AFL (NSW/ACT) COMMISSION LIMITED

&

AFL SOUTH COAST

2026 RULES

Version 1.0

Version	Date	Rule	Update

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Part A - GENERAL

1 INTRODUCTION

(A) These Rules form part of the AFL's regulatory structure and operate alongside AFL national policy, including:

(i) the *National Community Football Policy Handbook* ('the *Policy Handbook*');

(ii) the Junior Rules Program Handbook which overarches the conduct of Junior football; and

(iii) the *Laws of Australian Football* which establishes the laws for the conduct of Competition Matches.

(B) The Rules provide for:

(i) regulation of matters at a state / territory level or League level that are not otherwise covered by national policy;

(ii) variation to national policy where such variation is necessary for the proper conduct of community football at a State / Territory level or League level; and

(iii) inclusion of State / Territory level or League level procedural requirements that support aspects of, and compliance with, national policy.

2 APPLICATION

(A) AFL NSW/ACT is responsible for the organisation, promotion and administration of Australian Football throughout NSW and the ACT and accordingly has jurisdiction over all Affiliated Leagues in NSW and the ACT including the relevant Competitions.

(B) These Rules have been made by AFL NSW/ACT and by AFL South Coast pursuant to its role to administer Competitions in the ACT & Southern NSW region.

3 OBJECTIVES

(A) The Rules intend to:

(i) promote, develop and protect Australian Football in NSW and the ACT by ensuring that the appropriate standards and conduct apply;

(ii) ensure that the Leagues and Competitions are regulated in a consistent and co-ordinated manner across NSW and the ACT;

(iii) operate congruently with national policy and align Leagues and Clubs to this.

4 AFL NSW / ACT OBLIGATIONS

(A) AFL NSW/ACT will:

(i) comply with the Rules;

(ii) ensure that the Rules operate congruently with AFL national policy;

(iii) ensure compliance by Leagues with the Rules; and

(iv) provide appropriate education and training to those who manage and implement the Rules.

5 DEFINITIONS & INTERPRETATION

5.1 Definitions

(A) Definitions relevant to the Rules are in Table 1.

(B) Unless otherwise defined in Table 1, or elsewhere in these Rules, terms used in these Rules have the same meaning as defined in the *Policy Handbook*.

Table 1 – Rules Definitions

TERM	MEANS
ACT	The Australian Capital Territory
Academy	GWS GIANTS Academy or Sydney Swans Academy
Affiliation Agreement	The agreement between AFL NSW/ACT and a League outlining the rights and obligations of the parties including the benefits and services provided to a League of affiliation with AFL NSW/ACT and AFL NSW/ACT's requirements for affiliation.
AFL Marks	AFL logos, AFL Club logos, the AFL NSW/ACT logo, trade names and other Intellectual Property, registered or unregistered owned by the AFL and/or AFL NSW/ACT (whichever is applicable).
AFL NSW/ACT	AFL (NSW/ACT) Commission Ltd (ACN 086 839 385)
Age Group	Any or all of the nine (9) to eighteen (18) years age brackets, as the case may be.
Aligned Junior Club	Where Seniors and Juniors exist under the same Constitution, or where a League approved pathway exists between separate Senior and Junior Clubs that establishes a clear pathway for junior players to transition to senior grades.
Appellant	The Person or party seeking to appeal a decision under Rule 28, and where applicable, includes an Appellant's representative.
Appendix	An appendix to these Rules.
Child	All children and young people under the age of eighteen (18)
Child Protection Legislation	Legislation covering child protection and child wellbeing services nationally and in NSW or ACT (as the case may be), including the *Children's Guardian Act 2019* in NSW and the *Children and Young People Act 2008* in ACT.
Club Integrity Officer	A person appointed by a Club in accordance with Rule 8.10
Club Participation Agreement	The terms and conditions agreed between both a Club and a League with respect to a Club's participation in the League's Competitions in the form as prescribed by AFL NSW/ACT.
Chairperson	The Chairperson of the Appeals Board as appointed in accordance with Rule 28.1.2
Code of Conduct	The AFL NSW/ACT Code of Conduct in Appendix One or as issued from time to time.
Community League Club	All teams directly comprising Clubs within an Australian Football Competition, other than the AFL Competition or State Leagues.
CMC	A Competition Management Committee established in accordance with Rule 7.6.
Competition	Any Australian Football Competition conducted and organised by AFL NSW/ACT or a League
Competition Management Platform	PlayHQ
Constitution	The constitution of an incorporated association as required under the NSW *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* or the ACT *Associations Incorporation Act 1991*.
Controlling Body	A League or AFL NSW/ACT
Delegate	A member of a Club who has voting rights on behalf of the Club at a League meeting (generally a member of the Club's Executive Committee)

Deregistration	Means removal of the registration or Accreditation of a Player or Football Official in line with Section 7 of the *Policy Handbook* (Deregistered has the same meaning).
Destination League	The League to which a Player or Club is Transferring
ERC	Emergency Response Coordinator
Executive Officer	The Head of AFL NSW/ACT or their delegate.
Field of Play	The area of the field inside the boundary line, goal line and behind line.
Fixture	The official schedule of matches established by the League in accordance with Rule 13.1.
Grade	A defined level of a Competition, based on gender and age for Junior Competitions (e.g. Mixed Under 13's) or based on gender and the standard of football for Senior Competitions (e.g. Women's Division 1).
Holiday Period	A semester or term break for an educational institution and does not include a Public Holiday, Pupil Free Day or Study Vacation unless that falls within the semester or term break.
Host Club	The first named Club or Team in each Round of the official Season Fixture.
Intellectual Property	All company and business names, trade names, trademarks, logos, symbols, emblems, designs or other indicia, inventions, patents, trade secrets, processes and any other intellectual property whatsoever (including copyright), registered or unregistered, currently owned and in existence or to be developed in the future by the AFL and/or AFL NSW/ACT.
Junior	An adjective describing any competition grade up to and including under 18s
League	An AFL NSW/ACT managed or affiliated League which operates or conducts a Competition within NSW and/or the ACT.
Match	A match in a Competition conducted by the League, and as appropriate and as applicable, includes practice matches.
MRO	Match Review Officer
MRP	Match Review Panel
NSW	The state of New South Wales.
Official	A person undertaking official duties for a Club, including a Club committee member, a ground manager, a timekeeper, an umpire escort, a coach, an assistant coach, a team manager, a trainer, ERC, first aid person or QMP, a runner, a water carrier.
Official Team Sheet	The official printed listing of Players and Officials participating in a Match as lodged by each competing Club with the Ground Manager prior to the commencement of any Match in accordance with Rule 15.7.1.
Parent	The parent or legal guardian of any Player under the age of 18 years.
Player Payment Rules	The player payment rules adopted by a League and approved by AFL NSW/ACT to regulate the level of payments and benefits to a Club's Players, as issued by the League from time to time.
Player Points System	The community club sustainability *Player Point's System Policy* approved by AFL NSW/ACT and implemented by a League with respect to a Competition or Competitions, as issued from time to time.
PlayHQ	The Competition Management Platform used by AFL NSW/ACT and Leagues to manage Player registration and competitions.
Policy Handbook	The *National Community Football Policy Handbook*.
QMP	Qualified Medical Professional as defined by Section 15.3(b)(iv) of the *Policy Handbook*.

Rules	These Rules.
RMC	The Rules Management Committee established in accordance with Rule 6.2.1
Senior	An adjective describing any Competition Grade that is under 18s or over.
Source League	The League from which a Player or Club is transferring.
Student Permit	A permit in accordance with Rule 11.4.4.
Supporter	A person who attends a Competition conducted and organised by AFL NSW/ACT or a League who is not a Player or Official, but who may include a Parent.
Team	A Club's team participating in a Competition conducted by the League.
Tribunal	A Tribunal constituted by a League under Rule 27.
Umpire	A field, boundary, goal or emergency umpire whether League or Club appointed.

5.2 Interpretation

(A) In the interpretation of the Rules, unless there is something in the subject or context inconsistent therewith:

(i) words importing the singular will be deemed to include the plural and vice versa;

(ii) words importing persons will be deemed to include all bodies and associations, incorporated or unincorporated and vice versa;

(iii) headings are included for convenience only and will not affect the interpretation of the Rules;

(iv) "including" and similar words are not words of limitation;

(v) a reference to a "day" is a calendar day unless it is deemed otherwise for a particular Rule;

(vi) a reference to a "business day" means a day, other than a Saturday or Sunday, that is not a designated Public Holiday in the relevant location, and if not otherwise specified in the Rules, a business day ends at 5.00pm;

(vii) words, terms and phrases not otherwise defined in these Rules will be given their ordinary meaning; and

(viii) the Rules includes the Rules as amended, varied, supplemented or replaced from time to time and any Appendix, schedule, attachment, annexure or exhibit to the Rules or that document.

6 GOVERNING POLICY & COMPLIANCE

6.1 The Policy Handbook

(A) The *National Community Football Policy Handbook* ("the *Policy Handbook*") provides a national policy framework covering:

(i) Eligibility & Registration;

(ii) Member Protection & Integrity;

(iii) Health & Safety;

(iv) Disciplinary.

(B) Unless varied in accordance with these Rules, the provisions of the *Policy Handbook* apply.

6.2 The Rules

6.2.1 Rules Management Committee

(A) The AFL NSW/ACT Rules Management Committee ('RMC') is responsible for:

(i) ensuring the Rules achieve the stated objectives;

(ii) overseeing the drafting of the generic Rules;

(iii) interpretation of any Rules in accordance with Rule 6.2.2;

(iv) annual review and update of the generic Rules in accordance with Rule 6.2.3;

(v) repeal of or amendment to any League variation under Rule 6.2.4 where that variation is inconsistent with the objectives of the Rules;

(vi) amendment or repeal of a Rule in accordance with Rule 6.2.5;

(vii) suspension of any Rule in accordance with Rule 6.2.6;

(viii) review and determination of any matter that is referred to it in accordance with the Rules.

(B) The RMC shall consist of at least three (3) of the following positions:

(i) Community Football Operations Manager, AFL NSW/ACT;

(ii) Manager – ACT & Southern NSW;

(iii) Manager – Greater Sydney & Northern NSW;

(iv) Community Football Manager – Greater Sydney & Northern NSW;

(v) Community Football & Competition Manager (of any region);

(vi) Other Persons as determined by the Community Football Operations Manager, AFL NSW/ACT.

(C) Where the RMC is required to determine a matter in accordance with these Rules, no person may sit on the RMC for a matter where that person was involved in the decision under review.

6.2.2 Interpretation of Rules

(A) A League or CMC may seek the advice of the RMC in relation to the interpretation or application of a particular Rule prior to making a determination of a matter.

(B) Where there is a dispute with respect to the interpretation of the Rules, the opinion of the RMC will prevail and will be final unless otherwise specified in these Rules.

(C) Any binding interpretation of the Rules made by the RMC will be circulated to all Leagues.

6.2.3 Generic Rules

(A) The AFL NSW/ACT generic Rules will be published and distributed to Leagues prior to the commencement of each season and are to be used as the framework for establishing the Rules for the League.

(B) A League may make variations to the generic Rules in accordance with Rule 6.2.4.

6.2.4 League Variations to the Rules

(A) Variations to the generic Rules may be agreed by the League:

(i) as may be necessary for the proper conduct and management of League and the regulation of its affairs; and

(ii) on the recommendation of the CMC in consultation with the Clubs; and

(iii) on the approval of AFL NSW/ACT.

(B) Where a League variation made in accordance with Rule 6.2.4(A) differs from the AFL NSW/ACT generic Rule, the League variation will apply.

(C) AFL NSW/ACT may determine and advise Leagues, at the time of distribution of the generic Rules, that select Rules must not be subject of any League variation.

(D) Prior to commencement of any competition to which the Rules apply, or by other timeline specified by AFL NSW/ACT, a League must:

(i) insert all agreed League variations into the Rules document and highlight these as variations in the manner specified by AFL NSW/ACT;

> ***Guidance Note**: Any League variation must be identified by highlighting the text in this colour.*

(ii) publish the complete varied Rules document on its website in a publicly accessible location; and

(iii) provide an electronic copy of its complete varied Rules document to AFL NSW/ACT.

(E) If a League fails to meet the requirements of Rule 6.2.4(D):

(i) the AFL NSW/ACT Generic Rules will apply until such time as the League complies; and

(ii) the RMC will determine the constraints of any Rules that require completion by a League for a competition to proceed.

(F) If, following the commencement of any competition to which the Rules apply, a League determines that it is necessary to make a further variation to the Rules to ensure the fair and proper conduct of a competition, the League must first seek the approval of AFL NSW/ACT to do so.

(G) AFL NSW/ACT, in its absolute discretion, may not approve a League variation where it is clearly inconsistent with the objectives of AFL national policy or these Rules.

6.2.5 AFL NSW/ACT Amendments

(A) AFL NSW/ACT may, from time to time, amend or repeal any of the Rules as may be necessary for the proper conduct and management of AFL NSW/ACT and the regulation of its affairs and to notify all Leagues of any such amendment.

(B) Where an amendment is made under Rule 6.2.5(A), all Leagues are required to update their respective Rules and republish these within seven (7) days together with notification of this to Clubs.

6.2.6 Suspension of Rules

(A) AFL NSW/ACT, in its absolute discretion, may suspend any Rule from operation.

(B) Any such suspension of a Rule shall be advised to Leagues and Clubs in writing and shall remain in force until AFL NSW/ACT determines otherwise.

6.3 Code of Conduct

6.3.1 Establishment of Code of Conduct

(A) AFL NSW/ACT will establish, and amend from time to time as is necessary, a Code of Conduct in accordance with the objectives of Rule 6.3.3.

(B) The Code of Conduct forms part of the AFL NSW/ACT Rules and is attached at Appendix One.

(C) The provisions of Section 9 of the *Policy Handbook* also apply.

(D) The Code of Conduct may be supplemented by additional codes of behaviour or procedures as imposed by a League or Club, provided that they are not inconsistent with the terms of the Code of Conduct.

6.3.2 Application of Code of Conduct

(A) The Code of Conduct applies to the conduct and behaviour of Clubs, Players, Club Officials, Supporters, Parents, League Officials and Umpires, and:

(i) applies to all forms of Australian Football under AFL NSW/ACT's jurisdiction;

(ii) continues to apply to a participant even after that participants association, registration, employment or engagement has ended, if that participant breached this Code of Conduct while a current participant; and

(iii) does not limit or restrict the application of the AFL or AFL NSW/ACT Rules, the *Policy Handbook* or other National AFL policy.

(B) The Code of Conduct does not govern Reportable Offences, the Order-Off Rule, or Citations and an individual must not be penalised under both the Reportable Offences provisions and the Code of Conduct.

6.3.3 Objectives of Code of Conduct

(A) The Code of Conduct aims to:

(i) promote and strengthen the reputation of Australian Football in NSW and the ACT by establishing a standard of performance, behaviour and professionalism for its participants and stakeholders; and

(ii) ensure the safety and enjoyment of all participants and stakeholders and deter conduct that could impair confidence in the honest and professional conduct of Matches or in the integrity and good character of its participants.

6.3.4 Agreement to Code of Conduct

(A) Clubs agree to comply with the Rules and Code of Conduct through affiliation.

(B) Players agree to comply with the Code of Conduct through the online registration process in PlayHQ.

(C) Coaches agree to comply with the Coaches Code of Conduct as part of the annual coaching accreditation and registration under Section 6 of the *Policy Handbook*.

(D) Players, Officials, Coaches and Supporters, including Parents, are bound by the Rules and Code of Conduct irrespective of whether they have received or signed the Code of Conduct.

(E) Any breach of the Code of Conduct by an individual or Club will be dealt with by the relevant Controlling Body as a breach of policy in accordance with Rule 26.

6.3.5 Club Code of Conduct Responsibilities

(A) Under the Code of Conduct, Clubs are responsible for the behaviour and conduct of its Players, Officials, Coaches and Supporters.

> ***Guidance Note**: it is incumbent upon a club to take immediate action to remediate any Code of Conduct matter that has been reported to it (e.g. via the Ground Manager). Any such remedial action taken by the club will be taken into consideration by the Controlling Body in any investigation of a complaint and any sanctions that may apply.*

(B) Clubs are required to ensure that all Club's Players, Officials, Coaches, administrators and Parents of Junior Players receive a copy of the Code of Conduct prior to the start of each season or at the time of registration.

(C) A Controlling Body may request that a club demonstrates compliance with the Rule 6.3.5(B).

6.4 Compliance

(A) All Leagues, Clubs, Players and Officials agree to comply with the Rules as well as any other Laws, Regulations, Policies and Guidelines established by the AFL or AFL NSW/ACT, including:

(i) the National Community Football *Policy Handbook*;

(ii) the Laws of Australian Football;

(iii) the Junior Rules Program Handbook;

(iv) the Management of Sport-Related Concussion in Australian Football;

(v) the AFL Gender Diversity Policy Community Football;

(vi) the AFL Gender Diversity Policy Elite Football;

(vii) the Australian Football Anti-Doping Code;

(viii) the AFL NSW/ACT Code of Conduct;

(ix) the AFL NSW/ACT Player Points System Policy;

(x) the AFL NSW/ACT Club Participation Agreement;

(xi) the AFL NSW/ACT Hearing Procedures;

(xii) the AFL NSW/ACT Coaching Box Card Policy.

(B) Each League, Club, Player, Coach, Official and supporter acknowledges that in order to meet the stated objectives of the Rules, their terms must be strictly complied with and their spirit and intent honoured and AFL NSW/ACT has the right to invoke a disciplinary process to enforce and encourage such compliance.

6.5 Disputing a Decision

(A) A person, including a Club, Club Official, Player or club member, must adhere to a decision made by AFL NSW/ACT, the League, the RMC or the CMC, and not publicise in any form, including in media or social media, information that:

(i) ignores, is contrary to, or misconstrues the decision made;

(ii) is false or misleading in respect of the decision made; or

(iii) is unreasonable or excessive criticism of the decision made or of any person who made or communicated the decision.

6.6 Safeguarding Children and Young People

6.6.1 Commitment Statement

Refer to Sections ***11.1(a)*** and ***11.2*** of the Policy Handbook for AFL and Controlling Body commitment to safeguarding Children and Young People.

6.6.2 Minimum Standards for Leagues & Clubs

(A) All Leagues, Clubs and persons must comply with:

(i) Section 11 and Appendix 6 of the *Policy Handbook*;

(ii) Any AFL NSW/ACT Child Safeguarding policy, as introduced or amended from time to time, relating to the Child Safe Scheme and associated child safe standards.

(iii) Applicable child safeguarding legislation

(B) Each Club and League must ensure its board (or committee) members are familiar with, and adhere to, the reporting procedures under Section 11.5 of the *Policy Handbook*.

***Guidance Note**: it is strongly recommended that each Club appoints someone to the role of Child Safeguarding Officer. This person is responsible for ensuring Club compliance in relation to all Child Safeguarding policies, and is also the nominated point of contact within the Club for any incidents to be reported.*

6.6.3 Working With Children Check

(A) The following persons must obtain a Working With Children Check Clearance, even if they are exempt under relevant child safeguarding legislation as not requiring a check by reason of them being a Parent or close relative of a Player in a team in which the Player usually participates;

(i) Coach, including any assistant Coach;

(ii) Team Manager;

(iii) Any person acting in a role as outlined in Section 15.3 of the *Policy Handbook (First Aider and Sports Trainers)*.

(B) All Working With Children Check clearances must be valid and effective for the duration of any period the person is working with children.

(C) Each Club must:

(i) maintain an up to date Working With Children Check Register; and

(ii) provide a copy of this to the League or AFL NSW/ACT within seven (7) calendar days following a request by the League or AFL NSW/ACT.

> ***Guidance Note**: A Club may download a template of the Working With Children Check Register from the Office of the Children's Guardian website resources section.*

6.7 Public Health & Legislation Compliance

(A) Whilst undertaking any community football related activity in NSW/ACT, all Leagues, Clubs, Players, Officials and supporters are required to adhere to all requirements established under:

(i) The NSW Public Health Order;

(ii) Not Applicable;

(iii) Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 (NSW)

(iv) Any additional directives that AFL NSW/ACT mandates from time to time in accordance with Rule 6.6(B).

(B) To address any impact of a Public Heath Order or Direction on its Competitions, AFL NSW/ACT may, as is required from time to time, issue directives to Clubs and Leagues that are necessary for the fair, proper and safe conduct of those Competitions.

(C) Any directives issued by AFL NSW/ACT in accordance with Rule 6.7(B) will be:

(i) communicated to all Leagues as soon as implemented; and

(ii) attached to these Rules as an Appendix.

6.8 Matters Not Provided For

The RMC may regulate any matters not provided for in the Rules in its sole and absolute discretion.

Part B - STAKEHOLDERS

7 LEAGUES

7.1 League Governance Structure

(A) Each League in NSW and ACT will fall under one of the following governance structures:

(i) AFL Managed League; or

(ii) Affiliated League.

7.2 AFL Managed Leagues

(A) Under an AFL managed League model, AFL NSW/ACT assumes responsibility for all aspects of:

(i) League Governance under an incorporated association;

(ii) Financial management, including League management costs;

(iii) Competition management including provision of necessary staff resources;

(iv) Management of the disciplinary process.

7.3 Not Applicable

7.4 League Insurance

(A) A League affiliated to, or managed by, AFL NSW/ACT has insurance cover with Marsh under the AFL's National Risk Protection Program.

> ***Guidance Notes**: Policy coverage details can be viewed at Australian Football Community Clubs | National Risk Protection Program | Marsh. A League can download its Certificate of Currency via Certificate of Currency | Marsh .*

(B) AFL NSW/ACT will determine insurance fees payable by an affiliated League under the National Risk Protection Programme, together with the terms of payment of this.

7.5 League Sponsorship / Marketing Agreements

The League will not enter into any contract, arrangement, agreement or understanding with any corporation/person for the supply, endorsement, approval or sponsorship of goods or services of the type provided by or associated with the operations of AFL NSW/ACT major sponsors or partners, unless otherwise approved by AFL NSW/ACT in writing.

> ***Guidance Note**: AFL NSW/ACT's major sponsors or partners provide, in part, the financial resources for AFL NSW/ACT to promote, develop and administer Australian Football in NSW and the ACT.*

7.6 Establishment of a Competition Management Committee ('CMC')

(A) The League shall establish a CMC to control the day-to-day management of the League's Competitions including the application and enforcement of the Rules.

(B) A CMC shall consist of at least three (3) persons selected from the following positions:

(i) League Chair/ President (if applicable);

(ii) Community Football Operations Manager – NSW/ACT (AFL NSW/ACT employee);

(iii) Community Football Operations Coordinator – NSW/ACT (AFL NSW/ACT employee);

(iv) Manager – ACT & Southern NSW (AFL NSW/ACT employee)

(v) Manager – Greater Sydney & Northern NSW (AFL NSW/ACT employee)

(vi) Community Football Manager – Greater Sydney & Northern NSW (AFL NSW/ACT employee);

(vii) Community Football & Competition Manager (AFL NSW/ACT employee);

(viii) Competition Coordinator (AFL NSW/ACT employee); or

(ix) Other persons as delegated by the League.

(C) A CMC member must take appropriate steps to ensure they do not place themselves in a situation where there may be an actual or potential conflict of interests in the determination of a matter before the CMC.

> ***Guidance Examples**: A CMC member who is also member of a particular Club should recuse themselves from any determination of a matter by the CMC that is specific to that particular Club (e.g. a disciplinary matter). A CMC member who made, or was involved in, the original decision of a matter that is now under review by the CMC may participate in the CMC in so far as presentation of facts and rationale for the decision, but should not cast a vote in the CMC's determination of the matter.*

7.7 Club Participation Agreements

(A) In accordance with Club affiliation requirements under Rule 8.1, in order for the Club to participate in a Competition each League must have an annually executed Club Participation Agreement with each of its Clubs:

(i) in the form prescribed by AFL NSW/ACT;

(ii) by no later than seven (7) days prior to the first home and away match of the season of the competition to which the Agreement applies, or by such other time as prescribed by the Controlling Body.

(B) Upon request by AFL NSW/ACT, a League must produce a copy of any or all Club Participation Agreements within seven (7) calendar days.

7.8 League Disbanding or Amalgamating

7.8.1 Notice of Intent to Disband or Amalgamate

Any League that is seeking to disband or amalgamate with another League, must provide notice of its intent to AFL NSW/ACT at the earliest possible time after establishing its intent.

7.8.2 Player and Club Transfer on League Disbanding

(A) In the event of a League disbanding:

(i) the Clubs affiliated with that League may be transferred to another League as determined by AFL NSW/ACT in its absolute discretion; and

(ii) Any Player of a Club affiliated with a disbanded League, who wishes to play for another Club, must request a Transfer in accordance with the Transfer Rules.

7.9 League Colours

(A) A League may prescribe official colours to be used for the League's representative football Teams, stationery and marketing.

(B) The official colours of AFL South Coast shall be red and white. The design of the League's representative uniforms shall be the responsibility of the Controlling Body.

7.10 League Awards

(A) Each season the League will, in its absolute discretion, establish:

(i) any awards to be awarded to Players, Officials, Clubs, Teams or other persons;

(ii) the criteria and benefits applicable to any awards;

(iii) the process for determining award nominees;

(iv) any event for presentation of awards.

(B) A Player will not be eligible to win a Best and Fairest award, where that player has received a suspension for one (1) or more matches in the home and away season for:

(i) a reportable offence; or

(ii) a policy breach offence arising from the conduct of that player during a match.

8 CLUBS

8.1 Club Affiliation

8.1.1 Affiliation of a New Club

(A) A new Club seeking to affiliate with a League and participate in the League's Competitions, must:

(i) submit a new Club application for affiliation to the League in the form prescribed by the League; and

(ii) pay to the League any prescribed fee or bond in accordance with Rule 8.1.3.

(B) The League must:

(i) determine the Club's affiliation application in accordance with Rule 8.1.4; and

(ii) obtain the prior written approval of AFL NSW/ACT prior to affiliating any newly formed Club.

(C) Where approval is given to affiliate a new Club, the Club must complete and sign a Club Participation Agreement prior to any of the Club's Teams participating in the League's Competitions.

8.1.2 Affiliation of an Existing Club

(A) To participate in the League's Competitions, a Club must apply to affiliate with the League:

(i) on an annual basis; and

(ii) in the form and on such conditions as determined by the League and AFL NSW/ACT from time to time pursuant to a Club Participation Agreement; and

> ***Guidance Note**: Unless the League has an alternative affiliation application form, the Club Participation Agreement is the primary document for existing Clubs to complete on an annual basis as its application to affiliate with the League. The League may impose any relevant conditions on an individual Club, or on all Clubs, within the Club Participation Agreement.*

(iii) pay to the League any prescribed fee or bond in accordance with Rule 8.1.3.

8.1.3 Affiliation Application Fee

(A) The League will prescribe the amount of any affiliation application fee payable by a Club to affiliate with the League.

(B) The League may determine that a bond is payable by a Club, in addition to or in lieu of a prescribed affiliation application fee, together with the terms of such bond.

8.1.4 Determination of Affiliation Application

(A) The CMC is to determine a new or existing Club's application for affiliation and in doing so may:

(i) approve the application for affiliation;

(ii) approve the application for affiliation on terms and conditions as it reasonably requires;

(iii) approve the application for affiliation with a request for further or additional information, or amend or revise the application;

(iv) refuse to grant the application for affiliation; or

(v) defer same.

(B) In determining whether to grant a Club's application for affiliation or in making any decision pursuant to Rule 8.1.4(A), the CMC shall take into account, as applicable:

(i) the Club's structure, governance and administration, including succession plans and long-term planning and development;

(ii) the promotion of AFL by the Club and its contribution to the ongoing development of Australian Football;

(iii) the financial health of the Club;

(iv) any outstanding debt to a League;

(v) the behavioural and conduct history of the Club, its Teams, Players, Officials, volunteers and Supporters, and the Club's relationships with other Clubs and the League;

(vi) any other matter that the CMC deems appropriate.

8.1.5 Termination of Affiliation Agreement

(A) In signing a Club Participation Agreement, a Club acknowledges and agrees that this does not create a right or expectation of continued participation in any particular Competitions or any future Competition/s administered by AFL NSW/ACT.

(B) In accordance with the Club Participation Agreement, the CMC of the League may, with prior approval from AFL NSW/ ACT, terminate the Club Participation Agreement at any time after each football season by giving three (3) month's written notice to the Club, and no reason for termination of the Club Participation Agreement are required to be provided by the CMC.

(C) Notwithstanding the above, the League may terminate the Club Participation Agreement with a Club immediately upon notice where:

(i) the Club unreasonably fails to duly and promptly comply with its obligation in the Club Participation Agreement;

(ii) the Club or any of its Officers, Players, Officials or volunteers does, or permits to be done, any act or thing which reflects unfavourably upon the reputation, standing or goodwill of the League or the game of Australian Football or engages in any unbecoming conduct or conduct which is prejudicial or likely to be prejudicial to the interests of the League, the AFL or the playing of Australian Football;

(iii) any event occurs which in the opinion of the League or AFL NSW/ACT materially and prejudicially affects the financial position of the Club or the ability of the Club to duly and promptly observe and perform any of its obligations under the Club Participation Agreement;

(iv) the League is of the opinion that the Club is otherwise unable to pay its debts as and when they fall due;

(v) the League is of the opinion that the Club is unable to field any Teams in a Competition administered by AFL NSW/ACT;

(vi) the Club threatens to or ceases to carry on all or part of its operations or disposes of the whole or any substantial part of its assets.

8.2 Club Incorporation & Governance

(A) Each Club must be incorporated, either as an incorporated association or a company.

(B) All Clubs are required to comply with all legal, statutory and other provisions and requirements governing their operations, including but not limited to:

(i) the NSW Associations Incorporation Act 2009 or ACT Associations Incorporation Act 1991, as applicable;

(ii) State and Federal child protection laws.

(C) Whilst AFL NSW/ACT and the League will provide information, guidance and assistance to Clubs where it is able on issues affecting their governance and operations, the responsibility to ensure compliance with all legal, statutory and other provisions and requirements affecting their operations lies with each Club.

(D) AFL NSW/ACT or the League may request that a Club provides documentation to demonstrate its compliance with governance requirements including financial solvency, the currency of its Constitution and the conduct of its Annual General Meeting.

8.3 Club Fees

8.3.1 Club Affiliation Fee

(A) Clubs will be levied an annual affiliation fee, which will be used to offset the operational cost of the respective Competitions.

(B) At least 28 days prior to the commencement of the season, the League will determine and notify the Clubs of:

(i) the rate of the affiliation fee; and

(ii) how the affiliation fee will be charged to Clubs and the timing of this.

8.3.2 Other Fees or Charges

(A) The League may, in its absolute discretion, determine any additional fees or charges that are to be payable by Clubs to offset the operational costs of the Competition.

(i) A $100 representative football levy will be charged to each participant selected to represent AFL South Coast at the Northern NSW Junior Carnival. At the request of a Club, this levy can be issued to them for payment on behalf of their players.

(ii) Umpire Fees will be paid by each Club to the value issued in the memorandum alongside the Club Affiliation Fees.

(a) For Senior matches, these fees will be paid in two instalments, with invoices issued in July and September of the respective season.

(b) For Junior matches, these fees will be paid to the officiating Umpire on match day or at the Club's earliest convenience, but not beyond three business days following the Match

(iii) Wollongong City Council ground hire fees will be issued to respective clubs in September to the value AFL South Coast are charged by the City of Wollongong. Each club will receive a full breakdown of their fees, including the dates and times of hire, the status of any booking (completed/cancelled, etc), and the cost per booking

(iv) The Host Club for the League's Senior Grand Final Day will be charged $5000 (excl. GST) for the hosting rights. Catering and Gate receipt rights associated with the day are listed in Rule 17.4.

8.4 Club Finance

8.4.1 Club Budget

(A) A Club is required to establish and maintain a Club budget for each financial year.

(B) A Club shall provide the League with a Club budget for the season by 31 January each year or as otherwise designated by the League.

8.4.2 Financial Statements

(A) A Club shall be required to furnish to the League by 31 January each year, or as otherwise designated by the League in the Club Participation Agreement, a copy of its Fair-Trading Return, Financial Statement and Profit and Loss Statement for its operations for the previous season.

(B) The League may, where it has concern at any time regarding a Club's solvency or financial administration, request that the Club provide Financial Statements within seven (7) days of the request by the League.

8.4.3 Outstanding Accounts

(A) Except as provided for under Rule 8.4.3(B), a Club that is in arrears to the League for a period more than ninety (90) days from the date of the invoice, may, at the discretion of the League, be ineligible to receive any Competition points which may be accrued by its Teams and ineligible to play finals Matches, from that point in time until the overdue amount is paid.

(B) Where extenuating circumstances exist, the League may in its discretion, place a Club on an agreed financial arrangement for the repayment of outstanding accounts.

(C) Where a Club is operating under an agreed repayment arrangement:

(i) the Club shall be considered financial with the League provided that it is up to date with all payments specified by the repayment arrangement and for the current year; and

(ii) if the club is not up to date with all payments specified by the repayment arrangement, the Club will be ineligible to receive any Competition points which may be accrued by its Teams and ineligible to play finals Matches, from the date the payment was due until the date the overdue amount is paid.

8.4.4 Dishonoured Payments

Any Club that pays an account to the League by an instrument which is not honoured by its bank or other institution upon presentation, shall be fined fifty (50) dollars on each occasion.

8.5 Club Insurance Requirements

8.5.1 Insurance Coverage

(A) A Club affiliated to a League has insurance cover with Marsh under the AFL's National Risk Protection Program.

(B) Under the National Risk Protection Program, all Players and Officials of a Club will have minimum cover for public and products liability, association liability (subject to the Club being an incorporated body), personal accident and non-Medicare medical.

(C) A Club must be affiliated to a League in accordance with Rule 8.1 to ensure insurance coverage under the National Risk Protection Program.

(D) A Player is to be registered with the Club to ensure personal injury coverage under the National Risk Protection Program.

(E) A Club may elect higher levels of cover directly through Marsh.

(F) A Club is required to register annually under the National Risk Protection Program and obtain a Certificate of Currency.

***Guidance Notes**: Policy coverage details can be viewed at Australian Football Community Clubs | National Risk Protection Program | Marsh. A Club can download its Certificate of Currency via Certificate of Currency | Marsh .*

8.5.2 Insurance Fees

(A) Annual insurance fees for a Club under the National Risk Protection Program will be determined by AFL NSW/ACT and will be notified to Leagues at least 28 days prior to the commencement of the season.

(B) The League is to notify Clubs of insurance fee rates prior to the commencement of the Competition.

(C) Unless otherwise determined by AFL NSW/ACT or the League, insurance fees are payable by the Club.

8.6 Club Name & Logo

(A) A new Club must submit details of its proposed name, nickname and/or Club logo to the CMC for prior approval, with such approval to be determined at the absolute discretion of the CMC.

(B) An existing Club must submit details of any proposed variation of its name, nickname or Club logo design to the CMC for approval before use, with such approval to be determined at the absolute discretion of the CMC.

8.7 Club Uniform

8.7.1 Club Uniform Obligations

(A) A Club's playing uniform is fundamental to a Club's identity and consists of a jersey, playing shorts and socks.

(B) Each Club:

(i) must have a minimum of one (1) playing uniform;

(ii) may have multiple playing uniforms; and

(iii) all playing uniforms must be approved by the League.

(C) All Players participating in a Match must:

(i) play in the Club's playing uniform as registered with and approved by the CMC; and

(ii) where a Club has multiple approved playing uniforms or a Joint Venture Team uniform, all wear matching jersey, shorts and socks.

(D) A Club must have a sufficient number of:

(i) approved playing uniforms available for all players participating in a Competition Match; and

(ii) spare playing uniforms available in the event of damage to or blood on a player's uniform in the course of a Match.

8.7.2 Approved Club Uniform

(A) A Club seeking to change any part of an existing approved uniform, or a new Club seeking approval for its uniform or a Club seeking approval for an additional uniform must lodge a *Club Uniform Design Approval Form* with the CMC and have this approved prior to any Player wearing the uniform in a Competition Match.

(B) In reviewing any application made under Rule 8.7.2(A), the CMC will consider a range of factors, including:

(i) any possible clash of a proposed uniform with a competing Club;

(ii) the requirements of these Rules;

(iii) any other factors it considers relevant.

(C) Following its review, the CMC may, in its absolute discretion:

(i) accept the proposed uniform design;

(ii) conditionally accept the proposed uniform design;

(iii) request changes be made to the proposed uniform design with resubmission of the application;

(iv) reject the proposed uniform design.

> ***Guidance Note**: An example of conditional acceptance is where a particular design is relevant to a themed round and therefore is to be worn only in that themed round.*

(D) A Club may have more than one approved uniform.

8.7.3 AFL Logo & Approved Suppliers

(A) The suppliers listed in Table 2 are licensed and authorised as the only suppliers in NSW and ACT to use the AFL logo, including the AFL NSW/ACT logo.

(B) No other business or organisation is entitled to use AFL, AFL NSW/ACT and/or League logos

Table 2 – AFL NSW/ACT Approved Apparel Suppliers

Supplier Companies	
Aceit Sport	JS Sports (Belgravia)
ISC Teamwear	S-Trend Sportswear

> ***Guidance Note**: Any NSW or ACT Club uniform or Club merchandise that incorporates the AFL logo (e.g. AFL NSW/ACT logo, or a League logo), can only be purchased from one of the suppliers listed in Table 2.*

8.7.4 Other Logos on Playing Uniforms & Club Merchandise

> ***Guidance Note**: The Rules relating to the placement and approval of logos on playing uniforms seek to balance the importance of maintaining the integrity of a Club's identity against the need to visually recognize those who contribute valuably to a Club.*

(A) In assessing a Club application under Rule 8.7.2, the CMC will have regard for the nature, content and placement of any logos on a uniform and will not approve the following:

(i) tobacco or vaping company logos, images or text;

(ii) explicit, discriminatory, obscene or offensive logos, images or text;

(iii) alcohol or gambling logos, images or text on Junior Player uniforms;

(iv) any logo, image or text that promotes illegal activity or that the CMC considers may bring the game into disrepute.

> ***Guidance Note**: Reference to "alcohol" in this Rule, as it applies to Junior Player uniforms, is aimed at alcohol manufacturers and images of alcohol. It is not intended to bar sponsorship arrangements with local pubs or clubs, however imaging used in such a sponsorship arrangement must still meet the requirements of this Rule.*

(B) There are no limitations on the number, size or placement of logos on any Club merchandise that is not part of a playing uniform, however Clubs are to ensure that the type of logos on any Club merchandise does not contravene the items referred to in 8.7.4(A)(i) to (iv).

8.7.5 Legal Approval for Artwork, Logos & Images

(A) Prior to submitting any application under Rule 8.7.2, a Club must ensure that it has legal approval for the use of any artwork, logo or other image that it intends to include as part of the uniform.

***Guidance Note**: Examples of artworks, logo or other image that require legal approval include Indigenous artwork, Defence Force emblems and company logos.*

8.7.6 Jersey Design

(A) Jersey design must comply with Table 3.

(i) Any design component not referenced in Table 3 must be submitted to the CMC for review and approval at its ultimate discretion.

Table 3 – Jersey Design

Component	Requirement	
Style	AFL style jerseys (as worn at elite level football). Jerseys must have either no sleeves or full-length sleeves. Tee-shirt style sleeves are not permitted in Competition Matches.	
Numbers	Each jersey must have a number on the back and the number must be: • A whole number between one (1) and ninety-nine (99) inclusive. • Between 20cm and 28cm in height. • In plain font and in a colour that contrasts with the primary jersey colours. • Recognisable from one hundred (100) metres and unobscured by a logo or artwork of any kind. A jersey may also have a number on the front of the jersey (as per Right Breast logo)	
Logos	**Right Breast** *(AFL Logo)*	Every Jersey must have the AFL NSW/ACT logo on the right breast. The logo must not be less than 6cm x 6cm and not exceed 8cm x 8cm in size. No other logo is permitted on the right breast. A club may place a playing number on the front of the jersey immediately below the AFL NSW/ACT logo, and the combination of both must not exceed 8cm in width and 16cm in height.
	Left Breast *(Club / Sponsor Logos)*	A jersey may have a club logo and/or one sponsor logo on the left breast. A club logo must not exceed 8cm height and 8cm width. A sponsor logo must not exceed 8cm height and 16cm width. If a jersey has both a club logo and a sponsor logo on the left breast, the club logo must be on top and the combination of both must not exceed 16cm in width and 16cm in height
	Front Neck-vee *(apparel supplier logo)*	An approved AFL NSW/ACT supplier may place its logo on the front of the jersey just below the neck-vee. The size of the logo will be specified in the supplier Agreement.
	Front of Jersey	A sponsor logo on any other part of the front of a jersey is generally not permitted. The CMC may, in its absolute discretion, consider an application by a Club for a logo to be placed on the front of a jersey in some circumstances. An application for a logo on any other part of the front of a jersey will only be considered by the CMC if it is centred and does not exceed 15cm height and 30cm width.

	Back of Jersey	A jersey may have up to two logos on the back. If only one logo, this may be placed above or below the number. If two logos, one must be placed above the number and one below the number. A logo above the number must be centred and not exceed 8cm height and 25cm width. A logo below the number must be centred and not exceed 15cm height and 30cm width.

8.7.7 Shorts Design

(A) Shorts design must comply with Table 4.

Table 4 – Shorts Design

Component	Requirement	
Style	AFL style shorts (as worn at elite level of football).	
Club Name	**Either Side**	Shorts may have the Club name or nickname placed down one or both side of the shorts. This must not exceed 6cm width.
Logos	**Left Front Thigh**	Shorts must have the AFL NSW/ACT logo on the left thigh. This logo must not exceed 6cm height and 7cm width. Shorts may also have the Club logo on the left thigh. This logo must not exceed 6cm height and 7cm width and is to be placed above the AFL NSW/ACT logo. Shorts may also have the Supplier logo on the left thigh. This logo is not to exceed the size specified in the supplier agreement and is to be placed below the AFL NSW/ACT logo.
	Right Front Thigh	Shorts may have up to two sponsor / Club logos placed on the right thigh. The combined size of the two logos must not exceed 6cm height and 11cm width.
	Back of Shorts	Shorts may have up to two logos on the back, one on the bottom of each leg. Each logo must not exceed 6cm height and 7cm width.

8.7.8 Socks Design

(A) Socks must be AFL style socks (as worn at elite level of football).

> ***Guidance Note**: Shorter style AFL socks, as worn at the elite level, are permitted providing there is a reasonable component (10cm or more) of the sock visible above the ankles (not just anklet sports socks), and they must be consistent with the club uniform & colours as worn by all players.*

8.8 Club Contact Details

(A) By 31 March each year, Clubs must ensure that Club details are updated in PlayHQ including a list of the names, addresses and contact details of the officers (including the President and Secretary).

8.9 Attendance at League Meetings

(A) The League will determine a schedule of meetings for Clubs to attend that enable the business of the League to be properly conducted.

(i) The League will hold one (1) in-person pre-season meeting and one (1) in-person post-season meeting;

(ii) The League will hold one (1) online mid-season meeting; and

(iii) The League will hold additional meetings where required, which will be held online.

(B) The League is to provide sufficient notice to each Club of any meeting arranged in accordance with this Rule and each Club is entitled to have one Club Delegates present at any such meeting.

(i) For any club delegates meeting (held on one occasion during each of pre-season, in-season, and post-season), clubs will receive three weeks' notice

(ii) For any additional meeting, clubs will receive one week's notice

(C) Each Club is to make proper effort to ensure that a Club Delegate is in attendance at all League meetings.

(D) Any Club Delegate attending a meeting under this Rule must have the authority to represent the Club's position on a matter including, where applicable, the right to vote on a motion on the Club's behalf.

(E) In addition to a Club Delegate, the League will determine the number of any additional Club persons entitled to attend a League meeting in a non-Delegate capacity.

(i) For any club delegates meeting, two club representatives are permitted to attend; and

(ii) For any additional meeting, one club delegate is permitted to attend.

***Guidance Note**: For clarity, Rule 8.9 applies to both online and in-person meetings.*

8.10 Club Integrity Officer

(A) Each Club must appoint a Club Integrity Officer who is responsible for ensuring compliance by the Club, its Players and Officials with the Rules, Policies and Guidelines referred to in Rule 6.

(B) The Club Integrity Officer:

(i) may be an existing Club committee member;

(ii) will act as the primary point of contact for all Club related integrity and compliance matters.

(C) If a Club does not appoint a Club Integrity Officer, the Club President will be deemed to have assumed this role.

8.11 Club Alcohol Compliance

(A) For the purpose of this section, reference to "Under Age" means any age group up to and including under 18s.

(B) Subject to these Rules, alcohol is permitted to be sold at a League venue by the Host Club where the Host Club:

(i) has a current liquor licence for the venue issued by the relevant authority; and

(ii) has consent, if required, of the local council or landowner.

(C) Where a Club is permitted to sell alcohol under a liquor license, the Club:

(i) must ensure that it complies with Responsible Service of Alcohol ('RSA') requirements under State or Territory legislation, including ensuring that the sale and service of alcohol is undertaken by persons holding current RSA accreditation; and

(ii) is also responsible for controlling the behaviour of those consuming alcohol.

(D) At the request of the Controlling Body, a Club must produce a copy of the following within seven (7) days, or other period specified by the Controlling Body;

(i) Liquor license;

(ii) RSA accreditation.

(E) Alcohol is not permitted to be brought into any League venue and it is the responsibility of each Club to take reasonable measures to ensure that its members and Supporters abide by this Rule.

(F) Should a Host Club find that alcohol has been brought to the venue it must:

(i) take immediate steps for the alcohol to be removed from the venue; and

(ii) advise an Official of the offending member's or Supporter's Club (if not the Host club), who in turn must assist with any steps to remove the alcohol from the venue; and

(iii) report the matter to the Controlling Body.

(G) Alcohol is not permitted to be taken onto the Field of Play at any time during the course of a Match, including during quarter breaks and the Host Club is responsible for enforcement of this.

(H) Alcohol is not to be consumed by a Club Official either before or whilst they are fulfilling an official Match day role (e.g. timekeeping, Ground Manager, Umpire escort, Umpire etc.).

(I) Alcohol sales and consumption is prohibited at all times during Under Age Competitions.

(J) Not Applicable.

(K) Alcohol is only to be consumed in areas specifically provided for in the Host Club's liquor licence which areas must be clearly marked.

(L) Should a Club fail to act with a requirement under this Rule, or Club members or Supporters fail to adhere to an Official's request, the Club, together with any identified members or supporters will be deemed to be in breach of Rule 8.11 and/or the Code of Conduct.

(M) A Controlling Body may, at any time, report a Club to the relevant authorities, including the Police or the relevant gaming and liquor administrative body, where it considers a Club may have breached its liquor license requirements.

8.12 Club Transferring

8.12.1 Club Preliminary Request to Transfer

(A) A Club seeking to transfer to or from a League that is not affiliated with AFL NSW/ACT must first refer the matter to AFL NSW/ACT.

(B) A Club, from a League affiliated with AFL NSW/ACT, seeking to transfer to another League affiliated with AFL NSW/ACT, must, prior to formally applying to transfer:

(i) seek and receive written 'in principle' agreement from the Destination League that it may apply to transfer to that League;

> ***Guidance Note**: This is not approval to join that League, but rather just approval to proceed with an application to transfer to that League.*

(ii) determine from the Destination League any Competition minimum standards that apply to Clubs in that League as per Rule 12.1, as well as any additional criteria that must be met by the Club;

(iii) co-operate with the Destination League in the provision of any information the League requests that will assist with its decision under Rule 8.12.1(B)(i);

(iv) ensure that it has followed and met any requirement under the Club's Constitution to provide voting rights to its members in respect of the Club's decision to apply to transfer; and

(v) ensure that it has no debt owing to the Source League.

(C) Where a Destination League declines to provide 'in-principle agreement' as per Rule 8.12.1(B), the Club may refer the matter to AFL NSW/ACT for its consideration.

(D) Where a Club has satisfied the provisions of Rule 8.12.1(B), it may then proceed to lodge an application to transfer in accordance with Rule 8.12.3.

8.12.2 League Request for Club to Transfer

(A) A League seeking to invite a Club(s) to join it from any other League must notify, at least fourteen (14) days prior to the invitation to the Club(s):

(i) the Secretary of the Source League of such Club(s); and

(ii) AFL NSW/ACT.

(B) A Club(s) that accepts a League's invitation to transfer must:

(i) ensure that it has followed and met any requirement under the Club's Constitution to provide voting rights to its members in respect of the Club's decision to apply to transfer;

(ii) ensure that it has no debt owing to the Source League; and

(iii) subject to satisfying Rules 8.12.2(B)(i) and (ii), lodge an application to transfer in accordance with Rule 8.12.3.

8.12.3 Club Application to Transfer

(A) Where 'in-principle' agreement has been granted to a Club by a Destination League under Rule 8.12.1(B)(i), or an invitation accepted by a Club under Rule 8.12.2, the Club must then submit, at the same time:

(i) an *Application by Club to Transfer Leagues* form to both the Source League and the Destination League; and

(ii) a copy of the application to transfer to AFL NSW/ACT.

(B) An application made under Rule 8.12.3(A) must be submitted to the required parties by no later than:

(i) 30 November of the year immediately preceding the season for which the transfer, if approved, would take effect; or

(ii) such other time as agreed by both the Source League and Destination League.

(C) The Destination League may, at its discretion, impose a fee payable by the Club on application, which shall be refunded in full if the application is not successful.

(D) The Destination League may, at its discretion, impose a bond payable by the Club as a condition of a successful application and that bond will not refundable if there is any contravention by the Club of the agreed terms and conditions of approval during the first three (3) seasons of participation in the Destination League.

8.12.4 Determination of Application to Transfer

(A) Where it is established that the Club has a debt owing to the Source League, an application to transfer must not be determined until such time as that debt has been paid.

(B) The Source League is required to respond to the Club's application to transfer within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt of the application and in doing so must advise the Club in writing, with a copy to the Destination League & AFL NSW/ACT:

(i) if it has no objection to the application; or

(ii) if it objects to the application together with the reasons for that.

(C) The Destination League is required to respond to the Club's application to transfer within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt of the application and in doing so must advise the Club in writing, with a copy to Source League & AFL NSW/ACT:

(i) if it approves the application unconditionally;

(ii) if it approves the application conditionally, together with the details of the conditions to be imposed; or

(iii) if it requires additional information from the Club to determine the application, together with the details of the information sought; or

(iv) if it declines the application together with the reasons for that.

(D) Should either the Source League or Destination League fail to respond to the application within fourteen (14) calendar days of lodgement, the Club may refer the matter to AFL NSW/ACT for its consideration.

(E) If approval to transfer is granted by both the Source League and Destination League, the transfer will proceed on the agreed terms, and:

(i) All registered Players of that Club shall be transferred with the Club to the Destination League;

(ii) The Secretary or authorised person of the Source League shall supply a certified list of all registered Players of the Club to the Destination League.

(F) Where an application is not approved by the Source League or Destination League, the Club may refer the matter to AFL NSW/ACT for its consideration.

(G) In assessing any referral made by a Club under Rule 8.12.1(C), 8.12.3(E) or Rule 8.12.3(G), AFL NSW/ACT may request the Club provide any relevant information that will assist with consideration of the matter and the Club is required to co-operate with any such request

8.13 Club Amalgamating

(A) Any Club seeking to amalgamate with another Club in the same League, must apply to the League for approval to do so.

(B) The League may prescribe the amalgamation application requirements.

(C) The League will determine any application by a Club to amalgamate, and may:

(i) approve the amalgamation;

(ii) approve the amalgamation subject to any conditions it considers necessary;

(iii) request additional information prior to determining the application;

(iv) decline the amalgamation.

8.14 Club Disbanding

Any Club seeking to disband must notify the League of its intention to do so at the earliest possible time.

8.15 Proof of Communication

Wherever the Rules provide for a time limit for a communication, including lodgement of any document, the onus of proof of such communication or lodgement is on the initiating Club.

8.16 Disputes Within a Club

(A) Subject to 8.16(D), any dispute arising within a Club is to be resolved in accordance with the provisions of the Club Constitution and to the reasonable satisfaction of the members of that Club.

***Guidance Note**: Examples of common disputes arising within a Club may be (but are not limited to):*

- *Termination or non-appointment of a coach, committee member or staff person*
- *Denial or termination of a club membership*
- *Misuse of club money, theft or damage to club property by a person*
- *Bullying or harassment of, or abusive behaviour toward, a Club member by another Club member of the same club (including via social media)*

(B) All Clubs and their members have a responsibility to participate in the Club's dispute resolution processes subject to the Club's Constitution and all persons involved in a dispute must act in a genuine attempt to resolve the dispute.

(C) If a dispute is unable to be resolved in accordance with the Club Constitution, the Club may raise the matter with the Controlling Body for further advice on dispute resolution options.

(D) Where a dispute involves a potential breach of Section 11 (Safeguarding Children and Young People) or Section 14 (Anti-Doping) of the *Policy Handbook* the matter must be immediately reported to AFL NSW/ACT, and the Club is to co-operate with the provision of all information relevant to the dispute.

8.17 Representations to the Controlling Body

(A) Any representations made to a league in relation to any aspect of these Rules, including any matters relating to disputes or interpretation of the Rules:

(i) are only to be made via the nominated Club Delegate or a Club Executive Committee member; and

(ii) must be in a manner consistent with the Code of Conduct requirements set out in these Rules and the *Policy Handbook*.

***Guidance Note**:* Only nominated Club Delegates and Club Executive Committee members are permitted to contact the Controlling Body directly. Any other person must contact their Club who will then contact the Controlling Body via the appropriate channels. The Controlling Body is not obliged to respond to representations made to them by other persons (e.g. players, parents, coaches).

9 OFFICIALS

9.1 Conduct of Officials

(A) Whilst in attendance at a community football event, irrespective of whether they are acting in an official capacity at that event or not, all Club Officials are:

(i) required to adhere to the Code of Conduct at all times; and

(ii) responsible for ensuring the adherence of its Club's Players and Supporters to the Code of Conduct and should seek to immediately address any identified behaviour that may be considered a breach of this.

9.2 Disqualification – Persons Not to Act

Any person who has been refused a Transfer or Permit to play or has been suspended, stood down or Deregistered shall not hold any on field position with any League or Club until the Transfer or Permit is granted, or the period of suspension, stand down or Deregistration has expired or is removed by the Controlling Body imposing the suspension or Deregistration.

9.3 Coaches

9.3.1 Coach Eligibility

(A) To Coach in a Competition Match, a Coach must be eligible, registered and accredited in accordance with Section 6 of the *Policy Handbook*.

(B) Any Coach not eligible, accredited or registered, or registered based upon incorrect information, is ineligible to coach a Club's team in a Competition Match.

(C) Any Club who engages or permits an ineligible Coach to officiate during a Competition Match may be subject to disciplinary sanctions including the loss of Competition Match points and / or a fine determined by the relevant Controlling Body in its absolute discretion.

(D) An ineligible Coach may also be liable to disciplinary sanctions including a fine, suspension, Deregistration or ban on registration as determined by the relevant Controlling Body in its absolute discretion.

(E) Where a complaint submitted in accordance with Rule 26 relates to a Club engaging an ineligible Coach, the Club is responsible for the appearance of the Coach at any investigation or hearing conducted by the relevant Controlling Body.

(F) Each Club is to ensure that a person who is ineligible to Coach as a result of a disciplinary sanction or Deregistration, must not:

(i) display signs of Coaching, which includes communicating in any form before or during the Match with any Player, any assistant Coach, or any Team officials including the Team manager, runners, water carriers and/ or trainers;

(ii) enter the playing arena at any stage during the Match; or

(iii) be within twenty-five (25) metres of the team's interchange bench during a Competition Match.

9.3.2 Coach Code of Conduct

(A) Section 9.3 of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

(B) A Coach may be subject to suspension or Deregistration in accordance with these Rules and/or the *Policy Handbook*.

9.3.3 Coach Identifiable

(A) A Coach of a Junior Team must be attired in accordance with Rule 9.5.2 or as required by the League.

(B) Any Coach of a Junior Team who fails to comply with this requirement may be referred to the CMC who may impose any relevant sanctions at its absolute discretion.

9.3.4 No Dual Team Official Role

(A) Any person designated on the Team Sheet as the Coach or Assistant Coach for a Match must not undertake any other Team Official roles including those of runner, water carrier, first aid or trainer.

> ***Guidance Note**: The purpose of this Rule is to prevent a Coach or Assistant Coach assuming another team official role to enter the Field of Play during a match and potentially coach players from on field.*

9.4 Ground Officials

9.4.1 Ground Manager

(A) Prior to any Match taking place the Host Club must appoint a Ground Manager for the Match to undertake the responsibilities detailed in this Rule.

(B) A Ground Manager must be readily identifiable by the wearing of a yellow bib that has the words "Ground Manager" clearly visible.

(C) The Ground Manager's Matchday responsibilities include, but are not necessarily limited to, those detailed in Table 5.

Table 5 – Ground Manager Responsibilities

Category	Specific Responsibilities
Risk Management Compliance	Check the Field of Play and general conditions and complete the Marsh Match Day Checklist ***Guidance Note**: The Ground Manager is responsible for regular checks of the Field of Play on matchday to ensure it remains safe and suitable to play on, and the checklist is to be redone anytime the Ground Manager considers there to be a change to the Field of Play that may impact the safety of Players and Officials (e.g. if raining heavily and the field becomes boggier throughout the day as more matches are played).*
Equipment & Ground Setup	Ensure all equipment necessary for conducting a Match is available before the Match. For Junior Competitions on reduced field sizes, ensure the ground is set-up properly for each Match including: • Adjusting the field size (e.g. with cones) to the specified size for the age group (see Rule 16.5.2); • The movement and placement of goal posts and padding (where applicable); and • Marking the interchange area (e.g. with cones). Ensure that both Teams are aware where the interchange area is.
Rules & Laws	Ensure the following are readily available (online or hardcopy) for all Matches: • the Rules; • the *Laws of Australian Football*; • the *Policy Handbook;* and • the *Management of Sport-Related Concussion in Australian Football*.
Timekeeping	Ensure the availability of a competent timekeeper for each Match. Ensure timekeeping equipment and a back-up timer and siren are available.
Umpires	Check the availability of field, goal and boundary Umpires. Provide Goal Umpires with flags and score cards. Ensure an Umpire Escort is available to conduct duties as detailed in Rule 9.4.3. Ensure water is provided for the Umpires at each break. Ensure the field Umpire reviews both Team Sheets for inclusion of all jumper numbers and then sign the sheets plus the score cards. Ensure a spare set of Yellow and Red cards is available. Ascertaining from the Umpires immediately following the conclusion of the Match whether or not any Reports and/or Incident Referrals of Players or Officials have arisen from the Match.
Officials Identification	Ensure team officials are properly attired and identifiable as per Rule 9.5.2 and Table 8.
Injury Management	Ensure at least one Sports Trainer, AFL First Aider or QMP with Appropriate Minimum Qualifications, as defined by Section 15.3 of the *Policy Handbook*) is present for each Match in accordance with Rule 21.2 and Section 15.2 of the *Policy Handbook*. Ensure a stretcher and a first aid kit are readily accessible at all times. Provide assistance to injury management officials as needed with contacting an ambulance and safe access for an ambulance to the venue and Field of Play.

	In any case where a stretcher or ambulance is required, ensure a Match does not resume until the injured person has been safely removed from the field. Determine whether any delay to a Match caused by an injury, requires • alteration to the duration of any quarter to ensure the Match is still able to be completed within the specified time as per Rule 15.8.5; or • a Match to be abandoned in which case the result of the Match is to be determined in accordance with Rule 16.6.
Matchday Paperwork	Ensure adherence to Matchday paperwork requirements in accordance with Rule 15.7.
Scoring	Check the accuracy of the scoreboard with goal Umpires at the end of each quarter and instruct the scoreboard attendant to correct any inaccuracy in the score displayed. For Junior Competitions ensure the Mercy Rule, where applicable, is applied in accordance with Rule 15.2.8.
Complaints & Attendee Conduct	Receive any formally submitted complaint from a Club Official or other person: (i) Manage, in consultation with other available Club Officials, any attendee behaviour that is contrary to the *Code of Conduct* (not including on-field reportable offences) and make a record of this. (ii) Determine if a complaint is practicably able to be resolved at the time (except where it involves a complaint of vilification or a safeguarding children issue). Where a complaint cannot be resolved: (i) obtain as much immediate information as possible of the situation including the names and contact details of any witnesses; (ii) determine whether the Police need to be called; and (iii) complete and submit the applicable *Notice of Complaint* form to the League in line with Rule 26.
Dangerous Weather or Conditions	Identify any conditions (e.g. extreme weather as defined in Section 17 of the *Policy Handbook*) that may place attendees at significant risk and determine if a Match in progress is to be suspended or abandoned.
Determine Whether a Match Should Commence	Refer to Rule to 15.8.4 – Match Unable to Commence Refer to Rule 14.4(F) – Minimum Number of Players
Determine if a Match is to Recommence or be Abandoned Following a Significant Delay	Refer to Rule 15.8.5 – Significant Delay to a match (Table 30 – Determining if a match is to recommence)
Abandoned Match	For any Match that has been abandoned prior to or after commencing: • Determine the reasons for the Match being abandoned ; and • Within 24 hours, inform the League of the details of the abandoned Match including the reasons for the abandonment so the result of the Match can be determined by the CMC.

9.4.2 Timekeepers

(A) The Host Club must provide a Timekeeper for each Match to undertake the responsibilities detailed in this Rule.

(B) The away Club is entitled to also appoint or supply a Timekeeper for each Match and where it does so, that Timekeeper must sit in the same proximity as the Host Club Timekeeper.

(C) Where practicable, the Timekeeper should be positioned in an equally accessible location for both Teams.

(D) A Timekeeper is to perform the duties as set out in the *Laws of Australian Football* and in Table 6.

Table 6 – Timekeeper Responsibilities

Category	Specific Responsibilities
Quarter Duration	Keep the time for each quarter in accordance with the quarter duration specified in Rule 15.8.2 for the relevant Grade and sound the siren at the conclusion of the quarter. Where time-on is applicable to a Match, record on a timecard or timesheet the time taken to play each quarter
Break Duration	Keep the time for each break between quarters in accordance with the break duration specified in Rule 15.8.2 for the relevant Grade and sound the siren in accordance with the "Sirens" section in this Table.
Record Keeping	Ensure that a copy of all timekeeping records are retained by the Club for the duration of the current Season and are provided to the League within three (3) business days upon request.
Scoring	Record the scores of each Match in which they officiate ***Guidance Note:*** *the score recorded by the Timekeeper will become a determining factor if there is a score discrepancy between the Goal Umpire score cards (see Table 27).*
Sirens	Sound the siren as follows: Once - As Umpires enter the Field of Play prior to the start of a Match and after half-time. Once - Five (5) minutes prior to: ▪ the scheduled starting time of the Match; and ▪ the start of the third quarter (unless the prescribed break duration for the Grade is 5 minutes or less) Twice - Two (2) minutes prior to scheduled starting time of each quarter. Once - One (1) minute prior to scheduled starting time of each quarter Once - Scheduled starting time of each quarter (as the umpire holds the ball in the air) *Once - At the end of each quarter *Keep siren on until satisfied the Field Umpire has heard the siren by raising both arms in the air and blowing the whistle.
Red or Yellow Cards	Acknowledge the Umpire's decision to send off a Player by showing the appropriate red or yellow card to the controlling Umpire Record the time that Players who are ordered off leave the field and be the sole arbiter on when a Player may return to the field in accordance with Rules 24.1.1 or 24.1.2. It is the responsibility of the offending Player's Club to obtain the all-clear from the timekeeper for a Player to resume playing.
White Cards	Be responsible for noting the time and quarter of any white card or subsequent red card issued and to which Coaching Box, and a record of all cards issued must be listed on the official timecard in line with the Rule 10.14.5.

Timekeeping Disputes	In the event of a dispute or disagreement between the two timekeepers, such dispute shall be reported to the field Umpire, at half time if the dispute occurs during the first half or at the conclusion of the Match if it occurs during the second half. The field Umpire shall report the matter to the CMC for attention.
Dismissal of a Timekeeper	The field Umpire shall have the power to dispense with the services of either or both timekeepers during a Match, and in such instance may request the Host Club provide an alternative Official to fulfil the required duties.

9.4.3 Umpire Escort

(A) For each Match, the Host Club must appoint a suitable person to act as an escort for the Umpires (often the Ground Manager).

(B) The Umpire Escort is to escort the Umpires:

(i) From their change-rooms to the centre of the field prior to the commencement of a Match.

(ii) From their assembly point on the field to their change room at half time.

(iii) From their change room to the centre of the field after the half time break.

(iv) From their assembly point on the field to the change room at the conclusion of the Match.

(C) An Umpire exclusion zone should be implemented at quarter, half time and three-quarter time encompassing the centre square.

(i) during half time of Senior competition Matches only, the following Match's teams, in consultation with the Ground Manager, can enter the centre square only if the Umpires have exited the field of play; and

(a) The teams must leave the centre square no later than the time at which the Umpires return to the field.

(ii) during any break in play, one representative from each team, alongside the Ground Manager, Umpires (if applicable), and AFL Staff (if applicable) can enter the centre square to review safe playing conditions for subsequent matches.

(D) The Umpire Escort is to:

(i) stand with the Umpires during the quarter and three-quarter time intervals, and half time where the umpires do not leave the field;

(ii) arrange for water to be provided to the Umpires, if required;

(iii) Ensure that the only persons to approach an Umpire are those entitled to, as listed in Rule 10.13 and Table 11.

(E) The Umpire Escort is expected to be identifiable as required by the League.

(i) the Umpire Escort is required to wear a clearly visible shirt, jacket, or bib so that they are readily identifiable. This can be in the form of a Ground Manager bib.

(F) Any Umpire Escort provided is expected to assist in providing and/or obtaining details of any alleged breach of the Code of Conduct immediately after completing their duties in liaison with/at the request of the Umpire or Ground Manager.

(G) Failure to provide an identifiable Umpire Escort will be deemed a breach of these Rules and the Club may be sanctioned at the discretion of the CMC.

9.5 Team Officials / Staff

9.5.1 Number Allowed on Bench

(A) A Team competing in a Match is allowed the number of Club Officials on the bench inside the ground during the Match as prescribed in Table 7:

Table 7 – Number of Team Officials on Bench

Official	Number Allowed	Specific Requirements
Head Coach	1	See Rule 9.3
Assistant Coach	2	See Rule 9.3
Team Manager	1	See Rule 9.5.3
Trainers / First Aid / QMP	2	See Rule 9.5.4
Runners	1	See Rule 9.5.5
Water Carrier	4	See Rule 9.5.6

9.5.2 Team Officials Attire

(A) Team Officials are to be attired as follows:

(i) Must wear an identification bib or shirt as detailed in Table 8;

(ii) Must wear enclosed footwear and in the case of Runners and Water Carriers, must wear runners or football boots.

(iii) Must not wear singlets or a team jersey (unless a playing Coach) or other football jersey.

Table 8 – Team Officials Identification Requirements

Official	Applies to (Junior / Senior)	Colour of Bib / Shirt	Wording on Bib / Shirt
Coach	Junior	Blue	COACH
Assistant Coach	Junior	Blue	COACH
Team Manager	Junior	Maroon	TEAM MANAGER or MANAGER
Trainer	Both	White	TRAINER
QMP / First Aid	Both	Red	FIRST AID
Runner	Both	Pink	RUNNER
Water Carrier	Both	Light Blue	WATER or WATER CARRIER

(B) The field umpire will ask any Team Official on the field without the correct attire to leave the field and not return until they are correctly attired.

9.5.3 Team Manager

(A) A Club is to appoint a Team Manager for each Team it fields in the Competition.

(B) The Team Manager is responsible for:

(i) ensuring their Team's Players, Officials and supporters comply with the requirements of the Rules and with any request reasonably made by the Umpire officiating in a Competition Match in which their Team is participating;

(ii) the management and alteration of Team Sheets and PlayHQ records as detailed in Rule 15.7.1;

(iii) ensuring that, at the conclusion of the Match, the match scores, goal kickers and best Players for their Team are recorded on the Official Team Sheet, which is held by the Ground Manager;

(iv) obtaining the "all clear" from the timekeeper in relation to the expiry of any time penalty imposed on a player under a yellow or red card;

(v) ascertaining from the Ground Manager at the conclusion of the Match whether any Reports and/or Incident Referrals of Players or Officials have arisen from the Match.

9.5.4 Sports Trainer / AFL First Aider / QMP

(A) A Sports Trainer, QMP or AFL First Aider:

(i) must meet the appropriate minimum qualifications as per Section 15.3 of the *Policy Handbook;*

(ii) is to register as a "Medical Officer" in PlayHQ as per Section 15.4 of the *Policy Handbook*;

(iii) is only permitted onto the field during play to attend to an injured Player, Official or Umpire;

(iv) must not be used to deliver messages to a Player;

(v) may enter the field at any stage during play where it is evident that a Player, Official or Umpire is injured;

(vi) may speak to an Umpire to assist the Umpire determine whether a Match should be halted whilst the injured Player or Official is being attended to, or for the purpose of treating the Umpire where the Umpire is the injured person.

9.5.5 Runners

(A) Each Team is permitted to use one (1) runner in any Match.

(B) The sole duty of the runner is to deliver messages to their Club's Players and then leave the field immediately having done so.

(C) The Umpire shall ask a runner to leave the field if the runner remains on the playing surface for an unnecessary period of time as determined by the Umpire.

(D) A runner is not required to enter the field via the interchange area and is permitted to enter the field at any stage throughout the match.

(E) For any Match played on a full field, and other than where attending to an injured player, a runner must not be within the fifty (50) metre arc when a Player is preparing to bring or bringing the football back into play after a behind is scored, and an umpire may award a free kick to the opposition Team where this occurs.

(F) A runner must remain a reasonable distance from play at all times and an Umpire may award a free kick to the opposition Team where the Umpire considers that a runner is encroaching on or interfering with play, regardless of whether that is accidental or not.

(G) A runner must remain a reasonable distance away from all Field, Boundary and Goal Umpires to allow them to Umpire the Match without interference.

(H) If the designated runner is unable to continue to undertake their responsibilities for the remainder of the Match, they may be replaced and:

(i) the replacement runner must be registered on the official Team Sheet; and

(ii) the Ground Manager informed.

(I) Suspended, stood down or Deregistered Players or Officials are not permitted to act as the runner.

(J) The runners' names must appear on the official Team Sheet.

(K) A runner must be at least fourteen (14) years of age unless otherwise approved by the Controlling Body.

9.5.6 Water Carriers

(A) The sole duty of the water carrier is to deliver water to their Club's Players and then leave the field immediately having done so.

(B) A water carrier must not be used to deliver messages to Players.

(C) The Umpire will ask water carriers to leave the field if they are delivering messages to Players and is to include details of this in the Umpire Match Report.

(D) A water carrier may enter the field at any stage during play.

(E) For any Match played on a full field, a water carrier must not be within the fifty (50) metre arc when a Player is preparing to bring or bringing the football back into play after a behind is scored, and an umpire may award a free kick to the opposition Team where this occurs.

(F) A water carrier must remain a reasonable distance from play at all times and an Umpire may award a free kick to the opposition Team where the Umpire considers that a water carrier is encroaching on or interfering with play, regardless of whether that is accidental or not.

(G) A water carrier must remain a reasonable distance away from all Field, Boundary and Goal Umpires to allow them to Umpire the Match without interference.

(H) Water carriers shall not be younger than an age approved by the relevant Controlling Body.

(i) Water carriers must be at least fourteen (14) years of age.

9.5.7 Team Officials Registration on Team Sheet

(A) All persons undertaking official duties in a Match must be registered on the official Team Sheet for that Match in PlayHQ.

10 UMPIRES

10.1 Umpire Eligibility and Accreditation

(A) Section 6 of the *Policy Handbook* applies to the accreditation and eligibility of an Umpire.

(B) Leagues and Clubs must ensure that all Umpires appointed to a Match meet the requirements set out in Section 6 of the *Policy Handbook* and these Rules.

10.2 Umpire Minimum Age Requirements

(A) Subject to Rule 10.2(B), the minimum age of field and boundary and goal Umpires (both League and Club appointed Umpires) for all Senior and Junior Competitions is as per Table 9.

Table 9 – Minimum Age of Umpires (as at 31 December of the year prior to the Competition Year)

Umpire Role	Field	Boundary	Goal
Under 9	Twelve (12)	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Under 11	Twelve (12)	Not Applicable	Twelve (12)
Under 13	Fourteen (14)	Not Applicable	Thirteen (13)
Under 15	Sixteen (16)	Not Applicable	Fifteen (15)
Under 17	Sixteen (16)	Fourteen (14)	Sixteen (16)
Seniors	Sixteen (16)	Fourteen (14)	Sixteen (16)

(B) The relevant Controlling Body or umpiring group may appoint a field Umpire to a higher age group than that specified in the table above but only where it determines that there are exceptional and compelling circumstances that warrant such permission being granted.

***Guidance Note**: In assessing whether there are exceptional and compelling circumstances, a Controlling Body and Umpiring Group must have regard to the Umpire's physical capability, experience, skill level and social maturity along with any child safeguarding considerations.*

10.3 Appointment of Umpires

(A) The League or League's delegate will appoint official Umpires to all Matches as available and the names of the appointed Umpires will be issued to participating Clubs at least one (1) calendar day prior to the first Match of each round.

***Guidance Note**: Where all Matches are unable to filled with league appointed umpires, the League should endeavour to provide the Clubs with as much notice of this as possible so Clubs can make arrangements for Club umpires to officiate.*

(B) Any senior field, senior boundary or senior goal Umpire coach:

(i) shall be eligible to be appointed to any practice match or home and away Match as required;

(ii) shall not be eligible to be appointed to a senior representative fixture Match;

(iii) shall be eligible to be appointed to any final or grand final, with the exception of a senior (first grade or equivalent) final or grand final unless prior written approval has been granted by the State Umpiring Lead or an independent selection panel is in place.

(C) For the avoidance of doubt, any other field, boundary or goal Umpire coach that formally holds a coaching position with AFL NSW/ACT (for example, but not limited to a state League umpires' Coach or assistant Coach) are not eligible to be appointed to Senior (first grade or equivalent) representative fixture matches or senior (first grade or equivalent) finals and grand finals, subject to 10.3(B).

10.4 Number of Field Umpires for a Match

(A) A minimum of two (2) field Umpires are required in order for a Match to commence unless determined otherwise by the League and these must be registered League appointed Umpires or Club appointed Umpires (or a combination of both).

(B) Except where determined otherwise by the League in accordance with 10.4(A), where two (2) Umpires are not available, the Match will not proceed and the matter referred to the CMC for determination.

(C) Where two (2) field Umpires commence a Match and for any reason one (1) of the field Umpires is unable to complete the Match, the remaining field Umpire may continue to control the Match as a single Umpire in the event that there is not a suitable replacement Umpire.

(D) If for any reason, none of the field Umpires who commenced the Match are able to complete the Match and there is no other accredited Umpire available:

(i) the competition Match will be stopped and the result determined in accordance with Rule 16.6;

(ii) the League is to be notified of this via the Umpire Match Report;

(iii) Teams may proceed with a scratch match for the remaining duration of time that was allocated to the competition Match, with the provision by one or both Teams of a person to umpire that scratch match.

10.5 Number of Goal Umpires for a Match

(A) As a minimum, two (2) goal Umpires are required prior to a Match commencing.

(B) Goal Umpires can be League appointed or Club appointed umpires or a combination of both.

(C) Should two (2) goal Umpires not be available, the Match must not commence and the matter is to be referred to the CMC for determination.

10.6 Club Umpires

10.6.1 Club Field Umpires

(A) From time to time each Club may be required to provide suitable persons to umpire Matches, and prior to the season, the League will advise Clubs of the expected Club Umpire commitment for the season.

(B) Club field Umpires, where appointed, shall be required to complete the minimum level accreditation and must register as a Club Umpire in OfficialsHQ prior to umpiring their first match of a season.

(C) Where the League has not appointed official field Umpires or accredited Club Umpires, it shall be each Club's responsibility to arrange for a suitable person or persons to umpire the Match.

(D) Club field Umpires, where appointed for a Match, are to be attired as approved by the League.

(i) Shirt - NSW/ACT Men's or Women's Field Umpire tee as listed on the Project Clothing Online Store;

(ii) Shorts - NSW/ACT Men's or Women's AFL Umpire shorts as listed on the Project Clothing Online Store or black shorts; and

(iii) Shoes - runners or football boots.

(E) Club field Umpires are required to complete and submit, in the manner prescribed by the League, all the necessary Match Paperwork, including the Umpires Match Report and Best & Fairest votes.

***Guidance Note**: Where a Club Umpire is appointed to a Match and is not registered in OfficialsHQ, it is strongly recommended that the Club registers a 'Club profile' in OfficialsHQ which will provide the link to the relevant matchday paperwork for completion by the Club Umpire.*

(F) Each competing Club is responsible for the payment of their own Club field Umpires, or in the case of one Club providing both Club field Umpires, the payment is to be shared equally between the competing Clubs.

(G) Club field Umpires are not permitted to umpire more than two (2) Competition Matches on the same day.

10.6.2 Club Goal and Boundary Umpires

(A) Where Official goal and boundary Umpires have not been appointed by the League, each competing Club must be prepared to provide a suitable goal and boundary Umpire to officiate.

(B) Each Club is to ensure the competency of any person who accepts appointment as a goal or boundary Umpire.

(C) Club goal Umpires must be equipped with two white flags, a scorecard and pen, and attired in:

(i) Shirt - NSW/ACT Men's or Women's On-Field Umpire tee as listed on the Project Clothing Online Store;

(ii) Pant – Grey NSW/ACT Men's or Women's Umpire pant as listed on the Project Clothing Online Store or black pant; and

(iii) Shoes – Enclosed footwear.

(D) Club boundary Umpires must be equipped with a suitable whistle and attired in:

(i) Shirt - NSW/ACT Men's or Women's Field Umpire tee as listed on the Project Clothing Online Store or fluorescent yellow tee or white boundary umpire bib;

(ii) Shorts - NSW/ACT Men's or Women's AFL Umpire shorts as listed on the Project Clothing Online Store or black activewear; and

(iii) Shoes - runners or football boots.

(E) Official field Umpires shall have the power to:

(i) overrule decisions by Club goal and/or boundary Umpires; and

(ii) remove them should they consider that such Club Umpires are not competent to carry out the required duties.

(F) Payment of Club goal and boundary Umpires (if any) shall be the responsibility of the respective Clubs or as determined by the CMC.

10.7 Umpire Match Report

(A) At the conclusion of each Match, the field Umpire must, via OfficialsHQ:

(i) complete and provide an Umpire Match report to the League; and

(ii) for home and away season Matches, complete the Best and Fairest Player voting.

(B) If it is not practicable for an Umpire to complete the requirements of Rule 10.7(A) immediately following the Match, the requirements must be met by no later than 9.00am on Monday after the Match. For weekday Matches, this must be met by no later than 9.00am of the next business day.

(C) If the requirements of Rule 10.7(A), or Rule 10.7(B) where applicable, are not met:

(i) payment of the field Umpires for a Match may be withheld until such time as the relevant information is submitted; and

(ii) the League may also choose not to allocate one (1) or more future Matches to the responsible Umpire.

10.8 Umpire Responsibilities

(A) In addition to any other requirements under the Rules:

(i) all members of the Umpires' panel must make themselves available to the League for appointment as a field, boundary or goal Umpire as required;

(ii) any Umpire who is unavailable for appointment on a particular day is to provide seven (7) calendar days notice of this to the League in the manner prescribed by the League, or in the case of illness, at the earliest practicable time to the League;

(iii) all Umpires must conform to the Rules and arrangements of the League and shall appear when called upon by the CMC and/or Tribunal;

(iv) all appointed Umpires must, at least ten (10) minutes before the scheduled Match start time, be correctly attired and ready to go on the field.

10.9 Umpire Fees & Payment

(A) The Umpires' fees for each season will be determined by the Controlling Body and communicated to all Clubs no later than February in the year of the season in which they are applicable.

(B) The process for payment of the Umpires will be determined by the League.

(C) In the event of a Match being cancelled, other than because of forfeit as provided for in Rule 16.5.7, no payment shall be due to the Umpires appointed to the Match.

10.10 Umpire Uniform Branding

(A) Subject to this Rule, a League has the right to display partner or sponsor branding on Umpire uniforms.

(B) A League must seek approval from AFL NSW/ACT for an agreed area on the umpiring uniform shirt for the purpose of promotion of any AFL NSW/ACT community umpiring partner.

(C) Each League must submit all Umpire uniform designs to AFL NSW/ACT for approval which will not be unreasonably withheld.

(D) Each League must ensure that on-field umpiring uniforms comply with the following design requirements:

(i) all umpiring uniform shirts and shorts must display the AFL NSW/ACT logo in accordance with Table 10;

(ii) only a supplier approved by the AFL may reproduce the Umpire AFL logo;

(iii) on-field umpiring shirts and shorts may have sponsor logos in compliance with Table 10;

> ***Guidance Notes**: AFL NSW/ACT approved apparel suppliers are licensed and authorized as the only suppliers to use the AFL NSW/ACT logo. A current list of AFL NSW/ACT approved apparel suppliers can be found on the AFL NSW/ACT website.*

(iv) on-field umpiring shorts may have the apparel supplier logo in compliance with Table 10.

Table 10 – Umpire Uniform Logo Requirements

Uniform Location	What Logo is Allowed	Size (must not exceed)
Shirt right breast	AFL NSW/ACT logo	8cm width and 8cm height
Shirt left breast	Sponsor logo	8cm width and 8cm height
Shirt front mid-region	Sponsor logo	28.5cm width and 8.5cm height
Shirt rear	Sponsor logo	30cm width and 13cm height
Shirt front neck-vee	Apparel supplier logo	7cm in width and 3cm height
Shirt sleeve (either or both)	Sponsor logo	12cm width and 8cm height
Shorts left thigh	AFL NSW/ACT logo	8cm width and 8cm height
Shorts right thigh	Sponsor logo	8cm width and 8cm height

(E) The same principles detailed in Rule 8.7.4(B) apply to the nature and content of a logo on an Umpiring uniform.

10.11 Powers & Duties of Umpires

(A) The field Umpire has the power to order replacements for any boundary or goal Umpire.

(B) The field Umpire has the power to consult with, and if necessary, overrule a goal or boundary Umpire where, in the field Umpire's opinion, an obvious error has occurred, and no third party is permitted to be involved in any such consultation (notwithstanding the *Laws of Australian Football*).

(C) The following Umpires may report a player or official for a reportable offence as per Law 22.2.1 of the Laws of Australian Football:

(i) League appointed or club appointed field umpire;

(ii) League appointed boundary or goal umpire;

(iii) League appointed Emergency Umpire.

(D) All goal and boundary Umpires should introduce themselves to the field Umpire prior to the commencement of the Match and restrict all communications with the field Umpires to matters arising directly from Umpire duties.

(E) Any person officiating in a Match as a field, goal or boundary Umpire, is to:

(i) act in a professional manner;

(ii) adhere to the *Code of Conduct* as it applies to an Official;

(iii) refrain from barracking for or giving support to a Team;

(iv) refrain from making comments to Officials or Supporters other than for the purposes of fulfilling responsibilities as an Umpire;

(v) refrain from engaging in any form of coaching of, or instruction or advice to Players other than for the purpose of fulfilling responsibilities as an Umpire.

> ***Guidance Notes**: This provision relates to Competition Matches. A field umpire may provide some degree of helpful instruction to players in a non-competition (development) Age Group, particularly to clarify the rules of the game where players are still learning how to play.*

10.12 Emergency Umpires

(A) Emergency Umpires, when appointed to a Match by the League, shall have the power to order Players, Coaches and Officials from the field as well as the ability to report Players, Coaches and Officials.

(i) the League will only appoint Emergency Umpires to Senior Finals matches; and

(ii) payment of Emergency Umpires will be detailed in the Umpire Pay Rates memorandum and covered by the League

10.13 Approaching Umpires

(A) No person, except as listed in Table 11, shall approach or talk to an Umpire (field, boundary or goal) prior to, during or after the conclusion of a Match, or leaving the playing arena.

Table 11 – Who can approach an Umpire

Role	When/Criteria	Purpose
1. A full-time AFL NSW/ACT staff member	(i) Who is not otherwise participating in the Match as a Player, Coach or Team Official (ii) Before or after the match, at match breaks and when requested to assist the umpire at any other point in the match/on the day.	(i) Support the Umpire (ii) Provide appropriate and relevant feedback (iii) Protect the Umpire's during breaks and before, after and between matches
2. The Umpire Escort (who must be appropriately identifiable on the day)	(i) As outlined in Rule 9.4.3	(i) To fulfil the duties outlined in Rule 9.4.3
3. The Ground Manager, including any designated assistant (who must be appropriately identifiable on the day)	(i) As outlined in Rule 9.4.1, Table 5	(i) To fulfil the duties outlined in Rule 9.4.1 and Table 5
4. Umpire Manager and/or Umpire Coach	(i) Before or after the match, at match breaks and when requested to assist the umpire at any other point in the match/on the day.	(i) Support the Umpire (ii) Provide appropriate and relevant feedback (iii) Protect the Umpire's during breaks and before, after and between matches
5. Team Manager	(i) Only at a quarter break	(i) To confirm the score of a Match where the Mercy Rule in Rule 15.2.8
6. One (1) captain from each competing team as designated on the Official Team Sheet (Senior Competitions only)	(i) At quarter breaks or any appropriate break in play, at the approval of the Umpire	(i) To confirm/clarify whether a Player on their team has been reported (ii) To clarify a rule or decision made by the Umpire, only for the purposes of providing feedback to their team
7. The Team captain, vice-captain or Team runner	(i) At any time during at Match	(i) For the purposes of requesting a headcount in accordance with the Laws of Australian Football
8. The Team captain	(ii) At a quarter break	(ii) For the purpose of seeking clarity as to why a white or red card was issued in line with Rule 2.5(B) of the *Coaching Box Card Policy*

10.14 Abuse of Umpires

10.14.1 Umpire Welfare & Safety

(A) The Controlling Body may, at any time, implement any reasonable measures or Rules aimed at:

(i) reducing the occurrence of Umpire abuse in community football;

(ii) protecting the safety and welfare of Umpires; and

(iii) providing an inclusive environment for Umpires.

(B) All Clubs are to commit to the safety and welfare of Umpires and are to co-operate with the Controlling Body in implementing and adhering to any measures established under Rule 10.14.1(A).

10.14.2 Definition of Umpire Abuse

For the purpose of Rule 10.14, *abuse* includes any language, terminology or behaviour intended to insult, offend, intimidate, threaten or harm an Umpire.

10.14.3 Action Against a Person for Umpire Abuse

(A) Subject to Rule 10.14.3(B), any person identified as having abused an Umpire will be subject to the *Reportable Offence* process under Rule 25, the *Policy Breach* process under Rule 26, or the *Prohibited Conduct* process under Section 10 of the *Policy Handbook*, as is applicable to the circumstance.

(B) Any adult identified as having abused an Umpire under the age of 18 years may be referred to AFL Integrity for investigation into potential breach of the *Safeguarding Children and Young People* policy under Section 11 of the *Policy Handbook* and/or the *Member Protection* policy under Section 9 of the *Policy Handbook*.

10.14.4 Action Against a Club for Umpire Abuse

> ***Guidance Notes**: In accordance with Rule 6.3.5 a Club is responsible for the behaviour and conduct of its players, officials, coaches and spectators. The purpose of this Rule 10.14.4 is to incentivise Clubs to address behavioural issues that may be arising within a certain Team or playing group.*

(A) A Club will be subject of the following automatic sanctions, payable to the Controlling Body where a Team has any person associated with it plead or found guilty of umpire abuse more than once during a season:

(i) a fine of two hundred and fifty (250) dollars for a second offence in the current season, regardless of whether the offence was committed by the same or different person to the person who committed the first offence;

(ii) a fine of five hundred (500) dollars for a third offence in the current season, regardless of whether the offence was committed by the same or different person to the person who committed the first offence; and

(iii) a fine of one thousand (1,000) for a fourth or subsequent offence in the current season, regardless of whether the offence was committed by the same or different person to the person who committed any earlier offence under this Rule.

(B) In respect of any sanction issued in accordance with Rule 10.14.4(A), only one (1) fine will be issued per Match, regardless of whether more than one (1) offence is committed in that Match, unless otherwise determined by the Controlling Body.

(C) Any Club that has been subject of four (4) or more instances of sanction under Rule 10.14.4(A) in one season, will be issued with a *Notice of Breach* under Rule 26.5.1 and referred directly to the Tribunal for a Tribunal Hearing under Rule 27.

10.14.5 AFL NSW/ACT Coaching Box Card Policy

(A) The *AFL NSW/ACT Coaching Box Card Policy* is established in accordance with Rule 10.14.1 and sets out the objectives and application of a process aimed at addressing unacceptable behaviour directed at umpires from the Coaching Box Area.

10.15 Club Feedback Report on Umpiring

(A) No person other than an Umpire Coach is to approach any Umpire during or immediately following a Match to voice any concerns or other feedback regarding the umpiring.

(B) Clubs may provide a feedback report to the League on the Umpires performance in a Match which will be used by the League and AFL NSW/ACT in its assessment of Umpire performance including areas for potential focus.

(C) A feedback report made by the Club in accordance with this Rule must be provided via the online form as prescribed by AFL NSW/ACT.

(D) Each League is to ensure the online feedback form is readily accessible on its Website.

***Guidance Notes**: Feedback should be specific, objective and constructive to enable it to be used for focused training and improved umpiring standards.*

11 PLAYERS

11.1 Player Registration

11.1.1 Registration Requirements

(A) Subject to any variation in these Rules, a Player seeking to play Australian football and/or participate in a Competition must be registered in accordance with Section 3.1 and 3.2 of the *Policy Handbook*.

(B) The League agrees to apply and enforce the uniform system of registration of Players as set out in the *Policy Handbook* and the Rules.

(C) Registration is for the period of one season only, and a Player must re-register each season.

(D) A Club must not register a Player without the Player's consent, or in the case of a Player under the age of 18 years, without consent of the Players parent or guardian.

(E) A player must not be registered or re-registered under an assumed name unless such assumed name and the reason for its necessary use is notified to and accepted by the League and the person's legal name and current address are submitted to the League at the time of registration.

(F) Upon a person's registration application being approved, the person shall be deemed a Player of that Club until such time as the person has been granted a transfer to play with another Club.

11.1.2 Junior Player Registration with a Senior Club

(A) Subject to meeting the eligibility and permit requirements in the Rules and the *Policy Handbook*, a Junior Player may play in a Senior Grade competition on an available permit.

(B) A Junior Player may only register with a Senior Club where;

(i) there is no Junior Grade available to the Player at a Junior Club that is within reasonable proximity to the Player; and

(ii) where the Player is age eligible to play a senior Grade in accordance with Rule 11.2.1(C).

(C) If a Junior Player wishes to register with Senior Club where there is an eligible Junior grade competition available for the Player to participate in, the Player may only register with the Senior Club where:

(i) a written application has been made to the CMC by the Senior Club detailing any exceptional circumstances that apply to the Player;

(ii) the Player's Junior Club has provided written endorsement of the registration with the Senior Club; and

(iii) the application has been approved by the CMC.

***Guidance Notes**: Where a Club is both a Junior and Senior Club, the intent of this Rule still operates, i.e. the expectation is that the Player still plays in an available Junior Competition and if the Player is seeking to play only in a Senior Competition, the Player must still apply to the CMC in accordance with Rule 11.1.2(C) and establish exceptional circumstances.*

11.1.3 Registration Period

(A) The registration period in respect of each season commences on 1 October immediately preceding the season.

(B) Subject to any Transfer Rules, new Player registrations will be accepted until the end of the home and away series in the season in which the Player intends to play.

11.1.4 Matchday Registration

(A) As per Rule 11.1.1, a Player must be registered with the Club prior to being eligible to play in a Match.

11.1.5 Proof of Player Identity

(A) The relevant Controlling Body or CMC may, at any time, request in writing that a Player, or the Player's Club, provide proof of a Player's identity and/or date of birth by way of production of one or more of the following documents:

(i) Birth certificate;

(ii) Drivers licence (with photo);

(iii) Passport;

(iv) Student identification;

(v) Statutory declaration;

(vi) Any other document that provides legal proof of identity and/or age.

(B) Where a request is made in accordance with Rule 11.1.5(A), the Player or the Player's Club must produce the requested documentation by no later than 5.00pm on the third (3rd) business day following the request.

(C) Failure to provide documentation as requested under this Rule, or where documentation does not satisfy proof of identity or date of birth, the relevant Controlling Body may:

(i) revoke or suspend a Player's registration;

(ii) revoke any dispensations previously granted to the Player;

(iii) initiate a Policy breach process in accordance with Rule 26.

11.1.6 Multiple Registrations or Profiles

(A) A Player must not be registered with more than one Club at the same time.

(B) A currently registered Player seeking to play at a different Club must not register with that Club, including creating a new PlayHQ profile in order to register, until such time as a Transfer request has been submitted and approved in accordance with Section 3 of the *Policy Handbook*.

(C) Where a Player is identified as having more than one Player profile in PlayHQ the details of the Player's profiles are to be provided to the League who will initiate steps to merge the profiles.

(D) Where a Player has a duplicate profile that has the effect of circumventing a suspension, Deregistration or Transfer, that Player will be deemed ineligible and the Controlling Body may also deal with the matter as a Policy Breach by that Player and any other Person where applicable.

11.2 Player Eligibility

11.2.1 Age Eligibility

(A) A Player must be a minimum of seven (7) years of age by 31 July in the year of the relevant season to be eligible to be registered in accordance with Section 3.1(b) of the *Policy Handbook*.

> ***Guidance Notes**: A Player younger than this requirement may still register and participate in Auskick.*

(B) Subject to these Rules, a Player may only play in a Competition age group or grade if they are eligible to do so based on the age criteria specified in Table 12.

(C) Subject to Rule 11.2.1(E), a Player may only play in a Senior Grade Competition where the Player is a minimum of 16 years of age as at 31 December of the year immediately prior to the Competition year.

(D) Subject to Rule 11.2.1(A), the Player's minimum age to participate in a Competition age group or grade is to be taken as at 31 December of the year immediately prior to the Competition year.

Table 12 – Age Eligibility for Junior Age Groups & Senior Grades

Age Group / Grade	**Minimum Age to Participate in Age Group** (age as at 31 December of the year prior to the Competition Year)	**Age Turning in the Competition Year**
Under 9	See Rule 11.2.1(A)	Subject to Rule 11.2.1(A), 7, 8 or 9
Under 11	8	9, 10 or 11
Under 13	10	11, 12 or 13
Under 15	12	13, 14 or 15
Under 17	14	15, 16 or 17
Senior Grade	16	17 or older

(E) A Junior Player may play up a Junior age group, or in a Senior Grade, subject to the following:

(i) the Player must meet the 'minimum age to participate in an age group' as specified in Table 12, or have been granted dispensation in accordance with Rule 11.2.2;

(ii) the Player must always first commit to playing in the eligible Junior age group most closely aligned to their age, unless otherwise approved by the Controlling Body; and

(iii) the Player must not displace another Junior Player to whom that higher Junior age group applies and who otherwise would be available to play.

> ***Guidance Note**: if a competition has two-year age group intervals, e.g. under 11s, under 13s, under 15s etc, a Player turning 13 in the Competition year who wishes to play in an under 15 competition, must not take the place of an available under 15s Player who is turning 14 or 15 in that competition year. This would not apply to a 7-year-old playing in under 9s if there was no lower age group in the Competition.*

11.2.2 Application to Play Up

(A) For any Player who is younger than the 'minimum age to participate in an age group' as specified in Table 12, and who wishes to participate in a higher age group or a Senior Grade, the Player's Club must;

(i) complete and lodge an *Application to Play in a Higher Age Group Form* with the CMC together with any evidence to support the application; and

(ii) obtain approval from the CMC prior to the Player playing in a higher Competition age group, otherwise the Player will be deemed to be an ineligible Player in accordance with Rule 11.6.

> ***Guidance Notes**: A Player younger than the minimum age specified in Rule 11.2.1(A), is not eligible to register as a Junior Player and is therefore not eligible to apply under this provision.*

(B) In assessing an application made under Rule 11.2.2(A), the CMC will give consideration to the actual age differential between the Player and the age group or Senior Grade they seek to play in, together with any evidence submitted with the application that demonstrates:

(i) any exceptional circumstances for the Player playing at a higher level;

(ii) it is clearly in the football development interests of the Player to play at a higher level;

(iii) the Player's ability to compete safely and adequately at the higher age level, including evidence of their physical capacity, experience, skill level and social sense;

(iv) the Player is not displacing an age eligible Player in a junior age group, as detailed in Rule 11.2.1(E);

(v) in the case of a Junior Player seeking to play in a Senior Grade, any plan the Club has to ensure the safe integration of the Junior Player into a Senior Club environment, taking into account the *Safeguarding Children and Young People* provisions of Section 11 of the *Policy Handbook*;

(vi) it does not jeopardise the viability of the Player's current age eligible team being able to continue to participate in the Competition.

***Guidance Notes**: Where assessing a Player under the "football development interests" Rule, a CMC could consider, for example, where the Player is part of a talent pathway program (e.g. Academy) and where a coach in that program has provided a written confirmation to the League that it is in the Player's development interests to be allowed to play in the higher Grade and any conditions around that (e.g. limited number of Matches or Match time).*

(C) In making a determination of an application made under Rule 11.2.2(A), the CMC may, in its absolute discretion:

(i) grant dispensation unconditionally for the duration of the season;

(ii) grant dispensation subject to specific conditions;

***Guidance Notes**: An example of a specific condition of approval could be to limit the number of Matches a Player is initially approved for (e.g. three Matches), with review at the end of those Matches to ensure that any continued approval meets the objectives of this Policy.*

(iii) request additional information prior to granting or declining an application;

(iv) decline an application.

***Guidance Note**: A Player may apply for dispensation to play in a Competition age group below their applicable age group on the basis of a 'or for 'physical size considerations'. 'Physical size considerations' is measured on a Player's body mass index ('BMI') or the Player's height being below the 5th percentile for the Player's age group.*

11.2.3 Dispensation to Play Down

(A) Subject to any variation specified in these Rules, Section 4 of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

(B) To make an application under Section 4.1 of the *Policy Handbook*, a Player's Club must:

(i) complete and lodge an *Age Dispensation to Play Down Application Form* with the CMC together with the required evidence to support the application; and

(ii) obtain approval from the CMC prior to the Player playing in a lower Competition age group, otherwise the Player will be deemed to be an ineligible Player in accordance with Rule 11.6.

(C) In addition to the relevant factors listed in Section 4.2 of the *Policy Handbook*, the CMC will also have regard to evidence demonstrating that the participation of the Player in a lower age group does not adversely impact the safety of other Players in that age group.

(D) In addition to the determination options provided for under Section 4.1(d) of the *Policy Handbook*, the CMC may also determine to approve an application subject to specific conditions.

(E) If a Player's dispensation application to play down is declined by a CMC in accordance with Part B Section 4.1(d) of the *Policy Handbook*, the Player may seek to appeal the decision in accordance with Rule 28.2.

11.2.4 Gender Eligibility & Diversity

(A) Age eligible female and male players are entitled to play in a Junior mixed grade Competition up to and including under 14's.

(B) Where the CMC has determined, in accordance with Rule 12.5, that a junior age group is classified as a boys only age group or a girls only age group, the following applies:

(i) no male player is eligible to play in a girls only age group; and

(ii) no female Player is eligible to play in a boys only age group.

(C) Where a Player identifies as transgender or non-binary, the *AFL Gender Diversity Policy – Community Football* applies.

11.2.5 Player Eligibility to Move Between Senior Grades

(A) The League may determine any criteria or restrictions on Player movement between Senior Grades in a Competition.

(B) If, in a particular Round, a Team is scheduled for a bye, or a fixtured match is cancelled for any reason, no Player who was in that Team or a Team in a higher Grade in the previous Round is eligible to play in a lower Grade.

> ***Example**: In Round 7 a Women's Division One team is scheduled to have a bye, so no player who played in the Women's Division One team in Round 6 may play in Women's Division Two (or lower) in Round 7.*

(C) Not Applicable

(D) A Club may apply to the CMC in writing for an exemption from Rule 11.2.5(B) or Rule 11.2.5(C):

(i) where there are exceptional circumstances as to why the Player should be allowed to play in the next consecutively ranked Grade as per Rule 12.5, or as otherwise determined by the CMC; and

(ii) where any such application is made no later than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the Match in which permission is sought for the Player to play.

(a) The CMC will approve only enough players for the team to get to the maximum on-field number as per Rule 14.4

> ***Example**: Where a competition has Division 1, Division 2 and Division 3 Grades, once a Player has played eight (8) Division 1 matches, the player is ineligible to play in Division 3 for the remainder of the home and away season.*

(E) The CMC, may, in its absolute discretion, determine to accept or decline an application under 11.2.5(D).

(F) In the case of playing a catch-up match which was originally postponed due to weather or any other reason, any player who played in a Club's higher grade the previous Round to the new catch-up match's date is ineligible for selection.

11.2.6 Club Request for Proof of Player Eligibility

(A) If, on the day of a Match, a Club considers it has reasonable grounds to question an opposing Player's eligibility to participate in a Match, the Team Managers of both Teams are to meet and endeavour to resolve the matter at the time by production and review of any Player identification record and/or review of relevant PlayHQ records.

(B) Where a matter is unable to be resolved in accordance with Rule 11.2.6(A), the following is to apply:

(i) the Player in question shall sign the reverse side of the Official Team Sheet;

(ii) the signed Team Sheet is to be photographed by the Ground Manager, with the photograph to be sent to the League;

(iii) the Club requesting proof shall apply in writing to the League by no later than 5.00pm on the next business day following the Match;

(iv) The Player's Club must produce satisfactory evidence within three (3) working days of receiving an official request from the League, otherwise all Match wins gained by that Team in which the Player took part shall be forfeited to the opposing Team.

(C) Should any Club, Official or Player fail to comply with a request pursuant to Rule 11.2.6(B) or fail to assist in the provision of identification of the Player, the Club, Official or Player may be subject to the Policy breach process as per Rule 26.

(D) If the League considers that a Club's request for proof of Player eligibility was made without reasonable grounds, or was frivolous, the League may request a further explanation from the Club making the request and may, in its absolute discretion, impose a penalty on that Club in the form of a fine of up to five hundred (500) dollars.

11.3 Transfers

(A) Subject to any variation specified in these Rules, the transfer provisions within Section 3 of the *Policy Handbook* apply.

(B) Where a person is seeking to apply for a late transfer in accordance with Section 3.3(b)(ii) of the *Policy Handbook*:

(i) the application must be made to AFL NSW/ACT on the *Late Transfer Request* form; and

(ii) the details of the exceptional and compelling circumstances for the late transfer must be provided together with all evidence relied upon in support of this.

11.4 Permits

11.4.1 Local Interchange Agreements

(A) Two or more Leagues may enter into Local Interchange Agreement that allows for conditional Player movement during a season between Clubs that are in different Leagues without a Player having to fully transfer from one Club to another.

(B) Any Local Interchange Agreements between Leagues must:

(i) be in place and current in order for a Season Permit or Student Permit to be used;

(ii) be in a form approved by AFL NSW/ACT;

(iii) be in place by 30 June of the year of the current Season;

(iv) established only between Leagues where it is mutually beneficial to each League;

(v) establish the conditions under which Player movement can occur.

11.4.2 Season Permit

(A) A Season Permit allows a Player, who is registered with one Club, to play one or more home and away Matches with another Club in a different Competition without having to register with the Destination Club.

> ***Guidance Note:*** *a Player cannot participate in a Finals Match on a Season Permit unless specified otherwise in the Local Interchange Agreement.*

(B) A Season Permit must:

(i) be lodged by the Destination Club via PlayHQ;

(ii) specify duration of the Permit;

(iii) be approved by the Source and Destination Clubs and the Source and Destination Leagues involved before the Player can play in a Match for the Destination Club.

(C) Where there is a dispute between two Clubs or two Leagues regarding the approval of a Season Permit, the dispute may be referred to the following for determination:

(i) where the dispute is between two Clubs or two Leagues that are both in NSW and/or ACT, refer to the RMC; or

(ii) where the dispute is between a Club or a League in NSW or ACT, and a Club or a League in another State or Territory, refer to the Permit Committee in accordance with Section 3.9 of the *Policy Handbook*.

(D) Any determination made by the RMC in accordance with Rule 11.4.2(C)(i) will be considered final and binding and not subject to any right of appeal under these Rules or the *Policy Handbook*.

11.4.3 Not Applicable

11.4.4 Student Permit

> ***Guidance Note**: A Student Permit allows a Player, who has moved away from home to attend an educational institution on a full-time basis in a different region, and who has had to Transfer Clubs to play football in the new region, to return home during a Holiday Period (as defined) to play in one (1) or more home and away Matches for their former Club.*

(A) A Student Permit may be approved where there is no Interchange Agreement in place between Leagues and allows for this type of Permit.

(B) A Student Permit:

(i) requires proof that the Player is a current full-time student at an educational institution;

(ii) requires proof of the relevant Holiday Periods of that educational institution;

(iii) requires proof of the Player's living away from home address;

(iv) only applies to Matches during those Holiday Periods;

(v) subject to Rules 11.4.4(D) and 11.4.4(E), only allows the Player to play for the Club they last transferred from;

(vi) must be made on the *Student Permit Form* and, subject to Rule 11.4.4(E), submitted by no later than seven (7) days prior to the first Match the player is seeking to play in;

(vii) can only be utilised for home and away Matches.

(C) Before the Player can play in a Match for the Destination Club, the Student Permit must:

(i) be approved in writing by the Source and Destination Clubs and the Source and Destination Leagues involved; and

(ii) entered and approved in PlayHQ.

(D) It is the responsibility of the Destination Club to ensure that written approval for a Student Permit is obtained from all parties referred to in 11.4.4(C)(i).

(E) No Student Permit may be lodged after 30 June of the season to which it applies.

(F) Where a Player has not previously been registered with any Club, the Player may request a Student Permit to play at the Club closest to their usual home address in the region they are returning to during the Holiday Period.

(G) Where a Player's former Club is a Junior Club, and the Player is no longer eligible to play Junior football, the Player may request a Student Permit to play for a Senior Club to which that former Junior Club is aligned.

(H) Where a Player is seeking to play for their former Junior Club, and is also seeking to play in a senior competition for a Senior Club:

(i) the player must meet all relevant eligibility criteria under these Rules to play in a senior competition;

(ii) the player may only play for a Senior Club that is aligned to the former Junior Club under an approved Aligned Junior Club pathway; and

(iii) as part of the approval process under Rule 11.4.4(C)(i), written approval must be obtained from both the Destination Junior and Senior Clubs.

(I) Where there is a dispute between two Clubs or two Leagues regarding the approval of a Student Permit, the dispute may be referred to the RMC for determination, subject to the following:

(i) the Club lodging the dispute must do so no later than three (3) business days prior to the first Match for which the permit is being requested; and

(ii) the determination of the RMC will be considered final and binding and not subject to any right of appeal under these Rules or the *Policy Handbook*.

11.5 False or Misleading Information

(A) Subject to any variation specified in these Rules, Section 3.10 of the *Policy Handbook* applies to the provision of false or misleading information in relation to Player Registration, Transfers or Permits.

(B) In addition to the sanctions referenced in Section 3.10 of the *Policy Handbook*, the CMC may, in its absolute discretion, also determine to:

(i) suspend a Player from participation in one or more Matches;

(ii) impose a sanction on any Club Official found to be involved in the provision of false or misleading information.

11.6 Ineligible Players

(A) An ineligible Player includes a Player who:

(i) is not properly registered in accordance with the Rules or the *Policy Handbook* including where 11.1.6(D) applies;

(ii) has registered or transferred on the basis of false or misleading information;

(iii) does not meet the minimum age requirements under the Rules or the *Policy Handbook* and does not have an approved dispensation application as per Rule 11.2.2;

(iv) exceeds the age limit for any Junior Grade, unless given dispensation under Rule 11.2.3;

(v) has failed to provide proof of identity or age in accordance with the Rules;

(vi) plays in a higher or lower Grade contrary to the Rules or any determination of a CMC;

(vii) plays in a Finals Match without having met finals eligibility criteria or without receiving an exemption to play;

(viii) does not have an approved Permit or Transfer to play with another Club in accordance with these Rules or the *Policy Handbook*;

(ix) is suspended from playing by way of a sanction invoked under these Rules or the *Policy Handbook*;

(x) is a Deregistered Player or Official;

(xi) has incurred a concussion and has not complied with all stages of the *Management of Sport-Related Concussion in Australian Football*; or

(xii) exceeds the Maximum Number of Players Listed on a Team Sheet, unless given dispensation under Rule 14.4(H).

(B) Any Club that fields an ineligible player in a Match (including in a finals Match) may be subject to disciplinary sanctions to be imposed by the CMC including but not limited to:

(i) If the Club won the Match: the loss of the relevant Competition Match and associated Competition Match points with the result of the match determined in accordance with Rule 16.5.3 as a forfeit in favour of the opposing team;

(ii) If the Club did not win the Match: the deduction of the equivalent of Competition Match points for one Match;

(iii) a fine of up to one thousand (1,000) dollars for each Competition Match in which such player has played: and

(iv) any additional conditions as reasonably determined by the CMC.

(C) Only under exceptional circumstances will the sanction under 11.6(B) not include the loss of the relevant Match or Matches.

(D) Where Sections 11.6(B)(i) or 11.6(B)(ii) is applied:

(i) best and fairest votes and goals kicked by the non-offending team will be maintained; and

(ii) best and fairest votes and goals kicked by the offending team will be determined by the CMC.

(E) Any Player, Official or Club, who the CMC determines in its absolute discretion, was knowingly involved with allowing an ineligible Player to compete in a Competition Match may, in addition to any sanction applied under Rule 11.6(B):

(i) in the case of a Player or Official, be subject of suspension and may also be subject of Deregistration; or

(ii) in the case of a Club, suspension or termination of the Club Participation Agreement.

(F) If a complaint has been made against a Club with respect to fielding an ineligible Player, the Club must ensure that its Players and Officials attend and cooperate with any relevant investigation conducted by the CMC.

Part C – COMPETITION MANAGEMENT

12 COMPETITIONS

12.1 Minimum Standards

(A) Clubs must comply with the minimum standards applicable to a Competition or Competitions as prescribed by the League from time to time.

(B) The League will determine which Competitions operate under minimum standards.

(C) If a Club fails to meet the relevant minimum standards of a Competition or Competitions, the CMC may impose disciplinary sanctions, including but not limited to expulsion or relegation from the relevant Competition.

12.2 Competition Management Committee (CMC) Decisions

(A) The League's CMC is established in accordance with Rule 7.6.

(B) A Club seeking a determination of the CMC in accordance with these Rules, must make any such request in writing.

(C) A CMC may request that a Club or person provide further information to assist its review and determination of a matter, and that Club or person must co-operate with any such request.

(D) The CMC is to make decisions in an efficient and transparent manner, and where practicable, will provide the applicant Club with its decision in writing.

(E) The decision of a CMC will be final and binding and will not be appealable unless allowed for under Section 26.1 of the *Policy Handbook*.

12.3 Competition Equalisation

12.3.1 Player Points / Player Payments System

(A) Prior to the League introducing, utilising, or implementing, a Player Points System or Player Payment Rules, the Player Points System or Player Payment Rules must be in a form approved in writing by AFL NSW/ACT.

(B) In addition to the obligations of a League under Rule 12.3.1(A), no League may introduce, utilise or implement any Rule or other binding provision or direction that relates to or impacts on the registration or transfer of Players, competitive balance or equalisation mechanisms in respect of the League's Competitions or the number of teams Clubs may enter or field in the League's Competitions, without the prior written approval of AFL NSW/ACT.

(C) The Competitions listed in Table 13 are presently governed by an approved Player Points System Policy.

Table 13 – AFL NSW/ACT Competitions with an approved PPS Policy

League	Competition / Grade
AFL Canberra	First Grade Men's
	First Grade Women's
AFL Hunter Central Coast	Men's Black Diamond Cup
AFL South Coast	Men's Premier Division
AFL Sydney	Men's Premier Division
	Women's Premier Division
Farrer Football & Netball League	Men's Seniors
Hume Football & Netball League	Men's Seniors

Riverina Football & Netball League	Men's Seniors

(D) Any alleged breach of a Player Points System Policy will be considered to be a breach of policy under the Rules.

(E) Appeal rights and procedure in relation to decisions made under the Player Points System Policy are provided for within that Policy rather than under the Rules.

12.4 Conduct of Junior Competitions

(A) All Junior Competitions will be conducted according to the provisions of the *Junior Rules Program Handbook* unless otherwise approved by AFL NSW/ACT or as detailed in the Rules.

12.5 Competition Grades

(A) Subject to these Rules, the League will determine, in accordance with any relevant AFL Policy, the Competition Grades for the season including;

(i) any Junior Age Groups available and, subject to Rule 12.5(C), whether each Age Group is boys only, girls only or mixed gender Age Groups;

(ii) which, if any, Junior Age Groups are development age groups;

> ***Guidance Note**: A development age group is one where matches are not played for points and is designed to assist junior players learn the game in a non-competition, modified rules environment.*

(iii) any Senior Grades available

(iv) the ranking of competition Grades where applicable; and

(v) which Teams are eligible to participate in each of those Grades.

(B) Where a League seeks to have a Junior Competition that has an age interval exceeding two years, the League must obtain the prior approval of AFL NSW/ACT.

(C) Mixed grade Junior competitions are only allowed up to and including Under 14s.

(D) Table 14 details the Competition Grades and rankings that have been determined by the League for the current season.

Table 14 – Current Season Competition Grades

League	Competition	Age Group / Grade (include whether mixed, female only, male only)	Rank
AFL South Coast Seniors	Men's Competitions	Men's Premier Division	*1*
		Men's Reserve Grade	*2*
	Women's Competitions	Women's Premier Division	*1*
		Women's Division One	*2*
AFL South Coast Juniors	Under-17s Boys	Male only	*N/a*
	Under-17s Girls	Female only	
	Under-15s Boys	Male only	
	Under-15s Girls	Female only	
	Under-13s Mixed	Mixed	
	Under-13s Girls	Female only	
	Under-11s Mixed (Illawarra)	Mixed	
	Under-11s Girls (Illawarra)	Female only	

	Under-11s Mixed (Shoalhaven)	Mixed	
	Under-11s Girls (Shoalhaven)	Female only	
	Under-9s Mixed (Illawarra)	Mixed	
	Under-9s Girls (Illawarra)	Female only	
	Under-9s Mixed (Shoalhaven)	Mixed	
	Under-9s Girls (Shoalhaven)	Female only	

12.6 Not Applicable

13 FIXTURE

13.1 Preparation of Fixture

(A) The League will determine dates, locations and times of all Competition Matches in its ultimate discretion.

(B) The League will prepare the Season Fixture for each Grade of Competition for distribution to Clubs prior to the start of the season.

(C) Other than in exceptional circumstances as determined by the League, the Season Fixture will not be varied once the season has commenced.

(D) Where a Season Fixture is prepared for a divisional structure, any byes, where possible, should be in the lower division.

(E) Each Competition Season Fixture will consist of a series of home and away Matches followed by a finals series of Matches.

13.2 Club Requests for Fixture Changes

(A) Senior Clubs have four (4) weeks from the distribution of the Season Fixture to request changes to times and venues, and after that time changes to the Season Fixture can only be requested:

(i) with fourteen (14) days prior notice and with the affected opponent's agreement and subject to umpire availability; or

(ii) for unforeseen circumstances such as washouts.

(B) Junior Clubs may only seek to change the time and/or venue of a fixtured Match where:

(i) it has been agreed to by both competing Clubs; and

(ii) where it has been agreed to by the Umpire Coordinator; and

(iii) where notice of the requested change has been lodged by the competing Clubs with the CMC no later than 7 days prior to the scheduled Match.

(C) The *AFL South Coast Fixture Change Request* form is to be completed by the Club seeking to change a fixture in accordance with Rules 13.2(A) or 13.2(B).

14 TEAMS

14.1 Team Nominations

(A) The nomination process for a Club to enter a Team in a Competition, including any team nomination fees payable, will be determined by the CMC in its absolute discretion.

(B) The CMC may impose sanctions on Clubs for late submissions of a Team nomination or withdrawal of a Team nomination past a predetermined date.

(C) Should a Club withdraw a nominated senior team from a competition where they have been already accepted, the following financial penalties may apply to the club at the discretion of the Competition Management Committee:

(i) if prior to the commencement of the season, a maximum fine of $1000;

(ii) if after the commencement of the season, a maximum of $1500.

14.2 Joint Venture Teams

(A) The CMC may allow the formation of a joint venture Team between Clubs to maximise the participation opportunity for Players to play in a Competition.

(B) The formation of a joint venture Team will only be allowed to proceed where it is in the best interests of the Competition. The purpose of a JV is to allow two (2) clubs to come together and enter one (1) or multiple teams under the following conditions:

(i) Where neither club can field a standalone team; or

(ii) To develop a pathway where in the short term neither club can establish a pathway on a standalone basis.

(C) Clubs proposing a joint venture Team must make a written application to the CMC, setting out the background to the proposed joint venture, the reasoning and justification for same, and must include a completed Joint Venture Agreement template as approved from time to time by the CMC.

(D) The CMC may reject, approve, or approve on terms and conditions, the proposed joint venture Team and Joint Venture Agreement.

(E) A joint venture Team will not be able to be participate in any Competition until such time as the Joint Venture Agreement for that Team is approved by the CMC.

(F) The terms of a Joint Venture Agreement will be for one (1) season only, at which time the Joint Venture Agreement will expire or be deemed to expire.

(G) As part of any Joint Venture Agreement, all Clubs involved must provide the League with an individualised Recruitment Strategy Plan for a standalone side by July 31 of the competition year.

14.3 Club Entering Multiple Teams in a Junior Competition

(A) Where a Club enters more than one (1) team in a Junior Grade in the same Competition, the following applies:

(i) the Club has three (3) rounds to finalise its Player allocation to those Teams;

(ii) unless 14.3(A)(iii) applies, the Club must ensure that the allocation of Players to those Teams results in Teams that are evenly matched;

(iii) a Club may apply in writing to the CMC for approval of an alternative method of allocating players to Teams.

(B) Any application by a Club under 14.3(A)(iii):

(i) must be lodged with the CMC no later than fourteen (14) days prior to round one (1) of the Season;

(ii) must detail the rationale for the method proposed including how this will maximise the experience and retention of all players and is in the best interests of the Competition as a whole; and

(iii) will be approved or declined by the CMC in its absolute discretion.

(C) During the first three (3) rounds a Player may play for any of the Club's Teams in that Grade but cannot play for more than one (1) of those Teams in a round.

> ***Guidance Note**: The purpose of this Rule is to allow Clubs to move Players from one Team to another during these rounds to try to achieve evenly matched Teams. Allowing a Player to play in more than one Team in a Round would not serve this purpose*

(D) After round three (3) a Player must remain in the same team for the duration of the season including finals.

(E) Unless otherwise approved under Rule 14.3(B), if after five (5) Rounds, it is evident to the CMC that there is significant disparity in the evenness of the Teams from a Club, the CMC may:

(i) direct the Club to make changes to the Teams to ensure they are evenly matched; and

(ii) determine that the Teams will not accrue any Competition points until such time as the Club demonstrates to the satisfaction of the CMC that they are taking reasonable steps to even up the Teams.

(F) During the course of the Season, a Club may make application to the CMC to move a Player to another Team in that Grade, where the Club can demonstrate that moving that Player will help bring balance to the Club's Teams in that Grade.

(G) The approval of an application under Rule 14.3(E) is at the absolute discretion of the CMC, and:

(i) if the application is approved, the Player must then remain in that Team for the duration of the Season, including any Finals; and

(ii) Matches played by that Player in the other Team will be counted for finals eligibility.

14.4 Number of Players in a Team - Senior Competitions

(A) The CMC will determine the minimum and maximum number of Players allowed per Team for Senior Competitions and detail this in Table 15.

Table 15 – Number of Players Allowed in a Team - Senior Competitions

Competition	Grade	Minimum Number of Players for a Match	Maximum Number of Players	
			On a Team Sheet	On Field
AFL South Coast Seniors	Premier Division Men	18	22	18
	Reserve Grade Men	12	22*	18
	Premier Division Women	12	20	16
	Reserve Grade Women	12	20*	16

**In Reserve Grade Football, teams may exceed the Maximum Number of Players allowed on a Team Sheet by one (1) player in line with Rule 14.4(H).*

(B) Where both competing Teams in a Match have the maximum number of Players allowed on a Team Sheet as per Table 14, the number of Players per Team on field at the start of a Match shall be the "Max Number of Players On-Field" as per Table 15.

(C) Where one or both competing Teams have less than the maximum number of Players allowed on a Team Sheet as per Rule 14.4(A), the number of Players per Team on field at the start of a Match shall be as per Table 16.

Table 16 – On-Field Number Where Less than Maximum Team Sheet Number - Senior Competitions

Competition	Grade	Where One or Both Teams has only...	On-field Number of Players is...
South Coast Seniors	Reserve Grade Men	Twenty-one (21)	Eighteen (18)
		Twenty (20)	Eighteen (18)
		Nineteen (19)	Eighteen (18)
		Eighteen (18)	Seventeen (17)
		Seventeen (17)	Sixteen (16)
		Sixteen (16)	Fifteen (15)
		Fifteen (15)	Fourteen (14)
		Fourteen (14)	Fourteen (14)
		Thirteen (13)	Thirteen (13)
		Twelve (12)	Twelve (12)
	Reserve Grade Women	Nineteen (19)	Sixteen (16)
		Eighteen (18)	Sixteen (16)
		Seventeen (17)	Sixteen (16)
		Sixteen (16)	Fifteen (15)
		Fifteen (15)	Fourteen (14)
		Fourteen (14)	Fourteen (14)
		Thirteen (13)	Thirteen (13)
		Twelve (12)	Twelve (12)

(D) The Coaches of both Teams may agree, in consultation with the Umpire, to start with a different on-field number of Players to that stated in Rule 14.4(C) provided that:

(i) Both teams have the same on-field number of Players; and

(ii) The agreed on-field number of players does not exceed the Maximum Number of Players on-field for that Grade as specified in Table 15 and is not less than the Minimum Number of Players for Match for that Grade as specified in Table 15.

(E) In Finals Matches:

(i) Rules 14.4(C) and 14.4(D) do not apply; and

(ii) either team may field up to the maximum number of on-field Players specified in Table 15.

(F) At the commencement of a Match, both Teams must have available the "Minimum Number of Players for a Match" as detailed in Table 15 in order for it to constitute an official Competition Match and where a Team has less than the minimum number of Players required, that Team will be deemed to have forfeited the Match.

(G) If for any reason during the course of a Match a Team has less than the "Minimum Number of Players for a Match" as per Table 15:

(i) the Match is to continue and the Team has fifteen (15) minutes to ensure the minimum number of Players is reinstated, with players who are fit and able to play; and

(ii) if the Team is unable to comply with the requirement in Rule 14.4(G)(i) it will be deemed to have forfeited the Match.

(H) Under Appendix Five, a Club may apply for an Inclusion Dispensation for a Player with an intellectual impairment. If a Player with dispensation is selected to a Men's Reserve Grade or Women's Reserve Grade Team, the Team may exceed the Maximum Number of Players allowed on a team sheet by one (1) player.

14.5 Number of Players in a Team - Junior Competitions

(A) The CMC will determine the minimum and maximum number of Players allowed per Team for Junior Competitions and detail this in Table 17.

Table 17 – Number of Players Allowed in a Team - Junior Competitions

Competition	Grade	Minimum Number of Players for a Match	Maximum Number of Players	
			On a Team Sheet	On Field
AFL South Coast Juniors	Under-9s Mixed	6	12	9
	Under-9s Girls	6	12	9
	Under-11s Mixed	9	15	12
	Under-11s Girls	9	15	12
	Under-13s Mixed	9	Unlimited	16
	Under-13s Girls	9	Unlimited	14
	Under-15s Boys	9	Unlimited	18
	Under-15s Girls	9	Unlimited	16
	Under-17s Boys	9	Unlimited	18
	Under-17s Girls	9	Unlimited	16

(B) Teams must have the "Minimum Number of Players for a Match", as per Table 17, available at the scheduled commencement of a Competition Match to constitute an official Match, and subject to Rule 14.5(C), where a Team has less than the minimum number of Players:

(i) that Team will be deemed to have forfeited the Match;

(ii) a scratch match may still proceed to allow player participation, with the Coaches encouraged to even-up the skill levels of the Teams.

(C) If the "Minimum Number of Players for a Match" as per Table 17 are not available at the scheduled commencement of Junior Competition Match, but Players sufficient for minimum numbers are expected to arrive before the end of the first quarter, the following is to apply:

(i) a scratch Match will commence with reduced Player numbers on each Team;

(ii) Teams must still have equal numbers on the field;

(iii) scores will be recorded by the goal Umpires;

(iv) if minimum numbers become available at any time prior to the end of the first quarter, then they may take the field after a goal is scored, the Teams are to be adjusted accordingly and the scratch Match then becomes an official Match;

(v) the scores at the time when the Match becomes an official Match will stand;

(vi) if minimum numbers are not available by the end of the first quarter, the Match remains a scratch Match and the Team with less than the minimum number of Players forfeits the Match.

(D) During school holidays the "Minimum Number of Players for a Match" as per Table 17 are to be reduced by two (2) Players where this is necessary to ensure a Match can be played, unless the League advises otherwise.

14.6 Even On-field Numbers – Junior Competitions

(A) On-field Player numbers must be equal at all times other than:

(i) in the case of a Red Card send-off where the Rules disallow a replacement for a period of time; or

(ii) in the case of a Yellow Card send-off where there is no available replacement Player; or

(iii) where a Coach declines to accept Players as per the requirements of Table 18.

(iv) where team numbers are adjusted in accordance with the mercy rule under Rule 15.2.8.

(B) If during the Match, an injured Player has to leave the ground but there are no replacements in that Team, the following applies:

(i) the field Umpire, the Opposition Coach and the Ground Manager must be advised accordingly;

(ii) the other Club's Team is to remove a Player to keep the numbers on the ground even; and

(iii) if the injured Player then returns to the field, the same process applies in reverse.

14.7 Even Up Rule – Junior Competitions

(A) To encourage maximum participation where the two Teams do not have the same number of available Players, the rules in Table 18 apply.

Table 18 – Even Up Rules - Junior Competitions

Grades	Requirements
Under 8 to Under 12	Clubs **must** borrow or loan available Players up to the maximum on-field number for that Grade as specified in Table 17. Players must be rotated so that no single player plays more than one (1) quarter per match for the opposition team.
Under 13 to Under 18	Clubs **may** borrow available opposition Players up to the maximum on-field number for that Grade as specified in Table 17. If the coach accepts the players, they must be rotated so that no single player plays more than one (1) quarter per match for the opposition team. If the Coach does not accept the Players offered, the Team offering the additional Players will be able to play with such additional Players up to the maximum on-field number as specified in Table 17.

(B) The Rules specified in Table 18 do not apply in finals series matches.

15 MATCHES

15.1 Laws of Australian Football

Except where otherwise provided for in the Rules, Competition Matches shall be played under the *Laws of Australian Football* as prescribed by the AFL from time to time.

15.2 AFL NSW/ACT Match Laws

15.2.1 Kick-in Rule

(A) Subject to Rule 15.2.1(B), the same football used to score the behind must be utilised for the resultant kick-in, unless otherwise instructed by the field Umpire.

(B) Senior Competitions are to have an additional football of appropriate quality behind each set of goals and a Player is permitted to use this ball in the event the ball from in play is not easily accessible (e.g. no longer in the venue).

15.2.2 50 Metre Penalties

(A) Players may not play on during the advancement of any 50 metre Penalty and must wait until the field Umpire signals time back on (variation from the Laws of the Game).

(B) Where a 50-metre penalty is not applicable in the Age Group rules, the penalty metres applicable for that Age Group shall be applied.

(C) In addition to any Report that may be made, a free kick or a fifty (50) metre penalty may be awarded against a Team if a Player, Official or clearly identifiable Supporter of a Team:

(i) uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards an Umpire;

(ii) behaves in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards an Umpire;

(iii) intentionally, recklessly or negligently engages in conduct which affects, interferes with or prevents an Umpire from performing their duties.

15.2.3 Starting Positions at Centre Bounces

> ***Guidance Note**: Refer to Law 13.1 and Diagram 2 in the Laws of Australian Football. This applies to Senior Competition Grades only.*

(A) The Law in the *Laws of Australian Football* relating to "Centre Bounces – Starting Positions" does not apply to Junior Competition Grades.

(B) Based on a Team's on-field playing numbers, the number of Players in each area of the field will be as per Table 19.

Table 19 – Player Number Starting Positions

Per Team	Forwards	Centres	Backs
18	6	6 – Maximum 4 in square	6
17	6	5 – Maximum 4 in square	6
16	5	6 – Maximum 4 in square	5
15	5	5 – Maximum 4 in square	5
14	5	4 – Maximum 4 in square	5
13	5	3 – Maximum 3 in square	5
12	4	4 – Maximum 4 in square	4

15.2.4 Location of Mark at Kick In

The Law in the *Laws of Australian Football* relating to "Location of The Mark at Kick Ins" does not apply to a Junior Competition Grade where a reduced size field is used.

15.2.5 Player Standing the Mark

The Law in the *Laws of Australian Football* relating to "Player Standing the Mark" does not apply to Junior Competition Grades.

15.2.6 Out of Bounds

(A) Where Boundary umpires have not been designated to a Match, and when the ball goes out of bounds, the field Umpire will bring the ball back in 5m from the boundary line and a ball-up will apply.

(B) The last touch interpretation as introduced by the AFL for 2026 will not apply to Junior Grades up to and including U12's and Masters.

15.2.7 Removing a Team from the Field of Play

(A) No person, including any Coach or Club Official, may remove, or cause to be removed, a Team from the Field of Play before the official completion of the Match.

(B) Breach of this Rule is, for an Official, a Reportable Offence, to be dealt with by the Tribunal pursuant to the Rules as an act of Serious Misconduct under Law 22.2.2(bb).

(C) Breach of this Rule by a person other than an Official, is a breach of the Code of Conduct, to be dealt with by the prescribed disciplinary process.

15.2.8 Mercy Rule - Junior Competitions

> ***Guidance Note**: The purpose of the Rule is to instil in Coaches and Players of Junior Teams that it serves no beneficial purpose to inflict massive losses on an opposition Team. The Rule provides a mechanism to limit the final winning margin of any Junior Match, and where that capped margin is reached during a Match, requires the Coaches to implement strategies to equalise the competitive balance of the Teams for the benefit of all participants.*

(A) The provisions of this Mercy Rule apply to all Junior Competition home and away Matches, but do not apply to finals Matches.

(B) Regardless of the actual Match score, the official final winning margin between Teams in a Junior Competition Match cannot exceed:

(i) **sixty (60) points** for all Grades up to and including Under 13's;

(ii) **seventy-five (75) points** for Under 14's to Under 18's.

(C) Where the score differential between Teams at the end of the first (1st), second (2nd) or third (3rd) quarter equals or exceeds the points margin specified in Rule 15.2.8(B) for the relevant Grade, the requirements of Table 20 apply.

Table 20 – Mercy Rule Requirements

Component	Requirements
Score Check	The Umpires and Team Managers are to check the scores with the Goal Umpires at the end of the quarter to confirm that the maximum margin has been achieved.
Scoreboard	Scoring on the scoreboard is to cease at the end of the quarter that the margin is achieved, and the score on the scoreboard is to be adjusted as follows: ▪ the trailing team's score is to be retained; and ▪ the leading team's score is to be calculated and recorded by adding the maximum margin specified in Rule 15.2.8(B) to the trailing team's score. *[**Example:** if at the end of the third quarter, the score of an Under 15s boys match is 125 to 32, the trailing Team's score is to be recorded on the scoreboard as 32 and the leading Team's score is to be recorded as 107 (i.e. 32 + 75).]*
Goal Umpire Scoring	The goal umpires are to continue to score the Match as usual and submit score cards to the Ground Manager at the end of the Match. *[**Guidance Note**: The purpose of this is to assist the League determine whether the on-field equalisation requirements of the Mercy Rule have been applied.]*
Entry of Scores in PlayHQ	Each Team's total score is to be recorded in PlayHQ by the home Club as follows: ▪ for the **losing Team** – that Team's actual score at the end of the quarter that the margin was achieved; and ▪ for the **winning Team** – by adding the maximum margin specified in Rule 15.2.8(B) to the losing Team's score. *[**Example:** if the score at the end of the 2nd quarter of an Under 13s mixed match is 83 to 12, the losing Team's score is to be entered as 12 and the winning Team's score is to be entered as 72 (i.e. 12 + 60).]*
Umpire Match Report	The field Umpire is to note in the Umpire Match Report that the Mercy Rule was invoked and end of the quarter that it was invoked at. A copy of the goal umpire scorecards is to be submitted with the Umpire Match Report.

On-field Equalisation Requirements	It is incumbent on the Coaches of both Teams to implement measures to: ▪ equalize the on field competitive balance of the Match; and ▪ allow for improved participation in the Match for the Players of the losing team. The League may prescribe particular requirements in relation to the on-field equalisation measures to be taken. Any equalisation measure should look to maximise the number of players on the field, but no more than the maximum number of players on field allowed for under Table 17. Where an equalisation measure results in an uneven number of Players in each Team on the field, the Umpires must be notified of this so that the headcount Rule is not unnecessarily invoked.
Coach Responsibilities	Clubs and Coaches may be required by the CMC to explain any circumstance in which there is evident failure to take equalisation measures or achieve a competitive balance between the Teams.
Non-Compliance	Non-compliance with this Mercy Rule will be dealt with by the CMC as a potential breach of policy by the Club and any Officials involved.

(D) Where the maximum margin specified in Rule 15.2.8(B) is not attained until the fourth (4th) quarter, the same principles and method as detailed in the "Entry of Scores in PlayHQ" in Table 20 apply.

15.2.9 Supporter Distance from Boundary & Goals

(A) Where the Field of Play has no fence around it, supporters are to remain a minimum distance of:

(i) three (3) metres from the boundary line;

(ii) five (5) metres from the behind and goal posts.

(B) The field Umpire may require Supporters to provide more space beyond the boundary or goals and may refrain from recommencing the Match until the request is complied with.

15.2.10 Persons Allowed on Field of Play

(A) Only Players, Umpires, medical staff (trainers, QMP's or first aiders), runners and water carriers are permitted on the field during the course of play, including any period of delay in play caused by an injury to a Player and their presence on the field must be in accordance with the provisions of these Rules.

***Guidance Note**: Any incursion onto the field during the course of play by an unauthorised person is a serious offence and will be managed accordingly.*

(B) A coach of a junior grade team is permitted to be on the Field of Play in a grade that is deemed to be a development grade.

***Guidance Note**: Development age groups are non-competition ages groups like Under-9s and Under-11s where there is no formal scoring, result or ladder maintained.*

(C) During an unscheduled delay caused by an injury to a Player, the Ground Manager may enter the field to determine from medical staff the Players condition, whether an ambulance is to attend and the likely duration of such delay.

(D) Where a player is injured and it has been determined by medical staff that the player is not to be moved pending the arrival of an ambulance, the parents or guardians of an injured junior player, or the spouse or partner of an injured senior player, are allowed to enter the Field of Play to provide support to that player.

15.2.11 Procedure for Stopping Play (Injured Player)

(A) In the event a Player is clearly injured and being attended to by a trainer on the Field of Play, the field Umpire will only stop play when:

(i) the ball is within one kick of the injured Player and heading in the direction of that injured Player; or

(ii) where an ambulance is required or where a stretcher is required in accordance with Law 7.3 of the *Laws of Australian Football*

***Guidance Notes**:*

1. *a field Umpire will be the sole arbiter of what constitutes one kick, any dispute in regard to this from a Player or Official may constitute a free kick in accordance with Law 18.8.2 of the Laws of Australian Football or a Reportable Offence in accordance with Law 22.2.2 of the Laws of Australian Football*
2. *a field Umpire may also stop play at any time, at their discretion, where it is evident a Player has suffered a serious and/or distressing injury.*

(B) If play is stopped under Rule 15.2.11(A), play can only recommence once:

(i) the injured player has been assisted away from play as directed by the Umpire; or

(ii) in the event a stretcher is required, once the player has been removed from the Field of Play in accordance with Law 7.3.2 of the Laws of Australian Football.

(C) Once it is determined that play may recommence, the field Umpire shall recommence play as follows depending on the circumstances:

(i) where the football was in dispute at the time play was stopped, by throwing up the football;

(ii) where the football was out of bounds at the time play was stopped:

(a) where boundary Umpires are appointed, by directing the boundary Umpire to throw the football in; or

(b) where boundary Umpires are not appointed, in accordance with Rule 15.2.6;

(iii) where a Player had possession of the football at the time play was stopped, by awarding a Free Kick to the Player; or

(iv) where a Player had been awarded a Free Kick or a Mark at the time play was stopped, by allowing the Player to dispose of the football.

15.2.12 Pre-match Warm-up

(A) When Teams enter the Field of Play for the start of the Match, they may only warm up at the end of the field closest to their interchange bench.

15.2.13 Interchange Process

(A) In accordance with Law 7.2 of the Laws of Australian Football, the following procedure shall apply to the interchange of Players during a Match who are listed on the Team Sheet:

(i) Unless an ambulance is required or a stretcher is required in accordance with Law 7.3 of the Laws of Australian Football, the Players intending to interchange shall leave and enter the Playing Surface through the Interchange Area;

(ii) Where a Player does not leave or enter the Playing Surface as specified in in 15.2.13(A)(i), this will be reported to a field Umpire and the following shall apply:

(a) The field Umpire shall stop play at the first available opportunity;

(b) A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick to the nearest player of the opposing Team; and

(c) A fifty (50) metre penalty shall then be imposed from the position where the Free Kick was awarded.

15.2.14 Nomination of Ruck

The restart of play without a nominated ruck interpretation as introduced by the AFL for 2026 will not apply to Junior Grades up to and including U17.

15.3 Player Match Attire & Protective Equipment

15.3.1 Match Uniform

(A) A Player is required to wear an approved Club uniform in any Match as prescribed by Rule 8.7.

(B) Where a Player is not attired for a Match in an approved Club uniform:

(i) the field umpire, at their discretion, may request the Player leave the Field of Play until such time as the Player is correctly attired;

(ii) the field umpire is to include details of the incorrectly attired Player in the Umpire Match Report; and

(iii) the CMC may, in its absolute discretion, deal with the matter as a potential breach of policy under these Rules.

(C) Each Player must wear a number on the back of their jersey that corresponds to the number listed on the Club's Team Sheet and no Players from the same Team are permitted to wear the same number at any time during a Match.

(D) If a player is required to change a jersey during a match (e.g. due to damage to, or blood on, a jersey), the following is to apply if the replacement jersey has a different number on it:

(i) the Team Manager is to notify Ground Manager immediately;

(ii) the Ground Manager is to note the change of the Player's number on the official team sheet and the time of the Match of this occurred;

***Guidance Note**: The Player's original number must still remain visible on the team sheet.*

(iii) The Team Manager is to notify the opposition team immediately following notification to the Ground Manager;

(iv) At the next quarter time interval in the match, the Ground Manager is to notify the field umpire of the change to a Player's jersey.

15.3.2 Uniform Clashes

(A) To avoid clashes of uniforms in Matches, the following provisions will apply:

(i) Not Applicable;

(ii) where the Host Club play in white shorts as its primary playing uniform, the away Team must play in any colour shorts other than white; and

(iii) where Teams play in uniforms that are similar in design or colour as determined by the CMC, the away Club's Team must wear a clash jumper as approved by the CMC.

(B) The CMC may, in consultation with the Clubs involved, determine any other measure necessary to avoid a clash of uniform between Teams in a Match.

15.3.3 Undergarments & Other Items

(A) Table 21 prescribes what undergarments and other items are permitted, or not permitted, to be worn in a Match.

Table 21 – Undergarments & Other Items in Matches

Item	Permitted or Not
Undergarments	Undergarments, such as lycra shorts or compression garments, including socks, are permitted to be worn under shorts and jerseys as follows: 1) Undergarments worn under shorts must be skin tone, black or the same colour as Club shorts and must not be longer than the top of the knee. 2) Undergarments worn under jersey must be sleeveless unless the jumper being worn is long sleeve or the undergarment is the same colour as the jersey. 3) Compression socks must be worn under playing socks and must be skin tone, black or the same colour as Club socks. Compression socks must not be longer than the bottom of the knee. Exemptions to the length of undergarments worn may be sought from the CMC for medical, religious or other reasons. Written approval from the CMC is required for any exemption prior to the undergarment garment being worn. The field Umpire, at their discretion, may request evidence of an exemption to be provided prior to a Player, who is wearing long length undergarments, being allowed on the Field of Play.
Tee Shirts	Not permitted unless worn under a long sleeve jersey.
Football Boots	Football boots must be worn. Metal stops are not permitted.
Runners / Sneakers	Not permitted
Hats, Caps, Beanies	Not permitted
Gloves	Not permitted, unless medically prescribed to protect an injury and approved by the CMC.
Arm Bands	Black tape arm bands are permitted where worn to commemorate a deceased person. Other colour tape arm bands are permitted in line with an appropriate themed event.
Wrist Bands	Not permitted, other than medical tape for an injury.
Hair Bands / Ribbons	Permitted as long as no hard component (e.g. plastic, metal).
Bobby Pins	Not permitted
Jewellery	Not permitted and must be removed, unless it is fixed permanently. The Club of a Player with permanently fixed jewellery must apply to the CMC for approval for the Player to wear the jewellery, and must detail what measures are proposed to be taken to ensure the jewellery does not lead to increased risk of injury to the Player, or other Players.
Spectacles	Refer to Section 16.6 of the *Policy Handbook*. The Club of any Player wearing spectacles in a Match is to advise the CMC of this and provide evidence to show that the spectacles meet relevant safety requirements.

15.3.4 Protective Equipment

(A) Sections 16.1 to 16.5 of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

(B) For the purposes of Rule 15.3.4(A), the Controlling Body as referred to in the *Policy Handbook* will be AFL NSW/ACT.

15.4 Host Club Match Day Responsibilities

(A) A Host Club's matchday responsibilities are established throughout the Rules.

(B) Table 22 provides a snapshot of key Host Club matchday requirements.

Table 22 – Host Club Key Match Day Responsibilities

Item	Requirements
Ground Setup & Equipment	Ensure that each ground for a Match is set up in accordance with the Rules and that all relevant equipment is provided.
Risk Management Checklist	Complete a risk management assessment of the venue in accordance with Rule 20.
Ground Manager	Appoint a Ground Manager for all Matches to carry out responsibilities detailed in Rule 9.4.1 and Table 5.
Timekeeper	Appoint a Timekeeper for all Matches to carry out the responsibilities detailed in Rule 9.4.2 and Table 6.
Umpire Escort	Appoint an Umpire Escort for all Matches to carry out the responsibilities detailed in Rule 9.4.3.
Injury Treatment Resources	Ensure the following: ▪ the presence of injury management officials in accordance with Rule 21.2. ▪ that a first aid kit is readily available; ▪ that ice packs are available; ▪ that an adequate sport-specific rescue/transport equipment e.g stretcher is readily available; ▪ that the telephone numbers and addresses of the nearest medical services including ambulance and hospitals are available; ▪ adequate access to venue is available for emergency service vehicles; ▪ that the *Management of Sport Related Concussion in Australian Football* document is readily available.
Match Day Paperwork Records	Collect, submit and retain matchday records in accordance with Rule 15.7.

15.5 Ground Preparation & Setup

15.5.1 Ground Marking

(A) For any Grade where a Match is played on a full-size field, the ground is to be clearly marked with lines in white or other easily discernible colour as detailed in Table 23.

Table 23 – Ground Marking Requirements

Part of Ground	Line Marking Requirement
Boundary Line	▪ As per Law 3.2(b) of the *Laws of Australian Football*. ▪ The line must be at least three (3) metres in from any fence
Goal Square	▪ As per Law 3.4 of the *Laws of Australian Football*.

***Guidance Note**: Where chemicals (e.g. weed killer) are used with or without paint to curb grass growth on a Field of Play, the Club is to ensure that it is not creating a trip hazard for participants due to any resultant significant surface variation.*

	▪ It is also recommended that a short line be marked fifteen (15) metres out from the "kick-off line" (end of the goal square) to assist Players and Umpires with the Location of the Mark at Kick-in Law.
Centre Square	▪ As per Law 3.5(a) of the *Laws of Australian Football*.
Centre Circle	▪ As per Law 3.5(b) of the *Laws of Australian Football*. ▪ Law 3.6 of the *Laws of Australian Football* provides for the League to allow relocation of the centre circle if it the centre location is in unsuitable condition.
Goal Line & Behind Lines	▪ **Goal Line** – a straight line to be marked between the goal posts ▪ **Behind Lines** – a straight line to be marked between each behind and goal post
50m Arc	▪ As illustrated in Diagram 1 of the *Laws of Australian Football*. ▪ The fifty (50) metre arc is not to intersect with the centre square. If a ground is less than one hundred and fifty (150) metres in length the arc to be reduced by 5m intervals (e.g 45m or 40m) until it no longer intersects with the centre square.
Interchange Area	▪ Unless otherwise specified by a League, one interchange area fifteen (15) metres wide.
Coach Line	▪ A Coach's line should be marked comprising five (5) metres in length and one (1) metre in from the fence / fence line or if no fence line, two (2) metres out from the boundary. ▪ It should be marked in front of the Coach's box / area. ▪ No Official or bench Player is allowed to stand in front of this line during play.
Spectator Exclusion Areas	▪ Where the Field of Play has no fence around it, it is recommended that the Club also mark lines to denote spectator exclusion areas as per Rule 15.2.9.

15.5.2 Ground Size

(A) The playing surface dimensions for Senior Grade Matches are to be in accordance with Law 3.2(a) of the *Laws of Australian Football*.

(B) The field sizes to be used in Junior Competition Matches are to be in accordance with Table 24.

Table 24 – Junior Competition Field Dimensions

Grade		Maximum Length (Metres)	Maximum Width (Metres)
Mixed, Girls Only and Boys Only	**Under 9**	100	80
	Under 11	130	90
	Under 13	140	110
	Under 15	150	120
	Under 17	Full Ground	Full Ground

(C) For Matches played on a field of smaller dimensions as specified in Table 24, boundaries are to be marked with cones placed no more than five (5) metres apart

(D) Where an exceptional circumstance results in an available ground being smaller than the field size for one or more Grades as specified in Table 24:

(i) for age groups of Under 13 or below, the field size is to be as close to the specified size as the ground space allows, but no smaller than 75% of the ground size specified in Table 24; or

(ii) in all other circumstances, an alternative venue with the correct ground size is to be sought.

***Guidance Note**: Clubs are to make all reasonable efforts to play matches on the correct size field. This Rule is only intended to be used where a field becomes unavailable due to damage or wet weather closure or other exceptional situation. It is not to be used where it is simply convenient to a Club to play on a smaller field.*

(E) Where both teams have less than the maximum number of Players, the Coaches of the two teams, in consultation with the Ground Manager and Umpire, may agree to reducing the field size from that specified in Table 23.

15.5.3 Goal / Behind Posts

(A) Table 25 establishes key requirements for the setup of goal and behind posts for a Match.

Table 25 – Goal and Behind Post Requirements

Post Attribute	Requirement
Post Height	Where goal and behind posts are fixed, the minimum and maximum heights are to be in accordance with Law 3.3.1 of the *Laws of Australian Football*. ***Guidance Note:** The recommended height for posts for venues that host local and regional level competitions are 10m for goal posts and 6.6m for behind posts. For State level facilities, the recommended heights are 12m for goal posts and 8m for behind posts.*
Post Placement	All goal and behind posts are to be placed in a straight line with a distance of six point four (6.4) metres between each post.
Post Padding	All fixed goal and behind posts are to be padded in accordance with Law 3.3.2 of the *Laws of Australian Football*.

15.5.4 Scoreboard

(A) A suitable scoreboard with numbers and Team names clearly visible to Players, Umpires and Supporters must be in operation for all Matches.

(B) As a minimum standard, the scoreboard should identify teams as “Home” and “Away”.

(C) The correct score is to be confirmed by the Goal Umpires with the Ground Manager at the end of each quarter and updated accordingly.

15.5.5 Timekeeping Facilities / Equipment

(A) Where a Timekeeping box is not available at a venue, a table and seating with an unobstructed view of the playing area must be provided for Club timekeepers, and where practicable, should be positioned in an equally accessible location for both Teams.

(B) The following must also be provided:

(i) a suitable time clock or timing device;

(ii) a siren in working condition that can be clearly heard at any location on the playing surface; and

(iii) a backup sounding device readily available in the event of the failure of the siren.

15.5.6 Change Rooms

(A) Separate changing facilities and showers must be provided for each Team and the Umpires for a Match.

(B) Where a Club facility does not have separate Umpire changing facilities, the Club must make arrangements to appropriately manage change room access and communicate this to the Umpire Coordinator in a time frame determined by the League.

(C) These rooms must be presented in a clean and tidy condition at the commencement of each Match.

(D) For Senior Grade Matches, the Host Club is to make the change rooms available to both teams as follows:

(i) for the first Match of the day, or where there is no match immediately prior, at least one (1) hour prior to scheduled commencement time of the Match;

(ii) for all other Matches, by no later than the commencement of the third quarter of the Match immediately prior.

(E) Where a venue does not have change rooms available, the Host Club is to notify any attending Club and Umpires of this at least two calendar (2) days before any scheduled Match at the venue.

15.6 Match Footballs

(A) Unless otherwise agreed by AFL NSW/ACT in writing, the size, type and brand of footballs to be used in Competition Matches is specified in Table 26.

Table 26 – Match Football Size & Type

Grade		Size	Type	Brand
Mixed	**Under 9**	2	Synthetic	Sherrin synthetic
	Under 11	3	Leather or synthetic	Sherrin Match or Sherrin synthetic
	Under 13	4	Leather	Sherrin Match
Girls Only	**Under 9**	2	Synthetic	Sherrin synthetic
	Under 11	2	Leather or synthetic	Sherrin Match or Sherrin synthetic
	Under 13	3	Leather or synthetic	Sherrin Match or Sherrin synthetic
	Under 15, Under 17	4	Leather	Sherrin Match
Boys Only	**Under 15, Under 17**	5	Leather	Sherrin Match
Women	**All Senior Grades**	4	Leather	Sherrin Match
Men	**All Senior Grades**	5	Leather	Sherrin Match or Kangaroo Brand

(B) The colour of the football to be used in a Match is:

(i) **red**, for any Match that commences prior to 3.00pm;

(ii) **yellow**, for any Match that commences at or after 3.00pm, or any Match commencing at or after 2.30pm where the lighting conditions are poor as determined by the Ground Manager in consultation with the Field Umpire.

(C) The Home Club must make available at least two footballs of a *suitable standard* and correct size for each Competition Match.

(D) For the purposes of Rule 15.6(C), a football of *suitable standard* is a new ball, where that is mandated by the League under Rule 15.6(D) for a particular Grade, or otherwise it is used ball where that ball:

(i) has only had limited use, is clean and has no discernible scratches or damage to its surface;

(ii) has retained its proper shape and colour;

(iii) has all branding and writing on the ball clearly visible and legible; and

(iv) can be inflated to the correct limit.

(E) Subject to Rule 15.6(A), additional standards and requirements relating to footballs for all Competitions may be determined by the League.

(F) AFL NSW/ACT approved suppliers, as published on the AFL NSW/ACT website, are the only companies authorised to use the AFL logo on footballs for NSW and ACT Competition Matches.

15.7 Match Day Paperwork / Records

15.7.1 Team Sheets

(A) The Club of a Team that is competing in a Match is required to complete a Team Sheet in accordance with the requirements detailed in Table 27.

(B) Each Club is ultimately responsible for the accuracy of its own Club's Team Sheets.

(C) Any Club that provides a late, incorrect or incomplete Team Sheet, including the PlayHQ Team Sheet records, may be subject to disciplinary sanctions including a determination that the Club's Team be recorded as losing the Match with scores determined under Rule 16.4.

Table 27 – Team Sheet Requirements

Match Stage	Requirements
Pre-Match	***Preparation of Team Sheet*** A Team Sheet is required to be prepared by each Club prior to every Match via PlayHQ. A Team Sheet must accurately reflect the list of all Players and Officials participating for the Club's Team in a Match and must include: i. The name of each Player participating (in alphabetical order by surname); ii. The jersey number of each Player participating; iii. The designated captain of the team; and iv. The name of all Team Officials participating, including: a. Coach b. Assistant Coach (if applicable) c. Team Manager d. Runner(s) e. Trainers / QMPs / First Aid Officials f. Water Carriers Any person not listed on the Team Sheet must not participate in the Match as a Player or Official.
	Distribution of Team Sheet Each Team is to print four (4) copies of their Team Sheet and distribute prior to the Match by the Team Manager as follows: i. one (1) provided to the Ground Manager ("Official Team Sheet"); ii. one (1) provided to the Timekeeper; iii. one (1) provided to the opposition Club's Team Manager; iv. one (1) to be retained by the Club Team Manager. Once the Official Team Sheet has been provided to the Ground Manager, it must not be taken back by the Club for any purpose including amendment. Any alterations to it in accordance with this Rule must be made in the presence of the Ground Manager. ***Guidance Note****: where it is known that a Match is being officially filmed with commentary, an additional copy of each Team's Team Sheet is to be provided to the commentator.*
During Match	***Alteration of Team Sheet*** Alterations of the Team Sheet are only to be made when a Player who is listed on the Team Sheet is not present, not able to participate, or a Player who was not listed on the Team Sheet arrives and is participating. This rule does not allow for Team Sheet alterations on the basis of injury once the Match has commenced.

	Team Officials must make a proper effort to ensure the accuracy of a Team Sheet prior to the commencement of a Match and make immediate amendments to it where it is known at the time that: i. a person listed on the Team Sheet will not be participating in the Match; or ii. a person not listed on the Team Sheet will be participating in the Match. All participating Players listed on the Team Sheet at the commencement of the Match are considered active players and cannot be removed under any circumstances. A Team Sheet may only be amended during a Match to add or delete Players or Officials in accordance with the following: i. any such amendment must be made as soon as the Team Manager becomes aware a person will or won't be participating in a Match, but by no later than the siren to commence the third quarter; ii. all copies of the Team Sheet must be amended, with priority given to amendment of the Official Team Sheet first which must be done in the presence of the Ground Manager; and iii. any amendment is to be handwritten in pen. No alterations or additions may be made to a Team Sheet after the siren to commence the third quarter has sounded, other than for the purposes of recording scores and best Players post-Match in accordance with this Rule. Where the Player Points System Policy applies to a Match, it is the responsibility of the Team Manager to ensure that any amendment to the list of Players on the Team Sheet takes into account the requirements of that Policy and the cap that applies to the Team. ***Players Arriving Late*** No player, who arrives after the siren to commence the third quarter has sounded, may take the field. Players arriving late, but prior to the siren to commence the third quarter, may take the field providing their name and jersey number have been added to all copies of the Team Sheet in accordance with this Rule. ***Recording of Match Scores on the Team Sheet*** Each Club's Team Manager, or a person nominated by the Team Manager, is to keep a record of the quarter-by-quarter scores, and goal kickers, on the Team copy of the Team Sheet (which will be transposed to the Official Team Sheet at conclusion of the Match).
Post Match	***Adding Scores & Best Players to Official Team Sheet*** At the conclusion of the Match, the Team Managers from each Team are to record the following on the Official Team Sheet: i. quarter by quarter scores; ii. the Team's goal scorers; and iii. the Team's best players. Goals not listed on the Official Team Sheet at the time it is received by the League shall not be credited to a Player's tally. ***Umpire Verification of Official Team Sheet*** The field Umpires are to sign each Official Team Sheet after completing end of Match duties. ***Updating of PlayHQ Team Sheet***

	Where an Official Team Sheet is altered in accordance with these Rules, the PlayHQ team sheet records are to be updated by the Club by 7.00pm (or 10.00pm for night Matches) after completion of the Match to ensure that the altered Official Team Sheet and PlayHQ records properly reconcile.

15.7.2 Recording of Match Results

(A) Except where Rule 15.7.2(B) applies, the designated Host Club must enter the following in PlayHQ by no later than 7.00pm (or 10.00pm for night Matches) on the day of the Match:

(i) quarter by quarter scores and final Match results; and

(ii) unless otherwise specified by the League, goal kickers and best Players for both teams.

(iii) yellow and red cards issued to Players for both teams.

***Guidance Note**: the entry of goal kickers and best players for Junior Matches may be prescribed by the League as optional.*

(B) Should the Host Club not receive the required information as per 15.7.2(A) from the away Club, the Host Club is required to notify the League by 9.00am on the first business day following the Match.

(C) A League may mandate the requirement for a Host Club to record live or progressive scoring, in PlayHQ, of a Match in a particular Grade.

(D) A Host Club will incur a one hundred (100) dollar fine for failure to comply with this Rule 15.7.2.

15.7.3 Umpire Matchday Records

(A) Table 28 establishes the matchday record requirements of the Umpires.

Table 28 – Umpire Matchday Record Requirements

Record	Requirements
Goal Umpire Scoring & Score Cards	Score cards are required to be completed by both goal Umpires for every Competition Match. The League may prescribe the form of the score card to be used. At each quarter interval during a Match and following completion of the Match, the goal Umpires are to meet on the ground to compare and reconcile their score cards. If there is any difference in the two score cards at any interval, the goal Umpires are to consult with the Timekeeper to determine and agree on the correct score. The Team Managers from both Clubs may be consulted if the correct score can not be agreed upon by the Umpires and the Timekeeper. Once the score cards are reconciled at the conclusion of the Match, scorecards are to be signed by both goal Umpires and then immediately provided to the Ground Manager.
Send Off Form / Timekeepers Report	These are to be provided to the Ground Manager at the conclusion of the Match.
Umpire Match Report	Immediately following completion of the Match, the field Umpire (regardless of whether a League appointed Umpire or a Club Umpire) is to complete an Umpire Match Report in accordance with Rule 10.7. If access to Officials HQ is not available (i.e. in the case of the Umpire being appointed at short notice), best and fairest votes are to be emailed to the League's Community Football and Competition Manager, with the Host Club to provide necessary contact information to the Field Umpire.

Umpire Notice of Report	In addition to the requirements of Rule 25.2.2, if an Umpire has reported a Player or Official, the Umpire is to also undertake the following at the earliest practicable time following the Match: i. verbally notify the League Umpire Coach / Coordinator of the Report; ii. verbally notify the Ground Manager that a *Notice of Report* will be lodged; ***Guidance note:*** *failure to comply with this requirement does not invalidate a Notice of Report.*
Forfeit During Match	Where a forfeit of a Match occurs after the Match has commenced, an Umpire Match Report should be completed detailing any reasons provided for the forfeit. No score cards or best and fairest votes are required to be submitted.

15.7.4 Club Retention of Match Day Paperwork

(A) Clubs must retain all Official Team Sheets, score cards, send off forms and Timekeeper records for a period of at least four (4) weeks after the Season (including Finals) concludes and be able to produce these, if required, to the League within three (3) days or other timeframe as determined by the League.

15.8 Match Times & Duration

15.8.1 Match Start Times

(A) Matches must start on time and be in accordance with the duration specified in Table 29.

(B) The starting time of a Match;

(i) is as outlined in the Season Fixture;

(ii) may be varied by the League and/or CMC, in its absolute discretion, by notice to the Clubs involved.

(C) For Senior Matches, the competing Clubs may vary the starting time of a Match by mutual agreement, subject to the League receiving notification at least fourteen (14) days prior the original scheduled Match date. League approval will be subject to Umpire availability.

(D) For Junior Matches the competing Clubs may vary the times by mutual agreement subject to the League and/or CMC receiving notification:

(i) at least seven (7) days before the initial scheduled starting time; or

(ii) a shorter time period if determined by the League, but a fee, as determined by the League, may be payable by the Club requesting any such change.

(E) Where a Team fails to enter the Field of Play after receiving a second warning from the Umpire, the Umpire is to include this in the *Umpire Match Report* and the Club of the Team may be sanctioned at the absolute discretion of the CMC.

15.8.2 Match & Quarter Duration

(A) The duration of quarters and breaks for all home and away Matches will be determined by the League and prescribed in Table 29.

Table 29 – Duration of Quarters & Breaks for All Grades

Grade	Duration (Minutes)					
	Quarter Length	¼ Break	½ Break	¾ Break	Time On (Y/N)	Match Total
Premier Division Men	25	5	10	5	N	120

Reserve Grade Men	20	5	10	5	N	100
Premier Division Women	18	5	10	5	N	92
Reserve Grade Women	15	5	10	5	N	80
Under-9s Mixed	12	3	3	3	N	57
Under-9s Girls	12	3	3	3	N	57
Under-11s Mixed	12	3	3	3	N	57
Under-11s Girls	12	3	3	3	N	57
Under-13s Mixed	14	4	4	4	N	68
Under-13s Girls	14	4	4	4	N	68
Under-15s Mixed	15	4	4	4	N	72
Under-15s Girls	15	4	4	4	N	72
Under-17s Mixed	17	4	4	4	N	80
Under-17s Girls	17	4	4	4	N	80

(B) If a Match commences after its scheduled start time or there is a lengthy delay during the Match, Rule 15.8.5 applies.

15.8.3 Time On

(A) Where time on is played in a Competition Match, Law 10.6 of the *Laws of Australian Football* applies.

(i) There are no Competition Grades within AFL South Coast that utilise time on in general play.

(B) Where the field Umpire fails to signal the completion of the time added period, or the timekeepers fail to hear their whistle or see their signal, the timekeepers must restart the clock when the ball is clearly back in play.

(C) In the event of a Player being replaced under the blood rule or where a stretcher is required, timekeepers are to stop the clock from the time that the blood rule or stretcher signal is given by the field Umpire until the field Umpire signals time back on or the ball is clearly in play.

***Guidance Note**: This rule applies to all Matches, including those where no time-on is played. Where a stretcher or ambulance is required, the Umpire and Ground Manager may need to have consideration to Rule 15.8.5 if the requirement for a stretcher or ambulance results in a significant delay to the Match.*

15.8.4 Match Unable to Commence

(A) Subject to Rule 16.5.2, where a Match is unable to commence for reasons beyond the control of either Team:

(i) the field Umpire is to notify the League, including any reasons for which the Match was unable to commence; and

(ii) the CMC will determine whether the Match is to be rescheduled, or the result of the Match.

15.8.5 Significant Delay in a Match

(A) Where, for any reason, a Match is subject of a significant delay in starting, or during a Match, the field Umpire in consultation with the Ground Manager will determine whether, following resolution of the delay, the Match can proceed within the remaining time scheduled for the Match.

> ***Guidance Note**: The term "significant delay" is not formally defined in these Rules. It is intended to refer to a delay arising from something uncommon that impacts the ability of the competing teams to complete a full quarter or more of the Match. It will usually arise where an injury results in the need for an ambulance to be called, or where extreme and dangerous weather such as lightning of hail occurs. It is not intended to cover minor delays due to the like of players being escorted off the field due to blood or other common injury.*
>
> *The 'remaining time scheduled for a match' is to be determined with regard to the duration of the match as per Table 28.*

(B) In making a determination under this Rule, the field Umpire and Ground Manager will have regard for:

(i) the length, or expected length, of the delay;

(ii) the health and safety of Players;

(iii) what adjustments to the Match can fairly and practicably be made;

(iv) the provisions of Table 30.

Table 30 – Determining if Match is to Recommence

Circumstance	Requirements
Delay in Starting or During the First Half	In order to proceed with the Match, the field Umpire and Ground Manager are to be satisfied that the equivalent of one half of the Match, including any time already played, is able to be completed within the remaining time scheduled for the Match (see Guidance Note under 15.8.5(A) regarding 'remaining time scheduled for a match'). To enable completion of the equivalent of one half of the Match within the remaining time scheduled for a Match, the field Umpire and Ground Manager may make an adjustment to the length of quarter breaks or to the length of a quarter providing that the length of a quarter is no less than five (5) minutes. If it is determined by the field Umpire and Ground Manager that the equivalent of one half of the Match is unable to be completed, the Match is not to recommence and the result of the Match is to be determined in accordance with Table 34.
Delay at or After Half Time	In order to recommence a Match, the field Umpire and Ground Manager are to be satisfied that the equivalent of at least half of one quarter can be completed within the remaining time scheduled for the Match (see Guidance Note under 15.8.5(A) regarding 'remaining time scheduled for a match'). If it is determined by the field Umpire and Ground Manager that at least half of one quarter is unable to be completed, the Match is not to recommence and the result of the Match is to be determined in accordance with Table 34. ***Guidance Note**: It is important to provide a prescriptive measure so that teams cannot dispute whether a match should resume or not depending on whether they are winning or losing. If a quarter is usually 20 minutes duration, half of one quarter will be 10 minutes.*
Last Match of the Day	Where the delayed Match is the last scheduled Match of the day, and where the lighting conditions would allow for the continuation of that Match beyond its schedule finish time, the field Umpire and Ground Manager may determine that additional time, not exceeding 20 minutes, is to be added where that additional time allows for the equivalent of one half of the Match, including time already played, to be completed.

Finals Match	Where the delayed Match is a Finals Match, the Ground Manager may, after consultation with the League, alter the start and finish times of Matches in order to complete a Match provided there are no significant impacts on the remaining matchday fixture.
Junior Competition Match	Where it has been determined in accordance with this Rule that a Competition Match involving Junior Teams is unable to recommence, the Teams may, by agreement between Coaches, play out any remaining scheduled time as a scratch Match for the benefit of participation of the Players. This is only to occur where it is deemed safe for Players to return to the field. No further scoring, however, is to be recorded.

(C) Where a Team is directed to recommence play by a field Umpire and the Team fails, refuses or neglects to recommence play:

(i) Rule 16.5.2 shall apply; and

(ii) the field Umpire is to report the matter to the League for investigation.

(D) Where a Match is unable to recommence, the result of the Match is to be determined in accordance with Table 34.

15.9 Ground Closures

(A) Where a ground at which a Match is scheduled to be played becomes unavailable due to adverse weather conditions or any other reason, the home Club is to advise the League and any opposing Club as early as it becomes aware of the likelihood of the ground closure to enable alternative arrangements for the playing of scheduled Matches to be considered.

Table 31 – Change of Venue Procedure

Reason for Closure	Actions/Exemptions
1. Where a ground has been closed by the local Council, no Competition Match is to be played on that ground.	Unless the home Club: (i) Has a written agreement with the local Council that allows it to override the ground closure; and (ii) In making its decision on the use of the ground, has followed any risk assessment process expected as part of that agreement with the local Council
2. Where the League determines to cancel the entire Round due to multiple ground closures or any other circumstances at their ultimate discretion	(i) The League will determine whether the Round can be re-fixtured based on an available date such as a general bye or wet weather round within the fixture and notify the Club's accordingly; or (ii) The League will cancel the entire Round with no reschedule options if no available fixture dates are available and notify the Club's accordingly
3. Where a venue at which a match has been scheduled to be played is deemed unfit for play or has been closed, the League will, in consultation with the Club's concerned and Umpires, provisionally reschedule the Match to be played on the opposing Club's ground if available.	Where a Match is transferred to the opposing Club's venue, the following will occur: (i) That Club will assume the Host Club responsibilities in line with Rule 15.4 and Table 22; and (ii) Where practicable, the venue of the next Match between the two Clubs concerned will be reversed to compensate for the loss of home ground privilege

4. Where neither the Host Club nor the opposing Club's venue is available:	(i)	The League will make every effort to reschedule the Match to an alternative available venue that is most convenient to the Host Club;
	(ii)	Other Clubs whose venues are vacant and playable will be expected to co-operate with the League by making their venue available to minimize the likelihood of cancellations;
	(iii)	The Host Team responsibilities will be assumed by the Host Team as nominated in the fixture.
Where a change of venue is required due to any of the above clauses:	(i)	The League is to provide as much notice of this as possible to the participating Clubs and Umpires providing that all adjustments to Wet Weather affected Matches are made and communicated prior to 7.00pm on the day preceding the scheduled Match with no further adjustments being permitted after this time of on match day
	(ii)	The competing clubs must comply with any adjustments made under Rule 15.9;
	(iii)	The competing clubs must comply with any venue and/or reasonable time adjustment (reasonable time being defined as within two hours of the original scheduled match start time)
	(iv)	Failure to comply with this by a Club will be deemed as a forfeit unless determined otherwise by the CMC; and
	(v)	Should both clubs fail to comply, both clubs will be deemed to have forfeited the match unless determined otherwise by the CMC
5. Where a change of venue is required in the last 4 Rounds of the fixture, the League will review the ladder for each applicable Grade	(i)	In taking into consideration all cancelled matches and proposed venue changes, the League will also take into consideration the ladder positions of all teams impacted and prioritise Matches that will have the most impact on the Ladder in the last 4 rounds
	(ii)	Matches from any Grade within the Competition that has the most impact on the ladder may be moved to an available venue, taking precedence over the relevant Host and opposing Club, if applicable

(B) If a Match is unable to be played because no venue is available, the CMC will decide whether or not the Match is to be rescheduled to another date, as per Rule 15.10, or cancelled.

(C) Each Club is required to have procedures in place which enable them to contact their Players and Officials at short notice regarding any changes to scheduled Matches.

15.10 Postponed Matches

(A) Subject to 15.10(B), where it has been agreed by the League or the CMC that a Match is to be postponed for any reason, the competing Clubs have two (2) weeks from the date of postponement to reach agreement, and notify the League, on the rescheduling of the Match, including:

(i) the date and time the Match is to be played, providing that no Match is rescheduled to be played in the seven (7) days prior to the Finals series commencing for that Grade;

(ii) the venue at which the Match is to be played.

***Guidance Note**: Both Clubs are to co-operate with each other and with the League to agree on an available date and venue for the Match to be rescheduled, including options such as playing midweek or playing on a date set aside as a wet weather round.*

(B) Any Match scheduled to be played in the last three (3) rounds of the home and away season (this is inclusive of any rounds that were rescheduled in line with Rule 15.9 and Table 31) that is unable to be

played for any reason, as agreed by the League or the CMC, cannot be rescheduled and will be deemed cancelled in accordance with Rule 15.11.

(C) Where Clubs are unable to reach agreement in accordance with Rule 15.10(A), the Clubs are to advise the League of this, together with any reasons either Club has in relation to the matter, and the CMC will then determine whether the Match is deemed to be:

(i) a cancelled Match, in which case, Rule 15.11 will apply; or

(ii) a forfeit in accordance with Rule 16.5.3 where it is considered by the CMC that a Club has not made best endeavours to reschedule the Match or does not have reasonable grounds to decline playing the Match.

***Guidance Note**: Reasonable endeavours include proof of communication between clubs with proposed date, time and venue as well as proof as to why one or both clubs were unable to meet the requirements of 15.10(A)*

15.11 Cancelled Matches

(A) Subject to Rule 16.5, if any Match is cancelled in accordance with the Rules:

(i) the Match does not contribute to either Team's "Match Ratio" pursuant to Rule 16.3; and

(ii) the Match shall not count towards Player eligibility for finals.

(B) Where two or more of a Club's home and away Matches are cancelled due to adverse weather or other reason, the CMC will determine whether alteration is to be made to Player eligibility for finals, taking into consideration the relevant Finals Eligibility criteria listed in Appendix 2.

15.12 Sanctions for Match Day Breaches

(A) Subject to Rule 15.12(B), Appendix 3 establishes the base sanctions that apply to a Club in respect of particular Match Day breaches.

(B) An initial breach of an item listed in Appendix 3 will result in a warning, with any subsequent breaches to result in the corresponding sanction.

(C) The CMC is not limited to the sanctions set out in Appendix 3 in respect of any breach.

16 MATCH RESULTS

16.1 Determination of Match Results

Results of Matches will be determined in accordance with the *Laws of Australian Football* and these Rules. The CMC will determine any dispute in relation to the result of a Match.

16.2 Ladder

A premiership ladder for each Competition shall be maintained in PlayHQ throughout the duration of the home and away season as determined by the CMC.

16.3 Match Wins

(A) Unless otherwise specified by the League, in home and away round Matches:

(i) Match ratio will be used as the method of determining ladder position;

(ii) Match ratio is determined by dividing the number of wins by the number of Matches played;

(iii) in the case of a draw, this is determined as half (0.5) of a win and this calculation is used when determining Match ratio;

(iv) if a scheduled round of Matches is not played, the Club with the bye in that round does not receive a Match win;

(v) where more than one Team has the same Match ratio, Clubs will be positioned on the ladder in order of percentages calculated from the points scored for and against.

16.4 Loss of Points for Breach

16.4.1 Loss of Match for Breach

(A) Where a Team is determined as losing a Match as a result of a breach of the *Laws of Australian Football* or a policy breach under the Rules or the Policy Handbook, the following applies:

(i) the Competition points or 'win' for the Match concerned will be credited to the opposing Team;

(ii) the Team receiving the win shall:

(a) be attributed a "win";

(b) have its "points for" increased by the average of the points scored by the winners of the other matches in the round of that Competition;

(c) have no points added to its "points against".

(iii) the Team losing the Match team shall:

(a) be attributed a "loss";

(b) have no points added to its "points for";

(c) have its "points against" increased by the average of the points scored by the winners of the other matches in the round of that Competition.

16.4.2 Not Applicable

16.5 Forfeits

16.5.1 Notice of Forfeit

(A) Where a Team is unable to play a Match for which it is scheduled:

(i) the Club of that Team is to advise the opposing Club, Umpire Manager and the League no later than 6.00pm the day prior to the Match, or as otherwise prescribed by the League;

(ii) the Match will be treated as a forfeit;

(iii) the forfeiting club will be fined three hundred (300) dollars, unless the Controlling Body determines there are exceptional circumstances not to do so; and

(iv) the club receiving the forfeit can claim one hundred and fifty (150) dollars in compensation from the League.

(B) Should a Club fail to provide notice in accordance with Rule 16.5.1(A)(i):

(i) the forfeiting club will be fined five hundred (500) dollars, unless the Controlling Body determines there are exceptional circumstances not to do so; and

(ii) the club receiving the forfeit can claim two hundred and fifty (250) dollars in compensation from the League.

16.5.2 Unable to Commence or Complete Match

(A) If for any reason a Team is not ready to commence play fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled commencement time for a Match, or if a Team fails, refuses or neglects to complete a Match already commenced:

(i) the opposing Club may claim the Match as a forfeit, to be determined by the CMC; and

(ii) a fine of up to one thousand (1,000) dollars may be imposed on the Club of the forfeiting Team at the absolute discretion of the CMC.

(B) Any Club with a Team deemed to have forfeited a Match in accordance with this Rule is, within 24 hours of the Match, to provide the CMC with a written explanation for the Team's inability to play or complete the Match.

(C) If an explanation is not provided in accordance with this Rule, or the explanation is not to the CMC's reasonable satisfaction, an additional sanction or penalty, other than those specified in this Rule, may be imposed at the absolute discretion of the CMC.

16.5.3 Forfeit Results

(A) In the event of a forfeit, the non-forfeiting Team will be declared the winner of the Match and the final score of the Match will be determined in accordance with Table 33.

Table 33 – Score for Forfeit

Grade		**Score to Forfeiting Team (Points)**	**Score to Non-forfeiting Team (Points)**
Junior Competitions	Under-13s	Zero (0)	Sixty (60)
	Under-15s, Under-17s	Zero (0)	Seventy-Five (75)
Senior Competitions	All Senior Women grades	Zero (0)	Ninety (90)
	All Senior Men grades	Zero (0)	One Hundred & Twenty (120)

(B) The Host Club remains responsible for entry of the correct score in PlayHQ.

(C) Where a forfeit is applied, Competition ladders will be adjusted accordingly by the League.

16.5.4 Entry of Team Sheets

(A) For Matches where there is a forfeit, the forfeiting Club must not enter a Team Sheet in PlayHQ and should it do so may be subject of sanctions by the CMC in its absolute discretion.

(B) The non-forfeiting Club may enter a Team into PlayHQ for the purposes of player eligibility, provided this is completed prior to the scheduled commencement time of the forfeited Match.

16.5.5 Multiple Forfeits by a Club in a Season

(A) Should a Club's Team forfeit three (3) matches in the same Grade in a Competition in the one season, the CMC may, in its absolute discretion:

(i) disqualify the Team from that Grade in the Competition for the duration of the season; and

(ii) impose a fine on the Club, not exceeding one thousand dollars ($1,000), in addition to any other fine or sanction applicable under this Rule.

16.5.6 Forfeit of a Higher Grade

(A) In respect of Senior Competitions, should a Club play in a reserve or lower ranked Grade Match and subsequently forfeit a higher ranked Grade Match on the same weekend, that Club:

(i) will not be awarded any points for the reserve or lower ranked Grade Match, except where a forfeit is applied to the higher ranked Grade under Rule 15.9(F)(iii); and

(ii) will be liable to disciplinary sanctions as the CMC may determine in its absolute discretion.

16.5.7 Additional Costs for Forfeiting Club

(A) Where the League is unable to advise the appointed Umpires prior to such Umpires attending a forfeited Match, the League will pay the Umpires any Match fees or expenses and the forfeiting Club will be responsible to reimburse the League.

16.5.8 Forfeit of a Finals Match

(A) Where a Team forfeits a Finals Match:

(i) that Team will be ineligible to participate in any further Matches for the duration of the Finals.

(ii) The Controlling Body, in its absolute discretion, may fine the Club an amount up to one thousand (1,000) dollars.

16.6 Results of an Incomplete or Delay-impacted Match

(A) Subject to Rule 16.5.2 and Rule 16.6(B), where a Match that has commenced is unable to be completed within the time scheduled for the Match, or where it has been shortened due to a significant delay, the result will be determined in accordance with Table 34.

Table 34 – Determining the Result of a Delayed / Incomplete Match

Circumstance	Match Type	Result
Where less than the equivalent of one half of the Match has been played	Home and Away Match	The Match shall be deemed to be drawn and the scores of the Teams at the time the Match was interrupted shall be used in calculating the percentage of each Team.
	Finals Match (other than Grand Final)	If the match is unable to be rescheduled the Match result will be determined in accordance with Rule 17.7(B)(ii)
	Grand Final	If the match is unable to be rescheduled the Match result will be determined in accordance with Rule 17.7(B)(iii)
Where the equivalent of one half or more of the Match has been played	All Matches	Where a Match is able to resume after a significant delay, the result will be based on the final score of the Match at the conclusion of play. Where a Match is unable to resume for any reason including after a significant delay, the score at the time the Match was interrupted shall be deemed to be the final score, with the result of the Match based on this, unless otherwise determined by the CMC in accordance with any other provision of these Rules.

(B) Where a finals Match has commenced and less than one half of the equivalent of the match has been played, the CMC will determine, in consultation with the clubs involved, if the match is able to be rescheduled prior to the result being determined in accordance with Table 34.

17 FINALS

17.1 Finals Structure

(A) The League will determine the structure of the finals' series for each Competition upon release of the Competition's Season fixture and prior to the first home and away Match of the season.

(B) The League, in consultation with the home club will determine the terms and conditions under which any finals matches are to be held at a host venue.

(C) For any Competition Grade with four (4) or more Teams, Finals will be held across three (3) weeks, with the schedule as follows:

(i) Week 1A: Ladder Position One (1) versus Ladder Position Two (2);

(ii) Week 1B: Ladder Position Three (3) versus Ladder Position Four (4);

(iii) Week 2: Loser Week 1A versus Winner Week 1B; and

(iv) Week 3: Winner Week 1A versus Winner Week 2

(D) For any Competition Grade with three (3) Teams, Finals will be held across three (3) weeks, with the schedule as follows:

(i) Week 1: Ladder Position Two (2) versus Ladder Position Three (3);

(ii) Week 2: General Bye; and

(a) NB: at the request and approval of both participating clubs, Finals matches in accordance with Rule 17.1(D)(i) can be scheduled for Week 2

(iii) Week 3: Ladder Position One (1) versus Winner Week 1.

17.2 Venue Selection

(A) The League will determine the venues for finals series Matches in its absolute discretion.

(B) For Senior Competitions, the hosting of Week 2 and Week 3 Finals will annually alternate between North Dalton Park (even years) and Artie Smith Oval (odd years).

(C) For Junior Competitions, the hosting of Week 2 and Week 3 Finals will annually alternate between Artie Smith Oval (even years) and North Dalton Park (odd years).

(D) Hosting of all other Finals Matches will be determined by the League in consultation with Host Clubs.

17.3 Provision of Officials

(A) During finals' series Matches, non-competing Clubs may be required (as determined by the League and/or CMC) to provide personnel to assist with event and ground management duties including as gatekeepers, timekeepers, interchange stewards, scoreboard attendants and with other operational requirements.

(i) all participating Clubs must provide a Ground Manager and Club Contact for Senior Grand Final Day to manage their Club's spectator areas; and

(ii) any non-participating Club attending Senior Grand Final with a visible spectator group will also be required to provide a Ground Manager and Club Contact for their Club's spectator area.

17.4 Catering & Gate Receipt Rights

(A) Catering and gate receipt rights for finals Matches will be determined by the League.

(B) For Senior Grand Finals, the Host Club will be charged a fee of $5000 (excl. GST) for the hosting rights as detailed in Rule 8.3.2(iv).

(C) The Host Club will be responsible for all expenses incurred in relation to the game day management of any finals matches or as determined to by the League. This includes, but is not limited to:

(i) venue ground hire fees;

(ii) lighting, scoreboard, and other miscellaneous costs;

(iii) cleaning fees;

(iv) first aid costs (Semi Finals, Preliminary Finals only); and

(v) catering costs

(D) For Senior Competition Finals, the Host Club shall be responsible for obtaining a liquor licence where necessary and no other persons shall be permitted to take alcohol into the venue.

(E) The League will coordinate Player/Spectator first aid and cover associated costs for Grand Finals only.

17.5 Match Conditions

Unless otherwise specified in the Rules, all Match conditions applicable to home and away season Matches will apply to all finals Matches.

17.6 Drawn Finals Match

(A) In the event of scores being equal at the end of a finals Match, the following procedure will apply:

(i) the goal Umpires will confirm the scores;

(ii) the field Umpire will re-commence the Match to play extra time, initially for a further duration of five (5) minutes, plus time on where time on applies, and the Teams will not change ends;

(iii) the siren will sound after the first period of extra time, the Teams will change ends and a further five (5) minutes, plus time on where time on applies, is to be played, following which the siren will sound.

(B) If the Match is still drawn after the second five (5) minute period of extra time, the Umpires and Goal Umpires will consult to confirm the scores, and if the scores still remain tied, the following will apply:

(i) the teams will reset their position (not changing ends) with a centre bounce/ball up to recommence play; and

(ii) play will continue until the next score at which time the siren will sound signalling the end of the Match; and

(iii) the first team to score a point or goal will be the winner.

(C) The coach will be allowed to address their team during a three (3) minute break after the final siren at the end of normal Match time, but will not be able to address the team further during extra time.

(D) For a Grand Final where the scores are less than six (6) points the difference with two (2) minutes remaining in the final quarter, an announcement is to be made by the Ground Manager that Supporters are not to enter the Field of Play after the final siren until the goal Umpires have confirmed the final score.

17.7 Finals Match Unable to Commence

(A) Where a finals series has commenced and where a scheduled finals Match is unable to commence for any reason other than a forfeit, the CMC will determine, in consultation with the clubs involved, if the match is able to be rescheduled.

(B) If, under Rule 17.7(A), it is determined that:

(i) a Match is able to be rescheduled, the CMC will fixture it accordingly and notify the clubs of this as soon as practicable; or

(ii) a Match, other than a Grand Final, is unable to be rescheduled for any reason, the Match will be deemed to have been played, with the Team that is positioned higher on the ladder being declared the winner of the Match; or

(iii) a Grand Final Match is unable to be rescheduled for any reason, the Match will be recorded as having no result.

(C) Where a finals series is yet to commence, but where it is evident that one or more finals Matches may be unable to be played for any reason other than a forfeit, the CMC:

(i) may, in its absolute discretion, alter the structure or fixturing of the finals series where it is required to ensure the viability of the finals series; and

(ii) notify all relevant clubs of any such alteration as soon as practicable.

(D) If, under Rule 17.7(C), it is necessary to reduce the number of participating finals Teams, those Teams that qualified lowest on the ladder will be eliminated first.

(E) Where it becomes evident that the entire finals series of a Competition grade will be unable to be played for any reason, and where it is not practicable to reschedule that series, the CMC may, in its absolute discretion, make a decision to cancel that finals series.

(F) If a Grand Final Match is unable to commence for any reason, the CMC may, in its absolute discretion, determine whether or not a premiership is to be awarded on an alternative basis.

17.8 Club Finals Eligibility

(A) In accordance with Rule 8.4.3, a Club may be ineligible to play finals Matches where it has any outstanding accounts to the league.

(B) In the event that this occurs, teams placed next on the respective Competition table shall fill the place of the ineligible team.

(C) For the purpose of this Rule, Clubs which are under a financial arrangement with the League and are up to date with the payments of that arrangement, shall be considered financial.

17.9 Player Finals Eligibility

(A) The League, in its ultimate discretion, may determine Player eligibility requirements for finals Matches and publish these in Appendix Two.

(B) Clubs are responsible for ensuring all Players meet eligibility requirements to participate in finals Matches.

(C) Any Club that fields an ineligible player in a finals Match may be subject to disciplinary sanctions to be imposed by the League in its absolute discretion including, but not limited to, the loss of the finals Match.

18 OTHER MATCHES INCLUDING PRACTICE MATCHES

(A) No Club shall arrange or play in any Match other than Matches outlined in the Season Fixture without the prior approval of the League and/or CMC.

(B) For any practice Matches involving two different Clubs the following provisions will apply:

(i) a Practice Match Request Form, as designated by the League, shall be completed and submitted to the League by midday the Tuesday before the practice Match;

(ii) where a practice match is being organised involving Clubs from different Leagues or a carnival involving multiple Clubs is being organised, the Club hosting the event will be required to submit the Practice Match Request Form;

(iii) all Players must be registered in PlayHQ prior to taking the field;

***Guidance Note**: Registration of a player is a requirement for insurance coverage. Where a player is 'trying out' to see if they like the game, they are still to register to play a match, however the Club may forgo charging any registration fee to the Player until such time as they commit to the Club on an ongoing basis.*

(iv) a Team Sheet for each Team, that details all participating Players and jersey numbers, is to be completed;

(v) in all practice matches, the Umpire may report players as per the *Laws of Australian Football*;

(vi) where a Club requests the appointment of League Umpires for a practice match the League will determine the fees payable by the Club to the appointed Umpires.

(a) for all "full-length" matches in accordance with Rule 15.8.2, a 50% competition match fee for the respective grade will be paid by the participating Teams to each umpire; and

(b) for shortened matches, a pro rata match fee will be determined by the League.

19 REPRESENTATIVE FOOTBALL

19.1 Player Eligibility

(A) Any Player selected in a representative Team must be a registered Player with a Club participating in a Competition of that League.

(B) The RMC may, in its absolute discretion, establish any provisions that ensure consistency across competing Leagues in Player eligibility criteria for participation in a representative Team.

19.2 Player Selection and Participation

Unless otherwise specified, the below conditions apply to Senior Representative Football only.

(A) Competition representative Teams shall participate in inter-league Matches as directed by the League and sanctioned by AFL NSW/ACT from time to time.

(B) The League shall have first call on the services of all Players for its representative Matches and representative training sessions.

(C) Any Player who, without reasonable cause and without the written approval of the League, does not make themself available or declines selection for representative training sessions and Matches, may automatically be suspended for the next two (2) Matches in which the Player's Club is participating immediately subsequent to the representative Match concerned.

(D) Any Player who declares themselves unavailable because of injury or illness must, at the request of the League, provide medical evidence to support the injury or illness, or make themselves available for a medical examination by a medical practitioner of the League's choice.

(E) Any Player who fails to attend a scheduled representative training session of which they have been properly notified must:

(i) submit an explanation to the League; and

(ii) if in the opinion of the League the Player's explanation is unacceptable, such Player may be dealt with as the League sees fit.

(F) Subject to Rule 19.1, the League will determine the process for selection of Players in the representative Team.

(G) Except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the CMC, Players selected in a representative Team will not be permitted to play with their Club on the same weekend of the representative Match where the Club Match is played earlier than a representative Match; and

(i) any Player who takes part in a Match in violation of this Rule shall be liable for further disqualification; and

(ii) the Team with which the Player participates may lose any Competition points gained and their Club may be fined up to two hundred and fifty (250) dollars.

19.3 Match Venue & Catering

(A) Where the League schedules a representative Match to be played, the League shall select a venue taking into consideration the standard of playing surface and facilities, ground hire costs and the ability to charge admission.

(B) The League may allocate catering rights to the Host Club or any other Club which is prepared to undertake all ground management duties for the Representative Match.

19.4 Cost of Representative Event

(A) Expenses incurred as a result of the Representative Program will be borne by the League except as otherwise determined by the League.

(B) Any gate takings will be used by the League to offset the cost of the representative event.

19.5 Representative Team Uniform

(A) The League will determine the design of the League's representative Team's Match uniform.

(B) Any Match uniform must have the AFL NSW/ACT logo on the jersey and shorts as prescribed for a Club uniform in Table 3 and Table 4.

19.6 Competition Rules

(A) The CMC will determine any specific rules that apply to the Representative Competition, including but not limited to, registration of players and teams, fixture, match rules, disciplinary provisions, umpire appointments. Where no such rules are provided, the relevant provisions of the AFL NSW/ACT Rules will apply.

(B) Where it is determined that the disciplinary processes prescribed by Rule 25 and Rule 27 will apply to the Representative Competition, reference to 'Club' in those Rules also extends to mean 'Representative Team' where applicable.

Part D – HEALTH & SAFETY

20 RISK MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

(A) In accordance with the terms of insurance under the AFL National Risk Protection Program, the Host Club must:

(i) complete the *Marsh AFL Match Day Checklist* prior to the commencement of the first Match of the day, as well as at any other time during the day if conditions change to an extent that may impact the safety of participants, and have this signed by the competing Club at the time of any inspection undertaken;

(ii) retain completed checklists for a period of seven (7) years for future reference by the League or its insurers if so required.

(B) Non-compliance with these requirements may result in the Insurer rejecting any claim made by a Club or Player.

21 INJURY MANAGEMENT

21.1 Injury Management Policy

(A) Section 15 of the *Policy Handbook* establishes the requirements for Club compliance with ensuring the presence of appropriately qualified persons at each Match and training session.

21.2 Matchday Injury Treatment Resources

(A) The Host Club must ensure at least one appropriately qualified person, as per Section 15 of the *Policy Handbook*, is present for the duration of each Match.

(B) If the Host Club does not have a qualified person available for a Match, the visiting Club may provide a qualified person.

(C) If neither Club has a qualified person available at the scheduled commencement of the Match:

(i) a delayed start of up to twenty (20) minutes may be applied to allow the Clubs time to source an appropriate person; and

(ii) if there are additional Matches following, the Match should be shortened appropriately to not delay the commencement of those subsequent Matches.

(D) If a qualified person, as per the requirements of the *Policy Handbook*, is unable to be sourced by either Club:

(i) the Match must not proceed;

(ii) the Clubs are to discuss options for rescheduling the Match; and

(iii) the Host Club is to refer the matter to the CMC, within twenty-four (24) of the scheduled start time of the Match and include any details of any agreed rescheduled Match date and venue.

(E) Where a referral is received in accordance with Rule 21.2(D), the CMC may, in its absolute discretion, determine:

(i) that the Match is to be rescheduled in line with Rule 15.10; or

(ii) that the visiting Club may be awarded a forfeit in its favour with the score determined in accordance with Rule 16.5.3 and Table 33; and

(iii) that an amount of up to two hundred (200) dollars is payable by the Host Club to the visiting Club for expenses incurred in the visiting Club's Team attending the venue.

(F) If a Match proceeds without a qualified injury management person present, the Host Club will forfeit the Match and may be subject to a maximum fine of five hundred (500) dollars at the discretion of the CMC.

21.3 Concussion

(A) The *Management of Sport-Related Concussion in Australian Football* applies.

21.4 Active Bleeding

(A) Law 24 of the *Laws of Australian Football* applies.

22 PREGNANT PLAYERS

(A) Section 20 of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

23 SUN/UV PROTECTION & EXTREME WEATHER

(A) Section 17 of the *Policy Handbook* applies to the assessment and management of extreme weather conditions.

> ***Guidance Note**: Refer to Section 17.3 of the Policy Handbook for the 30/30 Lightning Safety Guideline*

(B) Rule 15.9 applies where ground closures result from wet or extreme weather.

> ***Guidance Note**: Sports Medicine Australia's "Extreme Heat Policy" provides some valuable guidance for Leagues and Clubs on how to determine whether a Match is safe to proceed taking into account the temperature and humidity, as well as strategies for helping manage Matches being played in hot conditions.*

(C) Section 18 of the *Policy Handbook* outlines the risks of sun and ultraviolet (UV) light exposure while participating in Australian Football and the responsibility of a Club, Official, Player, Parent and Spectator with respect to those risks.

Part E – DISCIPLINARY & APPEALS

24 MATCH OFFENCES

24.1 Order Off Rule

24.1.1 Yellow Card

(A) Subject to Rule 24.1.1(B), a player who commits a Reportable Offence may be ordered from the Field of Play by an Umpire under a yellow card.

(B) At the discretion of the field Umpire, the Player ordered from the field under a yellow card may be reported.

(C) A Player ordered off under a yellow card is;

(i) required to leave the playing area immediately through the interchange area;

(ii) to be seated with the Timekeeper or where provided, the Interchange Steward during play;

(iii) to be accompanied by an adult Team Official for Junior Competitions;

(iv) not permitted to resume playing in the Match for:

(a) subject to Rule 24.1.1(C)(iv)(b), a period of **fifteen (15) consecutive playing minutes**, excluding breaks between quarters; or

(b) for matches with a quarter duration less than fifteen (15) minutes, an amount of time equivalent to **one quarter**, as detailed in Table 29, of consecutive playing minutes, excluding breaks between quarters; and

(v) not permitted to enter the Field of Play for the duration of the penalty period, including breaks between quarters.

(D) The penalty period will commence once the offending Player has left the Field of Play.

(E) The offending Player's Club is responsible for obtaining approval from the timekeepers for the Player to resume playing in the Match at the end of the relevant penalty period.

(F) All Players who are ordered from the Field of Play with a yellow card can be replaced immediately.

(G) Any yellow card issued to a Player is to be recorded by the Player's Club on the official team sheet at the end of the Match and the Host Club must enter the details of the yellow card in PlayHQ in accordance with Rule 15.7.2.

(H) A yellow card may be issued by an Umpire to a Team Official and will apply to that Official in the same manner as it would to a Player.

24.1.2 Red Card

(A) A Player or Official, as applicable, shall be ordered from the field for the remainder of the Match by the field Umpire under a red card where the Player or Official commits:

(i) two yellow card offences in the same Match; or

(ii) two Reportable Offences in the same Match for separate incidents; or

(iii) a single Reportable Offence that is considered a serious breach of the *Laws of Australian Football*; or

(iv) a third white card offence in accordance with the *AFL NSW/ACT Coaching Box Card Policy*.

(B) A Player or Official ordered off under a red card:

(i) is required to leave the playing area immediately through the interchange area;

(ii) is not permitted to sit on the bench or enter the Field of Play at any time (including breaks) for the remainder of the Match; and

(iii) is not permitted to return to participate in the match in any capacity.

(C) Unless otherwise determined by the CMC in its ultimate discretion, a Player who is ordered from the Field of Play under a red card can be replaced after:

(i) subject to Rule 24.1.2(C)(ii), a period of **fifteen (15) consecutive playing minutes**, excluding breaks between quarters; or

(ii) for matches with a quarter duration less than fifteen (15) minutes, an amount of time equivalent to **one quarter**, as detailed in Table 29, of consecutive playing minutes, excluding breaks between quarters.

(D) The penalty period will commence once the offending Player has left the Field of Play.

(E) The offending Player's Club is responsible for obtaining approval from the timekeepers for the replacement Player to commence playing at the end of the penalty period.

(F) An Official ordered from the field can be replaced immediately.

(G) All red cards are Reportable Offences and a *Notice of Report* must be submitted by the field Umpire in accordance with Rule 25.2.2.

(H) Any red card issued to a Player is to be recorded by the Player's Club on the official team sheet at the end of the Match and the Host Club must enter the details of the red card in PlayHQ in accordance with Rule 15.7.2.

24.1.3 Blue Card (Junior Competitions only)

(A) A Junior Player who displays unsportsmanlike behaviour or is deemed to require a "cool off" at the discretion of the field Umpire may be ordered from the Field of Play by an Umpire under a blue card.

(B) A Player ordered off under a blue card is;

(i) required to leave the playing area immediately through the interchange area;

(ii) not permitted to resume playing the Match for a period of ten (10) consecutive playing minutes, excluding breaks between quarters;

(iii) required to sit at the Ground Manager or Timekeeper table, or with an adult Team Official for the duration of the penalty period; and

(iv) not permitted to sit on the bench or enter the Field of Play at any time (including breaks) for the duration of the penalty period.

(C) The ten (10) minute penalty period will commence once the offending Player has left the Field of Play.

(D) The offending Player's Club is responsible for obtaining approval from the timekeepers for the Player to resume playing in the Match at the end of the ten (10) minute penalty period.

(E) All Players who are ordered from the Field of Play with a blue card can be replaced immediately.

(F) The reporting Umpire or Umpire Coach may review the blue card conduct during or post-match and determine it constitutes a Reportable Offence and submit a Notice of Report in accordance with Rule 25.2.2.

24.2 Melees

(A) A melee is defined in Law 1.1 of the *Laws of Australian Football*.

(B) Individual Players engaging in a melee may be reported by an umpire under the *Laws of Australian Football*

(C) A Club whose Players or Officials engage in a melee may be subject of disciplinary action and sanctions in accordance with Rule 24.2(E).

(D) The field Umpire is to record the details of the melee in the Umpire Match report including:

(i) the approximate time of a match that the melee occurred;

(ii) the approximate duration of the melee;

(iii) the number of Players involved from each Team, or if the exact number is not able to be stated, the approximate number of Players involved from each Team;

(iv) the number of Officials involved from each Team, or if the exact number is not able to be stated, the approximate number of Officials involved from each Team;

(v) the number of Umpires, including any emergency Umpire, who had to intervene in the melee:

(vi) an assessment of the level of aggression displayed by Players and/or Officials during the melee.

(E) Where a melee is reported in an Umpire Match report, the CMC will assess the melee in accordance with the melee matrix in Table 35 and the Club/s involved in the melee may be sanctioned by way of a fine calculated in accordance with the melee matrix, and any other sanction the CMC considers is appropriate in its absolute discretion.

Table 35 – Melee Matrix

Melee Details		**Fine Amount ($AUD)**
Players Actively Involved from ONE Team	*6 or less players*	50
	7 – 9 players	150
	10 – 12 players	400
	13 or more players	600
Duration of Melee	*0 – 30 seconds*	50
	30 – 60 seconds	150
	60 – 120 seconds	300
	>120 seconds	600
Level of Aggression in Melee	*Low (minor wrestling, push and shove)*	100
	Medium (wrestling, jumper punches, headlocks)	300
	High (striking and/or reports)	500
Umpire Intervention in Melee	*Not involved*	0
	1 umpire asking players to break it up	50
	2 umpires asking players to break it up	100
	3 umpire or more asking players to break it up	150
Officials Involved	*No officials involved*	0
	2 or less manhandling own players	100
	3 or more manhandling own players	200
	2 or less manhandling opposition players	400
	3 or more manhandling opposition players	600

25 REPORTABLE OFFENCES

25.1 What is a Reportable Offence?

(A) A Reportable Offence occurs when a Player or Official is alleged to have committed any of the offences set out in Law 22.2.2 of the *Laws of Australian Football*.

(B) The listing of offences in Law 22.2.2 is a non-exhaustive list and additional offences may be classified by AFL NSW/ACT under these Rules.

(C) For the purposes of this Rule 25, an Official includes any person listed in Rule 9.3 and Rule 9.5.

(D) A Reportable Offence may occur:

(i) during a Match; or

(ii) on the day of the Match and within the immediate proximity of the venue where the Match is conducted.

(E) A Reportable Offence may be a:

(i) Low-Level Offence – one that does not require grading;

(ii) Classifiable Offence – one that requires grading; or

(iii) Direct Tribunal Offence – one that is referred directly to the Tribunal for a hearing and determination.

25.2 Making a Report (of a Reportable Offence)

25.2.1 Methods for Making a Report

(A) A Player or Official who is alleged to have committed a Reportable Offence may be reported via:

(i) Umpire report as per Rule 25.2.2;

(ii) Club citing as per Rule 25.2.3;

(iii) Review of Footage as per Rule 25.2.4;

(iv) Executive Officer report as per Rule 25.2.5;

25.2.2 Umpire Report

(A) Subject to Rule 25.2.2(D), if an Umpire reports a Player or Official for a Reportable Offence, the Umpire is to inform, where practicable, the Player or Official that they have been reported either:

(i) immediately following the relevant incident;

(ii) before the commencement of the quarter following the relevant incident; or

(iii) if the relevant incident occurs in the final quarter, as soon as reasonably practicable after the completion of the Match.

(B) The Umpire may inform the captain, acting captain or Club Officer of a report where it is impractical to inform the reported Player or Official.

(C) The Umpire must, as soon as practicable after completion of the Match, but by no later than 10.00am on the next business day after that Match or, for weekday Matches, by no later than 5,00pm of the next business day, complete and lodge a *Notice of Report* with the relevant Controlling Body via OfficialsHQ or in any other such manner as allowed by the Controlling Body.

(D) If an Umpire believes that a Player or Official may have committed a Reportable Offence but did not report that Player or Official at the time of the Match:

(i) the Umpire must, as soon as practicable on the day of that Match, but by no later than 10.00am on the next business day after that Match, complete and lodge an *Incident Referral Form* with the relevant Controlling Body and

(ii) the relevant Controlling Body must, as soon as practicable following receipt of the *Incident Referral Form*, notify the reported Player or Official's Club of the report.

(E) Unregistered Club field Umpires, Club boundary Umpires and Club goal Umpires are not permitted to lodge a *Notice of Report*, but are permitted to lodge an *Incident Referral Form* in accordance with

Section 22.1(b)(i) of the *Policy Handbook and/or Section 25.2.2(D)(i) of these Rules* if they consider a Player or Official has committed a Reportable Offence.

(F) An Umpire Coach or Umpiring Co-ordinator in attendance at a Match as an observer has the authority to report a Player or Official in accordance with this Rule.

25.2.3 Club Citing

(A) Subject to Rule 25.2.3(B), if a Club has evidence that a Player or Official has committed a Reportable Offence, and the Player or Official has not been reported by the Umpire for that offence, the Club may complete and lodge a *Notice of Citing- Part A and Part B* with the relevant Controlling Body.

(B) A Club may only lodge a *Notice of Citing* under Rule 25.2.3(A) for a Reportable Offence, that is:

(i) a Classifiable Offence with a Base Sanction of at least three (3) Matches as defined in Appendix 1 of the *Policy Handbook*; or

(ii) a Direct Tribunal Offence

(C) A *Notice of Citing- Part A* must be lodged by the Club with the relevant Controlling Body by no later than 5.00pm on the next business day after the relevant Match.

> ***Guidance Note**: The intent of this deadline is to ensure matters are managed and communicated in an appropriate timeframe. If an incident is serious enough to warrant a* Notice of Citing, *the relevant Club Officer should have adequate information to submit the* Notice of Citing-Part A *by this deadline, without significant impact on a volunteer's external workload. Additionally, this deadline prevents vexatious or retaliatory Citing's being submitted as a response to a* Notice of Charge *received.*.

(D) *Notice of Citing- Part B* can be submitted at the same time as *Notice of Citing- Part A* if all relevant evidence has been obtained, otherwise the *Notice of Citing- Part B* must be lodged by no later than 5.00pm on the second business day after the relevant Match. The lodgement of Part B will then constitute a formal citing submission.

(E) All evidence the Club relies upon to support the citing must be lodged with the *Notice of Citing Part B*, including any medical evidence to support the Club's grading of "impact".

(i) Witness statements can only be provided by Players or Officials, only in exceptional and compelling circumstances will statements from spectators be accepted.

> ***Guidance Note**: Examples of evidence required include:*
>
> - *Written statements from those who directly witnessed the incident (Players and Officials only unless allowed for under exceptional circumstances).*
> - *Footage and or photos of the incident.*
> - *Any Medical Reports relevant to impact on the offended against Player.*

(F) On application by a Club to the Controlling Body by no later than 5.00pm on the next business day following the Match, an extension of the time for lodgement of a Notice of Citing- Part B may be approved by the Controlling Body, but only where the Controlling Body is satisfied the Club has provided evidence there are exceptional circumstances to justify this.(i) If, after completing the *Notice of Citing - Part A*, a Club elects to not proceed with *Notice of Citing- Part B*, the Club is to notify the Controlling Body in writing prior to the time outlined in 25.2.3(D)

> ***Guidance Note**: Simply not having evidence available would not be considered exceptional circumstances, unless for example, the Club was waiting for a statement from an injured Player who was in hospital and unavailable to provide a statement and/or medical evidence such as discharge paperwork by the deadline.*

(G) The Controlling Body, MRP or MRO will review the *Notice of Citing Part A and B* in line with Rule 25.3

(H) A fee of five hundred (500) dollars is payable by the Club to the Controlling Body for each *Notice of Citing- Part A and B* lodged: and

(i) payment for this must be agreed to by the Club upon lodgement of the *Notice of Citing- Part A and B*;

(ii) the Controlling Body will invoice the Club at the end of the Season for any relevant costs incurred in line with Rule 25.2.3(G) and Rule 25.2.3(H) as applicable; and

(iii) the Controlling Body may, in its absolute discretion, refund the citing fee in full or part if the Controlling Body proceeds with issuing a Notice of Charge to the Player or Official subject of the Notice of Citing.

(I) A *Notice of Citing- Part B* in accordance with Rule 25.2.3(A) may not be withdrawn by the Club after it has been lodged, unless the withdrawal is approved by the Controlling Body.

(J) The Controlling Body must, as soon as practicable upon receipt of the *Notice of Citing- Part A*, notify the reported Player or Official's Club of the intended citing.

(K) For the avoidance of doubt:

(i) the lodgement of *Notice of Citing - Part A* will not constitute a formal citing;

(ii) the lodgement of *Notice of Citing - Part A and Part B* will constitute a formal citing;

(iii) if the *Notice of Citing- Part B* is not lodged in line with Rule 25.2.3(D) or another such time as determined in conjunction with Rule 25.2.3(E), a citing will be deemed not to have been made;

(iv) a *Notice of Citing - Part A and B* must be submitted for each separate incident.

25.2.4 Review of Footage

(A) A Club may request the Controlling Body to review footage of an incident where it considers the footage shows a Player or Official has committed a Reportable Offence. The footage must show the incident in its entirety, and no part of the incident should be obstructed or off-screen.

> ***Guidance Note**: In circumstances where footage does not capture the entire incident, the Club may choose to procced with a Notice of Citing in accordance with Section 25.2.3 rather than a Review of Footage.*

(B) A request by a Club for a review of footage must be submitted to the relevant Controlling Body by no later than 5.00pm on the first business day following the Match the incident arises from.

(C) A Review of Footage request must be submitted for each separate incident.

(D) A Club making a request under this Rule must, within the time specified in 25.2.4(B):

(i) complete and lodge the prescribed *Request for Review of Footage* form together with the footage relied upon; and

(ii) where available, provide any medical evidence to support the Club's grading of "impact".

(E) A fee of two hundred and fifty (250) dollars is payable by the Club to the relevant Controlling Body for each request to view footage of an incident and:

(i) the Controlling Body will invoice the Club at the end of the Season for any relevant costs incurred in line with Rule 25.2.4(D)(ii) as applicable ; and

(ii) may, at the absolute discretion of the Controlling Body, be refunded to the Club in full or part if the Controlling Body proceeds with issuing a *Notice of Charge* to the Player or Official subject of the *Request for Review of Footage*.

(F) The Controlling Body must, as soon as practicable upon receipt of the *Review of Footage*, notify the reported Player or Official's Club of the submission and provide the Player or Official's club with a copy of the footage.

(G) Following review of the footage, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO may determine, in line with Rule 25.4 to:

(i) proceed with the issuing of a *Notice of Charge* in accordance with Rule 25.4; or

(H) not proceed with a Notice of Charge if not satisfied based on the evidence provided that a Reportable Offence was committed in line with Rule 25.3.4.

25.2.5 Executive Officer Report

If an Executive Officer considers a Player or Official has committed a Reportable Offence, the Executive Officer may refer the matter for further investigation in accordance with Rule 25.3.3.

> ***Guidance Note**: This provision is to be used for serious reportable offences where it was not practicable for any of the other reporting mechanisms to have been invoked. It is not to be used to circumvent those other mechanisms where it is reasonably evident that one or more of those could have been used.*

25.2.6 Reporting of Junior Players

(A) The Controlling Body, MRP or MRO may determine to manage a report of a Junior Player aged 9 to 12 years old and any subsequent disciplinary process in an alternate manner at their absolute discretion.

(B) If it is determined that a report meets Rule 25.2.6 (A), the MRP will provide a provisional grading of the incident in line with Appendix 1 of the *Policy Handbook* and offer the Reported Person's Club the opportunity to impose a club-based sanction: and

(i) if the Reported Person and their Club accept this, the sanction will be recorded, as applicable, on the Reported Person's PlayHQ profile only for the duration of their suspension (if applicable) to ensure compliance, then the incident will be deleted; or

(ii) if the Reported Person and their Club elect to reject this alternative process, the matter will proceed to a formal Notice of Charge in line with Rule 25.5 and the matter can be accepted and formally recorded on the Reported Person's PlayHQ profile, or contested at Tribunal.

25.3 Assessing a Reportable Offence

25.3.1 Initial Assessment of a Report

(A) As soon as practicable after the Controlling Body receives a *Notice of Report* under Rule 25.2.2, a *Notice of Citing* under Rule 25.2.3, a *Review of Footage* request under Rule 25.2.4, or an *Incident Referral Form* under Rule 25.2.2(D) and 25.2.2(E) the Controlling Body must undertake an assessment to determine if:

(i) it is satisfied there is evidence a Reportable Offence has been committed and can proceed directly to classification and grading of the offence under Rule 25.4; or

(ii) further investigation of the Reportable Offence is required as per Rule 25.3.3; or

(iii) the Reportable Offence is to be dismissed as per Rule 25.3.4.

25.3.2 Match Review Panel ('MRP')

The Controlling Body may appoint a Match Review Panel ('MRP)', made up of no less than three (3) suitably qualified persons, or a Match Review Officer ('MRO') comprising only one (1) suitably qualified person, to conduct or assist with an assessment under Rule 25.3.1.

25.3.3 Further Investigation

The Controlling Body, MRP or MRO may use reasonable measures to establish the facts of a report made under Rule 25.2, to assess whether a Reportable Offence has been committed.

(A) All Players, Officials and Clubs are to cooperate with an investigation under this Rule, including the provision of any footage taken of a Match as requested by the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO.

***Guidance Note**: Reasonable measures may include:*

- *Reviewing the evidence provided and requesting additional information from the Club*
- *Determine that all relevant evidence has been provided and make a determination accordingly*
- *Provide details of the Reported Person's response to relevant parties to take into consideration in relation to statements or evidence already provided*

(B) Failure by a Person or Club to comply with Rule 25.3.3(B) will be considered to be a Policy Breach and dealt with in accordance with Rule 26.

(C) On completion of any investigation under this Rule, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO is then to determine:

(i) if it is satisfied a Reportable Offence has been committed and a *Notice of Charge* is to be issued in accordance with Rule 25.5; or

(ii) if the Reportable Offence is to be dismissed in accordance with Rule 25.3.4.

(D) If in the course of any investigation, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO identifies that further Reportable Offences have been committed and have not been reported, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO may proceed to issue a Notice of Charge in respect of that finding.

(E) If in the course of any investigation, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO identifies actions constituting a Policy Breach, the matter can be referred for review under Rule 26.2(A)(ii).

25.3.4 Dismissal of a Report

(A) After assessment and completion of any investigation, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO may dismiss a matter if it considers there to be insufficient evidence of a Reportable Offence occurring or does not meet the threshold to lodge a *Notice of Citing* under Rule 25.2.3(B)(i).

(B) Where a matter is dismissed in accordance with Rule 25.3.4(A):

(i) the Controlling Body is to notify the reported person's Club of this as soon as practicable after the decision is made: and

(ii) this decision is not able to be:

(a) reviewed by the Controlling Body even where additional information is provided by the Club; and

(b) appealed under Rule 28 of these Rules or Section 26 of the *Policy Handbook*.

25.4 Classification & Grading of Reportable Offence

25.4.1 Classification and Grading of a Reportable Offence

(A) Unless otherwise stated in this Rule, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO is to determine the classification and grading of the offence, in accordance with Appendix 1 of the *Policy Handbook*.

25.4.2 Reportable Offence in a Special Round

(A) The Controlling Body, MRP, MRO or Tribunal, as applicable, may apply at its absolute discretion, a loading of up to one hundred percent (100%) in relation to the base sanction for any Reportable Offence committed toward or in relation to an Umpire during a Community Umpiring Week.

25.4.3 Multiple Reportable Offences

(A) Where a Person commits multiple reportable offences in a Match each reportable offence is to be classified and graded separately;

(B) Where a Person has been found or plead guilty to two Reportable Offences in the previous 12 month period, for any subsequent Reportable Offence the Controlling Body will not offer a reduced sanction in an early guilty plea offer. This applies until the Player has not been found or pleaded guilty to a Reportable Offence for a period of 12 months from the date of the last Reportable Offence.

***Guidance Note**: The offence dates are determined based on the date the offence is committed, not the date the player has been found or pleaded guilty*

25.5 Notice of Charge

25.5.1 Purpose of a Notice of Charge

(A) A *Notice of Charge* is issued to the reported Person and their Club to detail the particulars of a Reportable Offence, any penalties that apply to the offence, the reported Person's rights and the process to be followed.

25.5.2 Issuing and Form of a Notice of Charge

(A) Where a *Notice of Charge* is to be issued under these Rules, the Controlling Body must, as soon as practicable, send the *Notice of Charge* to the reported Person and their Club.

(B) A *Notice of Charge* must contain the following particulars:

(i) date and approximate time of the incident;

(ii) a description of the incident;

(iii) the charge and classification of the offence;

(iv) the grading of the offence where applicable;

(v) the sanctions applicable, including early guilty plea offer, or direct Tribunal referral;

(vi) the reported Person's rights;

(vii) the reported Person's or Club's response requirements.

25.5.3 Withdrawing a Notice of Charge

(A) Section 22.3(b) of the *Policy Handbook* applies in relation to the withdrawal of a *Notice of Charge*.

25.6 Early Guilty Plea

25.6.1 Early Guilty Plea Offer

(A) An early guilty plea offer provides the means for the reported Person to accept a penalty for a low level or classifiable Reportable Offence without the need for a Tribunal hearing.

(B) The *Notice of Charge* to the reported Person and their Club will, where applicable, detail any early guilty plea offer.

(C) The Controlling Body may choose not to make an early guilty plea offer and refer the matter directly to the Tribunal to be determined under Rule 27.

(D) Where a matter is referred directly to the Tribunal under Rule 25.6.1(C), the Reported Person must provide all required documents in line with Rule 27 and as outlined in the *Notice of Charge*.

***Guidance Note**: An Early Guilty Plea does not automatically entitle the Reported Person to a reduction in the base sanction. It is the option for the Reported Person to accept the prescribed penalty without a Tribunal Hearing.*

25.6.2 Response to an Early Guilty Plea Offer

(A) Where an early guilty plea offer has been made, the reported Person or their Club must;

(i) respond to this to the Controlling Body by no later than 5.00pm on the next business day after receipt of the *Notice of Charge*, or by such other time as the Controlling Body determines; and

(ii) enter an early guilty plea to accept the penalty offered, or decline the early guilty plea offer.

(B) Failure by a reported Person or their Club to respond to an early guilty plea offer within the specified time will be deemed to constitute an early guilty plea by the reported Player or Official and acceptance of the penalty offered.

(C) If a Person elects to contest a *Notice of Charge* issued under Rule 25.5.2:

(i) the Controlling Body must refer the matter to the Tribunal to be dealt with in accordance with Rule 27; and

(ii) Section 22.4(b)(i) of the Handbook will apply in relation to any reduction in the sanction that otherwise would have been available under an Early Guilty Plea offer.

25.7 Reportable Offences Record Keeping

25.7.1 Documents

(A) All documents associated with a Reportable Offence must be retained by the Controlling Body for a period of ten (10) years, including:

(i) Notice of Report if not issued via OfficialsHQ;

(ii) Notice of Charge;

(iii) Witness statements;

(iv) Footage of the incident;

(v) Tribunal determination;

(vi) Deregistration documentation

25.7.2 Record of Reportable Offences

(A) Section 22.5 of the *Policy Handbook* applies to the recording of Reportable Offences.

(B) Where a Person is found guilty of or accepts a sanction under a Notice of Charge and that Person is not registered in the Competition Management Platform, the Person must register in the Competition Management Platform within seven (7) days of the sanction being accepted or the Tribunal determination (as applicable) so that Rule 25.7.2(A) can be complied with.

26 POLICY BREACHES

26.1 What is a Policy Breach?

(A) A policy breach occurs when a Party fails to comply with a requirement established under the AFL's policy structure, including:

(i) the *Policy Handbook*;

(ii) the Rules;

(iii) the AFL NSW/AFL Code of Conduct;

(iv) the AFL Coaches' Code of Conduct;

(v) any of the policies listed in Rule 6.4.

(B) For the purpose of Rule 26, a *Party* means a Club, Coach, Official, Player, Club member, parent or guardian of a Player, spectator of a Match or any other person reasonably connected to Australian Football and within the purview of these Rules or the *Policy Handbook*.

(C) Subject to Rule 26.2.2, a policy breach that is deemed to be a Reportable Offence is to be dealt with under Rule 25.

26.2 Reporting a Policy Breach

(A) An alleged policy breach may be identified in two ways:

(i) directly by the Controlling Body; or

(ii) by another person who has reasonable cause to believe that such a breach has occurred.

(B) Where an alleged policy breach is identified directly by a Controlling Body, the requirements of Rule 26.2.1 do not apply, however all other requirements of Rule 26 will apply as if a Complaint has been made.

26.2.1 Complaint Procedure

(A) Except where stated otherwise in this Rule 26.2, the process for a person making a complaint is detailed in Table 36.

Table 36- Complaint Procedure

Complaint Procedure	
How to make a complaint	Complete a *Notice of Complaint* form and attach all supporting evidence to be relied upon. ***Guidance Note*** *– it is the Complainant's responsibility to gather all witness statements and relevant evidence and submit this with the Notice of Complaint.*
Who to submit the complaint to	If the complaint relates to a **Club, Club Official, Player, Parent / Guardian or supporter**, submit to the Controlling Body. If the complaint relates to **a League or a League Official**, submit to the Executive Officer or Community Football Operations Manager of AFL NSW/ACT. If the *Notice of Complaint* has been submitted online in the League's prescribed format, it will be received by the League and the AFL NSW/ACT Community Football Operations team.
Timeline for submitting a complaint	Unless otherwise specified in a particular Rule, a *Notice of Complaint* is to be submitted by no later than 5.00pm on the **third (3rd) calendar day** after the occurrence of the alleged breach.

(B) The Controlling Body may allow for a complaint to be submitted up to 14 days after the alleged breach where there is evidence of exceptional and compelling circumstances as to why it was not practicable for the complaint to have been made by the required day and time.

(i) The Complainant must make reasonable efforts to ensure the Controlling Body is notified of their intent to submit a *Notice of Complaint* by the third (3rd) calendar day

(C) Subject to Rule 26.2.1(D), a complaint lodged with the Controlling Body under Rule 26.2.1(A) will be dealt with in accordance with these Rules.

(D) Where the Controlling Body considers that a complaint relates to a potential breach of Sections 11, 13 or 14 of the *Policy Handbook* , the Controlling Body may refer to the complaint to the AFL for management in accordance with Section 23 of the *Policy Handbook*.

(E) A complaint submitted in accordance with Rule 26.2.1(A) may not be withdrawn by the submitting Club or person after it has been submitted unless otherwise approved by the Controlling Body.

26.2.2 Complaint for Vilification or Safeguarding Children

(A) Where a complaint relates to an alleged Prohibited Conduct breach as defined in Section 10 of the *Policy Handbook*, the reporting party is to and submit a *Notice of Complaint – Prohibited Conduct* form, together with any supporting evidence, to the Controlling Body by no later than 30 days after the alleged breach.

(B) Any Complaint made under Rule 26.2.2 is to be managed by the Controlling Body in accordance with Section 10 of the *Policy Handbook*.

(C) Where a complaint relates to an alleged breach of Section 11 of the *Policy Handbook* (Safeguarding Children and Young People), the reporting party is to submit a complaint as soon as practicable, however there is no time limitation on this.

26.3 Assessing a Notice of Complaint

26.3.1 Assessing and Investigating a Complaint

(A) Section 23.2 of the *Policy Handbook* applies in relation to assessing and investigating a complaint.

26.4 Determining a Policy Breach

(A) Section 23.3 of the *Policy* Handbook applies in determining a Policy Breach. .

26.5 Notice of Breach

26.5.1 Issuing a Notice of Breach

Section 23.4 of the *Policy Handbook* applies for issuing a Notice of Breach.

26.5.2 Withdrawing a Notice of Breach

(A) Section 23.4(c) of the *Policy Handbook* applies in relation to the withdrawal of a *Notice of Breach*.

26.5.3 Response to a Notice of Breach and Early Guilty Plea

Section 23.5 of the *Policy Handbook* applies in relation to responding to a Notice of Breach and entering an Early Guilty Plea.

26.6 Record of Policy Breach

(A) Subject to Rule 26.6(B), Section 27.2 of the *Policy* Handbook will apply in relation to recording of Policy Breaches.

(B) Where a Person is found guilty of or accepts a sanction under a Notice of Breach and that Person is not registered in the Competition Management Platform, the Person must register in the Competition Management Platform within seven (7) days of the sanction being accepted or the Tribunal determination (as applicable) so that Section 26.6.2(A) can be complied with.

27 TRIBUNAL HEARINGS

27.1.1 Scope of the Tribunal

(A) The Tribunal may hear and determine a matter referred to it in accordance with:

(i) Rule 25 – Reportable Offences

(ii) Rule 26 – Policy Breach

27.1.2 Appointment of Tribunal Panel

(A) AFL NSW/ACT is to appoint a Tribunal Panel in accordance with Section 25.2 of the *Policy Handbook*.

(B) By agreement with AFL NSW/ACT, a League may elect to use the Tribunal Panel appointed by AFL NSW/ACT for the duration of a Season.

(C) Where an Affiliated League elects not to use the Tribunal Panel appointed by AFL NSW/ACT, the League is to appoint a Tribunal in accordance with Section 25.2 of the *Policy Handbook*.

27.1.3 Tribunal Procedure and Evidence

Section 25.3 of the *Policy Handbook* applies to the procedural and evidentiary requirements of a Tribunal hearing.

27.1.4 Tribunal Decision

Section 25.4 of the *Policy Handbook* applies in relation a decision of a Tribunal.

27.1.5 Appeal of Tribunal Decision

A decision made by a Tribunal may be appealed in accordance with Rule 28.

27.1.6 Recording of Tribunal Hearing

Section 25.3(n) of the Policy Handbook applies in relation to the recording of Tribunal Hearings.

28 APPEALS

28.1 Appeal Board

28.1.1 Function of Appeal Board

The function of the Appeal Board is to hear and determine appeals as allowed for under Section 26.1(a) of the *Policy Handbook* or where allowed for under these Rules.

28.1.2 Appeal Board Panel

Section 26.2 of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

28.2 Appeal Lodgement

28.2.1 Grounds for Appeal

(A) Where the right to appeal a decision to the Appeal Board is allowed for under the *Policy Handbook* or these Rules, a Player, Official, Club or Controlling Body may appeal to the Appeal Board on one or more of the Appeal Grounds specified in Section 26.1(b)(i) of the *Policy Handbook*.

28.2.2 Notice of Appeal

(A) A *Notice of Appeal* must:

(i) be in writing via a *Notice of Appeal* form;

(ii) lodged with the Executive Officer of the Controlling Body within the timeframe specified in Rule 28.2.3;

(iii) specify the Appeal Ground(s) relied upon by the Appellant and supporting submissions in respect of the Appeal Ground(s); and

(iv) attach confirmation of payment of the appeal fee as per Rule 28.2.4.

28.2.3 Timeframe for Appeal

(A) The Appellant must lodge a *Notice of Appeal* by:

(i) where an appeal relates to a determination of a Tribunal, no later than 5.00pm on the day following decision of the Tribunal; or

***Guidance Note**: The determination of a Tribunal is the decision delivered verbally by the Tribunal at the end of the hearing, not reference to the Minutes of Tribunal sent at a later date.*

(ii) where an appeal relates to a determination other than a Tribunal determination, no later than 5.00pm on the third (3) business day following the relevant determination being made.

28.2.4 Appeal Fee

(A) The appeal fee, as allowed for under Section 26.1(c)(i)(B) of the *Policy Handbook*, is one thousand (1,000) dollars and must be paid to the Controlling Body on lodgement of the appeal.

(B) Section 26.4(d) of the *Policy Handbook* applies in relation to the refund or otherwise of the appeal fee on determination of the matter by the Appeals Board.

(C) Section 26.4(e) of the *Policy Handbook* applies in relation to the refund or otherwise of the appeal fee where the appeal is abandoned by the Appellant.

28.2.5 Appeal Board may Dismiss Appeal

(A) Section 26.1(e) of the *Policy Handbook* applies to the right of the Appeal Board to dismiss an Appeal without a hearing.

28.3 Appeal Hearings

28.3.1 Appeal Hearing Date & Place

(A) Except where the Appeal Board dismisses an appeal under Rule 28.2.5, upon receipt of a valid *Notice of Appeal*, the Executive Officer, in consultation with the Chairperson, shall:

(i) fix the date, time and place for the hearing of the appeal as soon as reasonably practicable; and

(ii) advise all parties with an interest in the appeal in writing of those particulars.

(B) The Appeal Board is empowered to meet when and where it considers necessary, having regard to a fair and efficient resolution of the appeal.

(C) The Appeal Board, through the Executive Officer can vary the date, time or place of the specified hearing and upon doing so must immediately provide all parties with an interest in the appeal written notice of the variation.

28.3.2 Composition of Appeal Board for Hearing

Section 26.3(a) of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

28.3.3 Representation and Costs

(A) Section 26.3(b) of the *Policy Handbook* applies to representation at an appeal.

(B) Section 26.3(i) of the *Policy Handbook* applies to costs.

28.3.4 Attendance at Appeal Board Hearing

Section 26.3(c) of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

28.3.5 General Conduct of Appeal Board Hearing

(A) Other than provided for in this Rule 28.3.5, Section 26.3(d) of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

(B) The hearing before the Appeal Board shall be:

(i) inquisitorial in nature; and

(ii) conducted with as little formality and technicality and with as much expedition as the proper consideration of the matters permits.

(C) In the hearing and determination of an appeal, the Appeal Board shall decide all questions of law and fact and without limitation, shall determine the meaning of any words.

28.3.6 Review of Evidence by Appeal Board

(A) Other than provided for in this Rule 28.3.6, Section 26.3(e) of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

(B) The Appeal Board must have regard to any record of the proceeding before the Tribunal or other body against whose decision an appeal is made, including a record of any evidence taken in a Tribunal hearing.

(C) The Appeal Board may require the Parties to provide a written submission to the Appeals Board in accordance with a timeframe determined by the Appeals Board.

28.3.7 Onus and Standard of Proof

Section 26.3(f) of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

28.3.8 Adjournments

Section 26.4(c) of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

28.4 Appeal Outcomes

28.4.1 Decision of Appeal Board

Section 26.4(a) of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

28.4.2 Person to Serve Sanction Until Appeal is Determined

Section 26.4(b) of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

28.4.3 Abandoning an Appeal

Section 26.4(e) of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

28.4.4 Validity of Appeal and Hearing

Section 26.4(f) of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

28.4.5 Exhaust Appeal Rights

Section 26.4(g) of the *Policy Handbook* applies.

29 PROSCRIBED CONDUCT

29.1 Contact Intended to Mislead

A Person issued with a *Notice of Charge* or *Notice of Breach*, that Person's representative or any Person acting in concert with a Person issued with a *Notice of Charge* or *Notice of Breach*, must not contact, or procure another Person to contact, a Person who may be required to give evidence before the Tribunal, where that contact is intended to or may otherwise mislead the Tribunal or unfairly affect the conduct of the Tribunal hearing.

29.2 Public Comment and Criticism

Section 27.5 of the *Policy Handbook* applies in relation to public comments and criticism.

30 DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

30.1 Sanctions for Reportable Offence

(A) Sanctions for a classifiable Reportable Offence are detailed in Appendix 1 of the *Policy Handbook*.

30.2 Sanctions for Policy Breach

***Guidance Note**: In determining appropriate sanctions for a policy breach, the Controlling Body or CMC is to have regard for the nature and severity of each breach. Where there are multiple confirmed breaches arising from an incident, the League or CMC may determine to impose sanctions for each individual breach, or may impose one set of sanctions that apply to the amalgamation of all breaches.*

(A) Where a policy breach is established, the Controlling Body, CMC or RMC, as applicable, may impose one or more of disciplinary sanctions detailed in Table 37.

Table 37 – Disciplinary Sanctions Table

Item No	Sanction
(i)	Suspending a Player or Official from participation in one or more Matches, where any such suspension operates in accordance with Rule 30.3.
(ii)	Suspending a person from holding any post as an Official, administrator or committee person for a defined period.
(iii)	Banning a person from holding any post as an Official, administrator or committee person.
(iv)	Requiring an individual to undertake specific Official duties for a period of time.
(v)	Requiring a written apology, including in any terms or manner specified.
(vi)	Requiring mediation between parties including on specified conditions.
(vii)	Requiring that the individual participate in an education, remedial or counselling program.
(viii)	Appointing a mentor to an individual for a period of time.
(ix)	Imposing an official warning on a Club or individual.
(x)	Imposing a fine on a Club of up to $2,500 for a first offence.
(xi)	Imposing a fine on a Club of up to $5,000 for a subsequent offence.
(xii)	Imposing the loss of Competition points upon a Team.
(xiii)	Imposing a suspension on a Team from participation in one or more Matches, including a finals Match.
(xiv)	Deducting Club of the Year Award points for the season in which the indiscretion has taken place.
(xv)	Suspending or terminating the Club Participation Agreement.
(xvi)	Amending the terms of the Club Participation Agreement.
(xvii)	Requiring immediate rectification of a Club policy, system or process that led to, or contributed to, the breach.
(xviii)	Requiring a remedial action plan to be submitted by a Club.
(xix)	Requiring notification to all Club members of the requirements of a Rule or AFL Policy.
(xx)	Imposing a suspended penalty of any of the above.
(xxi)	Imposing any other sanction as determined by the Controlling Body with the prior approval of the RMC.

(B) A sanction has immediate effect unless otherwise notified by the Controlling Body or CMC, as applicable.

(C) In determining sanctions, the Controlling Body may also take into account:

(i) any acknowledgement by a Club or individual of a breach prior to the issuing of a Notice of Breach;

(ii) the extent of any remorse shown by a Club or individual to whom a policy breach applies;

(iii) the extent of any corrective actions taken, prior to the issuing of a Notice of Breach, by a Club or individual to whom a breach applies;

(iv) the number of policy breaches by a Club or individual in the past three (3) years.

(D) Where a breach of policy matter proceeds to the Tribunal, the Tribunal is to determine sanctions in accordance with the Section 25.4(a)(ii)(B) of the *Policy Handbook*.

> ***Guidance Note**: Under Section 25.4 of the Policy Handbook, the Tribunal has discretion to impose sanctions for a policy breach "on any terms and conditions" except for Deregistration of a person. In determining such sanctions, the Tribunal may have regard to one or more of the sanctions listed in Rule 30.2.*

30.3 Suspension of a Person

(A) The provisions of this Rule 30.3 apply to the suspension of a person for a Reportable Offence or a policy breach under these Rules.

(B) A Person suspended by a Controlling Body is, for the period of the suspension, or while the suspension remains unserved, prohibited from playing or participating in a Match conducted by the Controlling Body imposing the suspension and a Match conducted by any other Controlling Body.

(C) The suspension will apply to the Grade in which the person played, or was officiating in, immediately prior to such suspension or disqualification.

(D) For the purposes of this Rule 30.3, a 'Match' shall mean a competition Match of the same Grade in which the person committed the offence, and shall also include as the one Match, the Matches in all Grades in a particular round for which the person would, but for the suspension be eligible, regardless of whether all Matches in that round are played on the one day or not.

> ***Guidance Note**: The effect of this Rule (D) is that a Player cannot count towards his/her suspension matches in more than one grade in each round, even if he/she regularly 'doubles up' and/or in circumstances where the Player or Official also participates in another Competition under a Permit.*

(E) Where a suspension is expressed as one or more Matches, the suspension shall take effect from and include the next competition Match following the suspension for which the person would, but for the suspension, be eligible to participate in.

(F) Where a suspension for a policy breach is expressed as a period of time, the period shall commence from the time the penalty is pronounced and conclude at midnight on the last day of the period, unless the Controlling Body, Tribunal or Appeal Board orders otherwise.

(G) A suspension will apply to all Matches other than pre-season or off-season Matches unless otherwise determined by the Tribunal in exceptional and compelling circumstances.

(H) A person suspended may not serve the suspension in:

(i) any pre-season or off-season Matches but may participate in such Matches unless otherwise determined by the Controlling Body; or

(ii) any practice or trial matches but may participate in such Matches unless otherwise determined by the Controlling Body.

(I) Unless otherwise determined by a Controlling Body, a person suspended may not serve the suspension in any cancelled Matches.

(J) A Person suspended may not serve the suspension in a round where the Person's Team in the relevant Grade has a bye

(K) A person suspended during a split round may not serve the suspension in that same round in another Grade, including representative football.

(L) Where a suspension carries over to a subsequent season, a person who was suspended in a Junior Competition in the previous season and has transitioned to a Higher Age Group or Senior Competition in the subsequent season, must serve the suspension in the Competition most aligned to their age.

***Guidance Note**:*

A person suspended in a Junior Competition may not serve any part of their suspension in a Senior Competition within the same Competition year in which they were suspended. For example, a person suspended in an Under 17s competition in 2025 is unable to serve their suspension in a Senior Competition until the commencement of the 2026 season.

***Example:** A player who is suspended at the end of the season in an Under 17s competition but also plays in a Senior First Grade Competition which has not yet concluded is unable to serve any part of their suspension in the subsequent First Grade Competition matches for the remainder of the 2026 season, regardless of whether their Under 17s competition has finished.*

(M) A person transferring from one Competition to another Competition will carry over any suspension to the new Competition, and the suspension shall apply to the Grade in the new Competition that:

(i) is most closely aligned to the Grade in which the person was suspended; and

(ii) for which the person is eligible to participate in.

***Example**: A player, who is 14 turning 15 in the season, and was suspended in an under 15's match, moves to a new competition that has under 14s and under 16s, will serve the remaining period of suspension in the under 16s in the new competition (as they are not eligible to play under 14s).*

(N) Where a suspension carries over to a subsequent season, a person who was suspended must be registered in that subsequent season prior to any matches or period being counted toward the suspension, unless otherwise determined by the CMC.

***Guidance Note**: A person who is not registered is not eligible to participate in a match and therefore any matches during a period of non-registration will not count toward the suspension.*

(O) A person, other than a Player suspended for a Reportable Offence, may not communicate with any Football Official on matchday for the duration of their suspension.

(P) A person, other than a Player suspended for a Reportable Offence, may not enter the playing area or Club change rooms at any Match on matchday for the duration of their suspension.

(Q) A suspended person may not play or perform any football Official duties on matchday for the duration of their suspension.

***Guidance Note**: For example, a suspended Player cannot perform the role of runner or assistant coach for the duration of the suspension. Equally, a suspended Official, who is also a registered Player, cannot play for the duration of the suspension. However, a suspended person can perform other unofficial duties such as working in the canteen or bar.*

(R) Unless otherwise specified by the relevant Controlling Body in exceptional and compelling circumstances, a suspended Person will not be eligible to coach or perform any football Official duties in representative football if the representative fixture occurs while the Person is serving the suspension.

(S) A suspended Person will not be eligible to play in a representative match and the representative fixture will not count as part of the suspension for any person who may have been eligible to have played or officiated in a representative Match.

(T) Where a person is suspended as a result of an offence arising in a representative fixture match, any matches of the suspension that are unable to be served during the representative fixture shall carry over and apply to the Competition in which the person usually participates.

(U) Where the Controlling Body or Tribunal imposes a sanction on a person that prevents the person from participating in a Match, the person must serve that sanction pending the determination of any appeal.

(V) Law 22.4 of the *Laws of Australian Football* will apply in conjunction with this Rule 30.3 in relation to all persons suspended by the Controlling Body or Tribunal or Appeal Board.

Part F - MISCELLANEOUS

31 AFL MARKS AND LOGOS

(A) Clubs and the League must not make use of AFL Marks without the prior written consent of the AFL and/or AFL NSW/ACT which consent may be given or withheld at the AFL and AFL NSW/ACT's discretion (reasonably exercised).

(B) Clubs of the League, Leagues and Associations affiliated or directly associated with the League or Leagues controlled by AFL NSW/ACT must submit details of any proposed use of AFL Marks to AFL NSW/ACT prior to any use thereof including use for advertising or promotional purposes.

(C) Clubs and the League acknowledge that the AFL and AFL NSW/ACT are the owners of the AFL Marks and of the goodwill attaching to the AFL Marks and agree that the AFL Marks must remain vested in the AFL and/or AFL NSW/ACT and agree not to challenge the validity or ownership of the AFL Marks.

(D) Clubs and the League must not register any trade marks, company or business names, logos, symbols, emblems, designs, or other indicia using the AFL Marks or any component thereof.

(E) Clubs and the League agree not to alter the AFL Marks in any way nor to affix, incorporate or use the AFL Marks, in connection with or as part of another trade mark, distinctive mark, name, brand or thing.

(F) Clubs and the League recognise the great value of the AFL Marks and acknowledge the goodwill attached thereto and that all rights, title and interest therein including the copyright thereto vests in and belongs to AFL and/or AFL NSW/ACT.

(G) Clubs and the League agree that they will not at any time do any act, matter or thing intended to or which might otherwise have the effect of interfering with, restricting, limiting or challenging the proprietary rights of AFL and/or AFL NSW/ACT in and to the AFL Marks.

32 APPROVED SUPPLIERS

(A) AFL NSW/ACT approved suppliers are licensed and authorised as the only suppliers to use the AFL NSW/ACT logo and identified in Rule 8.7.2 and Table 2.

(B) The current list of AFL NSW/ACT approved suppliers is on the AFL NSW/ACT website and Table 2.

33 BROADCASTING RIGHTS

(A) In this Rule, the term "broadcast" means any service (by whatever means or process) which is or in the future becomes a content service for the purposes of the Telecommunications Act 1997 (Cth) and includes, but is not limited to any internet or online service, any television or radio transmission or any service making available to any member of the public (simultaneously with or consecutively to any other member of the public) text, sounds or images.

(B) Each Club acknowledges and agrees that the League and AFL NSW/ACT has the exclusive right to authorise the public broadcast of all matches played in the Competition or such other Competition/s conducted by the League.

(C) Clubs shall not participate in any match played in the Competition or such other Competition/s conducted by the League which is broadcast by any provider of a broadcast other than a provider of a broadcast authorised or approved by the League.

(D) Where a Club is the ground hirer or occupier of a venue at which matches are played in the Competition or such other Competition/s conducted by the League or AFL NSW/ACT;

(i) it shall use its best endeavours to provide any provider of a broadcast authorised by the League or AFL NSW/ACT with access to the necessary facilities required for the provision of the broadcast of matches played in the Competition and shall use its best endeavours to provide assistance to any provider of a broadcast authorised by the League or AFL NSW/ACT and its servants and agents as is necessary to ensure that the League or AFL NSW/ACT fulfils, to the

maximum extent possible, its obligations to the provider of a broadcast authorised by the League or AFL NSW/ACT; and

(ii) where it is within the Club's control, it shall not permit, allow or assist any other person to permit or allow the admission into the venue of any equipment used in the provision of a broadcast including television and video cameras, on a day when any match in the Competition/s or such other Competition is played at the venue, save as permitted by the preceding Rule and save as is otherwise specifically authorised by the League or AFL NSW/ACT.

(E) Where a Club is not the ground hirer or occupier of the venue at which the Club plays its home matches in the Competition, or such other Competition/s conducted by the League or AFL NSW/ACT, the Club shall use its best endeavours to ensure that the ground hirer or occupier of such venue complies with the provisions of this Rule.

34 SOCIAL MEDIA & MEDIA STATEMENTS

(A) The following applies to the use of social media and media statements:

(i) Section 12 of the *Policy Handbook*;

(ii) the AFL NSW/ACT Code of Conduct;

(iii) any relevant provisions of these Rules.

(B) Only persons authorised or approved by the Controlling Body may make public statements regarding League matters.

(C) For the Rules, "statement" includes any declaration, comment or remark, whether verbal, in print or by electronic media or social media.

(D) A Club whose Official or Player has made a statement contrary to the provisions of this Rule 34, or in the case of any other person with the apparent authority, agreement, consent or approval of the Club, may be referred to the Controlling Body which may, in the event of a breach, levy a fine of up to a maximum of five thousand (5,000) dollars and forfeit past or future Match points.

35 RECORDING & USE OF IMAGES & FOOTAGE

(A) All persons must comply with:

(i) the terms and conditions of registration; and

(ii) any AFL and/or AFL NSW/ACT Policy relating to the recording and use of images and footage as published from time to time; and

(iii) Any relevant state and national legislation relating to the recording and use of images and footage.

FORM / TEMPLATE LINKS

All forms and templates can be found on the Policies and Forms section of the League website.

Forms must be submitted in line with the proscribed format and conditions, including by a Person as defined within the relevant Rule.

Form / Template	Rule	Link (if applicable)
Application to Play in a Higher Age Group Form	11.2.2	Application to Play Up
Age Dispensation to Play Down Application Form	11.2.3	Application to Play Down
Fixture Change Request	13.2	Fixture Change Request
Joint Venture Agreement	13.2	Joint Venture Agreement
Notice of Appeal	28.2.2	Policy Handbook Template
Notice of Citing – Part A & B	25.2.3	Notice of Citing- Part A
		Notice of Citing- Part B
Notice of Complaint	26.2.1	Notice of Complaint
		Policy Handbook Template
Practice Match Request Form	18(B)	Practice Match Request
Request for Review of Footage	25.2.4	Review of Footage
Student Permit Form	11.4.4	
Uniform Design Approval Form	8.7.2	Uniform Design Approval
Notice of Complaint - Prohibited Conduct	26.2.2	Policy Handbook Template
Working With Children Check Register	6.6.2	
Club Feedback Report on Umpiring	10.15	Club Coach Umpire Feedback

APPENDICES

Number	Appendix Name
Appendix One	AFL NSW/ACT Code of Conduct
Appendix Two	Player Finals Eligibility
Appendix Three	Sanctions for Match Day Breaches
Appendix Four	Inclusion Dispensation
Appendix Five	Multiple consecutively ranked Senior Teams in one Competition Grade
Appendix Six	League Awards

This *Code of Conduct* is established under Rule 6.3 of the *AFL NSW/ACT Rules* and is intended to ensure Australian Rules football is a positive and enjoyable experience for everyone. All players, officials, parents and supporters are expected to abide by the *Code of Conduct*. Any person who fails to comply with the Code of Conduct will be subject of disciplinary proceedings for a breach of policy under Rule 26 of the AFL NSW/ACT Rules.

PART A General Code of Conduct Requirements

Any person (including Umpires) involved in Australian Rules community football must:	
1.	Comply with: (i) this *Code of Conduct*; (ii) the *AFL NSW/ACT Rules* ('the Rules'); (iii) the *AFL Community Football Policy Handbook* ('the *Policy Handbook*'); (iv) the *Laws of Australian Football;* and (v) any other rules or policy formally approved and/or adopted by the AFL from time to time.
2.	Comply with: (i) any direction given or procedure imposed by the Controlling Body in accordance with the Rules or the *Policy Handbook*; and (ii) any sanction imposed by the Controlling Body or Tribunal under the Rules or *Policy Handbook*.
3.	Comply with all relevant laws including anti-discrimination and child protection laws.
4.	Prioritise the safety and welfare of children.
5.	Respect the spirit of fair play and behave accordingly, and participate in Competition Matches in accordance with the *Laws of Australian Football* and the *Rules*
6.	Be ethical, fair, honest and respectful in all dealings with other people.
7.	Contribute to a safe sporting environment and respectful culture which is accepting of individual differences.
8.	Recognise that AFL is an inclusive environment and respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of gender, ability, sexual orientation, cultural background or religion, and never engage in any act of vilification or discrimination toward anyone.
9.	Recognise and respect the significant contribution of volunteers in our game.
10.	Respect and use appropriately the facilities and equipment made available for administration, coaching, training, Competition Matches and events, including facilities and equipment provided by the opposing teams.
11.	Never ridicule any mistake or loss and understand that everyone makes mistakes.
12.	Never engage in physical and/or verbal intimidation or verbal abuse, including sledging and abusive language, toward another person.
13.	Never engage in any type of inappropriate physical force or contact either on or off the field and condemn the use of inappropriate physical force or contact in any form by another person.
14.	Never make a threat of physical force or contact toward another person or undertake actions that may incite physical force or contact toward another person.
15.	Never publicly criticise a participant – raise any concerns you have with your Club's officials.
16.	Never engage in conduct that is unethical, unbecoming or likely to cause harm to the reputation of the game of Australian Football, the AFL, the League or the Club into disrepute.
17.	Never take part in any form of harassment or bullying including via the use of social media.
18.	Never make or post inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory comments in public, including via social media, about Players, Clubs, Umpires, Officials, the League or the AFL. Social media includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messaging, text messages, phone messages, digital images, online postings (including social media such as, but not limited to Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Instagram, websites and blogs).

PART B Code of Conduct Toward Community Football Umpires

LIKE players and coaches:	✓	Umpires are people and are critical participants in our game.
	✓	Umpires have different levels of skill and experience and do the best they can.
	✓	Umpires will make many good decisions during a Match and they may also make mistakes or decisions that others don't agree with.
UNLIKE players and coaches:	×	Umpires, including those under the age of 18, have frequently been subject of unacceptable abuse from people, often adults.

Any person involved in Australian Rules community football must:		
1.	**Never**	Never abuse an Umpire [NOTE: *Abuse* is defined in the Rule 10.14 as including *any language, terminology or behaviour intended to insult, offend, intimidate, threaten or harm an Umpire*.]
2.		Never argue with, ridicule or dispute a decision of an Umpire.
3.		Never approach an Umpire unless you are a person authorised to do so under the Rules.
4.		Never make intentional contact with an Umpire on or off the field.
5.		Never publicly criticise an Umpire - raise any concerns you have with your Club's officials.
Any person involved in Australian Rules community football should:		
6.	**Do**	Respect the critical and very difficult role that Umpires have in our game.
7.		Support and encourage all Umpires.
8.		Always consider the welfare and safety of our Umpires.

PART C National Community Football Policy Handbook Provisions

In addition to Part A and Part B above, any person involved in Australian Rules community football is bound by the below *Policy Handbook* clauses, as well as any other Policy outlined by the Controlling Body.

Section 9- Member Protection	9.1- Responsibilities of a Person
	9.2- General Code of Conduct
	9.3- Coach Code of Conduct
	9.4- Additional Responsibilities of a Club
Section 11- Safeguarding Children and Young People and Appendix 6- Children & Young People Safe Practices	Section 11.3- Responsibilities of a Person
	Section 11.4- Prohibited Conduct
Section 12- Social Media	Section 12.3- Behavioural Standards on Social Media
	Section 12.4- Prohibited Conduct on Social Media

This *Player Finals Eligibility* Appendix is established under Rule 17.9 of the *AFL NSW/ACT Rules*. As per that Rule:

- Clubs are responsible for ensuring all Players meet eligibility requirements to participate in finals Matches.
- Any Club that fields an ineligible player in a finals Match may be subject to disciplinary sanctions to be imposed by the League in its absolute discretion including, but not limited to, the loss of the finals Match.

1. Finals Eligibility for Senior Competitions

(A) Except as provided for under Appendix Two (J), to be eligible to play finals in a particular Grade, a player must have played the minimum number of home and away Matches, as set out in Table 1 below, in the current season for the Club in that Grade or a lower Grade:

Table 1 – Player Finals Eligibility Criteria (Minimum Matches)

Grade	Criteria
Men's Premier Division	a player must have played a minimum of five (5) home and away Matches in the current season in either Men's Premier Division, or a lower ranked division, as per Rule 12.5(D), for that club.
Men's Reserve Grade	A player must have played a minimum of five (5) home and away Matches in the current season in Men's Reserve Grade
Women's Premier Division	a player must have played a minimum of five (5) home and away Matches in the current season for their club in either Women's Premier Division, or a lower ranked division, as per Rule 12.5(D), for that club
Women's Reserve Grade	a player must have played a minimum of five (5) home and away Matches in the current season in Women's Reserve Grade.

(i) where a player plays more than one senior match on the same day/weekend during the home and away season, only the match in the highest grade will be counted towards finals eligibility.

(B) Where the number of fixtured regular season Matches (excluding byes and washouts) for a team in a senior competition Grade is ten (10) or fewer, the "*Minimum Number of Home and Away Matches in Season*" in the table under 2(A) shall be four (4).

(C) A player is only permitted to play in one finals match for their club on any given weekend

(D) Subject to Appendix Two, (E), (F) and (G):

(i) any Men's player who has played in a combined total of eight (8) or more home and away matches in any higher Men's grade, shall not be eligible to play finals Matches in a lower division; and

(ii) any Women's player who has played in a combined total of eight (8) or more home and away matches in any higher women's division(s), shall not be eligible to play finals Matches in a lower division.

(E) Where a club has multiple consecutively ranked teams playing in finals on the same weekend (as per Rule 12.5) a player will be eligible to play one (1) Club grade lower than the lowest grade for which they are eligible on a standalone basis in terms of Appendix Two (A).

(F) Where a Club has a lower ranked grade playing in a Final on the same weekend that the club has a higher ranked grade which has earnt a week off in its Finals series (i.e. won through to a subsequent final) the CMC may grant an exemption from Appendix Two (A) for up to two (2) players to play in the lower ranked grade Final, however the following restrictions will apply;

(i) the teams referred to above must be consecutively ranked as per Rule 12.5(D).

(ii) the players will be ineligible to play in the higher ranked grade Final the following week, except in exceptional circumstances upon approval of the CMC; and

(iii) to be considered, the application must be received by 12.00pm on the Wednesday prior to the scheduled match.

(G) On application by a player's club the CMC may vary the number of Matches required to qualify for Finals where:

(i) services personnel are posted a significant distance away from the club's home ground during the home and away season; or

(ii) a Player misses a significant number of matches due to injury, pregnancy or illness (six (6) or more consecutive matches); or

(iii) Competitions with three (3) or more Byes; or

(iv) three (3) or more cancelled matches (including washouts that are not rescheduled); or

(v) where a Player is a registered Junior participant and has played no fewer than two (2) Senior Competition Matches (across all grades) during the home and away season plus met the relevant eligibility criteria in their Junior Competition Grade; or

(vi) other exceptional circumstances.

(H) To be considered under Appendix 2 1(G)(i)-(vi), applications must be received by 12.00pm on the Monday prior to the first round of finals and must include the following:

(i) for service personnel, a signed deployment letter from the relevant institution.

(ii) for injuries, pregnancy or illness, a completed *Medical Exemption Request* form plus any relevant supporting documentation.

(iii) for exceptional circumstances, a signed letter by the Player and Club plus any relevant supporting documentation.

(I) Exemption will only be considered for players who:

(i) have played a minimum of one (1) home and away match for the Club in the current season; and

(ii) have not already played enough matches to qualify for finals in any other division on a stand-alone basis, regardless of whether the team in that division has made finals.

(J) The approval of exemption requests are at the discretion of the CMC who may request further information prior to approving or denying an application.

(K) Where a Club has two teams in the same competition during the home and away season, to be eligible to participate in finals for one of those teams a player must have played at least five (5) home and away Matches in that season for the team they intend to play finals for, or a lower ranked team as per Rule 12.5 and Team Competition ranking prior to the season.

(L) The following Matches (up to a maximum of two (2) matches) will count towards finals eligibility for the player's primary club:

(i) Men's Competitions – AFL National Championships - Boys U18, AFL National Development Championships - Boys U16, AFL Futures - Boys U17, Coates Talent League Boys;

(ii) Women's Competitions - Coates Talent League Girls, AFL National Development Championships - Girls U16, AFL National Championships - Girls U18, AFLW Futures; and

(iii) Sydney Swans and GWS GIANTS VFL 'Top Up' matches or Sydney Swans and GWS Giants 'Women's Winter Series' matches.

(M) Under Appendix Two (K) and (L) the Player is only permitted to apply these matches towards the club's highest Men's or Women's senior grade. The match will only be applied where it is played during the League's home and away season excluding bye rounds.

(N) Student permits issued under Rule 11.4.4 shall apply to home and away matches only. Matches played under such a permit will not be counted towards finals eligibility.

2. Finals Eligibility for Junior Competitions

(A) A Player must have played a minimum of four (4) home and away season Matches in the age group/division (as recorded in PlayHQ) for the team that has qualified for finals.

(B) A Player is permitted to play in a maximum of two (2) finals Matches on any given weekend

(C) The following Matches will count towards finals eligibility for the players AFL South Coast Club if the Match takes place on a weekend that South Coast Matches are fixtured:

(i) Boys Competitions – AFL National Championships - Boys U18 AFL National Development Championships - Boys U16, AFL Futures - Boys U17, Coates Talent League Boys; and

(ii) Girls Competitions - Coates Talent League Girls, AFL National Development Championships - Girls U16, AFL National Championships - Girls U18, AFLW Futures

(D) A Player who plays for more than one Team in the same age group and same division can only play in one Team during the finals for the duration of the finals series (i.e. the one most Matches were played for, or if equal, the one that fifty (50) % was first reached).

> ***Example***:
> *if an Under 13 Youth Girl player plays in the Yellow team (5 Matches) and the Blue team (6 Matches) in the Under 13 Youth Girls competition, they can only play in the Blue team during the finals series.*
> *If they played five matches in both teams, with their fifth game for Yellow being Round 8, and the fifth game for Blue being Round 13, the player is only eligible for the Yellow team during the finals series.*

(E) On application by a player's club the CMC may vary the number of Matches required to qualify for Finals where:

(i) a Player misses a significant number of matches due to injury, pregnancy or illness (six (6) or more consecutive matches); or

(ii) Competitions with three (3) or more Byes; or

(iii) three (3) or more cancelled matches (including washouts that are not rescheduled); or

(iv) other exceptional circumstances.

(F) To be considered under Appendix 2 2(E)(i)-(vi), applications must be received by 12.00pm on the Monday prior to the first round of finals and must include the following:

(i) for injuries, pregnancy or illness, a completed *Medical Exemption Request* form plus any relevant supporting documentation; and

(ii) for exceptional circumstances, a signed letter by the Player and Club plus any relevant supporting documentation.

(G) Exemption will only be considered for players who:

(i) have played a minimum of one (1) home and away match for the Club in the current season; and;

(ii) have not already played enough matches to qualify for finals in any other division on a stand-alone basis, regardless of whether the team in that division has made finals; and

(H) The approval of exemption requests are at the discretion of the CMC who may request further information prior to approving or denying an application.

This *Penalties for Match Day Breaches* Appendix is established under Rule 15.12 and is to be used by the Controlling Body or CMC, to determine the base sanction to apply to a Club for a breach of any of the Rules listed in Table 1 of this Appendix. As per Rule 15.12 the Controlling Body or CMC is not limited to the sanctions set out in Appendix 3 in respect of any breach.

1. Sanctions for Match Day Breaches

(A) Table 1 (*Sanctions for Match Day Breaches*) lists Match Day breaches established under these Rules and the applicable sanctions that will apply to a Club in breach.

(B) The value of one (1) point is five (5) dollars.

(C) An initial breach will result in a warning (per category), with any subsequent breach to result in a fine.

Table 1 – Sanction for Match Day Breaches

Category	Breach	Rule	Penalty Points
Officials	Ground Manager not identifiable	9.4.1	10
	Umpire Escort not provided or not identifiable	9.4.3	10
	Team runners, water carriers and trainers / First Aid Officials not correctly attired	9.5	5
	Timekeeper not supplied	9.4.2	5
	Club umpire not supplied (where required)	10.6	15
Pre-Match	Team Sheets incorrectly completed	15.7.1	5
	Team Sheets not distributed	15.7.1	5
	Ground set-up inadequate (ground markings, goal post pads, interchange bench)	15.5	5
	Umpires change room not clean	15.5.6	5
	Away change room not clean	15.5.6	5
	Marsh Match Day Checklist not completed	9.4.1	5
	Correct footballs not available	15.6	5
During Match	Failure to meet time – Match commencement or Quarter commencements not on time (< 5 mins late)	15.8	5
	Failure to meet time – Match commencement or Quarter commencements not on time (> or = 5 mins late)	15.8	10
	Players not in correct uniform	15.3.1	5
	Teams not in correct clash uniforms	15.3.2	20
	Number of Officials in Team box or area more than allowed	9.5.1	5
	Siren not available, operational or audible	9.4.2	5
	Alcohol policy breached	8.11	20
	Scoreboard not in operation or not accurate	15.5.4	5
	Stretcher not available	9.4.1	5
Post Match	Team Manager failed to seek all Clear or otherwise from Umpires	9.5.3	5
	Umpire Match Report not entered online by Sunday 7.00pm (Club umpires)	10.7	5
	Goal kickers and best players not provided to Ground Manager	15.7.1	5
	Match results not entered as required in PlayHQ	15.7.2	10
	Match day paperwork not submitted online by Monday 9.00am	15.7.1	10

This *Inclusion Dispensation* Appendix is established in accordance with Rule 14.4 and sets out the process for Clubs to apply for an Inclusion Dispensation for a Player with an intellectual impairment to participate as a twenty-third (23) player in Men's Reserve Grade or twenty-first (21) player in Women's Reserve Grade Matches where it would no longer be appropriate for the Player to obtain a Dispensation to Play Down.

1. Purpose

(A) To increase the opportunity for players with an intellectual impairment to participate in Open age Community Football by allowing them to be selected on a Team Sheet as an additional Player to the maximum number of players allowed as per Rule 14.4.

(B) If a Player with an Inclusion Dispensation is selected to a Men's Reserve Grade or Women's Reserve Grade Team, the Team may exceed the Maximum Number of Players allowed on a Team Sheet, as per Table 14, by one (1) player.

(i) This dispensation only permits the Team to exceed the Maximum Number of Players on a Team Sheet and not place an extra Player on the field.

2. Application Process

(A) A Player may apply for an Inclusion Dispensation on the basis of an intellectual impairment by submitting an application in accordance with Appendix Four Clause 2(B).

(B) An application for dispensation under Appendix Four Clause 2(A) must be:

(i) in the form of the AFL South Coast Inclusion Dispensation Form;

(ii) submitted via the Player's Club to the Controlling Body;

(iii) supported by written consent from the Player's parent or guardian where the player is an Underage Player; and

(iv) supported by confirmation the Player has an intellectual impairment as determined by Sport Inclusion Australia based on the Sport Inclusion Australia Athlete Registration and Primary Eligibility Application Guidance Notes;

(C) In relation to an application for dispensation, a Medical Specialist may, in their supporting Certificate, recommend that dispensation be approved for two seasons.

(D) Following its assessment of an application for dispensation, the Controlling Body may:

(i) approve the application;

(ii) refuse the application; or

(iii) request additional information from the Player or Club and, following its assessment of such additional information, either approve or refuse the application.

3. Relevant Factors in Assessing Application

(A) In assessing an application for dispensation, a Controlling Body will have regard to the following factors:

(i) how the Player's Intellectual Impairment impacts their ability to effectively participate in Australian Football;

(ii) the supporting Certificate provided under Appendix Four Clause 2(B) and any recommendation under Appendix Four Clause 2(C);

(iii) how it is proposed that the grant of Inclusion dispensation will support the Player to overcome any barriers to their effective participation in Australian Football arising from their Intellectual impairment;

(iv) the safety and welfare of the Player and those Players they will be participating with and against; and

(v) any other relevant factors as determined by the Controlling Body.

4. Effect of Approved Application

(A) A Player who has received dispensation approval (Permitted Player) will be permitted to be named as a:

(i) twenty-third (23) Player on their Club's Men's Reserve Grade Team Sheet; or

(ii) twenty-first (21) Player on their Club's Women's Reserve Grade team sheet.

(B) If, following receipt of dispensation approval, a Player with an approved Inclusion Dispensation per Appendix 4 plays in a higher ranked competition grade, the dispensation approval will be automatically withdrawn.

(C) A dispensation approval applies for the season in which the dispensation approval is granted unless the Controlling Body endorses a recommendation under Appendix Four Clause 2(B)(v) in which case the dispensation approval will apply for the season in which the dispensation approval is granted and the following season (i.e. two seasons).

(D) A Controlling Body may, acting reasonably, revoke a dispensation approval at any time provided that the reasons for such revocation are provided to the Permitted Player via their Club's assigned contact.

5. Matchday Application of Inclusion Dispensation

(A) A Player selected to a Team for a Match who has been granted Inclusion dispensation must be identified on all copies of the Team Sheet with "(ID)" handwritten next to their name.

(B) Copies of the Team Sheet must be distributed as follows:

(i) one (1) provided to the Ground Manager;

(ii) one (1) provided to the Field Umpires; and

(iii) one (1) provided to the opposition Club's Team Manager.

(C) Each of the parties listed in Appendix Four 5(C) must be advised of the circumstances in which the Player will be participating in the Match and discuss any measures that need to be put in place to manage the safety and welfare of the Player while participating in the Match as approved by the CMC prior to the first match between these Clubs in a given season.

(D) The Club fielding a Player with an Inclusion Dispensation should contact their opposition Club as soon as practicable to advise them of the Player's participation in the Match to allow reasonable attempts to be made by the opposition Club to inform their Players and Officials prior to the day of the Match.

(E) The League will communicate a list of all Clubs which have Player(s) with an approved Inclusion dispensation as soon as practicable. This list will be housed in the League's 'Club Executive' Microsoft Teams Folder and updated accordingly.

(F) Should a Club question the status of an approved Player, they can submit a request for Proof of Player Eligibility as outlined in Rule 11.2.6.

6. Appeal

(A) A decision by a Controlling Body under Appendix Five Clause 2(C) may be appealed in accordance with Section 26 of the Policy Handbook.

The below rules serve as the process for which clubs entering two teams in the same division must follow where their teams are progressively ranked (For the purpose of this policy, teams will be graded as 1) Premier Division, 2) Reserve Grade A, 3) Reserve Grade B). These rules do not apply where clubs enter two equal teams in the same Grade (i.e. Reserve Grade Blue & Reserve Grade Gold).

1. Multiple Teams: Senior Competitions

(A) The club is to provide the league with all required documentation and information, prior to the first scheduled match of the season

- (i) the club is to provide the league with a thirty (30) player Restricted Player List (RPL) for players unable to play in the Reserve Grade B team; and
- (ii) this list is due by 5:00pm the Thursday prior to Round 1

(B) At the conclusion of Round 6, the League may advise the Club of any players that must be added to the RPL who were not at the beginning of the season.

- (i) these players will be additional players and will not replace a player from the RPL.

(C) Once any player not listed on the RPL has participated in ten (10) home and away season matches for the Reserves A Team, the player will then be restricted from playing for the Reserves B Team for the remainder of the season. Additionally:

- (i) a player is not permitted to play for more than one (1) team per weekend;
- (ii) Eligibility for Finals shall be determined by the number of matches played for a team (Normal Finals Eligibility rules apply);
- (iii) in the case of a player with equal matches played for two teams, the club may determine what team the player is eligible to play for throughout finals. The CMC, at its ultimate discretion, may review and change this;
- (iv) dispensation can be sought for a non-RPL player returning from injury (4+ matches) to return via Reserves B in one (1) Home & Away match; and
- (v) any player not listed on the RPL who participates in the club's Premier Division Team will join the RPL and not be permitted to play in Reserve Grade B.

(D) Where a higher-grade team is scheduled for a bye, no player who played with that team in the previous week can play for the club's Reserve Grade B team.

- (i) this also applies to matches rescheduled where only one team's match is on the day

(E) The club is to provide clearly separate identities for the teams. This includes:

- (i) clearly different team names (both names can have the Club name, but must be clearly different); and
- (ii) Clubs must have a clash uniform for matches between the two teams or separate uniforms for the duration of the season. Any new uniform design must not clash with any current club uniform, and must be approved by the CMC prior to ordering, as per Rule 8.7.

(F) Players from other grades have usual player movement rules into both teams per Rule 11.2.5

(G) The League will provide a finals eligibility team list for any qualified team prior to the first finals match. No player movement is permitted between teams during finals.

(H) Players from a Youth competition are eligible to play for either team in the Senior Competition in any match during the Home and Away season

- (i) once allocated to a team for finals, a Youth player is not permitted to play for another team in that grade during finals; and
- (ii) Youth Players are still required to comply with other clauses in Appendix Five pertaining to Player Eligibility, for example Rule 1(c)(i).

(I) With respect to player movement between the same grade, players who play with both teams during the season will have separate profiles for league awards

> ***Guidance Note**: John Smith plays Round 1 with his club's Reserve Grade B side, kicking six goals and being awarded two Best & Fairest (B&F) Votes. John is immediately promoted to Reserve Grade A, where they play the remainder of the season kicking 23 goals and accruing 15 B&F votes. Another player polls 16 votes in the competition's Best & Fairest. John's tally at the end of the year is as follows:*
>
> *John Smith (RGB) – goals: 6, B&F: 2*
>
> *John Smith (RGA) – goals: 23, B&F: 15*
>
> *John Smith would therefore finish the Reserve Grade B&F in second place on 15 votes, even though he had polled 17 votes total in the season.*

(J) Once these rules have been agreed upon and signed, no variations will be made for the duration of the season.

(K) Should the club fail to follow these rules, the CMC may impose sanctions at its absolute discretion per Rule 11.6.

This appendix outlines the timelines, criteria, and voting processes for all league awards in addition to some important presentation function logistics

1. League Awards

(A) Each season the League will, in its absolute discretion, establish:

(i) any awards to be awarded to Players, Officials, Clubs, Teams or other persons;

(ii) the criteria and benefits applicable to any awards;

(iii) the process for determining award nominees; and

(iv) any event for presentation of awards.

(B) Any Person who has been suspended for any offence in the home and away season will not be eligible to win a Best and Fairest award, Rising Star award Coach of the Year award or Volunteer of the Year award.

2. Awards Presentation Night

(A) Each season, the League shall arrange for the presentation of designated awards.

(B) AFL South Coast Senior Clubs are required to fill one (1) table at the League's annual awards night – the Tunbridge & Maddy Collier Medal Night – as a minimum

(i) Any player who is a finalist for an award, or an award winner will be invited to the awards night;

(ii) Clubs are expected to maximise attendance of invitees and ensure a club representative is on standby to accept an award on a Person's behalf including speaking to the room to acknowledge the recipient's achievements; and

(iii) The fee per person will be communicated via email to Clubs, and fees will be issued via invoice following the evening.

(C) AFL South Coast Junior Clubs are required to fill one (1) table at the League's annual awards night as a minimum

(i) any player who is a finalist for an award, or an award winner will be invited to the awards night; and

(ii) the fee per person will be communicated via email to Clubs, and fees will be issued via invoice following the evening.

(D) AFL South Coast Umpires will receive one complementary table for attendance

(E) AFL South Coast Life Members and Hall of Fame inductees will receive one complementary ticket each and placed on tables together. At the request of a Club, a Life Member or Hall of Fame inductee, the person may be placed on their respective Club's table at no cost to the Club.

3. Best & Fairest Players

(A) A medal will be presented each year to the Best & Fairest player in each grade of competition. The medals shall be known as:

(i) Tunbridge Medal (Men's Premier Division);

(ii) Maddy Collier Medal (Women's Premier Division);

(iii) Tom Smith Medal (Men's Reserve Grade);

(iv) TBD (Women's Reserve Grade); and

(v) TBD (All Junior Grades)

(B) For all competitions, the winner of the Best and Fairest medals shall be determined by votes cast by the field umpires on a 3-2-1 basis for the best, second best and third best players in each home and away match.

(i) for each Match, one (1) vote card per field umpire panel must be submitted via the form as determined by the League in Officials HQ; and

(ii) the League shall instruct Umpires that votes are to be awarded to the Players adjudged by the Umpires to be the best performing Players on the day irrespective of whether such Players have been found guilty of an offence in a Match during that season and irrespective of whether any of such Players have been reported on the day.

(C) At the end of the home and away Matches in each season the votes are to be counted by a League appointed official and the Player receiving the highest number of votes is to receive the Best and Fairest Award.

(D) In the event that two or more players have been awarded the same number of votes at the end of the home and away series, no count back shall be applied and the players concerned will be declared joint winners and each will be awarded a best & fairest medal.

(i) in the event of there being a tie for the runner up to the Award, each Player shall be declared the joint runner-up.

(E) Should a Player be found guilty and suspended for one or more matches by the tribunal or prescribed penalty for an on-field offence arising out of a match during the current season for which best & fairest votes are cast by the umpires, that Player shall be ineligible to receive any League best & fairest award.

(i) if a Player is found guilty but only given a reprimand by the Tribunal or accepts a reprimand through the prescribed penalty system, that Player remains eligible to receive any League best & fairest award; and

(ii) any reference in this policy to a Player having been found guilty of an offence shall mean an offence as described in the Laws of the Game published by the Australian Football League.

(F) Where a player has moved to another club within the same competition within the same season, their votes will be carried over and combined with any votes received at the new club (in the same grade). However, where a club has two sides in the same division and a player plays at some stage for both, their votes will not be combined.

(G) Votes allocated to a Player who is determined to have been an Ineligible Player during the course of any Match, shall be disregarded in so far as that Player is concerned.

(H) Should a Premier Division Match not receive votes for any reason, the top three (3) vote getters in the Coach Association Player of the Year as outlined in Appendix 7, Rule 4 will be awarded 3-2-1 respectively for the Best & Fairest Medal

(I) Should a Reserve Grade or Junior Match not receive votes for any reason, no votes will be awarded for that Match.

4. Coach Association Player of the Year

(A) A Player of the Year award, as voted on by the respective Men's and Women's Premier Division Coaches will be awarded to the Player adjudged the Most Valuable Player to their Team

(B) Separate awards will be presented for Men's Premier Division and Women's Premier Division

(C) At the conclusion of each Home & Away season Match, both Coaches will provide a 5-4-3-2-1 vote via the prescribed online form with the Player adjudged Best on Ground to be awarded five (5) votes.

(D) Coaches can vote on Players from either Team but can only vote for a Player once per Match

(E) The Coach Association Player of the Year votes will be published on the League's social media platforms following Round 3, Round 6, and Round 9 of both Competitions.

5. Rising Star Award

(A) The Rising Star award will be presented each year to a male and female AFL South Coast player competing in their club's highest grade. The award is based on the following criteria.

(i) the player/s must be under 21 years of age as of 1 January in the year of the award;

(ii) must have played no more than ten (10) senior matches the year prior in either their Club's highest grade or a higher grade at a different club;

(iii) must have played a minimum of five (5) senior matches in their Club's highest grade during the award year; and

(iv) any Player who has been suspended in the current season is ineligible to receive the Rising Star award.

(B) The Awards will be named:

(i) Darren Williams Men's Rising Star; and

(ii) Darren Williams Women's Rising Star

6. Leading Goalkicker

(A) The League shall maintain records of goal-kickers in each grade of competition from the information recorded on the club team lists, which are returned to the League following each match throughout the season and published on Play HQ.

(B) The goal-kicking award for each grade shall be awarded to the player who kicks the greatest number of goals during the home and away matches.

(C) Goals not recorded on club team lists will only be added if provided to the League with evidence within seven (7) days of the Competition Match.

(D) Where a player has moved to another club with the same competition within the same season, their goals will be carried over and combined with any goals kicked for the new club (in the same grade). However, where a club has two sides in the same division and a player plays at some stage for both, their goals will not be combined.

(E) In the case of a tie, both (or all) players will be recognised as the Competition's Leading Goalkicker.

7. Grand Final Best Player

(A) A Medallion shall be presented to the Player adjudged as the best Player in the Grand Final of each competition. The Field Umpires will decide the winning player in each respective grade.

(B) For Youth Competition Matches, the player adjudged best afield must be a Player from the Premiership winning Team.

8. Premiership Awards

(A) A Premiership Trophy shall be presented to the winning club in the Grand Final of each grade of competition.

(B) The Premier Club in each grade shall also receive a premiership pennant suitably inscribed and manufactured in their club colours.

(C) A maximum of thirty (30) Premiership medallions shall be presented to the players/officials of the Premiership winning team.

9. Representative Player Best on Ground

(A) A Medallion shall be presented to the Player adjudged as the best Player in each Representative Match. The field umpires, or a person or person(s) appointed by the Community Football and Competition Manager, will decide the winning player in each respective grade.

10. Representative Player of the Year

(A) If AFL South Coast participates in a representative program, the AFL South Coast Representative Player of the Year, from either the Men's or Women's competitions, will be awarded at the League's annual award dinner.

(B) The winner will be adjudged by the Representative Coaching Panel and will be based upon performance, training, and leadership during AFL South Coast representative commitments scheduled in a given season.

(C) For Junior Representative Teams, one (1) player from each side that participates in the Northern NSW Junior Carnival will be selected by the Team's Coach as the Representative Player of the Year, and will be based upon performance, training, and leadership.

11. Coach of the Year

(A) Each year, the League will present an award to the person deemed the competition's Coach of the Year. There are three categories for this award

(i) Junior Coach of the Year (coaches of Under-9s or Under-11s teams);

(ii) Youth Coach of the Year (coaches of Under-13s, Under-15s or Under-17s teams); and

(iii) Senior Coach of the Year (coaches of Senior teams).

(B) Clubs are invited to nominate a coach from their clubs via an electronic form sent from AFL South Coast staff.

(C) Clubs submit a nomination for no more than one coach at their club with a reason and photo of nominee.

(D) AFL Staff review all nominations and select a winner. The criteria that will determine the winner includes:

(i) Team success during the voting period. Consideration will be given to improvement in comparison to the previous Season, if applicable;

(ii) Representative Coaching;

(iii) Player registrations;

(iv) Umpire match day paperwork submissions in relation to Coach and Player behaviour; and

(v) adherence to the Mercy Rule, National Participation Framework (Junior Competitions only) and other relevant league policy.

(E) The League are under no obligation to provide equal weight to the above criteria, and successful recipients are not required to achieve all of the above.

(F) A coach who has been suspended during the season via a reportable offence or matchday policy breach will be deemed ineligible to receive the award

(G) A coach who has received multiple reprimands during the season via a reportable offence or matchday policy breach will be deemed ineligible to receive the award

12. Volunteer of the Year

(A) Clubs are invited to nominate a volunteer from their club via an electronic form sent from AFL South Coast staff.

(i) all people who are nominated for the Toyota National Volunteer Awards will automatically be considered for the League's Volunteer of the Year award.

(B) AFL Staff review all nomination and select a winner. The criteria that will determine the winner includes:

(i) contribution to the management of a football club;

(ii) contribution to the matchday experience;

(iii) impact of the person's role on player/volunteer/spectator experience, including impact on retention;

(iv) delivery of correspondence with league staff and other club representatives;

(v) longevity or years of service to the club and/or clubs and/or league; and

(vi) success in National Volunteer Award.

(C) A volunteer who has been sanctioned during the season via a matchday policy breach will be deemed ineligible to receive the award.

13. Umpire Awards

(A) Senior Golden Whistle Award

(i) the Field Umpire adjudged to be the highest performing Umpire of the League's Senior Competition will be awarded the Golden Whistle Award;

(ii) by no later than the first Monday in August, a shortlist of no more than eight Men's or Women's Premier Division Field Umpires will be distributed to Premier Division Coaches for voting;

(iii) Coaches are to submit one (1) vote card as a 5-4-3-2-1 vote, where 5 is awarded to the highest performing Umpire during the current season; and

(iv) as the voting takes place prior to finals, Umpire performance in Home & Away Matches only are to be considered.

(B) Junior Golden Whistle Award

(i) the Field Umpire adjudged to be the highest performing Umpire of the League's Junior Competition will be awarded the Golden Whistle Award;

(ii) the League's Umpire Coaches, in consultation with the League's Umpire Coordinator (AFL NSW/ACT employee) will determine the Umpire adjudged to be the highest performing umpire of the year; and

(iii) consideration will be given to Umpire performance in Home & Away Matches based on feedback from Club and Umpire Coaches, attendance at weekly Umpire training sessions and completion of Matchday Paperwork in accordance with Competition Rules

(C) Silver Whistle Award

(i) the Boundary Umpire adjudged to be the highest performing Umpire of the League's Senior Competition will be awarded the Silver Whistle Award;

(ii) the League's Umpire Coaches, in consultation with the League's Umpire Coordinator (AFL NSW/ACT employee) will determine the Umpire adjudged to be the highest performing umpire of the year;

(iii) consideration will be given to Umpire performance in Home & Away Matches and attendance at weekly Umpire training sessions.

(D) Flags Award

(i) the Goal Umpire adjudged to be the highest performing Umpire of the League's Senior Competition will be awarded the Flags Award;

(ii) the League's Umpire Coaches, in consultation with the League's Umpire Coordinator (AFL NSW/ACT employee) will determine the Umpire adjudged to be the highest performing umpire of the year; and

(iii) consideration will be given to Umpire performance in Home & Away Matches and attendance at weekly Umpire training sessions.

(E) Brian Archer Development Award

(i) the Senior Umpire adjudged to be the most improved Umpire within the League's Senior Competition will be awarded the Brian Archer Development Award;

(ii) the League's Umpire Coaches, in consultation with the League's Umpire Coordinator (AFL NSW/ACT employee) will determine the Umpire adjudged to be the most improved; and

(iii) consideration will be given to Umpire performance in Home & Away Matches and attendance at weekly Umpire training sessions.

(F) Tony Kane Development Award

(i) the Junior Umpire adjudged to be the most improved Umpire within the League's Junior Competition will be awarded the Tony Kane Development Award;

(ii) the League's Umpire Coaches, in consultation with the League's Umpire Coordinator (AFL NSW/ACT employee) will determine the Umpire adjudged to be the most improved;

(iii) consideration will be given to Umpire performance in Home & Away Matches and attendance at weekly Umpire training sessions; and

(iv) two (2) Tony Kane Development Awards will be presented each season, with one (1) being awarded to an Umpire based in the Illawarra and one (1) being awarded to an Umpire based in the Shoalhaven

(a) officiating Matches in the other region is not a criteria for the award, nor will it make an umpire available for the other award; and

(b) only Umpires whose residential address is in the respective region (or travel from an alternate region to an Illawarra or Shoalhaven training hub) will be eligible for each award.

14. Team of the Year

(A) Premier Division Coaches are sent an electronic nomination form by no later than Round 12 of the competition season.

(i) this form is populated from Teamsheets from every round of the season to date including the positions that all players have been named in to start a match, excluding Interchange;

(ii) Premier Division Coaches are given until no later than the completion of Round 14 in the competition season to nominate players for each position in the team, inclusive of a captain and vice-captain;

(iii) during the nomination period, coaches can nominate players from their own team;

(iv) Coaches are required to nominate a player for each position of the team and are encouraged to nominate players from all teams; and

(v) Coaches who do not provide all required nominations will have their submission voided.

(B) Following the nomination period, AFL South Coast Staff review all nominations for Player eligibility and will distribute a voting form. Player eligibility is determined by:

(i) the Men's and Women's Premier Division Finals Eligibility Rules as outlined in Appendix 2; and

(ii) the Player was not playing in the Competition on permit, with exception granted to AFL South Coast Junior players permitting to their aligned senior Club.

(C) A voting period will run from Round 15, with all votes required no later than the end of the Home and Away season.

(i) Club Coaches are not permitted to vote for their own Players during this process and all Players from the Coach's team are removed from their voting form;

(ii) Coaches then vote on a 5-4-3-2-1 scale for the Player they believe is best suited for that position;

(iii) Coaches must vote for five Players, and all Players must receive a different vote value. Duplicate votes (for example two Players receiving five votes) will be considered void and removed from consideration;

(iv) five (5) points should be awarded to the Player deemed best for the season in that position;

(v) where a position has less than 5 Players nominated, the scale is adjusted. For example, a position with three Players nominated will permit a 5-4-3 voting system;

(vi) Coaches who do not provide all required votes will be voided;

(a) any coach whose votes are voided will have 48 hours to resubmit votes in line with the policy; and

(b) late submissions will not be accepted, and the voided votes will be removed

(D) Following the voting period, AFL South Coast staff review all votes;

(E) The player with highest vote count is selected into that position;

(i) where there is a tie, AFL South Coast staff will use the Umpire Best and Fairest votes as a deciding factor. Should there be a further tie from this, the number of times a player ranks in their teams 'Best Player' will be used;

(ii) a player who loses a tiebreaker will be added to the Team of the Year on the Interchange; and

(iii) once all positions are filled, any remaining Interchange positions will be selected from the highest remaining Players across the forwards, backs, and midfield.

(F) Both teams will have a Coach appointed. Premier Division Coaches are automatically nominated and must be voted on during the Team's voting period as outlined in Clause 14(C).

(i) Coaches are not permitted to vote for themselves; and

(ii) the Coach with the highest number of votes will be selected. In the case of a tie, the Coach's Team ladder position will be used as the tiebreaker.

(G) Both teams will have a Captain and Vice-Captain appointed. As part of the nomination process outlined in Clause 14(C), Coaches are required to submit a 3-2-1 vote for their team's preferred captain.

(i) these players do not need to be a club team's captain;

(ii) at least one (1) Player nominated for captain must be from another club to the Coach's own; and

(iii) the Player who polls the most votes will be awarded the captaincy, with the second-highest vote getter being named vice-captain.

(H) In the event of a tie, co-captains will be named. If no Player accrues more than three (3) votes, the captain and vice-captain will be determined by the Players who are voted on the most times.