

**2026**

# **CLUB UMPIRE COORDINATOR HANDBOOK**



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# **WELCOME**

Thank you for taking on the role of Club Umpire Coordinator.

This is one of the most important volunteer positions within any football club. Coordinators play a vital role in recruiting, supporting and developing umpires, ensuring games are delivered in a safe, fair and positive environment. Umpires are essential; without them, football does not happen. Your leadership helps young people build confidence, develop skills, earn income and stay involved in the game beyond playing. AFL Queensland is committed to supporting you with tools, resources and guidance to help build a sustainable and successful umpire program within your club.

Whether you are new to the role or have been coordinating for years, this handbook is designed to help you feel confident, supported and connected. It serves as a practical guide you can return to throughout the season and includes sections on:

- Recruitment
- Coordinate
- Retain
- Opportunities

Use it as a reference tool based on your needs.

If you are new to the role:

- Start with the Role Overview.
- Review Registration and Appointment Responsibilities.
- Familiarise yourself with AFLQ support and key contacts.
- Note important dates in the Calendar.

If you are an experienced Coordinator:

- Use Recruitment and Retention to strengthen your program.
- Explore Transition and Pathways for progressing umpires.
- Review mentoring and development ideas to enhance your club environment.

Our aim is to provide clarity, reduce uncertainty and make your role manageable.

If you are ever unsure or facing challenges, please contact the AFLQ Umpiring Department - we are here to help.

# **AFL QUEENSLAND UMPIRE DEPARTMENT STAFF**

## **Sam Bridges - Umpiring Development Lead QLD**

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Responsible for Umpiring Department staff leadership, Incident referrals/investigations, umpiring department strategy, umpire coach structure and support and major projects.

## **Ainslie Gardner - Umpire Recruitment & Retention Lead QLD**

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Responsible for developing state based strategies for recruitment and retention, overseeing women & girls, school umpire programs, club based initiatives and the development of future strategy.

## **Nicola Stevens - Umpiring Coordinator - Recruitment and Retention**

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Responsible for developing state based strategies for recruitment and retention, overseeing women & girls, school umpire programs, club based initiatives and the development of future strategy.

## **Chloe Webb - Community Coordinator - Competitions and Pathways**

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Responsible for delivery and coordination of SEQ Youth and SEQ Junior competitions (umpires and umpire coaches), mentor program and women and girls.

## **Paige Kakau - Administration Coordinator - Umpiring**

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Responsible for umpiring payments (regional and SEQ), umpiring department finance, uniforms, communications, administration support and social media.

# **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- SAVE KEY AFLQ CONTACTS TO YOUR PHONE**
- CONFIRM THE BEST EMAIL FOR UMPIRING COMMS AT YOUR CLUB (COORDINATOR AND BACK UP)**
- SHARE AFLQ CONTACT LIST WITH PRESIDENT, SECRETARY AND JUNIOR COORDINATOR**

# RECRUIT



## OVERVIEW OF ALL AFLQ PROGRAMS

AFL Queensland currently offer a range of programs to support the recruitment and retention of umpires within your club. An overview of the key recruitment programs can be found [here](#) with a detailed description of all programs found [here](#). Both documents can also be found in Rookie Me Connect.

## COORDINATOR CHECKLIST

- REVIEW THE AFLQ PROGRAM OVERVIEW DOCUMENTS
- IDENTIFY WHICH PROGRAMS SUIT YOUR CLUB THIS SEASON (UMPIRE4FUN, SUPERKICK, COME & TRY, MENTORING)
- BOOK KEY DATES INTO YOUR CLUB CALENDAR (COMMITTEE & JUNIOR TEAMS)
- NOMINATE ONE PERSON AT THE CLUB TO HELP PROMOTE UMPIRING (SOCIALS & NEWSLETTER)

## WHAT IS UMPIRE4FUN?

Umpire4Fun is the initial step in the umpiring pathway, providing club-based training, education and match appointments for new umpires. Participants are appointed by Club Umpire Coordinators to Saturday morning games as field umpires in the Under 8 to Under 11 age groups. During training participants will learn the fundamentals of field, boundary and goal umpiring.

The program offers a supportive environment to build confidence and develop core skills, with opportunities to progress into the youth umpiring pathway for field umpiring, as well as the chance to be appointed to youth finals as a boundary or goal umpire.

If your club is interested in hosting an Umpire4Fun session throughout the season please express your interest here.

## **DESIRED OUTCOMES**

The primary outcome of the Umpire4Fun program is to give new umpires a strong foundation at the start of their officiating journey. It aims to develop core skills in a supportive, low- pressure environment so participants gain the confidence and knowledge needed to progress into league umpiring.

By the end of the program, umpires should have a solid grasp of fundamental skills such as communication, positioning and decision- making, and feel comfortable managing junior matches independently. Umpire4Fun also aims to build confidence by providing a safe space to learn, make mistakes and grow. After 1–2 seasons, participants should feel ready and motivated to transition into youth league umpiring.

Finally, Umpire4Fun aims to establish a clear pathway mindset, helping umpires understand that this program is the first stepping stone in their ongoing development within the broader umpiring pathway.

## **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- CONFIRM WHETHER YOUR CLUB WILL HOST UMPIRE4FUN SESSIONS THIS SEASON**
- IDENTIFY LIKELY U8-U11 GAMES FOR NEW UMPIRES TO START SAFELY**
- RECRUIT A SMALL 'UMPIRE GUARDIAN' PARENT GROUP FOR MATCH DAY SUPPORT**
- PLAN HOW YOU'LL WELCOME NEW UMPIRES (MEETING POINT, INTRODUCTION, WHO THEY REPORT TO)**
- ADD UMPIRE4FUN TRAINING DATES, ONLINE WEBINARS AND FINALS TO YOUR CALENDAR**
- SET REMINDERS FOR KEY DEADLINES (EG AUSKICK GRID GAME INFO DUE TUESDAY 5PM)**

# RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

AFL Queensland encourages clubs to adopt proactive and sustainable recruitment strategies to grow and support their umpiring group. Below are some strategies to assist with recruitment.

If you would like a program run at your club [click here to book](#).

## U15 TEAMS

One effective approach is engaging the club's own playing cohort, particularly Under 15 teams, by inviting them to participate in a club-based Introduction to Umpiring program. This pathway allows young players to give back to the club's junior age groups while developing valuable skills, increasing their confidence, and earning money by umpiring local fixtures. Introducing umpiring within familiar club environments helps build a positive culture around officiating and supports long-term retention.

## UMPIRE READY CLUB

Clubs can also nominate to become an 'Umpire Ready Club', indicating they are committed to providing a welcoming, supportive, and beginner-friendly environment for new umpires. When individuals register to umpire in a region and do not have an existing club affiliation, AFL Queensland can direct them to an Umpire Ready Club as the preferred starting point. These clubs help new umpires settle in, offer guidance and mentorship, and contribute to building a robust umpiring community across the region.

## COORDINATOR CHECKLIST

- RUN ONE TARGETTED RECRUITMENT PUSH (EG U15 TEAMS) EARLY IN THE SEASON
- IDENTIFY 2-3 'CHAMPIONS' (COACH, PLAYER, PARENT) TO PROMOTE UMPIRING
- USE AFLQ TEMPLATES (SOCIAL TILES, SCRIPTS, CORFULTES ETC)
- CONSIDER BECOMING AN 'UMPIRE READY CLUB' AND TELL AFLQ YOU'RE OPEN TO NEWCOMERS
- TRACK LEADS AND FOLLOW UP WITHIN 48 HOURS

# INITIATIVES

Beginning in 2026, AFL Queensland is introducing two key uniform updates to improve the experience of junior and youth umpires. All umpires under 18 will wear orange wristbands, providing a clear visual signal that they are developing officials. This initiative is aimed at promoting respect from players, coaches and spectators and fostering a safer, more supportive match- day environment.

In addition, crew- length socks are now available as an alternative to traditional knee- high socks for umpires in Under 8 to Under 17 competitions. This option was introduced to make the uniform more comfortable and appealing, reducing potential barriers for young people considering umpiring.

Together, these initiatives support umpire recruitment and retention by helping young officials feel more confident, comfortable and supported on game day.



# COORDINATOR CHECKLIST

- BRIEF COACHES/TEAM MANAGERS ON THE PURPOSE OF ORANGE WRISTBANDS (RESPECT & SAFETY)
- REINFORCE EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOUR TOWARD DEVELOPING UMPIRES
- ENCOURAGE COMFORT OPTIONS (CREW SOCKS) TO REDUCE BARRIERS

# **SUPERKICK X UMPIRE4FUN RECRUITMENT PROGRAM**

The Superkick Umpiring Integration program is delivered during Term 1 as part of community club Superkick sessions. Designed to introduce young participants to the fundamentals of umpiring, the program replaces the opening activities in Weeks 3, 5, and 7 with engaging umpiring drills. Each of these sessions focuses on a different umpiring discipline, providing a well-rounded introduction to the role in a fun and supportive environment. This structured exposure allows participants to build confidence and develop essential skills while remaining within the familiar setting of their club. At the conclusion of the program, participants are well-positioned to transition directly into the umpire4fun program at their club or even explore opportunities in league-level umpiring. This initiative not only strengthens the umpiring pathway but also fosters a greater understanding and appreciation of the game from a new perspective.

If you are interested in running a Superkick x Umpire4Fun session at your club, please reach out to the umpiring department or to your Participation Coordinator for more information.

## **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- CONFIRM IF YOUR CLUB RUNS SUPERKICK AND IS INTERESTED IN THE INTEGRATION PROCESS**
- CONTACT UMPIRING DEPARTMENT OR PARTICIPATION COORDINATOR TO EXPRESS INTEREST**



# COORDINATE



## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS AND BENEFITS

To ensure a safe, well- supported and well- resourced umpiring environment across Queensland, all club umpires must be registered in OfficialsHQ.

While club umpires are appointed and managed by their clubs, registration in OfficialsHQ forms an essential part of AFL Queensland’s safeguarding, communication and development framework. Registration does not automatically place club umpires into league appointments, but it ensures they are compliant, visible and supported within the statewide officiating system.

## CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND BLUE CARD COMPLIANCE

Registering umpires in OfficialsHQ allows AFL Queensland to link, monitor and verify Blue Cards for all officials involved in match day roles. This oversight is a critical safeguarding measure that helps protect children, volunteers and the broader football community. Centralised visibility ensures that only eligible and compliant individuals are participating in umpiring activities.

## ACCURATE TRACKING OF UMPIRE NUMBERS

Club registrations in OfficialsHQ enable AFL Queensland to accurately track how many umpires are active at each club. This information helps ensure clubs receive appropriate resources, education opportunities and support from AFLQ. It also provides the national AFL umpiring team with a clear picture of Queensland’s umpire participation numbers, enabling accurate resourcing and program planning across the state and country.

In line with competition requirements (AFL Queensland Community Rules and Procedures), prior to the commencement of each season, every club must appoint a minimum of two (2) Accredited Club Umpires per competition entered. Ensuring these umpires are registered in OfficialsHQ allows AFLQ to verify compliance, support club umpire development, and provide targeted assistance where required. Page 10

## **ACCESS TO TRAINING, COMMUNICATION AND OPPORTUNITIES**

By being registered in OfficialsHQ, umpires gain access to essential training information, development opportunities and communication from AFL Queensland. This ensures all umpires, regardless of whether they are club- based or league- based, remain informed, connected and supported throughout their umpiring journey.

## **SEPARATION OF CLUB UMPIRES AND LEAGUE UMPIRES**

While club umpires must be registered in OfficialsHQ, they are not automatically included in league umpiring appointments. Club umpires are added to a separate panel that is not allocated to league fixtures. This ensures the registration process supports safeguarding and communication without affecting the club umpire's role or requiring them to officiate outside their club environment.

If a club umpire chooses to take on a one- off league match for development, experience or to support league needs, their OfficialsHQ registration allows AFLQ to appoint and pay them seamlessly and efficiently.

## **PAYMENT BENEFITS**

Where club umpires officiate league-appointed matches, being registered in OfficialsHQ provides clear benefits for both the umpire and the competition, while reducing administrative burden on clubs.

- Registered umpires are paid directly by AFL Queensland.
- Clubs are not required to manage match-day payments.
- There is no need for reimbursement processes for registered officials.

This streamlined approach ensures timely and consistent payment for umpires, while removing unnecessary administrative workload for clubs.

## **REGISTRATION PROCESS**

A guide outlining the registration process can be accessed [here](#). Please share with any new umpires or returning umpires who may be having difficulty registering.

## **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- ENSURE ALL CLUB UMPIRES ARE REGISTERED IN OFFICIALSHQ (OR PROGRESSING TOWARDS IT)
- CONFIRM BLUE CARD REQUIREMENTS ARE UNDERSTOOD AND ACTIONED

- EXPLAIN TO UMPIRES/PARENTS: REGISTRATION DOES NOT EQUAL AUTOMATIC LEAGUE APPOINTMENTS**
- SHARE THE REGISTRATION GUIDE LINK WITH NEW UMPIRES AND PARENTS**
- KEEP A LIST OF WHO NEEDS HELP WITH REGISTRATION AND ESCALATE ISSUES EARLY**

## **APPOINTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Some competitions require clubs to appoint their own umpires.

Always club-appointed:

- Junior Football (Umpire4Fun Umpires)
  - U8 Mixed
  - U9 Girls
  - U9 Mixed
  - U10 Mixed
  - U11 Girls
- QFA Division 2 Reserves (if applicable)
- QFAW Division 2 (AFLQ appoints one field umpire, the home club is required to supply a second field umpire)

Conditionally club-appointed:

- SEQJ or Senior games hosted by your club where AFLQ is unable to appoint an umpire

## **HOW TO CHECK APPOINTMENTS EACH WEEK**

SEQJ:

- Games requiring club umpires are published weekly via this link: <https://play.afl/queensland/resources/umpire-appointments>
  - Search your **club name** to view all relevant games (U11 Mixed and U13–U17 competitions).
  - Games listed as “**Pending**” indicate an umpire has been allocated but has not yet accepted.
  - Games listed as “**Club Umpire Required**” will need to be filled by the club.
  - Final appointment updates are published by COB (5:00pm) on Friday.

Senior Football:

- Competition managers will notify clubs directly if they are required to provide an umpire in any league appointed senior games.

## **CLUB REIMBURSEMENTS**

Clubs that are required to supply a club umpire throughout the season when AFL Queensland is unable to appoint an official league umpire are responsible for paying those umpires directly, unless they are registered and appointments are communicated with AFLQ during the payment cycle.

AFLQ tracks all matches where clubs were required to provide their own umpires, along with the corresponding match fees, over the course of the season. At the mid-way point of the season and conclusion of the season, AFLQ reconciles this data and reimburses clubs for the total amount owed based on the games they covered.

## **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- CONFIRM WHICH COMPETITIONS ARE CLUB-APPOINTED AT YOUR CLUB (U8-U11, ETC)**
- CHECK SEQJ APPOINTMENTS WEEKLY AND IDENTIFY 'CLUB UMPIRE REQUIRED' MATCHES**
- FINALISE CLUB COVERAGE BEFORE COB FRIDAY WHEN POSSIBLE**
- AVOID PERCEIVED BIAS: WHERE POSSIBLE, SHARE COVERAGE AND USE NEUTRAL OPTIONS**
- IF STRUGGLING, CONTACT AFLQ EARLY (DON'T WAIT UNTIL SATURDAY MORNING)**
- KNOW WHEN THE CLUB MUST PAY DIRECTLY VS WHEN AFLQ PAYS THROUGH OFFICIALSHQ**
- KEEP A SIMPLE RECORD OF CLUB-APPOINTED COVERAGE REQUIRING REIMBURSEMENT**
- UNDERSTAND THE MID-SEASON AND END-OF-SEASON REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS**
- COMMUNICATE PAYMENT EXPECTATIONS CLEARLY TO UMPIRES (WHEN/HOW THEY ARE PAID)**

# PAY SCALE

## SEQJ

### HOME AND AWAY

Competition	Field	Boundary	Goal
U11 Mixed	\$45		
U13 Girls	\$55		
U13 Mixed	\$55		
U15 Girls	\$70		
U15 Boys	\$70		
U17 Girls	\$85	\$42.50	
U17 Boys	\$85	\$42.50	

### FINALS

Competition	Field	Boundary	Goal
U11 Mixed	\$49.50		
U13 Girls	\$60.50		\$25
U13 Mixed	\$60.50		\$25
U15 Girls	\$77		\$30
U15 Boys	\$77		\$30
U17 Girls	\$93.50	\$46.75	\$35
U17 Boys	\$93.50	\$46.75	\$35



# SENIORS

## HOME AND AWAY

Competition	Field	Boundary	Goal
QAFL Senior	\$200	\$120	\$100
QAFLW Senior	\$190	\$120	\$100
QAFL Reserves	\$167	\$105	\$90
QFA Div 1 Senior	\$171	\$105	\$90
QFA Div 2 Senior	\$140	\$90	\$87
QAFL Colts	\$120	\$87	\$87
QFA Div 1 Reserves	\$120	\$87	\$87
QFA Div 3 Senior	\$120	\$87	\$87
QAFLW Reserves	\$97	\$87	\$87
QFA Div 2 Reserves	\$97	\$87	\$87
QFAW Div 1 Senior	\$97	\$87	\$87
QFAW Div 2	\$97	\$87	\$87

## FINALS (ADDITIONAL INCREASE FOR GRAND FINALS)

Competition	Field	Boundary	Goal
QAFL Senior	\$300	\$180	\$150
QAFLW Senior	\$285	\$180	\$150
QAFL Reserves	\$250.50	\$157.50	\$135
QFA Div 1 Senior	\$256.50	\$157.50	\$135
QFA Div 2 Senior	\$210	\$135	\$130.50
QAFL Colts	\$180	\$130.50	\$130.50
QFA Div 1 Reserves	\$180	\$130.50	\$130.50
QFA Div 3 Senior	\$180	\$130.50	\$130.50
QAFLW Reserves	\$145.50	\$130.50	\$130.50
QFA Div 2 Reserves	\$145.50	\$130.50	\$130.50
QFAW Div 1 Senior	\$145.50	\$130.50	\$130.50
QFAW Div 2	\$145.50	\$130.50	\$130.50



# UNIFORM

All umpire uniforms must be ordered through the AFL Queensland section of the [Tribal Sport website](#). Clubs are required to follow the current [AFLQ Uniform Policy](#) when placing any orders.

Clubs cannot order bundle packages under any circumstances. Instead, all items must be ordered individually to ensure compliance with the uniform standards and accurate stock management. A detailed breakdown of essential versus optional uniform items is included within the AFLQ Uniform Policy, and clubs should refer to this document before placing an order.

To avoid delays or incorrect orders, clubs are encouraged to review the policy each season, verify they are purchasing approved items, and ensure only the necessary quantities are ordered.

# COORDINATOR CHECKLIST

- READ THE AFLQ UNIFORM POLICY**
- ORDER ONLY APPROVED ITEMS (NO BUNDLES)**
- ENSURE UNDER-18 UMPIRES WEAR ORANGE WRIST BANDS (MANDATORY)**
- CONFIRM UNIFORMS ARRIVE AND ARE DISTRIBUTED BEFORE ROUND 1**

# RESOURCES

All umpiring resources will be centrally stored and accessible through Rookie Me Connect, providing clubs with a single, easy- to- use platform for development and administration. Within Rookie Me Connect, clubs will find a wide range of materials including training plans, season calendars, links to online webinars, feedback forms, learning modules, and recruitment toolkits. These resources are regularly updated to ensure clubs and umpires have access to current information and best- practice support.

In addition to digital resources, AFL Queensland can also provide clubs with physical materials, such as A1 corflute signage to support recruitment, match- day visibility, and promotion of umpiring programs. Clubs simply need to request these items through their AFLQ contact, and they will be supplied subject to availability.

## **ROOKIE ME CONNECT**

Rookie Me Connect is a communication platform being used across Queensland to support umpires and the volunteers who work closely with them. A dedicated Club Umpire Coordinator group has been created within the platform to ensure you remain informed and have access to information relevant to your role.

Rookie Me Connect acts as a central hub for all umpiring communication throughout the season, helping Club Umpire Coordinators stay connected, supported, and equipped with the tools they need to manage umpiring within their clubs.

Through Rookie Me Connect, you will be able to view all communications sent to umpires, including updates on events, education sessions, and training opportunities. The platform also provides a group messaging function, enabling engagement with other Club Umpire Coordinators across Queensland. This space encourages collaboration, allowing coordinators to share ideas, discuss challenges, and learn from what is working well in other clubs.

In addition, Rookie Me Connect provides access to Coordinator- specific information such as our monthly webinar series and the monthly Club Umpire Coordinator newsletter. Important links, documents, and resources will also be stored on the platform for quick reference whenever required.

## **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- BOOKMARK THE ROOKIE ME RESOURCE HUB**
- JOIN THE CLUB UMPIRE COORDINATOR GROUP IN ROOKIE ME CONNECT**
- TURN ON NOTIFICATIONS FOR KEY UPDATES**
- CHECK ROOKIE ME WEEKLY FOR PROGRAM INFORMATION, RESOURCES AND DEADLINES**
- USE THE GROUP MESSAGING FUNCTION TO ASK QUESTIONS/SHARE IDEAS WITH OTHER CLUB UMPIRE COORDINATORS**
- DOWNLOAD/PRINT WHAT YOUR CLUB USES WEEKLY (APPOINTMENTS LINK, PAY RATES, KEY CONTACTS)**
- REQUEST CORFLUTES/SIGNAGE EARLY IF YOU WANT THEM FOR ROUND 1**

# CLUB STORY PROMOTION

AFL Queensland is committed to celebrating the achievements and positive moments occurring within our umpiring community. If your club has milestones, achievements, feel-good stories, standout performances, or inspiring umpire journeys, we would love to hear about them. Sharing these stories helps highlight the valuable contributions umpires make to our game and strengthens the visibility of umpiring within the broader football community.

Clubs are encouraged to reach out whenever something noteworthy happens. AFLQ will work with our media team to promote these stories across appropriate channels, helping to showcase your club's culture, recognise individuals, and inspire others to get involved in umpiring.

# COORDINATOR CHECKLIST

- CAPTURE MILESTONES (FIRST GAME, FIRST SEASON, LEADERSHIP MOMENTS)
- TAKE PHOTOS (WITH CONSENT) AND SEND TO AFLQ FOR PROMOTION
- SHARE STORIES ON CLUB CHANNELS TO NORMALISE AND CELEBRATE UMPIRING



# RETAIN



## PATHWAY AND TRANSITION

A clear progression pathway is essential to the long-term growth, development, and retention of umpires within AFL Queensland. As umpires progress from junior football into youth and, eventually, senior football, their skills, confidence, and game understanding improve significantly. Without meaningful transition, umpires can quickly become stagnant, bored, or under-challenged, which often leads to them leaving the pathway altogether. Likewise, if no umpires are transitioned upward, the impact may not be felt immediately, but over time it results in fewer umpires available for youth football, and eventually creates shortages at the senior level. By the time these shortages are visible, it is often too late to address them quickly.

Transitioning umpires into youth football is a coordinated process, and AFLQ Umpire Coaches work to ensure that developing umpires remain primarily within their local region to minimise travel demands and support their wellbeing. When a specific game offers a valuable development opportunity, coaches may discuss occasional travel with the umpire and arrange appointments around their availability. These decisions are made collaboratively, ensuring the umpire feels supported and comfortable as they progress.

## COORDINATOR CHECKLIST

- IDENTIFY UMPIRES READY FOR A 'NEXT STEP' (CONFIDENCE, RELIABILITY, INTEREST)
- HAVE A QUICK TRANSITION CHAT WITH THE UMPIRE AND PARENT/GUARDIAN

- REINFORCE THE BENEFITS FOR THE UMPIRE, PARENT AND CLUB**
- CONNECT THE UMPIRE TO AFLQ COACHES/PROGRAMS WHERE APPROPRIATE**
- CELEBRATE TRANSITIONS AS A CLUB SUCCESS STORY**

## **TRAINING**

AFL Queensland provides a comprehensive training program to support the development of umpires at every stage of their pathway. Weekly in- person training sessions are offered in each region, giving umpires the opportunity to develop their skills, receive coaching feedback, and train alongside peers. Dates, times and venues can be found [here](#). To ensure all umpires can continue progressing, AFLQ also delivers online theory sessions, allowing those who cannot attend in person to stay engaged with learning and maintain their development throughout the season.

All umpires, whether they are part of Umpire4Fun, club umpiring, or league umpiring, are welcome and encouraged to attend the AFLQ delivered umpire training sessions. These sessions are supported by a diverse coaching group equipped to assist umpires across all disciplines and skill levels, ensuring that everyone from beginners to advanced umpires receives targeted and meaningful support.

Throughout the season, Umpire4Fun training will rotate across host venues in each region. A full training calendar is released at the beginning of the year, with reminders posted in Rookie Me Connect and on AFLQ social media channels one week prior to each session. This rotation helps provide accessible opportunities for all young umpires, regardless of their home club or location.

## **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- ENCOURAGE ALL UMPIRES TO ATTEND AFLQ TRAINING (IN PERSON OR ONLINE)**
- SHARE TRAINING TIMES/VENUES WEEKLY (ESPECIALLY WHEN ROTATING)**
- IF YOUR CLUB HAS BARRIERS (TRAVEL, DAY OF THE WEEK) TELL AFLQ EARLY**
- CREATE A SIMPLE 'TRAINING BUDDY' SYSTEM (NEW + EXPERIENCED)**

# **CLUB ROOM STANDARDS/GAME DAY ENVIRONMENT**

Clubs must provide umpires with a dedicated, secure room that is not shared with any other patrons and allows officials to safely leave their belongings throughout the day. This space must include private toilet and changing facilities with doors that lock, as umpire panels are often mixed- gender and open or communal facilities are not appropriate. Umpire rooms must be kept clean, including swept floors, hygienic toilets and showers, and essential supplies such as toilet paper. Clubs should not use umpire rooms as storage areas for equipment like barbecues or marquees, as this compromises the space and its purpose. Providing safe, clean, and inclusive facilities plays a critical role in ensuring a positive match- day experience and greatly contributes to umpire satisfaction and retention.

## **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- CONFIRM YOUR CLUB HAS A SECURE, CLEAN, APPROPRIATE UMPIRE ROOM**
- ENSURE MIXED-GENDER CHANGE NEEDS ARE CONSIDERED (PRIVACY AND LOCKS)**
- REMOVE STORAGE ITEMS FROM UMPIRE ROOMS (KEEP THE SPACE FIT FOR PURPOSE)**
- ENSURE BASICS ARE STOCKED (TOILET PAPER, CLEANING, BINS ETC)**

## **IMPORTANCE OF A GROUND MARSHALL**

While organising a Ground Marshall is not the responsibility of the Umpiring Coordinator, it is important to understand the significant role a Ground Marshall plays in creating a safe, positive and enjoyable game- day environment for umpires.

The Ground Marshall is appointed by the home club and is responsible for crowd control, monitoring behaviour around the coaches' boxes, and ensuring that everyone complies with the AFL Queensland Code of Conduct. They must remain visible throughout the match, patrolling the boundary area and responding appropriately to any incidents in a calm, polite and non- officious manner. Their presence is a key factor in helping to prevent inappropriate behaviour before it escalates.

One of the Ground Marshall's most important duties is to escort umpires on and off the field at the start of the match, at half- time, and at full- time.

This provides umpires, especially young or developing officials, with an added layer of safety and reassurance. Ground Marshalls are also the main point of contact for umpires on arrival, helping to set the tone for a supportive match- day experience.

By upholding the Code of Conduct, maintaining order around the field, and supporting umpires throughout the match, Ground Marshalls play a crucial role in fostering respect, protecting umpire wellbeing, and contributing to a positive football environment across all AFL Queensland competitions.

## **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- CONFIRM WHO IS THE GROUND MARSHALL EACH MATCH DAY AND HOW TO IDENTIFY THEM**
- ENSURE GROUND MARSHALL ESCORTS UMPIRES ON/OFF THE FIELD (START OF GAME, HALF TIME, FULL TIME)**
- ENSURE GROUND MARSHALL UNDERSTANDS ESCALATION STEPS AND CODE OF CONDUCT**
- IF ISSUES OCCUR, DOCUMENT AND ESCALATE VIA CLUB & AFLQ PROCESS**

## **PARENT MENTOR WORKFORCE (UMPIRE GUARDIANS)**

The Umpire Support Squad is a parent-led initiative designed to provide encouragement and wellbeing support for Umpire4Fun umpires. This group welcomes parents from within the club or those whose children are appointed to umpire at the club, creating a friendly and inclusive environment. No prior umpiring knowledge is required - just a willingness to be a positive presence and a supportive face on game day. The squad plays a vital role in helping young umpires build confidence and feel valued, especially during their early experiences on the field. It's important to note that members of the Umpire Support Squad are not expected to coach or provide technical feedback; their focus is purely on emotional support and fostering a sense of community. By simply being present and approachable, these parents contribute significantly to the overall wellbeing and development of umpire4fun participants.

AFL Queensland will be running an education session at your club for parents keen to explore opportunities in the workforce. Once they sign up, we'll provide all the necessary training and upskilling.

# COORDINATOR CHECKLIST

- RECRUIT 2-4 PARENTS TO BE VISIBLE SUPPORTERS ON GAME DAY
- BRIEF THEM: WELLBEING SUPPORT ONLY (NO COACHING OR TECHNICAL FEEDBACK REQUIRED)
- INTRODUCE GUARDIANS TO UMPIRES AND SET MEETING POINT EXPECTATIONS
- REGISTER INTEREST FOR AFLQ MENTOR EDUCATION AT YOUR CLUB

## ADDITIONAL AFLQ MATCH DAY SUPPORT

AFL Queensland is committed to ensuring that all umpires, particularly those who are new, young, or developing, receive meaningful support on match day. To complement the support provided by clubs, AFLQ will directly coordinate two key initiatives: ad hoc mentoring and mentor education for club members.

### AFLQ ORGANISED AD HOC MENTORING

AFLQ will facilitate and appoint mentors to attend selected matches throughout the season. These mentors may provide:

- Pre- game guidance and reassurance
- Practical feedback during scheduled breaks
- Support with positioning, communication, or game management
- A visible, supportive presence to help umpires feel safe and confident

While mentoring availability will vary based on resources and fixtures, even occasional match- day mentoring has a significant positive impact on umpire development and retention. Clubs can reach out directly to the umpiring department if they wish to have mentors appointed to their game.

### AFLQ-DELIVERED MENTOR EDUCATION FOR CLUBS

To build sustainable support within clubs, AFL Queensland will also deliver training sessions to upskill existing club members in how to mentor umpires effectively. These sessions aim to equip club volunteers with:

- Best- practice mentoring techniques

- Strategies for providing constructive, age- appropriate feedback
- An understanding of the developmental needs of junior and youth umpires
- Guidance on how to create a positive, supportive match- day environment

By strengthening mentoring capability at club level, clubs can contribute to a more consistent and positive experience for their umpires, while AFLQ continues to provide additional support as needed.

## **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- IDENTIFY MATCHES WHERE MENTORING WOULD HELP MOST (NEW UMPIRES/CHALLENGING FIXTURES)**
- REQUEST AFLQ MENTOR SUPPORT EARLY WHERE POSSIBLE**
- BRIEF THE UMPIRE ON WHAT MENTORING WILL LOOK LIKE (SUPPORTIVE, NON JUDGEMENTAL)**
- IDENTIFY VOLUNTEERS WHO COULD MENTOR (PARENTS, EX-PLAYERS, COACHES, COMMITTEE)**
- REGISTER THOSE VOLUNTEERS FOR THE EDUCATION SESSIONS**
- IMPLEMENT A SIMPLE MENTOR SCHEDULE (EVEN 1-2 MENTORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE)**



# OPPORTUNITY



## AUSKICK GRID GAMES

AFL Queensland offers clubs the opportunity to have their Umpire4Fun participants officiate the half-time Auskick grid games at Brisbane Lions and Gold Coast Suns home matches throughout the home- and- away season. Clubs are approached based on locality and their demonstrated involvement in the Umpire4Fun program, including attendance at training sessions, participation in online learning, and overall engagement with program activities.

Selected clubs will be invited to nominate umpires to attend the designated AFL match and assist with the Auskick grid games during the half-time break. Each umpire will receive one complimentary ticket for themselves and one additional ticket for a parent or guardian. Communication regarding the scheduled game will be sent to clubs one week prior to the fixture. To secure participation, clubs must submit all required information by **Tuesday at 5:00pm** of the scheduled week. Failure to provide details by the deadline may result in the opportunity being offered to another club.

## COORDINATOR CHECKLIST

- WATCH FOR INVITES AND DEADLINES (INFORMATION DUE TUESDAY 5:00PM)
- NOMINATE SUITABLE UMPIRES AND ENSURE PARENT/GUARDIAN AVAILABILITY
- USE THIS AS A RECOGNITION TOOL (SHARE PHOTOS AND THANKS)
- ENCOURAGE THOSE UMPIRES TO STAY ENGAGED (TRAINING & NEXT STEPS)

## **YOUTH UMPIRE RECOGNITION**

The Youth Umpire Recognition Program is an initiative designed to acknowledge and reward developing umpires who demonstrate commitment, skill growth, and strong engagement in their training. At each Brisbane Lions or Gold Coast Suns home game, one youth umpire is selected by the AFL Queensland Umpire Coaches to participate in a unique game- day experience.

The selected umpire will attend the match, meet the AFL umpires, and join them on- field for the pre- game warm- up. As part of their role, they will hold the match ball up as the umpires enter the field before the first bounce. The experience continues at half- time, where the youth umpire will officiate the Little League game, gaining valuable exposure to an elite football environment.

This program serves as a key incentive for young umpires to continue their development, transition into youth football umpiring, and remain engaged in regular training. If a youth umpire from your club is selected, clubs are encouraged to celebrate and promote their achievement. Highlighting these opportunities helps showcase the pathway available through Umpire4Fun and inspires other young umpires within the club to aspire to similar recognition.

## **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- PROMOTE THIS PROGRAM TO YOUR UMPIRE4FUN AND YOUTH UMPIRES AS AN INCENTIVE**
- IF A CLUB UMPIRE IS SELECTED, CELEBRATE IT (SOCIAL POST AND CLUB COMMS)**
- USE THE STORY TO RECRUIT OTHERS - 'THIS COULD BE YOU NEXT'**

## **FINALS BOUNDARY AND GOAL UMPIRE PROGRAM**

Each year, AFL Queensland provides an exciting development opportunity for Umpire4Fun participants to officiate as boundary and goal umpires in the South East Queensland Juniors (SEQJ) finals series. This program forms a key part of the umpire development pathway, giving young umpires a meaningful and supported introduction to officiating in youth football environments.

As part of the revised Umpire4Fun rollout, participants will now be introduced to the fundamental skills, techniques, and rules of both boundary and goal umpiring during the season. This ensures all interested umpires gain an early understanding of what these roles involve and can build confidence well before finals appointments are made.

In the lead- up to the SEQJ finals, AFLQ will deliver refresher sessions at weekly umpire training. These sessions are designed to reinforce positioning, signals, movement patterns, and decision- making for both boundary and goal umpiring, ensuring all selected umpires feel prepared and supported.

The SEQJ Finals Program provides a valuable entry point for young officials to experience boundary and goal umpiring in a structured youth competition. The intention is that participants not only enjoy this opportunity but are encouraged to continue umpiring in the following season, helping strengthen future youth and senior umpire panels across the region.

## **COORDINATOR CHECKLIST**

- ENCOURAGE UMPIRE4FUN UMPIRES TO TRY BOUNDARY AND GOAL UMPIRING AT TRAINING SESSIONS**
- WATCH FOR AFLQ COMMUNICATION ABOUT FINALS REFRESHER SESSIONS**
- NOMINATE INTERESTED AND RELIABLE UMPIRES**
- CELEBRATE SELECTION AND ENCOURAGE RE-SIGNING NEXT SEASON**





**INTERESTED IN  
BECOMING AN  
UMPIRE?**

**REGISTER NOW!**



**QUEENSLAND**

**AFLQ UMPIRING DEPARTMENT**

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