



PLAY



UMPIRE4FUN PROGRAM

COORDINATOR HANDBOOK

WELCOME

Congratulations on being selected to be your Club Umpire Coordinator! This role is a highly important one for our clubs and our game. You are assisting in the development of the future AFL Umpires – without umpires, we don't have a game, and we are grateful for your service to your club.

AFL Queensland is committed to the ongoing education of our junior football umpires. A key strategy in meeting this goal is through the appointment of Club Umpire Coordinators at Australian Football Clubs.

Club Umpire Coordinators are key influencers in developing and maintaining a positive club culture. They can also have a significant impact on the lives of individuals within the club, especially the young umpires. A Club Umpire Coordinator is appointed to support and oversee the growth and development of individual umpires and enhance the overall enjoyment of the junior umpires at your club. AFL Queensland has developed this handbook to assist you in your role efficiently.

We appreciate the time and effort that goes into coordinating umpires to be at the club on time and represent the club to the best of their ability. We understand that each club is different – some clubs struggle to find new umpires, others have an abundance – and we're committed to meeting each club where they are, adjusting our support accordingly.

The Queensland umpiring community is fantastic to be a part of. Umpires make life-long friends with their fellow umpires who support each other throughout their journey.

There are pathways all the way through to the elite level; however, we would like them to enjoy their journey, no matter where they are on the pathway. Our umpiring department will be here to support you and them every step of the way. You are contributing to that first step, and we thank you for your efforts.

Enjoy your journey,
AFLQ Umpiring Team!

AFLQ UMPIRING DEPARTMENT CONTACT LIST

Role	Name	Email	Phone	Can Help With...
Community Umpiring Coordinator	Emma George	emma.george@afl.com.au (JANUARY-JULY 2025)	0499 361 540	SEQJ Appointments & Competition, Umpire4Fun Program, Club Umpire Coordinator Support
Umpire Development Coordinator	Nicola Stevens	nicola.stevens@afl.com.au	0498 222 248	SEQ Senior Appointments & Competition, Boundary & Goal Umpiring, School Umpiring, Talent & High Performance Umpiring
Community Football Engagement Lead	Ainslie Gardner	ainslie.gardner@afl.com.au	0486 215 349	Umpire Recruitment & Retention, Umpire Data Management, Strategies
Umpiring Development Lead	Sam Bridges	sam.bridges@afl.com.au	0408 765 361	Can point you in the right direction if you're unsure who to best speak to
Administration Coordinator - Umpiring	Maddie Boulton	maddie.boulton@afl.com.au (UNTIL FEBRUARY 2026)	0437 224 129	OfficialsHQ, AFLiD, Uniforms, Payments, Social Media, Communications
Community Umpire Coordinator	Chloe Webb	chloe.webb@afl.com.au (2025 JULY-ONWARDS)	0499 777 425	SEQJ Appointments & Competition, Umpire4Fun Program, Club Umpire Coordinator Support

POSITION DESCRIPTION - CLUB UMPIRE COORDINATOR

To assist Club Umpire Coordinators in understanding their roles and responsibilities, AFLQ has published a Position Description for the role. You can find the Position Description on our [Umpire4Fun page](#), in the Resources for Club Umpire Coordinators section.

This Position Description outlines what AFLQ consider to be the core components of the role, and it is designed to act as a guide rather than a definitive list. Your club might require you to take on slightly different responsibilities to what our Position Description outlines, and that's okay!

The below section discusses the Position Description in more detail, so make sure you head to our website to download it while you read along here.

ROLE PURPOSE

Clubs that have Junior (previously called Footy4Fun) competitions (U8s through to U11 Girls) on Saturday mornings require umpires for these games. These umpires come from each club Umpire4Fun program. The Umpire4Fun program is an AFLQ-led introductory program for umpires to learn the basics of umpiring.

As the Club Umpire Coordinator, you are responsible for appointing Umpire4Fun umpires to these Junior games at your club. More information about appointing umpires is shared in later sections.

Other than appointing these umpires to games on Saturday mornings, Club Umpire Coordinators are also responsible for supporting them in their development, acting as their key point of contact for information, and all the associated administration.

Umpire4Fun umpires are usually brand new to umpiring – so the most important thing a Club Umpire Coordinator can do is ensure these umpires feel well-supported to have a go!

BEST PRACTICE

Appoint umpires to Junior games each week, striving to have every game covered by an Umpire4Fun umpire.

- As above, these are the U8s through to U11 Girls games at your club on Saturday mornings (U11 Mixed games are part of the SEQJ Youth program).
- If you can't find an Umpire4Fun umpire to appoint to a game, you can source an alternative such as a parent, coach, or other club umpire who can volunteer.

Where possible, host and facilitate training sessions to develop umpires on-field skills and knowledge of the game.

- AFLQ understand that access to greenspace can be difficult at some clubs. If you have the space available, we highly recommend hosting a few training sessions in the beginning of the year. More information on how to run a training session is shared in later sections.
- If you are unable to host training sessions at your club, it's especially important that you share the details of the AFLQ-run Umpire4Fun training sessions and encourage your umpires to attend. More information on these sessions is shared in later sections.

Assist the implementation of AFL Queensland Umpiring Programs.

- As the Club Umpire Coordinator, you are the key point of contact for AFLQ umpiring related communication. AFLQ will regularly send emails about upcoming programs, resources, or important information, and we ask that you share this with your umpires.

Act as the point of contact for Club Umpires on match days, either in person or by phone.

- If an umpire is running late or unable to attend, they should notify the Club Umpire Coordinator as soon as possible. The Coordinator is then responsible for either arranging a replacement or informing the relevant teams of the situation.
- Some Club Umpire Coordinators prefer to be available at the club on match days, but if you're not available to be there in person, it's important the umpires can still reach you on the phone.
- If you are going to be unavailable, AFLQ recommend appointing a replacement point of contact for the week and ensuring umpires know who to reach out to in your absence.

Foster an inclusive, enjoyable environment for participants to learn the fundamental skills of umpiring.

- Enjoyment is one of the biggest factors in umpire retention. It's the role of the Club Umpire Coordinator to ensure that umpires feel welcomed and supported at the club, so they enjoy their umpiring experience.
- Umpiring is an inclusive space that should feel safe for all. This is a key the role of the Club Umpire Coordinator to facilitate.

Assist AFL Queensland in appointing Club Umpires to Youth and/or Senior matches when league-appointed umpires are unavailable.

- AFLQ currently appoint umpires to 80% of the SEQJ (U11 Mixed to U17s) matches each week on average. While we always aim for 100% of appointments, our umpire numbers currently don't match the exponential growth in competitions in SEQ.
- If AFLQ are unable to appoint a league umpire to an SEQJ match, the Club Umpire Coordinator is required to assist.
- These matches will usually be U11 Mixed or U13s games. This provides clubs with an opportunity to appoint experienced or talented Umpire4Fun umpires to higher level matches.
- To find out whether a league umpire has been appointed, you can view this page: [Umpire Appointments | AFL Queensland](#).
 - Friday night games will be uploaded on Wednesday night. Thursday night will include all the games for the weekend and have updated appointments for Friday nights. Friday nights will have final appointments for the weekend games.
 - '1 umpire accepted' means a league umpire has accepted their appointment for this game.
 - '1 umpire pending' means a league umpire has been appointed but not yet accepted. Clubs should be prepared to find replacements for pending umpires.
 - '1 club umpire required' means you are required to find a club umpire. Sometimes these games will be filled by a league umpire in the final update, so It's important you check the website on Friday night for a final list.
- When there are last minute changes after the final website updates, your club's Competition Manager will alert you to this change.

APPOINTING THE RIGHT UMPIRES

JUNIOR GAMES

Appointing umpires to the right games can be a daunting process, especially at larger clubs with lots of junior games each week.

The week before, ask your umpires to confirm their availability for the following Saturday. This gives you time to make changes to appointments if necessary. Allow extra time at the start of the season for your umpires, particularly the younger ones, to adapt to knowing and communicating their availability ahead of time – as the season goes on, your umpires should become better at this process!

Each week, take the list of umpires available for that round and compare them to the list of games. Use your knowledge of the club personnel and teams involved in each match to determine which matches could be more challenging than others.

The following questions might be helpful in determining an umpire's ability to umpire a match:

- How old is the umpire? How old are the players for the game?
- Can the umpire communicate effectively with adults? If adults ask them questions about their decisions, can the umpire communicate confidently?
- Can the umpire communicate effectively with players? If the players on the field question their decisions, can the umpire communicate confidently?
- Does the umpire understand the rules enough to be able to explain them on-field to players who are still learning the rules or are very young?

For example, an U6s game might need an umpire who can give a bit more detailed explanation to the players about what the decision was and what happens now, as they players are still learning the rules themselves. An U10s game in comparison might have players who have already played for four years and therefore understand the rules but might now need a more confident umpire who won't be intimidated by players who question decisions.

If you need additional support in learning how to decide which umpire does which game, please reach out to the AFLQ team on the details listed in the table earlier in this document.

To help organise the appointment process, you can download a template from the Resources for Club Umpire Coordinators to help you track your appointments from the [Umpire4Fun page](#).

SEQJ GAMES

Each week, the AFLQ team will publish a spreadsheet of SEQJ matches for the coming weekend. This spreadsheet will confirm which matches have league-appointed umpires and which matches require club umpires. This spreadsheet will be published [here](#).

For matches where a club umpire is required, Club Umpire Coordinators need to assist AFLQ in finding a suitable umpire. To determine who the best umpire would be, the questions shared above for the junior appointments process still apply. In addition to that, there are a few administrative requirements to keep in mind:

- Umpire4Fun umpires are encouraged, but not required, to register in OfficialsHQ. However, SEQJ umpires — including Umpire4Fun umpires filling in for SEQJ matches — must be registered in OfficialsHQ and have completed the annual Education Module.
- We recommend Umpire4Fun umpires be at least 12 years old, though some clubs allow 10–11-year-olds to officiate younger games. SEQJ umpires must have already turned 12 before officiating any league-appointed matches.
- For the most part, AFLQ will need your assistance for games that are at your home club; however, if you have a larger club umpire pool, AFLQ might require your assistance to appoint umpires for SEQJ matches at nearby clubs, particularly if those clubs are smaller.

Once you have confirmed an umpire is available for an SEQJ match, contact the Community Umpire Coordinator at AFLQ with the umpire's full name. The AFLQ team will then appoint the umpire in the OfficialsHQ system, provided they meet the above requirements, and the umpire will get an email notification to accept the appointment in the system.

Because this process is different to how Umpire4Fun umpires normally accept appointments for junior games, AFLQ ask that Club Umpire Coordinators help communicate the need to accept the appointment in OfficialsHQ to their umpires.

Payment for this umpire is then organised through the OfficialsHQ system. Club Umpire Coordinator's don't need to do anything to pay umpires for their SEQJ matches when the umpire has been appointed in OfficialsHQ. If the umpire was not appointed in OfficialsHQ, the club needs to pay them as a club umpire.

CLUB UMPIRE PAYMENTS

Clubs can set their own payment guidelines to suit their individual needs and resources. Some clubs choose to pay umpires in cash on the day, while others organise payments via bank transfer.

Similarly, some clubs match the SEQJ Pay Rates, while others opt to pay less based on budget or the developmental nature of the games. This flexibility allows clubs to manage their umpiring programs in a way that aligns with their capacity. AFLQ only asks that clubs do not exceed the SEQJ pay rates. This helps ensure club-level umpiring remains an introductory, development-focused opportunity. When club umpires are paid significantly more than those officiating in Youth competitions, it can unintentionally discourage them from progressing into higher levels where ongoing learning and exposure to formal coaching are part of their development. Keeping pay rates aligned supports a smoother and more sustainable umpire pathway.

For your reference, below are the 2025 rates AFLQ uses to pay SEQJ umpires.

Practice Matches	
Grade	Rate
U11s	\$25
U13 Girls	\$25
U13 Mixed	\$42
U15 Boys, U15 Girls, U17 Girls	\$50
U17 Boys	\$60

Home and Away Matches	
Grade	Rate
U11 Mixed - 1 Umpire	\$35
U13 Girls - 1 Umpire	\$42
U13 Mixed (D1 = 2 Umpires, D2 Down = 1 Umpire)	\$42
U15 Boys, U15 Girls, U17 Girls - 2 Umpires	\$57
U17 Boys - 2 Umpires	\$70

Whenever a club pays an umpire for an SEQJ game, AFLQ will provide a reimbursement. Clubs are encouraged to keep their own records of which games they have paid club umpires for. AFLQ reimbursements are processed twice in the season – once after round 8 and once at the end of the season.

These reimbursements cover the cost each club pays to have an AFLQ appointed umpire in their competition fees.

UMPIRE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

As the Club Umpire Coordinator, part of your role is ensuring your umpires have access to the resources they need to development and improve across the season.

AFLQ-RUN TRAINING SESSIONS

To best support new Umpire4Fun umpires, AFLQ run a series of training sessions from March to May each year. These sessions are a mix of online webinar sessions to cover the theory elements, as well as on-field sessions at various clubs across SEQ to teach practical skills.

These sessions have concluded for 2025. You can access the three online training session recordings in the Resources for Umpires and Parents section of the Umpire4Fun [website](#).

AFLQ ONLINE RESOURCES

Below is a list of AFLQ-provided resources you can share with your umpires, all available on the website.

- [Umpire4Fun Participant Handbook](#) – includes information for brand new umpires and their guardians, tips for their umpiring, match-day checklists, hand signals, etc.
- [AFLQ Umpire4Fun & other Online Webinars](#) – previous online Umpire4Fun training sessions, as well as other umpire training videos recorded (in the Resources of Umpires and Parents section – find the links and associated passwords to three online video sessions)
- [Junior Rules Matrix](#) – one-pager highlighting the different modifications for each age group in junior football
- Play AFL Learning Management System – all umpires registered in OfficialsHQ can access an abundance of online training resources through Play AFL
 - Log into your [OfficialsHQ](#) account and click on your profile picture on the top right-hand side.
 - Select 'Account' from the dropdown menu.
 - Click on 'Connected Accounts' on the menu options on the left-hand side.
 - Click on 'Get an eLearning Link' and then click on the new button that pops up saying 'Go to eLearning platform'.
 - Scroll down a little on the new page that loads and click on the pictured tile called 'Umpire'.

- Choose from any of the online education modules!

RUNNING AN UMPIRE TRAINING SESSION

As well as encouraging your umpires to attend the AFLQ-run training sessions online and in person, many Club Umpire Coordinators run additional training sessions for their umpires. If you have no umpiring experience, that's okay! Most clubs will have umpires who are involved in SEQJ or senior umpiring and are experienced enough to run a session. Many are willing to do so for a small fee, a canteen voucher, or to give back to their club. If you're not sure who is involved in SEQJ or senior umpiring at your club, reach out the Umpire Administration Coordinator at AFLQ and ask for a downloaded database from OfficialsHQ. AFLQ can provide support in this area upon request – send an email to the Community Umpire Coordinator if you're interested in running a training session.

If you have some umpiring experience but are otherwise unsure of what activities to do in a training or how to structure a session, AFLQ has a series of training session plans available on the [website](#) in the Resources for Club Umpire Coordinators section.

USING UMPIRE MENTORS ON MATCH DAY

An important part of an umpire's learning and development is receiving feedback after a match. Just like your club's players who receive feedback on their performance by their coaches, umpires also benefit from a coach's feedback.

If you don't feel like you have the skills and experience to observe an umpire and provide feedback, that's okay! As the Club Umpire Coordinator, you can recruit and appoint Umpire Mentors to your games. These Umpire Mentors can be volunteers from your club or SEQJ or senior umpires who want to give back.

You might not have the resources to appoint an Umpire Mentor to every game on every Saturday, and that's okay too. Below are some tips that might help:

- Ideally, an Umpire Mentor will be appointed for every umpire's first game. This Umpire Mentor does not need to have any umpiring experience, and they won't need to provide specific feedback to the umpire. Instead, they are an adult figure who's available to provide reassurance, check the umpire is having fun, and give positive reinforcement when they nail the basics (for example, having a loud whistle). You can download a guide on mentoring from the Resources for Club Umpire Coordinators section of the [Umpire4Fun website](#).
- The same rules apply to Umpire Mentors on any U6s or U8s games – they don't need to be giving detailed feedback on the umpire's performance. The most important thing is they are

there to ensure the umpire feels supported by the club and to make sure the umpire is having a positive experience.

- Umpires who are more experienced and are thinking about transitioning into the SEQJ program are the umpires who would benefit the most from umpire-specific performance feedback. These might be older umpires, or umpires who have done Umpire4Fun for a few seasons.

A QR Code linking to an online form mentors can use to provide feedback for Umpire4Fun umpires is included at the end of this handbook. A hardcopy version is also included for printing.

UMPIRE UNIFORMS

You can view the [2025 Uniform Policy](#) on the website.

All Umpire4Fun umpires are to be provided a free uniform from the club. This uniform includes a shirt, shorts, and a hat.

Some clubs purchase new uniforms each year and give their umpires a uniform to borrow for the season. That way, clubs are spending less money on uniforms. Alternatively, your club can purchase new uniforms for your umpires each year. It's entirely up to your club how you manage this process.

Umpire uniforms are purchased online through our uniform supplier, [Tribal Sport](#). Each year, Club Umpire Coordinators are provided a window to order their club's uniforms in. Information about this process and the link to order through is sent out via email from the AFLQ Umpire Administration Coordinator.

Umpires need to supply their own whistle. As umpires progress through the pathway, the need to purchase a specific whistle for AFL umpiring will arise, but across junior football, it's okay for umpires to use any whistle they already have access to.

In 2025, AFLQ have removed the need for Umpire4Fun umpires to wear the official socks.

Umpire4Fun umpires can wear plain white or black socks instead.

CLUB UMPIRE RECRUITMENT

A key role of the Club Umpire Coordinator is recruiting new umpires each year. The Umpire4Fun program is the entry-level point for umpiring. It's a program specifically targeted to umpires in their very first year. After their first year, Umpire4Fun umpires can either stay as club umpires, where they remain in your umpire pool for junior games on Saturday mornings, or they graduate into the SEQJ umpire program, where they become league-appointed umpires.

The SEQJ competition has exploded in size over the last few years, which is great! AFL in Queensland is continually growing in size and talent, and as the competition gets bigger and bigger, it needs more umpires to officiate matches each week.

If you are looking for tips on recruiting more umpires for your club, there is an Umpire Recruitment Checklist available on the [website](#) or the Community Umpire Toolkit available [here](#). The below tips also might help:

- **Contact your current player database.** The biggest recruitment area for club umpires are your club players. These are members who are already invested in your club and have a good understanding of the rules of AFL. Send an email to your registered players who are aged 12 or older inviting them to register as umpires or attend a training session you're running.
- **Contact your current guardians and families.** Another big recruitment area are the people who will already be at your club on a Saturday anyway – parents and siblings of your junior players. Again, these are members who are already invested in your club and have already committed to be at your club on a Saturday morning, so it should be easier to get them to come a game earlier or stay a game later to umpire for you.
- **Contact your current coaches.** Your coaches have a big influence on their players and are often viewed as positive role models. If your coaches are advocating for getting involved in umpiring, players might be more likely to listen. Contact your coaches and impress on them the benefits umpiring can have for their players (e.g., improving understanding of the rules, increasing fitness, improving confidence, improving ability to read the play). Ask your coaches if you can come spend 10 minutes at the start or end of training talking to their team.
- **Contact your past players.** Every year, there will be players who don't return to play for various reasons. Consider reaching out to this database and ask them to get involved as club umpires as an opportunity to give back to and stay connected with their former club.

- **Think outside the box for your local community.** Each club is part of a unique community landscape that can be used for umpire recruitment. For example, if your venue shares greenspace with a cricket club, reach out to their committee to see if you can access their player or officials database and recruit them to umpire for you in their off season. If there's a netball association nearby who plays primarily on Saturday afternoons, perhaps those netball umpires might be interested in learning to umpire another sport on a Saturday morning. Perhaps some long-distance runners at a nearby athletics club might be interested in earning some pocket money while getting their weekend run in.

AFLQ RECRUITMENT SUPPORT

We understand that recruitment can be a big undertaking, and AFLQ are here to support all Club Umpire Coordinators. If you need any assistance in your recruitment efforts, please reach out to the Community Umpiring Coordinator.

AFLQ can run Come and Try Umpiring Sessions for your club. These sessions come in a variety of lengths and formats to suit your club's needs. Come and Try sessions can be run on an evening or on a weekend – we can fit the session around your club's schedule.

For these sessions, AFLQ provide the following:

- All the content for the session
- Someone to facilitate the session
- A registration link to collect umpire information
- Graphic to help promote the session on your club's social media pages
- Communication to nearby clubs to help promote the session more widely and promote a community feel among umpires

Club Umpire Coordinators are required to provide:

- Access to an indoor/undercover area for discussion work, ideally with a smart TV or projector screen to share content (alternatives are available if a smart TV or projector are not accessible)
- Access to the field for
- Promotion of the event to their databases and on the club's social media accounts
- In-person support to the facilitator on the day/night of the session

These sessions can be tailored to suit the specific needs for your club. For example, content can be adapted to teach female umpires if you wanted to run a Come and Try session open only to women and girls. Content can also be adapted to teach the basic skills to adults, if you have significant interest from a group of parents, for example.

If you would like to host a Come and Try session at your club, please reach out to the Community Umpiring Coordinator.

UMPIRE FEEDBACK FORM – TEMPLATE

Please hand this to the Umpire Coordinator so they can provide feedback to the Umpire before the next match.

Date: _____ Age Group Umpired: Under _____

Match between: _____ v _____

Umpire Name: _____

Mentor Name: _____

Did the Umpire meet the teams and coaches before the game? Y / N.

Was the Umpire's whistle loud enough? Y / N.

Were the Umpires signals clear for all to see? Y / N.

Was the Umpire's voice loud enough for all to hear? Y / N.

Was the Umpire's interpretation of the rules accurate? Y / N.

What did the umpire do well during the game? (e.g., clear signals, confidence, game control, fairness, teamwork with officials)

What areas could the umpire improve on to enhance their performance?

(e.g., positioning, communication, rule interpretation, consistency, game management)