participatory plays (e.g. kneel downs), in each game scheduled by the VMFL. This rule is enforced by the VMFL during the regular season and playoffs.

b) Definition of Non-Plays: For the purposes of the Player Participation Rule, non-plays shall not count toward a player's required minimum play count. A non-play includes, but is not limited to, any play in which a timeout is called after the snap and is honoured by the Officials, or any play that is whistled dead for procedural reason prior to a developed play.

c) Enforcement: If this rule is not adhered to then the offending team shall forfeit the game. U16 Bantam and U19 Midget divisions are excluded. (*Also: see Section 11.9 Player Participation Rules for all VMFL Playoff games). If both teams fail to adhere to this rule during a game, then the matter will be referred to the VMFL Executive for review and the VMFL Executive in its discretion may apply discipline including but not limited to: (1) Declaring that each team be recorded as having lost the game in question; or (2) Applying other sanctions or discipline including fines or suspensions.

d) Player Participation Monitors: Each team will supply two individuals: one will monitor their own team and the other will monitor the opposing team, thus having two monitors working together per

team. The results will be forwarded to the game commissioner for final verification if there is a discrepancy. Both monitors will sign the play count sheet when completed.

e) Ineligible Players: In any event where it has been determined a team has used over aged or otherwise ineligible players, all league games previously played by the ineligible player will be forfeited.

f) Injured or Unfit Players: Officials must rule that a player should leave the game if, in their opinion, the player is physically unfit to play (whether due to injury or illness). In the event that a player is ruled to be physically unfit to play and is required to leave the game and if that player does not return to the game, then the player participation rule shall be waived in respect of that player for that game. In any event, an injured player must leave the game for at least one play.

g) Non-Participating Players: Players unable to participate in a game due to injury, illness, or discipline as per subsection 2.2 (a) shall not wear shoulder pads or helmet. Non-playing players may remain with the team except as required in Section 13.5 of PART 13 (Ejections and Disqualifications).

2.12 LARGE POINT DIFFERENTIALS AND MERCY RULE

a) If a team is behind by 18 points or more, at the start of the second half, they will have the option to kick, receive the ball, or defend an end at the beginning of the second half and if a team is behind by 30 points or more, at the start of the second half, they will have the additional option to scrimmage from their own 45 yard line at the beginning of the second half.

b) If a team is behind by 30 points or more at any time during the game, then for so long as that team remains behind by 30 points or more, they will have the option to kick, receive the ball, scrimmage from their own 45 yard line, or defend an end after each score by the opposing team.

c) If a team is behind by 30 points or more at or after the start of the second half or at any time thereafter during the game, the Head Official will let both coaches know the rest of the game will be played under the mercy rule. The Head Official can enforce the rule at the beginning or any time during the 3rd quarter if he feels it is warranted once there is a 30 point spread. No stopped time will be automatically applied in the 4th quarter if there is a 30 point spread. The provisions of this subsection will be known as the MERCY RULE.

d) Once a game is in MERCY RULE it will remain until the game is over.

e) Once a game is in MERCY RULE, only the losing team shall be allowed time-outs. However, regardless of a time out, the game clock and the time remaining in the game will continue to run.

2.13 ACCUMULATED FOULS AND PENALTIES

A member of a team who receives **Two (2) Objectionable Conduct penalties** or **Three (3) Unnecessary Roughness penalties** during a game shall be ejected from the game.

Game ejections shall be conducted in accordance with CARBTF and the provisions of Part 13 of this Handbook and will be reviewed by the VMFL Commissioner and may be subject to further sanctions in accordance with this Handbook.

2.14 POST -GAME

a) **Game Commissioner Reports**. Game Commissioner Reports and game rosters are to be scanned and emailed to the applicable VMFL Commissioner by Midnight of game day in **PDF Format**. Each game must be in a single file, with the designated file name in the required format. (see **Appendix M,** as may be updated from time to time, for submission instructions).

b) **Late Submissions**. An Association that submits Game Commissioner Reports and game rosters after midnight or submits Game Commissioner Reports and game rosters that are not in the required format will be subject to a maximum $250 fine for each occurrence which may be imposed at the discretion of the VMFL Executive.

c) **Game Scores**. All game scores shall be emailed by the home Association to the League Scorekeeper (scores.vmfl@gmail.com), on the same email used to send the Game Commissioners Reports (commish.vmfl@gmail.com) from section 2.14a, by Midnight of Game Day.

d) **Damage at Parks**

   i. Any damage done by any team to the facilities (including but not limited to fields, facilities, dressing rooms, or equipment) of another Association may form the basis of incident report submitted to the Executive Director. Upon receipt of such an incident report, the Executive Director may cause an investigation to be undertaken and the result of which investigation may, if appropriate, include an order that the Association whose team caused the damage must pay or reimburse the other Association for all damages, costs and expenses incurred to remedy the damage caused. Further disciplinary action relating to the persons causing the damage or otherwise responsible may also be imposed as a result of the investigation.

   ii. The home Association must notify the local Parks and Recreation department (as required by applicable local requirements) regarding any damage caused.

3 U10 ATOM DIVISION RULES

3.1 FIELD SIZE

Playing fields shall be marked as required under the rules set out in the CARBTF for 9-Man Football. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in discipline (including but not limited to warnings, directions or sanctions) issued by the VMFL Executive to the Association concerned.

3.2 MAXIMUM NUMBER ON FIELD

Maximum number of players on the field is nine (9) per team.

3.4 EQUIPMENT

Soft shell helmets and pads below the waist are mandatory. Optional equipment allowed is "soft shell padded shirt" that provides chest and rib protection. Flags are to be the “popper” style in a contrasting color to the Club/Team colors. No modifications may be made to the length or popper apparatus, no Velcro flags on belts, or flags tucked into pants.

3.5 GAME PLAY RULES

a) Game play will start on the Offensive Team’s 45 yard line (no kick off/kick return).

b) Dead Ball Kicking:

Dead Ball punting will be permitted. Kicking converts and kicking field goals are permitted and must be declared.

Punting: Punting the ball is permitted. The ball will be given to the punter and play will commence on the referee’s whistle. All receiving players on Team B may raise their arms to attempt to catch a dead ball punt. If the ball touches a player from Team B, the ball is dead at that point. Rushing the punter is not allowed. Teams also have the option to take a walk-off of twenty (20) yards from the line of scrimmage. If the walk-off placement would result in the ball being placed inside the opponent’s five (5) yard line, the ball shall be placed at the five (5) yard line. When the walk-off option is used, no rouge shall be awarded. If the punt is played and results in a rouge under standard scoring rules, the rouge shall be awarded.

PAT (Convert): The ball will be given to the holder using the convert tee and play will commence on the referee’s whistle. All nine defending players may rush on the referee’s whistle.

Field Goal: The ball will be given to the holder using the convert tee and play will commence on the referee’s whistle. All nine defending players may rush on the referee’s whistle. If the ball touches a player from Team B, the ball is dead at that point. On a failed field goal attempt, the ball will be placed at the five (5) yard line. If the play results in a rouge under standard scoring rules, the rouge shall be awarded.

c) A maximum of 5 Defensive linemen are permitted and they must be set pre-snap. No swim moves are permitted. Defense has the right of way for position. Corners can rush if on the line of scrimmage at the snap.

d) Blocking is permitted from sideline to sideline within 5 yards of line of scrimmage. No cut blocking is permitted anywhere on the field.

e) Trucking or lowering of the shoulder of the ball carrier and blitzing are not permitted. Sliding on either side of the ball or diving are allowed only to “tackle” a flag or make a

reception as long as no contact is made. If contact is made, the offending player will be assessed a UR and a 15 yard penalty.

f) Blitzing is not permitted, however once the ball has left the quarterback possession or the QB has made a football move (including run, fake (handoff or pass, QB leaves the pocket) all defensive players are allowed to pursue and cross the line of scrimmage.

g) One (1) Coach per team is allowed on the field. Coaches must not coach once the ball is "live". Penalty 5 yds and replay down if accepted. No coaches on the field after Week 5 of the regular season.

h) When entering Mercy Rule, the ball shall be positioned at the 45 yard line for all offensive series when the score spread is greater than 18 points.

3.6 PENALTIES

a)	Flag Guard	5 yards + loss of down
b)	Offensive Jumping	5 yards + loss of down
c)	Sliding/Diving with Contact	UR + 15 yards
d)	Tackle	UR + 10 yards
e)	Swim Moves	10 yards
f)	Illegal Blocking	10 yards
g)	Coaching after huddle	10 yards
h)	Trucking/Lowering Shoulder	10 yards

3.7 U10 ATOM 6 MAN TACKLE

3.8 FIELD SIZE:

Playing fields shall be marked as required under the rules set out in the CARBTF for 9-Man Football

3.9 EQUIPMENT:

As per section 2.8 in the fall handbook

3.10 BALL SIZE:

Composite Balls Only

Division	Size	Nike	Wilson
U10 Atom	Size 5		K2

3.11 MAXIMUM NUMBER ON FIELD:

Maximum number of players on the field is six (6) per team.

3.12 GAME PLAY RULES:

a) The game will start on the offensive team's 35 yards (no kick off/kick return)

b) Punting will be allowed. The ball will be placed in the punter's hands, and play will commence on the referee's whistle, or teams have the option to take the walk-off 20 yards from the line of scrimmage. If the walk-off placement would result in the ball being placed inside the opponent's 5-yard line, the ball shall be placed at the 5-yard line. When the walk-off option is used, no rouge shall be awarded. If the punt is played and results in a rouge under standard scoring rules, the rouge shall be awarded.

c) Field goals and PATs will be allowed. The ball will be given to the holder, with a convert tee, and play will commence on the referee's whistle. All six (6) defending players may cross the line of scrimmage on the whistle. Any kick attempted from within 10 yards of the uprights, the ball will be placed centered to the hash marks.

d) Offensive Line play
- The offensive line must have three set players on the line of scrimmage including the center
- The other two set offensive players must be balanced and lined up within five (5) yards to either side of the center.
- The center is not an eligible receiver, the guards and or guard/tackle are eligible

e) Defensive Line play
- There must be a minimum of two (2) defensive players lined up one yard off the line of scrimmage, within the ends of the offensive line.

f) Blitzing is allowed from both inside and outside the ends of the offensive line.

4 U8 TYKE FLAG (FALL) DIVISION RULES

4.1 AGE OF PLAYERS

U8 Tyke Flag players may be 5, 6 or 7 years old. Players' ages are determined as of December 31 of the playing year. Associations may determine whether or not to accept and register players aged 5 years old for their fall U8 Tyke Flag teams

4.2 ROSTER SIZE

The minimum roster size for a team is 5**. The maximum roster for a team is 14 players. A copy of the roster shall be provided to the game commissioner, opposing coach and game announcer. Rosters shall be treated as per the VMFL Handbook. ** (Note per Football Canada's "The Canadian Rule Book for Flag Football" and particularly applicable rules for 5v5 Flag Football: Teams need a minimum of 4 players to be able to compete and a maximum of five (5) players on the field at any given time).

4.3 COACHES ON THE FIELD

One coach from each team shall have unrestricted access to the playing field at all times.

4.4 RULES OF PLAY

As defined in Football Canada's "The Canadian Rule Book for Flag Football" and particularly, applicable rules for 5v5 Flag Football.

4.5 FIELD SIZE

The field dimensions are as follows: Length – 60 (or 80) yards, Width – 30 (or 20) yards (no run zones element has been removed)

4.6 REFEREES

Host Clubs are to provide 2 trained referees aged 14 or older per 5-Man Fall U8 Tyke Flag game.

5 GAME SCORING - TABLE OF SCORES

5.1 SCORING IN VMFL GAMES

a) U8 Tyke Flag (Fall)**

- Touchdown 6 points
- Extra Point 1 point (played from midpoint of 5-yard line only)
- Extra Point 2 points (played from midpoint of 12-yard line only)
- Safety 2 points
- Downs 4

*** Note incidental rule change: Scoring is as per Football Canada's "The Canadian Rule Book for Flag Football" for 5v5 Flag Football – see 5v5 Rule 4 – Scoring.*

b) U10 Atom/U12 Peewee/U14 Junior Bantam

- Touchdown 6 points
- Kicked Convert 2 points
- Run or pass convert 1 point
- Rouge 1 point
- Field Goal 3 points
- Safety Touch 2 points

c) U16 Bantam/U19 Midget

- Touchdown 6 points
- Kicked Convert 1 points
- Run or pass convert 2 points
- Rouge 1 point

- Field Goal 3 points
- Safety Touch 2 points

6 OFFICIALS

6.1 RESPONSIBILITY OF PAYMENT

Home team pays for the officials even if the game is moved to another park.

6.2 FIELD OFFICIALS

As shown in the Agreement between VMFL and Officials (any contracted referees' Association, as may be applicable, from time to time).

6.3 GAME OFFICIALS

All field officials shall be appointed and scheduled by the Allocator of the contracted Referees Association. VMFL coaches shall not be an official of a game in the division in which they are currently coaching.

6.4 SIDELINE OFFICIALS

The Home Team is responsible for providing downs person, linespersons (yardstick personnel) and the game ball. These sideline officials shall work under the direction of the Head Linesperson.

6.5 JURISDICTION AND DUTIES

All field officials are equally responsible for the orderly conduct of the game. This includes the Game Commissioner, downs person and Linesperson.

6.6 GAME COMMISSIONER

a) The home team Association for all U10 Atom, U12 Peewee, U14 Junior Bantam, U16 Bantam and U19 Midget games shall be responsible to provide the Game Commissioner at all home games. The game cannot commence until a trained Game Commissioner is present and in place. A trained commissioner is a person who has attended the commissioner training prior to the season or has been trained by a representative who was at the training. The training must be witnessed by an Association President or member of the Association's board who has also been trained as a commissioner. Failure to provide a Game Commissioner for a game will result in forfeiture of the applicable game by the home team.

b) The Game Commissioner shall be responsible for the following:

   i. See that the player benches are in place; sideline yard markers are in position, goal post protections are installed, yardsticks and down boxes are on the sideline and announcing equipment in place. The playing field shall be ready for play a minimum of 15 minutes before game time.

   ii. Ensure that each team is ready to play 30 minutes prior to start of game.

   iii. Receive verified team rosters from each team completed on the official roster forms.

iv. Check with the Head Official on the following:
    1) Timing (See Section 2.10)
    2) Size of game ball to be used (Section 2.5 Table T2-A)
v. Ensure that sideline officials are available for the start of game.
vi. Observe conduct of team officials and players on team benches. If required, issue any instructions as required.
vii. Ensure that only team officials and players are on the team benches.
viii. Enforce rule that no fans are allowed behind players' benches [See subsections 2.3(c) and 2.3(e)].
ix. Only trainers or designates are allowed on the field when any injury occurs. A Doctor may be summoned from the spectators by the GAME COMMISSIONER or the home team's Association president (or designated representative).
x. Check with the trainer on the field, if an ambulance is required for an injured player.
xi. Carry out disqualifications and suspensions as noted in PART 13.
xii. Have game commissioner report completed with information and signatures as called for on the report. The penalty code area must be completed.* See Appendix O. You may need to confer with the head official. If there is an issue with team benches or an ejection during the game a report has to be sent to the league commissioner. Reports and those days' rosters are to be scanned and emailed to the VMFL Commissioner by midnight game day. Have the Head Official of all games initial the part of the game report where it states the number of officiating crew. This is to confirm the number of officials that did said game.
xiii. Ensure head coaches review and sign the commissioner's report at the end of each game. Score discrepancy must be rectified prior to the start of the next game.

c) Every game commissioner shall have the complete set of VMFL Rules (this Handbook) and a CARBTF Rule Book available at the field for each game. They will be made available to each Association at the start of each season. The Game Commissioner or the VMFL Executive may dismiss or eject any player, coach or team staff from the playing field and/or game for "improper conduct" as defined by the VMFL Executive.
d) One Game Commissioner per game and must remain on the sideline for the whole game.

7 PLAYER ROSTERS AND ELIGIBILITY

7.1 ROSTERS

a) All players for each team declared by an Association must be registered by name and jersey number on the official roster sheets supplied by the VMFL. Failure to follow

procedures for verified team rosters may result in forfeiture of one or more games. (See sample of official roster sheet in the appendices to this handbook).

b) Roster Limits. The following regulations govern the team rosters for each Association. Players' ages are determined as of December 31 of the playing year. Players are not allowed to play out of their Division. Players are not allowed to move up or down. NO exceptions unless approved by Majority Resolution.

Division	Age Range	Maximum Roster Number	Minimum Roster Number	Minimum Number Dressed for Game
U8 Tyke Flag (Fall)	Ages 5 – 7	14	5	4
U10 Atom Flag	Ages 8 – 9	24	12	9
U10 Atom 6-Man Tackle	Ages 8 - 9	19	9	9
U12 Peewee 9-Man	Ages 10 – 11	26	15	12
U12 Peewee 12-Man	Ages 10 – 11	34	20	16
U14 Junior Bantam 9-Man	Ages 12 – 13	26	15	12
U14 Junior Bantam 12-Man	Ages 12 – 13	36	20	16
U16 Bantam 9-Man	Ages 14 – 15	26	16	14
U16 Bantam 12-Man	Ages 14 – 15	38	22	16
U19 Midget 9-Man	Ages 16 – 18	26	16	14
U19 Midget 12-Man	Ages 16 – 18	38	24	20

*The Minimum Number dressed shall take precedence over minimum number on verified roster- but just for first week of schedule. In other words, a team will not be in breach of the roster requirements for first week of schedule if it meets the applicable Minimum Number dressed for a game in that week even if it does not meet the minimum required number of players on its roster for that week. (The rationale is to allow a further period of time to reach minimum number on the roster). However, if a team does not have the minimum number of players on the verified roster for any game after the first week of the schedule, the Association must fold the team in question prior to its next scheduled game.

c)***IF a declared 12 man division team is forced to become a 9 man division team due to not enough teams in the division. U12 Peewee, U14 JB, U16 Bantam and U19 Midget are granted to have a 32 man roster limit.

** IMPORTANT- See Specific Roster limits for 18 year Olds

18 YEAR OLDS ON U19 MIDGET DIVISION ROSTERS

50% of max roster allowable for 18 year old players on any U19 Midget roster 9-man or 12-man to be registered. Clubs can not register more than 50% max roster so no 18 year olds need to be cut/released.

7.2 VMFL ROSTER VERIFICATION RULES

a) **Roster Verification** All players on the official roster sheet of a team must be verified after proof of date of birth has been provided and found to comply with division age regulations. Documents that can be used to provide proof of date of birth for roster verification purposes are: original Birth certificates, passports, B.C. Driver's Licenses, Citizenship papers, official court Orders, certification of birth certificates (with file number), baptismal certificates and Care Cards that show birth date are acceptable proofs of age. There can be no exceptions to this rule by VMFL Executive unless approved by Majority Resolution.

b) **Who Can Verify** Only the official person designated by the VMFL shall verify a player on the Official Team Roster. Text or verbal verifications are not permitted. Verification of rosters is not to be done by members of their own Associations. THERE SHALL BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE, including Game Commissioners and Registrars, unless expressly approved by Majority Resolution.

c) **Removing Players from Roster** If a player is no longer on the team, before or after the roster is frozen, the name shall have a single line drawn through it. Any name that is removed from an Official Roster is off for the season. Association Registrars must keep a record of withdrawn players to prevent them from re-registering later in the season.

d) **Frozen Rosters** The rosters for each team will be frozen by Tuesday at Midnight between the 5th and 6th weeks of play with the official amount of frozen players on the roster in numerical order. To be submitted via email to the secretary, with each team being an individual PDF labeled First Club Call Letters, Division, Team name and date. (Example VMFL, U12PW9, Teamname, DATE). The frozen roster will become the official roster for the remainder of the Fall Tackle Season. A player who is not on the frozen roster for the team after the designated date is ineligible for that team. Any changes or failure to provide a Frozen Roster signed and verified by a second Association President or VMFL Executive by the date designated will result in a $250.00 fine to the offending Association.

e) A copy of verified rosters must be submitted to the VMFL Secretary by Midnight of the Friday before the first game of the season via email to the secretary, with each team being an individual PDF labeled First Club Call Letters, Division, Team name and date. (Example VMFL, U12PW9, Teamname, DATE). Any updated rosters are to be submitted the Thursday by Midnight before the weekend of play.

f) VMFL to provide template form, if able to.

7.3 PLAYING OF INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

Playing of ineligible players will result in the forfeiture of the game in which the ineligible player participated (including any player on a roster who is not otherwise listed as not playing in the game due to absence, injury, discipline, or illness). Any Association that fails to comply with this rule will be dealt with by a special committee, appointed by the Executive Director and may be subject to

sanctions, including but not limited to fines or other penalties. Recommendations of this committee will be final, and there will be NO appeal.

7.4 PLAYER MOVEMENT AND RELEASE

The following rules apply to any player (or his or her parent as applicable) who fails to return equipment in good condition, or pay money due to his or her Association and is designated “not in good standing” no later than four (4) weeks after the VMFL Spring Flag or Fall Tackle seasons.

a) A player's name cannot appear on the verified rosters of two different Associations. Any player (a “Moving Player”) who is during a current VMFL Fall Season or was during the previous VMFL Fall Season designated as a "not in good standing" by an Association (a “Previous Association”) and wishes to move from the Previous Association to play for another Association (the “New Association”) must obtain a VMFL Player release form signed by the president (or his or her designate) of the Previous Association. Equipment issued to the Moving Player by the Previous Association must be turned in to Previous Association prior to registering with another Association. When equipment is turned in, it is to be in good condition. Failure to comply with this rule makes the player(s) ineligible to play for the New Association. The release shall be in the form as set out in Appendix E-l (during the V Season) or Appendix E-2 (during the VMFL Fall Season). A copy of the signed release must be provided in writing to the VMFL Commissioner responsible for the division in which the Moving Player is intending to play for the New Association.

b) A player or coach without a release from the previous Association will be considered an “ineligible player" until the release is obtained. All games played for the new Association by a Moving Player while that Moving player is considered an ineligible player will be forfeited by the New Association.

c) The rationale for this rule includes the financial protection of the Previous Association to help avoid loss by reason of the Moving Player (or his or her parents as applicable) failing to return equipment in good condition or pay money due to the previous Association. Accordingly, the Previous Association must not unreasonably refuse to provide or delay providing the requested release to the Moving player. If all equipment has been returned in good condition and all amounts properly due to the Previous Association have been paid by or on behalf of the Moving Player, a VMFL release form must be issued in a timely manner to release the Moving Player from the Previous Association.

d) Any player (or his or her parent as applicable) who fails to return equipment in good condition, or pay money due to his or her Association can be designated “not in good standing” no later than four (4) weeks after the VMFL Spring Flag or Fall Tackle season. Associations must provide a list of these individuals to the VMFL Secretary, which will be circulated to all VMFL Presidents and/or noted in the electronic/online registration system.

7.5 NOT ELIGIBLE UNLESS ON A ROSTER

A player is not eligible to participate in a regular season game or play-off game on behalf of a team unless and until that player is duly listed on the team's Official Roster and is verified in accordance with the above VMFL roster verification rules.

7.6 MINIMUM GAMES FOR PLAYOFF ELIGIBILITY

All players on a frozen roster must participate in a minimum 3 league games to be eligible for playoffs. However, if a player is unable to meet requirements due to injury, a Doctors certificate is required before playoffs.

7.7 RULES AGAINST RECRUITMENT

a) Any coach who recruits a player(s) that has not obtained a release from their previous Association will be suspended for 2 games for the 1st offence, a full season for the second offence and permanently suspended from participating as a coach in the VMFL for a third offence.
b) For the purposes of this rule, "recruit" means to engage, directly or indirectly, in finding, soliciting, enticing, encouraging, or attracting athletes to move from one Association to play for another Association.
c) NO player is to receive any type of payment to play in the VMFL.
d) No player will be reimbursed for any expenses they incur to attend practices or games that are not offered to the entire team unless approved by the VMFL.

8 COACHES AND STAFF

All VMFL Board Members and all VMFL Presidents will sign a VMFL code of conduct and be held to the same accountability as we hold our coaches and players. All codes of conduct by VMFL board members and VMFL Presidents will be signed for that year. All will be held accountable and will be subject to all rules and discipline as laid out in the code of conduct. Commissioners must also sign the COC by the date of the first home game they will be commissioning.

8.1 CODE OF CONDUCT

All coaches, team managers, and trainers (team medical personnel) must sign the code of conduct ("COC") in the form as set out in Appendix L to this Handbook.

8.2 SUBMIT CCOC to VMFL

Each Association will complete and submit in writing to the VMFL Secretary with a copy provided in writing to the VMFL Head Coach by the Thursday before the first season game of the playing year, a

listing of their coaches and submit fully signed COC forms including all the necessary information. Failure by an Association to do so will result in a $250.00 fine to that Association.

8.3 COC CHANGES

a. All coaches, team managers, and trainers (team medical personnel) must sign a Code of Conduct (COC) in the form set out in Appendix L of this Handbook.

b. Each Association may submit periodic updates, changes, or additions to the list of persons who have signed a Code of Conduct in writing to the VMFL Secretary during the regular season by the Thursday prior to the next gameday in order for any new coaches or staff to be eligible to participate on the team bench for the next game or any ensuing games.

c. All Frozen Codes of Conduct must be submitted and approved no later than the Thursday prior to the Quarter Final round in order for any coach or team staff member to be eligible to participate on the team bench. Following this deadline, Codes of Conduct shall be considered frozen for the remainder of the playoff period, and no further additions or changes to team bench personnel will be permitted for any playoff games.

Exception: Trainers are the only personnel allowed to be resubmitted after the frozen COC. - Add in writing to the VMFL Secretary and Coaches Coordinator.

8.4 COACHES TRAINING

a) At all levels of tackle football and in flag, VMFL coaches must achieve minimum coaching standards in order to ensure that all participants receive the safest and highest quality of coaching possible.
b) No coach in the VMFL shall be permitted to actively coach unless they meet minimum standards of training.
c) Teams or Associations failing to comply with the requirements of minimum coaching training will not be sanctioned by VMFL
d) In order for teams and Associations to continue to qualify for liability insurance, as coordinated by the Football BC they must adhere to the above policies.
e) Training clinics will be scheduled by the Football BC each year to ensure that all non-trained coaches are given the opportunity to comply with the minimum training standards adopted by VMFL.
f) VMFL may request additional training clinics be scheduled by the Football BC if there are 10 or more coaches that need training or with approval by Majority Resolution the VMFL may arrange and organize other acceptable training clinics or programs that comply with the minimum training standards adopted by VMFL.

8.5 BENCH PERSONNEL AND COACHING ELIGIBILITY

Only individuals who are approved, eligible, and authorized under the VMFL Handbook may participate as bench personnel or engage in coaching activities during VMFL games or related activities, including practices.

All coaches must meet the minimum coaching and training requirements set out in this Handbook in order to be eligible to coach or participate as bench personnel.

Any individual who is not permitted to coach on the team bench due to failure to meet coaching requirements or as a result of a suspension or ejection shall not participate in coaching activities in any form, including but not limited to phone calls, messaging, live video, or relaying instructions through another individual.

Eligibility to coach and participate as bench personnel is subject to the disciplinary provisions outlined in Sections 13.3 (Coach or Team Personnel Ejection) and 13.5 (Disqualified Players May Not Be on the Field).

8.6 STANDARDS

Certification / Requirement	U8 Coach	U10–U14 Coach	U16–U19 Coach	Junior Coach 16-18	Trainer	Manager
Criminal Record Check	✔	✔	✔	*	✔	✔
Novice	✔	✔	✔	✔		
Intro to Competition			✔			
Safe Contact (renew every 5 years)		✔	✔	✔		
Making Ethical Decisions	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Safe Sport	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Understanding the Rule of Two	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Making Headway in Sport (Football)	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
First Aid (or Equivalent Medical Certification)					✔	

Depending on municipal or facility requirements, Junior Coaches may be required to obtain a Criminal Record Check (CRC), even if they are under 18 years of age

Note: Additional or other levels of training may be required from time to time based on requirements of Football Canada and Football BC as applicable, and all levels of training are subject to change as may be required in order to meet the applicable requirements of these bodies at the respective age levels and divisions.

8.7 MEDICAL PERSONNEL/TRAINERS

For the health and safety of all participants there must be competent and qualified personnel available at every Association practice and at every game to administer medical aid if necessary. The following qualifications are recognized by the VMFL:

- Doctor
- Paramedic
- Registered Nurse
- Industrial First Aid
- Practical Nurse
- Level 1 Johns Ambulance or equivalent
- Sports Aid Training

9 FORFEITED GAMES

9.1 INABILITY TO FIELD A TEAM

If, according to the VMFL Handbook, an Association cannot field a team for a VMFL scheduled game, that Association shall pay a forfeit fee of $300.00 per game, except U8 Tyke Flag for which the forfeit fee is $75.00 per game. The forfeiting Association must also pay for cost of officials, unless the allocator of officials is notified a minimum of 72 hours prior to game day and provided any other games impacted on that day can be re-scheduled or adjusted to reduce the officials' costs. The VMFL will pay the team not at fault the forfeit fee collected from the forfeiting Association. After two (2) forfeits, the Executive Director will appoint a committee to investigate the matter. The committee has the authority to determine whether the forfeiting Association should fold the team in question or make such other order, direction, or recommendation as the committee considers appropriate in the circumstances.

9.2 SCORING IN A FORFEITED GAME

Refer to Section 9.3 and Subsection 10.1 b) for scoring in forfeited games.

9.3 MINIMUM NUMBER OF DRESSED PLAYERS

If the minimum number of dressed players is not met it will be noted on the commissioners report and if both head coaches agree to play then the game can be played but the official score for the game will be recorded as a win by a 10-0 score in favour of the team which has met or exceeded the minimum number of dressed players. If neither team has met the minimum number of dressed

players, then the score will be recorded as a 10-10 tie, but no points will be awarded to either team. This rule is intended to allow teams to possibly participate in scheduled games when unforeseen events prevent them from fielding the minimum number of players from their verified rosters which otherwise conforms to section 7.1 of this Handbook. It is not intended to allow teams to repeatedly participate without meeting the minimum requirements for number of players on the verified roster or number of active players.

10 LEAGUE SCORING AND STANDINGS

10.1 LEAGUE SCORING AND STANDINGS

a) The winning team of each regular season league game will receive 2 points for a win. If 2 teams play to a tie score at the conclusion of a regular season league game, there will be no overtime and each of the 2 teams in that game will receive 1 point for a tie.

b) When a game is forfeited in league play, the team that forfeits (the “forfeiting team”) the game will be deemed to have lost the game and the team to which that the game was forfeited (the “non-forfeiting team”) will be deemed to have won the game and will receive 2 points for the win. The forfeiting team will have 2 points deducted. For the purposes of the standings,

c) Final standings in VMFL play will be determined as follows:

   i. If two teams are tied, the placement is resolved by the following principles:

      1)Record versus each other (winning team placed ahead, or if equal wins-losses head to head then team with better points for/against in head to head games is placed ahead)

      2)Combined winning % of opponents (not including games against them) The team whose opponents have the higher combined winning % will be placed ahead

      3)Points for/against - Maximum of +10 per game. The team with the highest positive point differential (maximum of +10 per game) will be placed ahead

      4)Total points against. Team with fewest points against, places ahead.

   ii. If three or more teams are tied:

      1)Record versus each other:

         a. Cannot finish ahead of team that beat you
         b. Winning teams of tied group get placed on top first
         c. Lower teams can pass other teams if better winning % but must start at bottom and move up one step at a time never passing the team to which you lost.
         d. If Paradox occurs then use combined winning % of opponents

      2)Points for/against - maximum of +10 per game

3)Total points against. Team with fewest points against, places ahead.

d) Once final standings have been established all Associations will be informed within 48 hours of playoff start. Final standings cannot be changed after subsequent playoff rounds.

11 VMFL PLAYOFFS

11.1 ASSOCIATIONS MUST BE IN GOOD STANDING

All monies (League fees, forfeited games, and all fines imposed by the Executive etc.) in arrears must be paid up before qualifying for playoffs, if not eligible for playoffs the monies in arrears will be added to next year's membership fees and unless otherwise approved by Majority Resolutions the amount in arrears must be paid in full before the Association in arrears is eligible to participate in VMFL Activities.

11.2 SCHEDULE

It is the preference and goal of the VMFL that VMFL teams participate in a regular season. Unless otherwise determined by Majority Resolution, the schedule, if the calendar allows for it, starts on the Labour Day weekend in September until playoffs are scheduled.

11.3 SCHEDULE CREATION

For the creation of the fall season schedule an external paid scheduler (or if in the case the VMFL league is unable to afford an external scheduler a panel appointed by the executive director of 3 must be made) is to be done. To be made in accordance with the existing rules regarding the fall schedule.

11.4 VMFL PLAYOFFS

a) If a division has 8 or more teams, then the top 8 teams will make the playoffs, and when a division has 7 or fewer teams, then the top 4 will make the playoffs, with the exception of U10 Atom and U12 Peewee. This rule may be modified by Majority Resolution to accommodate an integrated schedule of games with another league, to accommodate play-off requirements for Football BC play-offs, or as otherwise determined by Majority Resolution.

b) For U10 AtomConsolation playoffs, the trophy for U10 Atom 6-Man tackle will be the Connelly cup (formerly the Commissioner's Cup). For U10 Atom Flag it is the Kevin Parks Cup (formerly the Presidents Cup).

11.5 PLAYOFF HOME TEAM

The highest ranked VMFL team in each division will be considered the home team.

11.6 PLAYOFF GRIEVANCES

All grievances pertaining to the game after or during the game must be filed on the proper grievance form and shall be given to the VMFL Executive no later than 15 minutes following game completion, a decision will be made. This decision will be final and not open to appeal.

11.7 BENCH PERSONNEL

a) Clubs must submit a frozen Coaches Code of Conduct the Thursday prior to any playoff games.
b) Only players and coaching staff on the frozen coc are allowed on the bench. No children allowed e.g. water boys. Only players, coaching staff on league file, cheerleaders and people with proper passes may enter the field.

11.8 PLAYOFF TIMING

Quarter and Semi-final games start when the regular season is completed and scheduled by the league.

11.9 VMFL CHAMPIONSHIPS

a) The VMFL Championship games for all divisions will be held on such day or days and at the park or parks, as determined each year by Majority Resolution but if in any VMFL Fall Season such matters cannot be determined by Majority Resolution within a reasonable time before the respective VMFL Championships are to be held then such determinations may be made by the VMFL Executive.
b) Any player of coaching staff ejected in a VMFL championship game at any age level for fighting or targeting will automatically be suspended for the Provincial championships. This would not be able to be appealed.

c) At least 24 hours prior to the start of a VMFL Championship game, each Association having a team participating in that VMFL Championship game must complete and submit in writing to the VMFL Commissioner:
    i. a VMFL Player Participation Form (Playoffs) (F-3) [See Appendix J to this Handbook) in respect of any player from that Association who is not participating in the VMFL Championship game; and
    ii. a VMFL Player Release Form (Playoffs) (F-4) [See Appendix K to this Handbook) in respect of any player from that Association who is not participating in the VMFL Championship game by reason of that player having quit, being released or otherwise no longer on the frozen roster of such team as submitted for that team's final regular season game.

d) If the signature of a parent or guardian of a player listed in a form required to be submitted pursuant to either clause (i) or (ii) of subsection 11.8 b) cannot be obtained by reason of the absence, failure, or refusal on the part of that parent then the Association may apply in writing to the VMFL Commissioner for relief from this requirement which relief may be granted as the VMFL Commissioner, acting reasonably and in good faith, considers fair and appropriate in the circumstances. Such application must state the reasons which the signature cannot be obtained, the efforts made to obtain the signature and other relevant facts.

e) Failure to comply with the requirements of subsections 11.8 b) and 11.8 c)1011.8c) (as applicable) may result in either forfeiture of the VMFL Championship game by the team from the non-complying Association or such other sanctions as the VMFL Executive considers appropriate in the circumstances.

f) Medals for first and second place will be awarded by VMFL Executive Director (or designate) in respect of VMFL Championship games unless otherwise determined by Majority Resolution.

11.10 PLAYER PARTICIPATION RULES FOR ALL VMFL PLAYOFF GAMES

a) For play-off games in all divisions except U16 Bantam & U19 Midget, all playoff games will have game plays for player participation monitored. (U16 Bantam/U19 Midget divisions are exempt from these player participation requirements)

b) **Monitors for player participation:** each team will supply 2 individuals, one will monitor their own team and the other will monitor the opposing team, thus having two monitors working together per team and the results will be forwarded to the game's commissioner for final verification.

c) The minimum number of game plays for player participation in the U12 Peewee, U14 Junior Bantam divisions is:

i. For 12-man:
   1) For teams with 24 players or less active for the game, all players must play a minimum of 10 plays.
   2) For teams with 25 players or more active for the game, all players must play a minimum of 10 plays.

ii. For 9-man:
   1) For teams with 18 players or less active for the game, all players must play a minimum of 10 plays.
   2) For teams with 19 players or more active for the game, all players must play a minimum of 10 plays.

iii. For U8 Tyke Flag and U10 Atom divisions: teams will have all of their players who are active for the game participate in at least 10 plays during the game.

11.11 CONDUCT OF PLAYOFF GAMES

For Playoff games, the Head Official may suspend play of the playoff game (including any overtime) on account of darkness, severe weather or other conditions (if safety of the participants is at risk as a result of such conditions). If a play-off game (including any overtime) is suspended on account of darkness, severe weather or other conditions, then the continuation of the play-off game (including any overtime shootout) will be scheduled to take place no later than Wednesday of the following week (unless otherwise expressly approved or required by the VMFL). The VMFL may also require that the play-off game (including any Overtime shootout) be continued at a specified time or at a specified alternate neutral playing field that is equipped with appropriate lighting in order to avoid or minimize the risk of play being further suspended on account of darkness.

11.12 OVERTIME FOR PLAYOFF GAMES

a) When the score is tied at the end of the fourth quarter in a play-off game, there shall be a rest period of ten (10) minutes with each team allowed to return to their dressing rooms (if any).

b) In overtime, the winner shall be determined by a Texas Shoot-out format. An overtime period will consist of each team having an opportunity to possess and scrimmage with the ball on offense. Prior to the start of overtime, the Officials will call the captains of the 2 participating teams together near mid-field and conduct a coin toss to determine which team will have the first choice to scrimmage with the ball on offence or to choose an end of the field at which the overtime period will be played. The Home Team calls the coin toss by declaring “Heads” or “Tails” before the coin is tossed. If the captain of the team that wins the coin toss chooses to scrimmage with the ball first then the other team will have its choice of which end the overtime period will take place. If the captain of the team that wins the coin toss opts to choose an end at which the overtime period will be played then the other team will scrimmage with the ball first in that overtime period. For U10 Atom and U12 Peewee the teams will begin at the chosen end on the 15-yard line, for U14 Junior Bantam, U16 Bantam, and U19 Midget the teams will begin on the 25-yard line at the chosen end. The teams will start the overtime period at the designated yard line. Both teams will be allowed to scrimmage with the ball on offence. The team leading after the conclusion of an overtime period (after each team has had an equal number of possessions on offence) will be the winner of the game. If the score is still tied at the end of an overtime period, then another overtime period will immediately be commenced and the teams will scrimmage again from the designated yard line but there will be no coin toss instead the teams will alternate the order of possession on offence and choice of end so that the order of starting on offence or defense is reversed from the order at the start of the immediately completed overtime period.

c) There will be no further game time kept during overtime but the play clock will apply.
d) Each team will be entitled to only 1 time out during overtime (regardless of the number of overtime periods).
e) The overtime Shoot-out process will be continued until one team scores more points than their opponent at the conclusion of an overtime shoot-out period (after each team has had an equal number of possessions on offence with the exception that if one team's defense scores in an overtime shoot-out period, then that team's offence may elect not to take its next possession as it will have scored more points than its opponent in that overtime shoot-out period).

12 GENERAL CONDUCT

12.1 CONDUCT

Any player, coach, manager, trainer, Association member or volunteer who strikes a member of the Officials or VMFL Executive or Association member before, during or after a game on or near the game field, shall be suspended for the remainder of the season, all playoff games and championship games. For a second offence of the above, the suspension will be five years. This rule is not intended to apply to contact by or between players in the ordinary course of game action where such conduct is governed by CARBTF and is otherwise within the jurisdiction of the game officials. However, all player misconduct is subject to further review and possible further sanctions by the VMFL Commissioner pursuant to this Handbook.

12.2 COURTESY TREATMENT

All game officials, game commissioners, and VMFL Executive must be treated with courtesy at all times during the entire season by all players, coaches, managers, and Association presidents. Any infraction or violation of this rule will be reported to the Executive Director for possible further action (including an investigation and imposition of sanctions is appropriate).

12.3 LANGUAGE

The use of profane, obscene, insulting language or gestures to an opponent, official, or spectator by any player, or member of team staff or occupant of the team bench is prohibited. Any violation to this rule will result in ejection from the game. Procedure will be in accordance with PART 13.

12.4 FIGHTING

a) Any players fighting before, during or after a game within the boundary of the park will result in an automatic 1 game suspension and possible further discipline and sanctions by the VMFL Commissioner or discipline (or at the option of the VMFL Executive by a panel appointed by the VMFL Executive) in addition to any ejection imposed pursuant to the CARBTF for incidents occurring within the jurisdiction of the game officials.
b) Second ejection for fighting will b ea 3 game suspension

c) Third ejection for fighting will be suspension for remainder of season or following tackle season if third offense is with less than 3 games remaining in the season including playoffs and finals.

12.5 SMOKING

No player, coach or member of team staff (such as but not limited to trainers or managers) shall smoke and/or use smokeless tobacco or illegal drugs or narcotics, nor consume alcohol at any time on or near the game field, including benches, or in a manner or location that is clearly visible to participants at the field . Any violations of this rule shall result in ejections from the game as per PART 13 and may result in further discipline pursuant to this handbook. For the purposes of this rule, the term “smoke” includes smoking or using any device (including electronic cigarettes) or article to simulate the act of smoking tobacco or any tobacco-like substance by way of a cigarette, cigar, pipe or any device or article.

12.6 UNSPORTSMANLIKE OR OBJECTIONABLE CONDUCT

Players, coaches, and any other team staff (such as but not limited to trainers or managers) participating in VMFL championships who are ejected at any time during the game or display unsportsmanlike or objectionable conduct or other related incidents, will be ineligible for further games that year in the Province if the team is representing the VMFL. Further discipline may be added to the player, coach, team staff member (such as but not limited to trainers or managers) or the team as a whole in the following year if deemed appropriate by the VMFL Executive.

12.7 JOINING AN ALTERCATION

Any member of a team bench (such as but not limited to players, coaches, trainers or managers) who leaves the team area to join in an altercation (whether on-field or off-field) will be ejected from the game and receive a minimum 2 game suspension. Further discipline may be applied if deemed appropriate by the VMFL Executive.

12.8 EJECTION FOLLOW UP

Where any player, coach or member of team staff (such as but not limited to trainers or managers) has been ejected from a game, each Association involved in the game has 48 hours from the end of the game to submit game film regarding incident(s) to the VMFL Commissioner. Format and delivery to be determined by the VMFL Executive.

13 EJECTIONS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

13.1 EJECTION SUSPENSIONS

Any player or coach ejected from the game within any time of the fourth quarter of the game will receive an automatic one (1) game suspension. This includes any coach, players, or staff member who at the conclusion of the game commits an act that would have drawn an ejection during the game.

13.2 PLAYER EJECTION

Any player ejection implemented by game officials, the Game Commissioner or member of the VMFL Executive before, during or after a game at the game park will be reviewed by the VMFL Commissioner (or at the option of the VMFL Executive by a panel appointed by the VMFL Executive) and may result in further discipline pursuant to this handbook.

13.3 COACH or TEAM PERSONNEL EJECTION

Any ejection of any coach, trainer, manager or other team personnel implemented by game officials, the Game Commissioner or a member of the VMFL Executive before, during or after a game at the game park will be reviewed by the VMFL Head Coach (or at the option of the VMFL Executive by a panel appointed by the VMFL Executive) and may result in further discipline pursuant to this handbook.

13.4 MISCONDUCT

On the ejection or disqualification of a player, coach or team personnel (such as but not limited to a trainer or manager) for misconduct, the head official shall inform the game commissioner of the disqualification. The head official and game commissioner will approach each team concerned and have each player, coach or the team staff member escorted from the playing field by a responsible team staff member. Before any player is escorted from the field the player shall remove the player's shoulder pads, game jersey, and helmet. The responsible team staff member shall remain with the ejected or disqualified player or team staff member until the game is over or in the case of a player in the care of a responsible adult person. The game shall not resume until the player, coach or team staff member has been removed from the playing area (including team bench area).

13.5 DISQUALIFIED PLAYERS MAY NOT BE ON THE FIELD

Any disqualified player, coach or team staff member may not appear at or near the team bench during the period of his or her disqualification (including period of a suspension). Coaches shall not attempt to coach or interfere in any way from any position within the game park. Any violation of this rule may result in further suspension or possible game forfeit as determined by the Executive Director.

13.6 SUSPENSION NOTIFICATION

The VMFL Commissioner is to provide notice in writing to the Association whose player has been suspended or otherwise disciplined and report to all other Associations on a periodic basis and provide summary details regarding all player suspensions or discipline applied by the VMFL Commissioner from time to time. It is the responsibility of each Association to inform each of its offending players, coaches, team staff personnel or other members of suspensions or other discipline and to carry out and enforce any suspension or other disciplinary action.

14 PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE POLICY

14.1 VMFL PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE POLICY

a) The VMFL may levy sanctions against VMFL participants who breach the rules of this Handbook, including but not limited to warnings, fines, game suspensions, and other suspensions. The sanctions may be levied in accordance with the procedures set out in this Handbook and may be levied by the VMFL Head Coach in matters relating to violations by coaches, managers or trainers, by the VMFL Commissioner in matters relating to violations by players, or by the Executive Director in matters in relating to violations by Association Presidents, in all matters by a panel appointed by the VMFL Executive (including the VMFL Executive as a whole)

b) The VMFL will apply progressive discipline based on a reasonable assessment of the severity or level of the offence as categorized by the VMFL Executive acting reasonably (and this assessment may be delegated to the VMFL Head Coach in matters relating to violations by coaches, managers or trainers, the VMFL Commissioner in matters relating to violations by players, the Executive Director in matters in relating to violations by Association Presidents, in all matters by a panel appointed by the VMFL Executive).

c) The categories of the three levels of offences from less serious to most serious are as follows:

i. **Level One:** Less serious offences such as but not limited to objectionable conduct disqualification arising from play in a game, where conduct is not directed towards officials, game commissioner, or VMFL Executives.

ii. **Level Two:** More serious offences such as but not limited to Rough play, includes fighting and flagrant attempt to injure and objectionable conduct towards officials, game commissioner or VMFL Executives, property damage, encouraging or inciting misconduct by others.

iii. **Level Three:** Most serious offences such as but not limited to verbally threatening or unnecessary contact of an official, game commissioner or VMFL Executive, reckless disregard for the safety of others, or deliberately targeting the head of an opponent in a vulnerable position.

All levels of offences apply to conduct before, during or after a game within the boundaries of the game park.

d) Minimum Game Suspensions that may be applied by the VMFL for each Level:

	Level One	Level Two	Level Three
1st Offence	One Game	One Game	Two Games
2nd Offence	Two Games	Two Games	Three Games
3rd Offence	One Year	One Year	One Year

NOTE 1: A one year suspension = 12 complete and consecutive months

NOTE 2: A one Game suspension = one played VMFL game (whether a regular season or playoff game).

e) Discipline above these minimums will be at the discretion of the VMFL (which discretion may be exercised by the VMFL Commissioner) and may be appealed as per PART 17.

f) All 3rd offences will be automatically reviewed by the VMFL Executive or a panel appointed by the VMFL Executive. The VMFL Appeal Policy (see PART 17) is available for all 3rd offences.

g) WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND PRACTICAL IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF A GAME (as determined in the discretion of the head official including a consideration severity of the conduct or player safety), the head official should in the first instance give a player a 3 play warning and send that player to the player's team bench before invoking an offence for conduct during a game that is expressly covered by the examples of the categories set out under Levels One, Two or Three above.

h) If the Executive Director, a VMFL Commissioner, VMFL Head Coach or other person, committee or other body or entity (in each case the "Decision Maker") having jurisdiction with respect to a Level One or Level Two offence determines that the circumstances of the incident if confirmed would or could result in a suspension or other sanction that exceeds what is stipulated as an automatic minimum for the offence pursuant to this Handbook then the following procedure will apply:

   i. The Decision Maker will provide in writing a copy of the official complaint in respect of the incident giving rise to the infraction to the VMFL Secretary and to the Executive Director (if the Executive Director is not the person having jurisdiction with respect to the application of suspensions or other sanctions regarding the incident);

   ii. A copy of the official complaint in respect of the incident giving rise to the infraction will be promptly provided in writing to the President of the Association whose player, coach, personnel or other member is the Respondent;

   iii. The President of the Respondent's Association must promptly cause the copy of the official complaint to be provided in writing to the Respondent;

   iv. The Respondent will have a period of 48 hours from the time the official complaint was given to the President of the Respondent Association within which to make submissions (to be communicated and delivered by or on behalf of the President of the Respondent's Association) in writing to the Decision Maker in response to the official complaint and in particular to provide reasons or relevant facts as to why a suspension or sanction that exceeds the automatic minimum should not be applied to the Respondent in the circumstances;

   v. If the circumstances are such that this policy will not allow a timely conclusion or determination, or if the circumstances are such the Respondent cannot (for valid and good faith reasons) provide a response within the time stipulated in this policy, the Decision Maker may, in its discretion acting reasonably, direct that the timeline be revised.

vi. If a response on behalf of the Respondent is not provided within the time stipulated, the Decision Maker may proceed with the determination or decision in the absence of a response from or on behalf of the Respondent.

vii. If a response on behalf of the Respondent is provided within the time stipulated, the Decision Maker will proceed with the determination or decision including consideration of the response from or on behalf of the Respondent

viii. The purpose of this policy is to provide a timely conclusion or determination regarding less serious offences while providing a Respondent with an opportunity to make submissions in the event that potential suspensions or sanctions may exceed an automatic minimum. This policy does not preclude the Decision Maker from seeking a response or submissions from the Respondent or others in any circumstances nor does it preclude any rights of appeal otherwise available pursuant to this Handbook.

15 COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURES

15.1 PURPOSE

a) The VMFL is committed to providing an environment in which all VMFL Participants are treated with courtesy and respect and characterized by the values of fairness, integrity, and open communication. Participation in the VMFL, as well as participation in VMFL Activities, brings with it many benefits and privileges. At the same time, VMFL Participants are expected to fulfill certain responsibilities and obligations including, but not limited to, complying with the policies, bylaws, rules and regulations of the VMFL, including in the case of coaches and team staff members, the Coaches Code of Conduct.

b) Irresponsible behavior by VMFL Participants can result in severe damage to the reputation and integrity of the VMFL. Conduct that violates these principles and values may be subject to discipline and sanctions pursuant to this policy.

c) Since discipline and sanctions may be applied, it is only fair to provide VMFL Participants a mechanism so that complaints and disciplinary matters are dealt with fairly, expeditiously and affordably.

15.2 APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

a) This Policy applies to all VMFL Participants.

b) This Policy only applies to complaints and disciplinary matters that may arise during the course of VMFL Activities.

c) Complaints and disciplinary matters arising within the business, activities or events organized by entities other than the VMFL (such as but not limited to individual Associations or the Football BC) will be dealt with pursuant to the policies of those other entities.

15.3 REPORTING A COMPLAINT

a) Any VMFL Participant may report in writing to the Executive Director (with a copy to the VMFL Secretary) any complaint. Such complaint must be signed and in writing, and must be submitted to the Executive Director (with a copy to the VMFL Secretary) within fourteen (14) days after the alleged incident. Anonymous complaints may be accepted at the sole discretion of the Executive Director. An incident report form is set out in Appendix "N" for use in this regard. The decision to accept, or not accept, a notice of complaint by way of a form other than the incident report form set out in Appendix "N" will be at the sole discretion of the Executive Director. A decision by the Executive Director as to acceptance or rejection of a form other than Appendix "N" may not be appealed.

b) A complainant wishing to file a complaint beyond the fourteen (14) day period must provide a written statement giving reasons for an exemption to this limitation. The decision to accept, or not accept, the notice of complaint outside the fourteen (14) day period will be at the sole discretion of the Executive Director. This decision may not be appealed.

c) The Executive Director will determine whether the complaint is frivolous or vexatious. If the Executive Director determines the complaint is frivolous or vexatious, the complaint will be dismissed immediately. If the person who is the subject of the complaint is the Executive Director then the determination of whether the complaint is frivolous or vexatious or whether the complaint is a minor infraction or a major infraction will be referred to and determined by the VMFL Executive as a whole (but excluding the Executive Director the person who is the subject of the complaint is the Executive Director).

d) If a complaint is determined by the Executive Director (or the VMFL Executive as the case may be) to be appropriate for further investigation, the complaint will be designated by the Executive Director (or the VMFL Executive as the case may be) as either a minor infraction or a major infraction and dealt with according to the appropriate sections of this Policy. It will be at the sole discretion of the Executive Director (or the VMFL Executive as the case may be), to determine whether a complaint is to be dealt with as a major or minor infraction. This determination cannot be appealed.

e) If the incident is to be dealt with as a minor infraction, the Executive Director will inform the parties and the matter will be dealt with according to the section relating to minor infractions.

f) If the incident is to be dealt with as a major infraction, the Executive Director will inform the parties and the matter will be dealt with according to the section relating to major infractions.

g) This Policy does not prevent a Person in Authority from taking immediate, informal or corrective action in response to behavior that constitutes either a minor or major

infraction provided that the individual being disciplined is told the nature of the infraction and has an opportunity to provide information concerning the incident. Further sanctions may be applied in accordance with the procedures set out in this Policy.

15.4 MINOR INFRACTIONS

a) Examples of minor infractions include, but are not limited to, a single incident by a person of:
   i. Disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist or sexist comments or behavior directed towards others;
   ii. Conduct contrary to the ideals, purpose and objectives of the VMFL of providing an environment in which all VMFL Participants are treated with respect and characterized by the value of fairness, integrity and open communication;
   iii. Being late for or absent from VMFL meetings, events and activities at which attendance by the person is needed or required (provided that reasonable advance notice of the need or requirement to attend was given to the person, including notice posted on the VMFL website or included in minutes of the meetings circulated to the Association Presidents) ; and
   iv. Non-compliance with the policies, procedures, rules and regulations under which the VMFL is governed.

b) All disciplinary situations involving minor infractions occurring within the jurisdiction of the VMFL will be dealt with by either by the Executive Director or in if the Executive Director considers it to be reasonable in the circumstances, the Executive Director may delegate authority to deal with the matter to an appropriate Person in Authority.

c) Procedures for dealing with minor infractions will be informal as compared to those for major infractions and will be determined at the discretion of the Executive Director or the appropriate Person in Authority responsible for discipline of such infractions (as noted above in subsection 15.3g). If considered practical, the Executive Director may determine that the procedure for dealing with a minor infraction may be undertaken by way submissions in writing, in-person meeting or via telephone conference and without the need for a formal hearing. This is provided that the Respondent is given advance notice in writing of the nature of the infraction (the “Infraction Notice”) and has a reasonable opportunity to provide information and respond concerning the incident. Failure by a Respondent to provide information and respond concerning a complaint may result in the complaint being considered valid.

d) In circumstances of reasonable urgency (including but not limited to matters that will impact a play-off game, final league standings, play-off scheduling, suspensions or other matters that affect another team or teams, with respect to the Respondent’s participation in an upcoming game, particularly a playoff game) the procedures for dealing with an alleged minor infraction may, upon the request of the Respondent and

subject to the consent of the Executive Director (not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed), be dealt with on an expedited basis, with **time limits abridged. In this event, the Respondent will** have up to 48 hours after being given the Infraction Notice to provide information and respond concerning the alleged incident or infraction.

e) Sanctions for minor infractions, which may be applied singly or in combination, include the following:
   i. Written reprimand which will be placed in the Respondent's file;
   ii. Written apology to be provided by the Respondent;
   iii. Suspension or disqualification from the current VMFL activity or event; or
   iv. Suspension or disqualification from a future VMFL activity or event
   v. Any other reasonable sanction or discipline considered appropriate by the Executive Director for the infraction.

f) Minor infractions that result in discipline will be recorded and maintained by the VMFL. Repeated minor infractions by a Respondent may result in any such repeated minor infraction by the Respondent being considered a major infraction in future.

g) Any sanctions implemented by a Person in Authority who is not a member of the VMFL Executive must be immediately reported to and shall be subject to review by the VMFL Executive within 7 days after the occurrence of the incident and the sanctions imposed or other disciplinary actions taken may be replaced by reasonable sanctions or disciplinary actions deemed appropriate by the VMFL Executive.

15.5 MAJOR INFRACTIONS

a) Major infractions are instances of repeated or other misconduct that result, or have the potential to result, in harm to other persons, VMFL Participants or the VMFL or that demonstrates a material disrespect or disregard of the provisions and policies of this Handbook or the goals, objectives and guiding principles of the VMFL.

b) Examples of major infractions include, but are not limited to:
   i. Repeated incidents of disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist or sexist comments or behavior directed towards others;
   ii. Repeated conduct contrary to the ideals and objectives of the VMFL of providing an environment in which all VMFL Participants are treated with respect and characterized by the value of fairness, integrity and open communication;
   iii. Repeated incidents of being late for or absent from VMFL events and activities at which attendance is reasonably expected or required;
   iv. Activities or behavior which interfere with a competition or with any athlete's preparation for competition;
   v. Incidents of physical abuse;
   vi. Pranks, jokes or other activities that endanger the safety of others;

vii. Disregard for the policies, procedures, rules and regulations under which VMFL Activities or events are conducted;
viii. Conduct which results in harm to the image, credibility or reputation of VMFL and/or its' sponsors;
ix. Consumption of alcohol or being intoxicated by drugs or alcohol during VMFL Activities where the level of consumption or intoxication is such that it impairs the individual's ability to speak, walk or drive; causes the individual to behave in a disruptive manner; interferes with the individual's ability to perform effectively and safely, or places the safety of any other persons in danger;
x. Any use of alcohol by minors;
xi. Any use of illicit drugs or narcotics;
xii. Any use of banned performance enhancing drugs or methods.
xiii. Occurrence of multiple minor infractions within a 24 month period (where multiple minor fraction refers to more than one infraction considered by the VMFL Executive to be of the same, similar or greater severity); or
xiv. A single incident of conduct which is considered by the VMFL Executive to be severe and has resulted, or has the potential to result, in substantial harm to the VMFL, VMFL Participants or other persons.

Note: The definition of "repeated" will depend on the severity of the infraction and frequency of offences within a given time to be determined by the VMFL at its sole discretion.

c) Major infractions occurring within competition may be dealt with immediately, if necessary, by a Person in Authority, provided the individual being disciplined is told the nature of the infraction and has an opportunity to provide information concerning the incident. In such situations, disciplinary sanctions will be for the duration of the competition only. Further sanctions may be applied but only after review of the matter in accordance with the procedures set out in this Policy. This review does not replace the appeal provisions of this Handbook.

15.6 SERIOUS INFRACTIONS

a) The Executive Director, or designate, may determine that an alleged incident is of such seriousness as to warrant immediate suspension of the Respondent pending a hearing and a decision of a Panel pursuant to Part 16 of this Handbook or otherwise (including but not limited to an incident involving alleged criminal behavior or in which, if true, there is a risk of serious harm to the health or safety of VMFL Participants, especially but not only athletes).
b) Where it is brought to the attention of the Executive Director, that a VMFL Participant has been charged with an offence under the Criminal Code (or similar legislation in any other jurisdiction), or has previously been convicted of a criminal offence, the Executive

Director may suspend the VMFL Participant pending further investigation, a hearing or a decision of a Panel pursuant to Part 16 of this Handbook or otherwise.

c) Notwithstanding the procedures set out in this Handbook, any VMFL Participant who is convicted of a criminal offence involving sexual exploitation, invitation to sexual touching, sexual interference, sexual assault, aggravated assault, trafficking of drugs or narcotics, or possession of drugs or narcotics for the purposes of trafficking, or such other criminal offence as the VMFL Executive considers serious or a potential risk to the health or safety of VMFL Participants, will face automatic suspension from participating in any VMFL Activities until otherwise determined by the VMFL Executive and may face further disciplinary action by the VMFL in accordance with this Handbook.

16 DISCIPLINE PANEL AND HEARING POLICY

16.1 TIMELINE FOR PANEL

Within fourteen (14) days after notifying the Respondent of a complaint of a major infraction, the Executive Director, at the sole discretion of the Executive Director, will appoint a disciplinary panel ("Panel") of 1 or 3 individuals to hear the complaint. The members of the Panel will select from themselves a Chairperson. If within 3 days after its appointment, the Panel is unable to agree on the appointment of a Chairperson, then the Executive Director may by notice in writing to the Panel specify member of the Panel who is to be the Chairperson.

16.2 PANEL MEMBERS

Members of the Panel will have had no involvement with the alleged infraction; and will be free from any other bias or conflict of interest.

16.3 HOLDING A HEARING

The Panel will use their best efforts to hold a hearing with respect to the compliant as soon as possible, but not more than fourteen (14) days after being appointed, unless otherwise approved by the VMFL Executive.

16.4 REVIEW PROCESS

Having regard to the nature of the discipline matter and the potential consequences of any resulting sanctions, the Panel will decide to conduct the hearing by way of review of documentary evidence or by way of oral hearing. If the Panel decides to conduct an oral hearing, it may decide to do so in-person or by means of telephone or video conference.

16.5 PRELIMINARY MEETING

The Panel may determine that the circumstances of the complaint warrant a preliminary meeting. The Panel may delegate to one of its members the authority to deal with preliminary matters, which may include but are not limited to:

a) Format (hearing by documentary evidence, oral hearing or a combination of both);
b) Date and location of the hearing;
c) Timelines for the exchange of documents;
d) Clarification of issues in dispute;
e) Any procedural matters including order and procedure of the hearing;
f) Remedies sought;
g) Evidence to be brought before the hearing;
h) Identification of any witnesses; or
i) Any other procedural matter that may assist in expediting the hearing.

16.6 DOCUMENTARY REVIEW

Where the Panel has determined that the appeal will be held by way of documentary submissions, the Panel will govern the hearing fairly and as it sees fit, provided that:

a) All parties are given a reasonable opportunity to provide written submissions to the Panel, to review written submissions of the other parties, and to provide written rebuttal and argument; and
b) The applicable principles and timelines set out by the Panel are respected.

16.7 ORAL HEARING

Where the Panel has determined that the appeal will be held by way of oral hearing, the Panel will govern the hearing fairly and as it sees fit, provided that:

a) The affected parties will be given at least three (3) days' notice in writing of the day, time and place of the hearing;
b) The affected parties will be provided copies of all evidence to be relied upon;
c) Decisions will be by majority vote where the Chairperson carries a vote;
d) Panel members will refrain from communicating with the parties except in the presence of, or copy to, the other parties;
e) The parties may be accompanied by a representative;
f) The Respondent will have the right to present evidence and argument;
g) Any party actually or potentially affected by the matter may be made party to the hearing by the Panel;
h) The Panel may request that any witness be present at the hearing or submit written evidence in advance of the hearing. Any statements that are to be submitted and relied upon by the Panel must be signed by the party giving the statement;
i) The hearing will be held in private;
j) Each party will bear their own costs;

16.8 PANEL APPOINTMENT

Once appointed, the Panel will have the authority to abridge or extend timelines associated with any aspect of the hearing.

16.9 RESPONDENT

If the Respondent chooses not to participate in the hearing, the hearing may proceed in any event in the absence of the Respondent.

16.10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INCIDENT

Where the Respondent acknowledges the facts of the incident, he or she may waive the hearing, in which case the Panel will determine the appropriate disciplinary sanction. The Panel may hold a hearing for the purpose of determining an appropriate sanction.

16.11 DETERMINATIONS

After hearing the matter, the Panel will determine whether or not the Respondent will be sanctioned, and if so, will determine the appropriate penalty to be imposed and any measures to mitigate the harm suffered by others as a result. The Panel's decision, with reasons, will be distributed in writing to all parties, the Executive Director, and the VMFL Executive within fourteen (14) days of the conclusion of the hearing, unless otherwise approved by the VMFL Executive.

16.12 SANCTIONS

The Panel may apply the following disciplinary sanctions singly or in combination, for major infractions:

a) Written reprimand to be placed in the individual's file;
b) Written apology;
c) Removal of certain privileges of participation in VMFL Activities;
d) Suspension from specified VMFL teams, events and/or VMFL Activities;
e) Payment of a financial fine in an amount to be determined by the Panel;
f) Suspension from all VMFL Activities for a designated period of time;
g) Suspension of VMFL funding;
h) Expulsion from membership in the VMFL (in accordance with and subject to the bylaws and constitution of the VMFL);
i) Publication of the Panel's decision; or
j) Other sanctions as may be considered appropriate for the infraction. 16.13

16.13 COMMENCEMENT OF SANCTIONS

Unless the Panel decides otherwise, any disciplinary sanctions will commence immediately.

16.14 FAILURE TO COMPLY

Failure to comply with a sanction as determined by the Panel will result in automatic suspension or disqualification of the Respondent from further participation in VMFL Activities, suspension of membership in VMFL (if in accordance with and subject to the provisions of the bylaws and constitution of the VMFL) or such other sanctions and discipline as the Panel may determine to be reasonable and appropriate until such time as compliance occurs.

16.15 APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS

In applying sanctions, the Panel may have regard to the following aggravating or mitigating circumstances:

a) The nature and severity of the incident;
b) Whether the incident is a first offence by the Respondent or has occurred repeatedly;
c) The Respondent's acknowledgment of responsibility,
d) The Respondent's remorse and post-infraction conduct;
e) The age, maturity or experience of the Respondent;
f) Whether the Respondent retaliated;
g) The Respondent's pre-infraction conduct, including prior involvement with VMFL Activities; and
h) The Respondent's prospects for rehabilitation.

16.16 WRITTEN RECORD

A written record (which may include but is not limited to an electronic copy of a record that is saved on systems or storage media controlled or accessible by the VMFL) will be maintained by VMFL at the VMFL's head office for major infractions that result in a sanction.

16.17 TIMELINES

If the circumstances of the complaint are such that this policy will not allow a timely conclusion, or if the circumstances of the complaint are such the complaint cannot be concluded within the timelines dictated in this policy, the Panel may direct that these timelines be revised.

16.18 CONFIDENTIALITY

The discipline and complaints process is intended to be confidential involving only the parties, the Executive Director, VMFL Executive, Panel members, or their respective, representatives if any. Once initiated and until a decision is released, none of the parties will disclose confidential information relating to the discipline or complaint to any person not involved in the proceedings (other than for the purposes of obtaining legal or other professional advice on a confidential basis in connection with the proceedings).

17 APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

17.1 APPEALS

The decision of a Panel pursuant to Part 16 of this Handbook, by the Executive Director, a VMFL Commissioner, the VMFL Head Coach, a Decision Maker, a Person in Authority, or otherwise pursuant to this Handbook, may (unless rights to an appeal are expressly precluded by the provisions of this Handbook) be appealed in accordance with the provisions of this Part 17 (the "Appeal Policy").

17.2 DEFINITIONS

The following words, phrases or terms will have ascribed to them in this Appeal Policy the following meanings:

a) "Appeals Panel" means the person, panel or body appointed pursuant to this Appeal Policy to hear an appeal of a decision of a VMFL Decision Maker.
b) "Appellant" means the VMFL Participant appealing a decision of a VMFL Decision Maker pursuant to this Appeal Policy.
c) "VMFL Decision Maker" means the person, panel, entity or body whose decision is being appealed pursuant to this Appeal Policy (which may include, without limitation, the Executive Director, the VMFL Executive, a VMFL Commissioner, the VMFL Head Coach, a Person in Authority, a Decision Maker pursuant to Part 14, or a Panel appointed pursuant to Part 16).

17.3 PURPOSE

The VMFL is committed to providing an environment in which all members are treated with respect. Irresponsible behavior by members can result in severe damage to the sport and to the support of the VMFL. Conduct that violates these values may be subject to sanctions pursuant to VMFL's Discipline and Complaints Policy. Since sanctions may be applied, it is only fair to provide the VMFL Participants with some mechanism to appeal what may appear to be unfair treatment or decision of a VMFL Decision Maker. The purpose of this Appeal Policy is to enable appeals within the VMFL to be dealt with fairly, expeditiously and affordably.

17.4 SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

a) Matters of employment or contract with the VMFL;
b) Infractions for doping offences;
c) The rules of football;
d) Matters relating to the substance, content or establishment of team selection criteria;
e) Volunteer appointments and the withdrawal or termination of those appointments;
f) Matters of budgeting or budget implementation;
g) Matters of operational structure or committees;

h) Discipline matters and decisions arising during events organized by entities other than VMFL, which are dealt with pursuant to the policies of those other entities; or
i) Any decisions made under Subsection 17.5 b) or Section 17.8 of this Policy.

17.5 TIMING OF APPEAL

a) A VMFL Participant (an Appellant) who wishes to appeal a decision of a VMFL Decision Maker will have seven (7) days from the date on which the Appellant received notice of the VMFL Decision Maker's decision, to submit in writing to the head office of VMFL the following:
    i. Notice of the Appellant's intention to appeal,
    ii. Grounds for the appeal,
    iii. All evidence that supports these grounds,
    iv. The remedy or remedies requested, and
    v. A payment of two hundred fifty dollars ($250), which will be refunded if the appeal is successful.
b) Any VMFL Participant wishing to initiate an appeal beyond the seven (7) day period must provide a written request stating reasons for an exemption to the requirement of subsection 17.5 a). The decision to allow, or not allow an appeal outside the 7-day period will be at the sole discretion of the Executive Director, and may not be appealed.

17.6 GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

A decision cannot be appealed on its merits alone. An appeal may be heard only if there are appropriate and sufficient grounds for appeal provided by the Appellant. Appropriate and sufficient grounds include the VMFL Decision Maker:

a) Made a decision for which it did not have authority or jurisdiction as set out in this Handbook or the VMFL's governing documents;
b) Made a decision based on a policy that is illegal or contrary to a statutory provision;
c) Failed to follow procedures as laid out in the bylaws or approved rules or policies of VMFL, or
d) Made a decision that was influenced by bias, where bias is defined as a lack of neutrality to such an extent that the VML Decision Maker was unable or failed to consider other views.

17.7 SCREENING OF APPEAL

Within seven (7) days of receiving the notice and grounds of an appeal and the required fee, the Executive Director, will determine whether there are appropriate and sufficient grounds for the appeal to proceed as set out in Section 17.6 of this Appeal Policy. The Executive Director is not to determine if an error has been made but only if the appeal is based on sufficient grounds as set out in Section 17.6 of this Appeal Policy.

17.8 INSUFFICIENT GROUNDS

If the appeal is denied on the basis of a failure or lack of appropriate and sufficient grounds, the Appellant will be notified of this decision in writing, giving reasons. This decision is at the sole discretion of the Executive Director and may not be appealed.

17.9 APPEALS PANEL

If the Executive Director is satisfied that there are sufficient grounds for an appeal the Executive Director will establish an Appeals Panel within seven (7) days and the following will apply to the Appeals Panel:

a) The Appeals Panel will be comprised of one (1) or three (3) persons who will have no significant relationship with the affected parties, will have had no involvement with the decision being appealed, and will be free from any other actual or perceived bias or conflict.
b) If the Appeals Panel is comprised of three (3) persons, the Appeals Panel will appoint one person to act as Chairperson of the Appeals Panel. If within three (3) days of the Appeals Panel's appointment, the Appeals Panel is unable to agree on the appointment of the Chairperson, the Executive Director will upon request of any Appeals Panel member appoint the Chairperson.

17.10 PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE

The Appeals Panel may determine that the circumstances of the appeal warrant a preliminary conference. The matters that may be considered at a preliminary conference include:

a) Format of the appeal (hearing by documentary evidence, oral hearing or a combination of both);
b) Timelines for exchange of documents;
c) Clarification of issues in dispute;
d) Clarification of evidence to be presented to the Appeals Panel;
e) Order and procedure of hearing;
f) Location of hearing, where the hearing is an oral hearing;
g) Identification of witnesses;
h) Remedies sought ; and
i) Any other procedural matter that may assist in expediting the appeal proceedings.

The Appeals Panel may delegate to its Chairperson the authority to deal with these preliminary matters on behalf of the Appeals Panel.

17.11 PROCEDURE FOR THE HEARING

a) The Appeals Panel may conduct the hearing by means of documentary review, conference call, video conference or in person.

b) Where the Appeals Panel has determined that the appeal will be held by way of oral hearing in person or via conference call or video conference, the Appeals Panel will govern the hearing by such procedures as it deems appropriate, provided that:
c) The hearing will be held within fourteen (14) days of the Appeals Panel's appointment, unless otherwise approved by the VMFL Executive.
d) The Appellant and VMFL Decision Maker will be given seven (7) days' notice in writing of the date, time and place of the hearing (unless the Appellant and VMFL Decision Maker each consent in writing to waive or reduce the period of notice).
e) Decisions will be by majority vote, where the Chairperson carries a vote.
f) Copies of written documents that any of the parties would like the Appeals Panel to consider will be provided to the Appeals Panel and to all other parties at least 72 hours prior to the hearing.
g) If the decision of the Appeals Panel may affect another party to the extent that the other party would have recourse to an appeal in their own right under this policy, that party may apply to the Appeals Panel in writing and upon approval from the Appeals Panel will become a party to the appeal in question and in that event will be bound by its outcome.
h) A representative or advisor, including legal counsel may accompany any of the parties.
i) The Appeals Panel may direct any other person to participate or present evidence in the appeal.
j) Unless otherwise agreed by the parties, there will be no communication between the Appeals Panel and the parties except in the presence of, or by copy to, the other parties.

17.12 PROCEDURE FOR DOCUMENTARY APPEAL

a) Where the Appeals Panel has determined that the appeal will be held by way of documentary submissions, it will govern the appeal by such procedures as it deems appropriate provided that:
b) All parties are given a reasonable opportunity to provide written submissions to the Appeals Panel, to review written submissions of the other parties, and to provide written rebuttal and argument; and
c) The applicable principles and timelines set out in Section 17.11 are respected.

17.13 APPEAL DECISION

a) Within fourteen (14) days of concluding the appeal (unless otherwise approved by the VMFL Executive upon request by the Appeals Panel), the Appeals Panel will issue its written decision, with reasons. In making its decision, the Appeals Panel will have no greater authority than that of the original VMFL Decision Maker. The Appeals Panel may decide to:
    i. Reject the appeal and confirm the decision being appealed; or
    ii. Uphold the appeal and refer the matter back to the initial VMFL Decision Maker for a new decision; or

iii. Uphold the appeal and vary the decision; and

The Appeals Panel may determine how costs of the appeal, excluding legal fees and legal disbursements of any of the parties, will be allocated, if at all. The Appeals Panel may also decide to refund the appeal fee of $250 to the Appellant.

b) A copy of the decision will be provided to each of the parties and to the VMFL Executive.
c) In extraordinary circumstances, the Appeals Panel may issue a verbal decision or a summary written decision, with reasons to follow, provided the written decision with reasons is rendered within the timelines specified in this policy.

17.14 TIMELINES

If the circumstances of the dispute are such that this policy will not allow a timely appeal, or if the circumstances of the disputes are such the appeal cannot be concluded within the timelines dictated in this policy, the Appeals Panel may direct that these timelines be revised.

17.15 CONFIDENTIALITY

The discipline and complaints process is confidential involving only the parties, the Executive Director, or designate and case manager, if any. Once initiated and until a decision is released, none of the parties will disclose confidential information relating to the discipline or complaint to any person not involved in the proceedings (other than for the purposes of obtaining legal or other professional advice on a confidential basis in connection with the proceedings).

17.16 FINAL AND BINDING DECISION

a) The decision of the Appeals Panel will be binding on all parties and on all VMFL Participants, subject only to the provisions of further appeal, if any, in accordance with Dispute Resolution Policy of the to the extent applicable to the VMFL and in effect at the time.
b) No action or legal proceeding will be commenced against the VMFL (or any member of the VMFL Executive) in respect of a dispute, unless the VMFL has refused or failed to abide by the provisions for appeal and/or dispute resolution as set out herein.

18 ADMINISTRATION VOTES AND MEETINGS

18.1 MEETINGS

VMFL Presidents' meetings will be held on the 1st Wednesday of each month as needed. Additional meetings may be called from time to time to discuss programs or provide information or training (e.g., Commissioners training, Spring Flag Planning). Additional meetings may be designated as

mandatory by the VMFL Executive when the meeting date is set and the mandatory designation will be included in communication regarding the date and time of the meeting.

18.2 REQUIREMENTS

If an Association President is unable to attend a Presidents meeting, the Association President must provide in writing to the VMFL Secretary the name of the person who may vote in place of the President, if unable to attend due to illness, work or holidays. An Association President must attend at least 50% of all regularly scheduled President's Meetings, failure to do say will result in the assessed charge of $250.00 for a missed meeting. All information will only be sent to the Association Presidents and it will be up to each Association President to communicate with their designate.

18.3 MANDATORY MEETINGS

Associations will be assessed a charge of $250.00 for each missed mandatory meeting. For greater clarity all Presidents' meetings, VMFL AGM and the Football BC AGM are mandatory meetings. In order to confirm attendance at each meeting, the Association President or their designate must sign in on the sign in sheet provided by the VMFL Secretary. Association Presidents or designates attending via phone must ensure that the VMFL Secretary is aware that they are online and receive confirmation of their attendance from the VMFL Secretary. A timeline of 14 days' notice will be given for mandatory meetings.

18.4 VOTING PRIVILEGE

Each Association has one vote at all meetings of the Association Presidents (unless otherwise required or permitted pursuant to the Society Act or the constitution, bylaws of the VMFL, as the case may be).

18.5 VOTING ABILITY

An Association will not have a vote at any meeting of the VMFL unless and until that Association has paid in full all fines and fees then due and owing to the VMFL. This applies to the VMFL's Annual General Meeting ("AGM") or at any meeting of the Associations called by the VMFL.

18.6 MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS COMMUNITY LEVEL

All Associations must join the Football BC and attend meetings of the members of the Football BC. There will be additional fees payable by an Association if that Association has one or more teams qualify for Football BC finals.

18.7 PROVINCIAL FINALS

VMFL teams that qualify for the Football BC Provincial Finals shall have their fees paid for that event by the VMFL as long as funds are available.

18.8 RULES AND HANDBOOKS

The VMFL will supply each Association with two (2) handbooks. Extra copies may be downloaded from the VMFL website for distribution or printing by individual Associations. Extra copies may also be ordered from the VMFL by Associations at the cost to the VMFL.

18.9 RULE AND HANDBOOK CHANGES

All proposed rule and handbook changes must be submitted to the VMFL Secretary using the official Rule Change Submission Form. The Rule Change Submission Form (Appendix Q) will be distributed 45 days prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Rule change proposals may not be submitted prior to the distribution of the official form and must be received no later than 38 days prior to the AGM for consideration. The League Secretary shall be provided a 7-day administrative period to compile, format, and prepare the AGM rule-change package.

18.10 SPECIAL MEETINGS

No special meetings will be called to debate the merits of a motion or handbook rule approved by Association Presidents.

18.11 MOTION ENFORCEMENT

The VMFL Executive will only enforce motions and handbook rules approved by the Association presidents.

18.12 REVIEW COMMITTEE

A VMFL Executive review committee shall be available to review situations or incidents not covered by the VMFL handbook or irregularities that the committee becomes aware of.

18.13 WRITTEN PROTEST

A written protest is a statement of disapproval only and does not take the place of a grievance, complaint or appeal.

18.14 NOTICES AND INFORMATION TO VMFL: EACH Association MUST

a) Include the VMFL in notification of the Association's Annual General Meeting (AGM) or any extraordinary meeting of the members of the Association.
b) Submit in writing to the VMFL secretary within 30 days of the Associations' AGM a complete list with contact information of the Association's directors and/or executive members. Failure to do so will result in a $250.00 fine
c) Provide to the VMFL, upon request, within 30 days of the Association's AGM, a copy of the Association's most recent Financial Statement, the Constitution, current by-laws and “receipt of filing” with the office of the registrar of Companies for the Province of British

Columbia. If not provided, the Association will not be eligible for the scheduling of games. (Passed April 1998)

d) Provide to the VMFL, within 30 days of the Association's AGM, their signed acknowledgement of their understanding of the responsibilities of the Association President towards the VMFL for both Spring and Fall seasons and the timings thereof.

18.15 TEAM DECLARATIONS

Each Association must in each VMFL Fall Season declare in writing delivered to the VMFL Secretary by August 1st a list of the teams (by name and division) that the Association wishes to enter for VMFL scheduling. Each Association must also declare its team staff for each declared team (including Head Coach and any personnel required to submit a Code of Conduct.) All required Codes of Conduct must be submitted by August 1st. Associations may declare teams after August 1st, but before August 8th. Any Association declaring a team during this period will be assessed a $1000 fine. Any additions or changes to declared team staff after August 1st shall be governed by the applicable Code of Conduct submission rules set out in the handbook.

In Addition, each Association must in each VMFL Season

a) Must provide in writing and delivered to the VMFL Secretary by August 1st, a preliminary roster (substantially in the form set out in Appendix C) for each of the teams it wishes to declare pursuant to subsection 18.15(b). These preliminary rosters need not be verified but must list each of the players (including names and birth dates) for each of the teams the Association wishes to declare and otherwise must represent an accurate, honest and in good faith list of the players who are in fact duly registered for each such team (and recorded as such with the Football BC through its online registration system if applicable) as of the date the preliminary roster is delivered to the VMFL Secretary;

b) Declare in writing and delivered to the VMFL Secretary by August 1st, a list of the teams (by name and preferred division, i.e., 9-man or 12-man) that the Association wishes to enter for VMFL Scheduling. Final allocation of teams to division will be at the discretion of the "Allocation Committee" comprised of the League Commissioner(s) and Scheduler, based on the following principles:

   i. There shall be a minimum four teams per division.

   ii. Any team meeting the minimum roster requirements for their preferred division will be assigned to that division, except where a 9-man division has three teams declared the committee may reassign the declared 12-man team with the lowest number of players required to be dressed for a game as set out in the last column in the table set out following subsection 7.1(c) must also pay to the VMFL a deposit of $500.00 (a "Roster Deposit") for each such team that is below this minimum number of players. Associations who do not follow this procedure or who falsely or negligently submit a required roster, in addition to and not in replacement or limitation of any other applicable fines, penalties, sanctions or remedies available to the VMFL, will be assessed a fine of $1000.00 and may not be eligible for the scheduling of games for the ensuing VMFL Regular Season.

Each Roster Deposit will be payment of any forfeit fees, fines or other amounts that become payable by the Association by reason of such Low Roster Team forfeiting any games during that VMFL Fall Season. Within a reasonable time period following the conclusion of the VM FL Season, the VMFL will refund to the Association the amount of any remaining and unapplied portion of the Roster Deposit.

18.16 WITHDRAWALS

Any team withdrawn by an Association after the August 1st declaration date will result in a $1000.00 fine per instance assessed to and payable by that team's Association to the VMFL.

18.17 WITHDRAWALS AFTER SEASON START

Associations who drop or fold teams after three weeks of the start of first league game of the forfeiture game cost payable immediately in advance and in addition of a team dropped or folded by an Association is a Low Roster Team, the Association will further forfeit the Low Roster Deposit in full.

18.18 FOOTBALL INSURANCE FEES

Prior to the VMFL yearly scheduling, all VMFL Associations will have their football insurance fees paid in full to Football BC and all other VMFL fees, dues or fines shall be paid in full or that Association will not be scheduled to play games for that VMFL Season.

18.19 PRE-SEASON

All Associations hosting summer or pre-season tournaments must first obtain approval and sanctioning by the VMFL A list of all participating teams must be submitted in writing by the host Association to the VMFL for approval and so that the VMFL has a list of teams participating in the tournament. All tournament and exhibition games with VMFL teams will be subject to VMFL rules and policies with respect to the conduct of players and coaching staff.

ADMINISTERING FINES, PENALTIES AND DONATIONS

18.20 FINES AND PENALTIES

All cash fines and penalties collected by the VMFL pursuant to this Handbook will be paid out to one or more charitable or philanthropic causes as determined by Majority Resolution. If no charity or cause is determined by Majority Resolution in any year, the money will be donated to the Make a Wish Foundation.

18.21 DONATIONS PER OFFENSIVE POINT

Unless otherwise determined by Majority Resolution, Associations will in respect of each VMFL Season donate $0.20 per offensive point. Amounts will be invoiced annually by the VMFL Executive (treasurer or other person appointed for such purpose) and funds shall be payable by each Association within 30 days of the date of the receipt of the invoice in writing. The funds collected by

the VMFL will be paid out to one or more charitable or philanthropic causes as determined by Majority Resolution. If no charity or philanthropic cause is otherwise determined by Majority Resolution, the money collected by the VMFL will be donated to the Make a Wish Foundation.

18.22 LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS

At the discretion of the VMFL Executive, a Lifetime Membership can be awarded to a departing VMFL Executive or VMFL Association President. The membership bestows on the recipient a framed certificate and the right to attend any VMFL Presidents or Executive meeting, although they will not be permitted to vote.

Player Education Grant

Each year the Vancouver Mainland Football League (VMFL) will award a $500.00 education grant to a qualifying U16 Bantam player, U16 Spring Flag Player, U19 Midget player, U19 Spring Flag player and U19 Senior Cheerleader. Only one grant will be awarded per winning player or Cheerleader per lifetime.

The grant is to be used for post-secondary education at the university, college, Technical or vocational level. Correspondence or night school programs may not be acceptable.

Criteria used to determine recipients will be:

- football and/or cheerleading ability
- football and/or cheerleading work ethics, such as attendance at practices and games, behavior and leadership abilities, sportsmanship
- academic standing
- community volunteer and/or employment documentation
- general attitude

A personal interview may be required and will be at the discretion of the Committee. Determination will be based on a 100 point system:

- football and/or cheerleading ability - possible 30 pts
- academic standings — possible 40 pts
- attitude and personal ethics — possible 10
- volunteer and/or work experience

References for the above could come from head coaches, Association presidents, teachers, community representatives, employers, etc. Academic records must be included.

Players wishing to be considered for a grant must apply in writing to the VMFL Education Grant Committee by December 31 of the current year. All references, including academic records, must accompany the application.

Legal documentation will be drawn up and monies held in trust by the VMFL. Education Grant funds must be used before the recipient's 22nd birthday. On behalf of the recipient, a certified cheque and covering letter from the VMFL will be issued to the accredited institution chosen. In the event of cancellation of enrollment, the monies shall be refunded to the VMFL.

The Player Education Grant application form can be found on our website at www.vmfl.ca under Resources>Handbooks and Forms.

Appendices

The Appendices listed below can be found on our website at www.vmfl.ca. If you require paper copies of these forms please contact your club President to request these from the VMFL Executive.

Appendix A	Player Education Grant Application Form
Appendix B	10 Play Monitor Form
Appendix C	Official Team Roster
Appendix D	PA Roster – Numerical Order
Appendix E	Player Release Form
Appendix F	Game Statistics Form
Appendix G	Starbowl Nomination Form
Appendix H	VMFL Roster Form
Appendix I	15 Play Monitor Form
Appendix J	Championship Player Participation Form
Appendix K	Championship Player Release Form
Appendix L	Incident Report Form

The Appendices listed below are included in the handbook in the following pages and can also be found on our website at www.vmfl.ca.

Appendix M	Code of Conduct
Appendix N	Commissioner Game Day Report Submission Instructions
Appendix O	VMFL Penalty Codes
Appendix P	Uniform Declaration Form
Appendix Q	Rule Change Submission Form

Code of Conduct

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure a safe and positive environment within VMFL by making all Coaches and game day personnel, (including Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches and Associate Coaches, game commissioners, managers and trainers) aware that there is an expectation of appropriate behavior at all times.
2. Conduct that violates this Code of Conduct may result in the removal or suspension of the person.

APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

3. This Code of Conduct applies to all team sideline personnel relating to conduct that may arise during the course of VMFL business, activities and events, including but not limited to, office environment, competitions, practices, games, tournaments, training camps, travel, and any meetings.
4. This policy applies to conduct that may occur outside of VMFL business and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within the VMFL and its work and sport environment and is detrimental to the image and reputation of the VMFL.

RESPONSIBILITIES

5. All persons above will comply with the following:
   Maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of VMFL Members and other individuals by:

    a) Demonstrating respect to individuals regardless of body type, physical characteristics, athletic ability, gender, ancestry, color, ethnic or racial origin, nationality, national origin, sexual orientation, age, marital status, religion, religious belief, political belief, disability or economic status;
        i. Acting, when appropriate, to prevent or correct practices that are unjustly discriminatory; and
        ii. Consistently treating individuals fairly and reasonably.
    b) Refrain from any behavior that constitutes harassment, where harassment is defined as comment or conduct directed towards an individual or group, which is offensive, abusive, racist, sexist, degrading or malicious. Types of behavior that constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:
        i. Written or verbal abuse, threats or outbursts;
        ii. The display of visual material which is offensive or which one ought to know is offensive;
        iii. Unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendos or taunts;
        iv. Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures;

v. Condescending or patronizing behavior which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect working conditions;
vi. Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety or negatively affect performance;
vii. Any form of hazing;
viii. Unwanted physical contact including touching, petting, pinching or kissing;
ix. Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests or invitations;
x. Physical or sexual assault;
xi. Behaviors such as those described above that are not directed towards individuals or groups but have the same effect of creating a negative or hostile environment; or
xii. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment.

c) Refrain from any behavior that constitutes sexual harassment, where sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual comments and sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or conduct of a sexual nature. Types of behavior that constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:
   i. Sexist jokes;
   ii. Display of sexually offensive material;
   iii. Sexually degrading words used to describe a person;
   iv. Inquiries or comments about a person's sex life;
   v. Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions;
   vi. Persistent unwanted contact;
   vii. Sexual assault.
d) Creating an atmosphere of good sportsmanship and respect for the players to develop within;
e) Giving all players the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence and develop self-esteem;
f) All team personnel must abide by the rules and policies as set out in the VMFL handbook.
g) Team Personnel are to familiarize themselves with the rules, techniques and strategies of football. In addition, they should strive to be a positive role model for the players.
h) Never openly criticize players, coaches, parents, officials or Association members. Team Personnel must reserve constructive criticism for private meetings arranged with appropriate party(s).
i) Agree to follow directives issued by the Association and VMFL Executive Board and/or Coaches Committee whether written or verbal.
j) Use of tobacco products, drugs or alcoholic beverages is prohibited on game or practice fields or near or around players of the team.

k) In the case of adults, avoid consuming alcohol in situations where minors are present, and take reasonable steps to manage the responsible consumption of alcoholic beverages in adult-oriented social situations associated with VMFL events
l) Team Personnel will not allow an ineligible or injured player to participate in practices or games.
m) Team Personnel agree to inform the Association president or Coaches Committee of any challenges with a player or parent immediately as the incident arises.
n) The use of profanity or abusive language toward a player, official, parent, volunteer, or spectator is prohibited at all times.
o) Team Personnel will abide by home Association and park rules when playing opposing teams at visiting parks.
p) Team Personnel are to check and ensure all players are fit and properly equipped before allowing them to participate in a practice or game.
q) Team Personnel will read and acknowledge the responsibilities as stated in the VMFL Policy Manual attached to this document.
r) Refrain from the use of power or authority in an attempt to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate activities.
s) Respect the property of others and not willfully cause damage.
t) Abstain from the non-medical use of drugs or the use of performance-enhancing drugs or methods.
u) Comply at all times with the Constitution, Bylaws, policies, rules and regulations of the VMFL, as adopted and amended from time to time.
v) Adhere to all Federal, Provincial, or Municipal laws.

ADDITIONAL COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

6. The principle of respect for all participants challenges coaches to act in a manner respectful of the dignity of all participants in Football. Fundamental to this principle is the basic assumption that each person has value and is worthy of respect.
7. In addition to paragraph 5 above, Coaches have additional responsibilities. The athlete-coach relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal as well as athletic development of their athletes. Coaches must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it. Coaches will at all times:
    a) Be aware of significant pressure in a players' life, e.g. school, family, and financial pressure, and coach in a manner that fosters positive life experiences.
    b) Be acutely aware of the power in coaching relationships and, therefore, avoid intimacy with players, both during coaching and during that period following coaching when imbalance in power could jeopardize effective decision-making.
    c) At no time engage in an intimate or sexual relationship with an athlete of under the age of 18 years.

d) Abstain from and refuse to tolerate in others all forms of harassment and loss of self-esteem.
e) Act toward players, other coaches, parents and officials in a manner characterized by courtesy, good faith and respect.
f) Recognize and address harmful personal practices of others in football, e.g. drugs and alcohol, physical and mental abuse, and misuse of power.
g) Strive to be fully present, physically and mentally, in the performance of coaching duties.
h) Ensure players train and perform in suitable and safe settings.
i) Act in the best interest of the player development as a whole person.
j) Be honest, sincere and honorable in all relationships with players, parents, officials and other coaches.
k) No use of Tobacco products around the team or field.
l) Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of athletes, including educating athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment;
m) Prepare athletes systematically and progressively, using appropriate time frames and monitoring physical and psychological adjustments while refraining from using training methods or techniques that my harm athletes;
n) Avoid compromising the present and future health of athletes by communicating and cooperating with sport medicine professionals in the diagnosis, treatment and management of athletes' medical and psychological problems;

8. The Coaching staff is under the direction of the Head Coach; all other coaches will be considered Assistant Coaches.
9. The Head Coach will:
    a) Be responsible for the players of his/her team and will make sure all players are picked up or other arrangements are made before the Head Coach shall leave the park, both practice and games.
    b) In the absence of the Head Coach, appoint an Acting Head Coach for any VMFL game.
    c) Assume responsibility for the actions and behavior of all his/her Assistant Coaches.
    d) Have final responsibility for his/her actions, also of his/her Assistant Coaches, players, staff and parents. They are also responsible for any and all misconduct by anyone on their sidelines before, during and after a game, including but not limited to taunting, fighting, and verbal abuse of officials. These actions can result in game suspensions by either the league commissioner or the VMFL Executive.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

10. I have read and understand the items in this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by the provision as they are set forth in this document. I have also read, understand and agree to the VMFL 'Coaches Responsibilities' as written above.

11. I understand that non-compliance to the Code of Conduct can result in my suspension, removal or further action taken by the VMFL Executive.

APPENDIX M

Association: _____ Team Name: _____

Division: _____ President: _____

Head Coach: _____ HC Email: _____

HC Signature: _____ HC NCCP#: _____

Submission Requirements: All Codes of Conduct must be typed and submitted in a legible electronic format. Handwritten Codes of Conduct will not be accepted. The name and NCCP# on the Code of Conduct must match the current version published on thelocker.ca. Modified, altered, or outdated versions will not be accepted.

All Team Staff must complete and sign the following form:

Name (First & Last Printed)	Position (HC/AC/M/Jr, ETC)	NCCP #	Signed	Date

All Coaching COC's are to be submitted for Fall: Thursday prior to first season game as per Handbook 8.2

All Coaching COC's are to be submitted for Spring: April 1st as per Handbook 5.2

Any changes are to be submitted by the Thursday before the weekend game as per Handbook 8.

Commissioner Game Day Report Submission

Appendix N

Commissioner reports and rosters and play count forms are to be scanned by game into a single PDF File.

Each game is to be scanned and saved into its own separate file. Each of the files must be named in the following way and include a scanned copy of the COC for each game:

Month-Day-Year Association (first six digits or the first 3 of each name) Game Time (military) Division (first 2 digits)

IE: 09-05-2011 Clover 0900 U8Fl

IE: 09-05-2011 RoyCit 1000 U10ATF

IE: 09-05-2011 Coquit 1045 U10AT6

IE: 09-05-2011 NorDel 1230 U12PW

IE: 09-05-2011 WhtRck 1330 U14JB

IE: 09-05-2011 SouDel 1230 U16B

IE: 09-05-2011 Richmo 1330 U19MI

Note if there are both 9 and 12 man divisions in the VMFL then identify the appropriate division by adding 9 or 12- e.g. U14 JB9 or U14 JB12, or B9 or B12 etc.

IE: 09-05-2011 Langle 1430 U14 JB9

IE: 09-05-2011 Coquit 1600 U16 B12

Send the files for each game by email to the applicable 9man or 12man Commissioner for the division:

For 9 man Divisions (including, U10 Atom 9 Man Flag, 6 Man U10 Atom Tackle, and 9 Man divisions of U12 Peewee, Jr. Bantam, U16 Bantam and U19 Midget), the PDF files for the commissioner reports and rosters for are to be sent to:

commish.vmfl@gmail.com

For 12 man Divisions (the 12 man divisions for U12 Peewee, U14 Junior Bantam, U16 Bantam and U19 Midget), the PDF files for the commissioner reports and rosters for are to be sent to:

commish.vmfl@gmail.com

All game reports need to be emailed by midnight on game day to the appropriate commissioner

All Scores (including U8 Tyke Flag) are to be emailed to scores.vmfl@gmail.com within two hours of the last game at your park.

VMFL PENALTY CODES

1: GAME DISQUALIFICATION

2: UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS:

2a HELMET-TO-HELMET CONTACT
2b CLIPPING/BLINDSIDE
2c PILING ON
2d LATE HIT OUT OF BOUNDS
2e ROUGHING PASSER/KICKER/PLACK-KICK HOLDER/CENTRE
2f FACE-MASKING
2g HIGH/HEAD TACKLING IN OPEN FIELD
2h CLOTHES-LINING
2i SPEARING
2j BUTT-BLOCKING/-TACKLING
2k ILLEGAL USE OF HANDS IN AN UNNECESSARY MANNER
2L CRACK BACK BLOCK
2m DELAYED KNEE BLOCK
2n HORSE COLLAR
2p HAND TO THE FACE
2q OTHER

3: OBJECTIONABLE CONDUCT