

**AFL (NSW/ACT) Commission Limited**



# **REGULATIONS**

# AFL NSW/ACT REGULATIONS

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The following regulations have been made by the AFL (NSW/ACT) Commission Limited (ABN 53 086 839 385) pursuant to its object to administer and promote Australian Football in the State of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

## **DEFINITIONS**

In these Regulations, unless the context requires otherwise, the following terms shall have the following meaning:

**Administration Committee** means and shall consist of any two (2) from the following positions or otherwise designated by the League:

- Football Operations Manager or Coordinator;
- Secretary;
- Chairman/President;
- Competition Management Committee Member; or
- Their nominees.

**AFL** means the Australian Football League (ACN 004 155 211).

**AFL Marks** means 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** means AFL (NSW/ACT) Commission Limited (ABN 53 086 839 385).

**Appeals Board** means the panel constituted pursuant to the State and Territory Tribunal Guidelines or National Disciplinary Tribunal Guidelines NSW/ACT (as the case may be).

**Australian Football** means the game played in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

**Australian Football Match Policy** means the AFL guidelines for the conduct of Australian Football for players aged 5-18 years as issued and amended from time to time.

**Coach** means the individual appointed, engaged or employed to coach a Club's team in a Competition.

**Constitution** means the Constitution of the AFL NSW/ACT effective 13 February 2015 or as subsequently amended

**Chief Executive Officer** means the Chief Executive Officer of AFL NSW/ACT or his/her nominee.

**Club** means a Club affiliated to a League with teams participating in Competitions.

**Code of Conduct** means the AFL NSW/ ACT Code of Conduct in Appendix C, as amended from time to time.

**Community League Club** refers to all teams directly comprising Clubs within an Australian football competition, other than the AFL, State Leagues or Unaffiliated Leagues.

**Competition** means any Australian football competition conducted and organised by AFL NSW/ACT or the League.

**Footyweb** means the AFL Competition Management System & Membership Database implemented for Competitions within New South Wales or the Australian Capital Territory.

**Independent School** means a school that is not a government operated public school.

**Intellectual Property** means 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** means Players up to and under the age of 17 as at 1 January in the year of the relevant season.

**Juniors or Junior Competition** means Competitions up to and including Junior Players.

**Laws of the Game** means the Laws of Australian Football as administered and controlled by the AFL, as amended from time to time

**League** means an AFL NSW/ACT governed or affiliated league which operates or conducts an Australian Football Competition within New South Wales or the Australian Capital Territory.

**League Equalisation Panel** means the independent equalisation panel established by the League to administer the Player Points System prescribed for a Competition.

**Match** means any football Match played between or directly or indirectly involving any Club or Independent School, including without limitation any practice Match, Competition Match, representative Match or exhibition Match.

**National Disciplinary Tribunal Guidelines** means the AFL's National Disciplinary Tribunal Guidelines, as amended from time to time, which have been formally adopted by AFL NSW/ ACT to establish the tribunal and appeal process with respect to disciplinary matters.

**State & Territory Tribunal Guidelines** means the AFL's State & Territory Tribunal Guidelines, as amended from time to time, which have been formally adopted by AFL NSW/ ACT to establish the tribunal and appeal process with respect to reportable offences.

**National Player Transfer Regulations** means the national rules and regulations, as issued from time to time, regulating the transfer of players between clubs.

**National Vilification and Discrimination Policy** means the AFL's National Vilification and Discrimination Policy, as issued from time to time, establishing the means to address vilification and discrimination.

**Official** means AFL NSW/ACT, League and Club (as the case may be) employees, servant or agent having official duties in connection with a Match, Competition, League or the AFL NSW/ACT Regulations and By-Laws, including (unless otherwise stated) Club and League Umpires.

**Player** means a player registered with a Club.

**Player Points System** means a competitive balance policy relating to, among other things, the allocation of points to a team's individual players based on predetermined criteria which must collectively fit within a total points cap.

**Regional Board** means the board established by AFL NSW/ACT pursuant to clause 17 of its constitution.

**Reportable Offence** means a Reportable Offence within the meaning of the Laws of the Game, as amended from time to time.

**State League Club** refers to clubs competing in the North East Australian Football League who are not an AFL club's reserves team.

**Tribunal** means the tribunal constituted under the State and Territory Tribunal Guidelines or National Disciplinary Tribunal Guidelines NSW/ACT, as the case may be, as amended from time to time.

**Umpire** means the field, boundary, goal and emergency Umpires.

## **INTERPRETATION**

In the interpretation of these regulations, unless the context requires otherwise:

- (a) words importing the singular shall be deemed to include the plural and vice versa;
- (b) words importing any gender shall be deemed to include the other gender;
- (c) headings are included for convenience only and shall not affect the interpretation of these regulations;
- (d) "including" and similar words are not words of limitation;
- (e) Any words, terms or phrases defined in the remainder of these regulations shall have the meaning prescribed within the particular regulations; and Words, terms or phrases not otherwise defined in these regulations shall be given their ordinary meaning.

## **PART A – REGULATIONS**

### **1. OBJECTIVES AND APPLICATION**

These Regulations specify the regulations applicable for the conduct of the Leagues in NSW and the ACT. These Regulations aim to promote the proper conduct and standards of the Leagues.

The Regulations specify the rules and regulations for the administration of the playing, participating, coaching and officiating in football within AFL NSW/ ACT's jurisdiction.

#### **1.1 Objectives**

The objectives of the Regulations are to:

- (A) promote, develop and protect Australian Football in NSW and the ACT by ensuring that the appropriate conduct and standards apply;
- (B) ensure that the Leagues and Competitions are regulated in a consistent and co-ordinated manner across NSW and the ACT; and
- (C) align Leagues with AFL and AFL NSW/ ACT rules and regulations.

#### **1.2 AFL NSW/ ACT Jurisdiction and Obligations**

- (A) AFL NSW/ ACT is responsible for the organisation, promotion and administration of Australian Football throughout NSW and the ACT. Accordingly, it has jurisdiction over all NSW and the ACT Leagues including the relevant Matches and Competitions.
- (B) AFL NSW/ ACT will:
  - (i) comply with these Regulations and ensure that these Regulations are not inconsistent with AFL rules and regulations;
  - (ii) ensure compliance of these Regulations by Leagues;
  - (iii) investigate any complaint about a breach of these Regulations by a League;
  - (iv) impose disciplinary sanctions against a League within its jurisdiction found to have breached these Regulations; and
  - (v) provide appropriate education and training to those who manage and implement these Regulations.

### **2. AFFILIATION CONDITIONS**

#### **2.1 Affiliation Conditions**

Any Australian football league, the membership of which includes any club or clubs in NSW or the ACT, may apply to affiliate with AFL NSW/ACT subject to compliance with the following conditions in Regulation 2.

#### **2.2 League Constitution**

The League must be incorporated pursuant to the relevant legislation in New South Wales or the Australian Capital Territory and its current constitution lodged with the AFL NSW/ACT at all times.

### **2.3 Laws of the Game**

The League must adopt the Laws of the Game as administered and controlled by the AFL and as endorsed by AFL NSW/ACT.

### **2.4 Contact Details**

The League must submit to AFL NSW/ACT each year:

- (A) A list of the names, addresses, telephone and email addresses / fax number of its Officials by 31 January;
- (B) A list of the Clubs and Club teams by 31 March; and
- (C) A list of the names, addresses and contact details of the officers (including the President and Secretary) of each Club by 31 March.

### **2.5 Affiliation and Licence Fees**

The League must pay an annual affiliation fee as determined from time to time by AFL NSW/ACT in its absolute discretion.

### **2.6 Insurance**

The League must ensure that its Officials and Clubs, as a condition of affiliation to the League, are insured under the Australian Football National Risk Protection Program as arranged by JLT Sport or any substitute policy as arranged or administered by the AFL.

### **2.7 Appointment of Umpires**

The League must engage Umpires appointed by the League and/or Club from a panel of Umpires to be approved by AFL NSW/ACT.

### **2.8 Sponsorship / Marketing Affiliation**

The League acknowledges and agrees that:

- (A) AFL NSW/ACT's major sponsors or partners provide in part the financial resources for AFL NSW/ACT to develop, implement and support the development of Australian football generally and specifically in the NSW and the ACT; and
- (B) It 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.

### **2.9 Application of Competition Rules**

The League agrees to be bound by the Constitution of AFL NSW/ACT and these Regulations insofar as they apply to such League and agrees that in the event of any inconsistency between the constitution of such League and the Constitution or Regulations of AFL NSW/ACT, then the constitution and/or by laws of such League will be invalid to the extent of such inconsistency.



## **2.10 Club Affiliation and Licence Agreement with League**

Each League must have an affiliation agreement with AFL NSW/ACT as well as a Club licence agreement with its affiliated Clubs, in the format determined by AFL NSW/ACT from time to time.

## **2.11 Refusal or Cancellation of Affiliation**

Any League which fails to comply with these Regulations, either in whole or part, may be refused application for affiliation or have its affiliation cancelled or suspended by AFL NSW/ACT in its absolute discretion.

# **3. NOTICE AND DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS**

## **3.1 Compliance**

Each League, Club, Player and Official acknowledges that in order to meet the stated objectives of these Regulations, their terms must be strictly complied with and their spirit and intent honoured and AFL NSW/ACT has the right to impose disciplinary sanctions to enforce and encourage such compliance.

## **3.2 Disciplinary Sanctions**

AFL NSW/ACT may enforce the terms of these Regulations and invoke the sanctions only if it has given the party alleged to have breached these Regulations:

- (A) reasonable and sufficient notice of each and every particular of the alleged breach or breaches;
- (B) notice of possible sanctions; and
- (C) the opportunity to be heard and to make submissions in relation to that alleged breach or breaches.

## **3.3 Exclusion of Liability**

AFL NSW/ACT may excuse:

- (A) a League, Club, Player or Official from liability if that party ought reasonably and fairly be excused, wholly or partly, from that liability on such terms as AFL NSW/ACT thinks fit; and
- (B) a Player or Official from liability in consideration of the Player's co-operation and assistance in establishing a breach of the Regulations by any League, Club or Official.

# **4. PLAYER REGISTRATION AND ELIGIBILITY**

Each League agrees to apply and use the uniform system of registration of players as set out in these Regulations.

## **4.1 Player Registration**

- (A) Any person wishing to play in Competition Matches with a Club must be registered.
- (B) All Player registrations are processed through Footyweb, or any other system as determined by AFL NSW/ACT or the AFL from time to time.
- (C) No person will 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. Such information shall be kept confidential by the League.

- (D) 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 either been granted a transfer to play with another club or a period of twenty-four (24) calendar months has elapsed since the person last played competition football for the Club with which he or she was last registered.
- (E) Players are required to re-register with their existing Club each season through Footyweb. A new registration form is not required to be completed for re-registration.

#### **4.2 Registration Documentation**

- (A) All Player registrations must be submitted electronically via Footyweb by the player or, where the Player is Under 18 years of age as of 1 January in the year of registration, the registration must be submitted by the Player's parent or legal guardian.
- (B) For the registration to be active, the Club must accept the Player's registration.
- (C) Clubs must not register a Player without the Player's consent.
- (D) Documentation evidencing proof of age in the form of an original birth certificate, photo licence, passport, immunisation booklet or student identification may be requested by the League at any time. Failure to produce such documentation may lead to the Player's registration being refused or cancelled.

#### **4.3 Register of Players**

Each League, through Footyweb, must keep an up to date register of all Player registrations which includes the following information:

- (A) Full name, address, date of birth and contact telephone number(s); and
- (B) Date the Player registration was granted.

#### **4.4 Dual Registration**

No player can be registered with more than one club at the same time except as provided for under the National Player Transfer Regulations and Regulation 5 below or in special circumstances as determined by the League with which the player is registered.

#### **4.5 Closing Date for Registrations and Transfers**

- (A) 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.
- (B) Player transfer applications will be dealt with in accordance with the National Player Transfer Regulations.

#### **4.6 Misleading and Incorrect Information**

- (A) Any Player who knowingly submits incorrect information or who intentionally fails to disclose information on any registration form or transfer application may be subject to the following penalties as determined by the League in its absolute discretion:

- a. De-registration; or
  - b. Up to four (4) weeks suspension; and
- (B) In addition to Regulation 4.6(A) above, the League may also be deem or determine that the Player was ineligible for any Competition Matches in which he/she has played.
- (C) Any Club Official or Club that is party to a breach of this Regulation may be sanctioned by the League in its absolute discretion.

#### **4.7 Unregistered and Ineligible Players**

- (A) Any player not properly registered, or any Player registered based upon incorrect or omitted information on the registration application will be deemed to be ineligible. Any Club that either knowingly or unknowingly plays an ineligible player may lose all Match points for that Competition Match and be fined up to \$100 for each Competition Match in which such player has played.
- (B) Any ineligible Player(s), Official(s) and/or Club(s) found by the League to have been involved with allowing a player to compete in a Competition Match in accordance with this Regulation may be liable for suspension or deregistration in addition to any loss of Match points and fine(s).
- (C) If an allegation has been made against a Club for playing an ineligible Player, the Club will be responsible for the appearance of the player at any investigation conducted by the League.

#### **4.8 Eligibility of Minors or Juniors**

- (A) Players must be eligible for to play in the specific age group of the relevant Competition as of 1 January in the year of the relevant season.
- (B) In accordance with the Australian Football Match Policy, the minimum age for Players to participate in a Competition is as follows:
- a. Senior/ Open Grade Competitions – sixteen (16) years of age (subject to consent of the Player’s parents/guardians);
  - b. Under 18’s Competitions – sixteen (16) years of age (subject to consent of the Player’s parents/guardians); and
  - c. Under 17’s Competitions – fifteen (15) years of age (subject to consent of the Player’s parents/guardians).
- (C) The Administration Committee may consider any request for an exemption to the minimum age upon receipt of a written application from the Player’s Club including written consent from the Player’s parents/guardians.

## **5. PLAYER TRANSFERS**

### **5.1 Player Transfers**

All Player transfers must be processed through Footyweb.

### **5.2 Transfers between Clubs**

Procedures for the transfer of players between Clubs within the same League (Domestic Transfers) will be in accordance with the National Player Transfer Regulations and Regulations 3.7 and 3.8 below.

### **5.3 Transfers between Leagues**

Transfer of players between AFL NSW/ACT Leagues must be in accordance with the National Player Transfer Regulations.

### **5.4 Interstate Transfers**

Procedures for the transfer of players between States will be in accordance with the National Player Transfer Regulations.

### **5.5 Interchange Agreements**

Neighbouring Leagues may enter into Match Day Permit Agreements (or Interchange Agreements) to enable the movement of players between such Leagues other than as provided for in these Regulations. For Match Day Permit Agreements to be binding, they must be in writing and formally adopted by each League and lodged with the AFL NSW/ACT via Footyweb.

### **5.6 No Transfer Required**

The transfer provisions do not apply to any player who has not been registered with a League at any time during the past two (2) seasons.

### **5.7 Appeals Board – Domestic Transfers Only**

- (A) An Appeals Board will be established by the Administration Committee to hear and determine all appeals relating to the refusal of Domestic Transfers.
- (B) The Appeals Board shall be appointed each year by the League and shall consist of a panel of at least three (3) and no more than five (5) members, each of whom shall not be an Official of any Club playing in the League.
- (C) The Appeals Board shall hold office for one (1) year. Each member may be reappointed for further terms of office.
- (D) A Chairman and Deputy Chairman shall be appointed by the League.
- (E) At any sitting of the Appeals Board, a minimum of two (2) members shall constitute a quorum and where possible, the Chairman or Deputy Chairman shall preside.
- (F) For the avoidance of doubt, the Appeals Board referred to in this Regulation 5.7 and Regulation 5.8 will rule on appeals on domestic transfers only.

### **5.8 Refused Domestic Transfer**

- (A) Requests for a Domestic Transfer can only be refused by the Player's registered Club if the player:
  - a. is indebted to the Club;

- b. is in possession of Club property (e.g. jumper) that needs to be returned; and/or
  - c. wishes to withdraw their transfer application. Clubs can only submit this as a reason for refusal where the player has signed the forms as required by AFL NSW/ACT from time to time.
  - d. Is currently a contracted player to their registered club
- (B) The transferor Club must clearly state the reason(s) why the transfer is refused and must simultaneously provide supporting documentation.
  - (C) Where a transferor Club refuses to transfer a player, the player may lodge an appeal in writing, together with a \$100 bond (of which \$20 is not refundable), to the League within five (5) business days from receipt of refusal.
  - (D) Upon advice from the League that an appeal has been lodged the transferor Club has five (5) business days to lodge the same bond outlined in Regulation 4.8(C) to the League for the matter to be heard by the Appeals Board. The Appeals Board will hear the matter within five (5) business days of both bonds being lodged. Should the transferor Club fail to lodge the bond within five (5) business days then the transfer will automatically be granted by the League.
  - (E) Bond monies may be forfeited at the discretion of the Appeals Board if it deems either the appeal or the refusal to be frivolous. If the transferor Club does not lodge a bond in the time stipulated then the transfer shall be automatically granted by the League.
  - (F) Where, since the refusal of a transfer, the transferor Club and the player have come to an agreement, the transfer will take effect when the League receives either the original transfer form or a second transfer form, which has been suitably endorsed by the transferor club.
  - (G) Where the Appeals Board is satisfied that the transferor Club does not have reasonable grounds for refusing the Player a transfer, the Appeals Board may grant the transfer.
  - (H) The determination of the Appeals Board will be binding upon the Player and Club and an unsuccessful transfer application will not be renewed during the season in which the transfer was sought, provided always that where a material change in relevant circumstances occurs later, the Player may apply to the Appeals Board for a review by way of re-hearing.

The Appeals Board must report to the Administration Committee any circumstances of which it may become aware which may suggest that false or misleading information has been provided to the Appeals Board by a party at or in connection with the hearing of any appeal.

## **5.9 Refused Interstate Transfers and Transfers between Leagues**

Refusals of Players wishing to transfer between AFL NSW/ACT Leagues or interstate will be dealt with in accordance with the National Player Transfer Regulations.

## **5.10 Student Permits**

- (A) Subject to Regulation 5.10(D) below, a Player who transfers to another Club to attend an educational institution on a full-time and continuous basis may, during

official semester vacations / school holidays, receive a permit to play with his immediate former Club subject to written endorsement from the current Club, the former Club and their respective Leagues.

- (B) The permit application is to be endorsed by those outlined above in Regulation 5.10(A) prior to 1 July in a given year.
- (C) The permit period lasts until the Player ceases his commitments at the educational institution and is subject to any relevant regulations of any of the parties, including participation in finals.
- (D) In order to be eligible for a Student Permit under this Regulation, the player must provide a school or university calendar which sets out vacation periods.

#### **5.11 Match Day Permits**

- (A) A Player registered with a League Club may play with another League Club (in the same League) under the following conditions:
  - a. The interchange of all players under this Regulation must be approved by the Administration Committee;
  - b. The Player only plays with one Club on any weekend or round;
  - c. The Footyweb permit system shall be the facility used to activate such interchanges (A Match Permit);
  - d. Competition Matches played on Match permit do not count towards finals eligibility with either Club;
  - e. A Player cannot play on interchange on a day or weekend when his Club has the bye or is otherwise not playing.

*The spirit of this rule is to allow a Club with surplus Player(s) on a given Competition Match day to give these Player(s) a Competition Match of football with another club. It is also designed to allow a Player to trial with another Club which is playing in a higher grade or division.*

#### **5.12 State League Player Trial Permit**

- (A) A Player registered with a Community League Club may obtain a permit to trial with a State League Club under the following conditions:
  - a. The permit of all Players under this Regulation must be approved by the Administration Committee, the NEAFL Manager and the Player's Community Club;
  - b. A Player is only permitted to play with one club on any weekend or round;
  - c. A Player may only be granted a permit to one (1) State League Club per season;
  - d. A Player is eligible to trial in up to six (6) State Competition Matches per season with the one (1) State League Club;
  - e. A Community League Club can only permit one (1) Player to each State League Club on any given weekend or round;

- f. For each trial Match a Player's weekly Match payments and/or contract with their current Club must be honoured by the State League Club;
- g. Competition Matches played on permit shall count towards finals eligibility for both the State League and Community Club.

*The spirit of this rule is to facilitate aspiring Community League Player(s) the opportunity to trial with a State League Club.*

### **5.13 Leagues / Clubs Disbanding / Amalgamating**

- (A) In the event of the transfer of a Club from one League to another, all registered Players of that Club shall be transferred with the Club to the new League. The Secretary or authorised person of the transferor League shall supply a certified list of all registered Players of the Club concerned to the Club's new League.
- (B) If a Player's Club has disbanded or amalgamated, the Player must obtain a transfer from his/her League prior to playing with another Club.
- (C) If a Player's League has disbanded, the Player must obtain a transfer from AFL NSW/ACT prior to playing with another Club.

### **5.14 General**

- (A) Each League must keep a register of all transfer applications which contains the following information:
  - a. Player's name and date the application was received by the League;
  - b. Name of the Club/League from which the Player desires to transfer and name of Club/League to which the Player desires to transfer;
  - c. Date the application was forwarded for decision; and
  - d. Date the response was received and decision.
- (B) A Player or Coach under disqualification by a League or Tribunal may be granted a transfer to a Club in another League during his period of suspension but such Player or Coach must serve the remainder of his or her suspension before playing or coaching in Competition Matches with the new Club.
- (C) Notwithstanding anything within these Regulations and By-Laws, Leagues may make provision in their own by-laws for a player to register after 1 July, subject to transfer approval by his/her registered Club/League, where such Player is transferred by the defence force or by their employer of at least 3 months to another branch, department or related entity of the employer company.
- (D) AFL NSW/ACT may, in extenuating circumstances and in consultation with the relevant League, grant a transfer after 1 July of the relevant season.

## **6. CLUB TRANSFERRING**

- (A) Clubs desiring to transfer to another League must first obtain the permission of that League to join it, and if the permission is granted the Club must lodge a written application to transfer with its current League which shall be required to deal with such application. Should the Club's current League fail to determine the

application within sixty (60) days of lodgement, the Club shall be permitted to transfer automatically to the new League. A copy of the application must be lodged with the AFL NSW/ACT at the same time as lodgement with the League.

- (B) If any League is seeking a Club(s) from any other League, then the inviting League must notify the Secretary of the current League of such Club(s) at least fourteen (14) days prior to the invitation to the Club(s). Any Club(s) that accepts the League's invitation must provide its current League with no less than fourteen (14) days' notice of its intention to transfer to another League. Should the Club's current League fail to determine the application within sixty (60) days of lodgement, the Club shall be permitted to transfer automatically to the new League. A copy of the application must be lodged with the AFL NSW/ACT at the same time as lodgement with the League.
- (C) Leagues must obtain the prior written approval of AFL NSW/ACT prior to affiliating with any newly formed Club.
- (D) In the event of a Club being refused permission to transfer to or join another League, the Club may appeal to AFL NSW/ACT in accordance with Regulation 10 below.
- (E) In the event of a League disbanding, the Clubs affiliated with that League will be transferred to another League as determined by AFL NSW/ACT in its absolute discretion.
- (F) Any League or Club may appeal a decision made by AFL NSW/ACT pursuant to Regulation 6 (E) in accordance with Regulation 11 below.

#### **6A. PLAYER POINTS SYSTEMS & OTHER LEAGUE RULES, REGULATIONS & BY-LAWS**

- (A) Prior to any League introducing, utilising, or implementing, a Player Points System, the Player Points System must be in a form approved in writing by AFL NSW/ ACT.
- (B) In addition to the obligations of a League under Rule 6A(A), no League may introduce, utilise or implement any rule, regulation, by-law 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.



## **7. COACHES AND OFFICIALS**

### **7.1 Coaches to be Registered and Accredited**

- (A) All Coaches must be registered in Footyweb.
- (B) All Coaches must be accredited to at least Junior Level 1 and/or Youth Level 1 by 1 July in the year of Competition.
- (C) The League may revoke or suspend a Coach's permit or authorisation to coach a Club's team at any time in its absolute discretion.

### **7.2 Unregistered and Unaccredited Coaches**

- (A) Any Coach not accredited or registered, or registered based upon incorrect information is ineligible to coach a Club's team in a Competition Match.
- (B) Any Club who engages or permits an ineligible Coach to officiate during a Competition Match may be subject to disciplinary sanctions including loss of Competition Match points and/ or a fine of up to \$1,000.
- (C) Ineligible Coach(es) may also be liable for disciplinary sanctions including a fine, suspension, deregistration or ban on registration as determined by the League in its absolute discretion.
- (D) When an allegation has been made against any Club for engaging an ineligible Coach the Club is responsible for the appearance of the Coach at any investigation or hearing conducted by the League.

### **7.3 Suspended Players / Coaches / Officials**

- (A) Any suspended Player, Coach or Official is an ineligible person and will not be allowed to act in any way as a Coach, Umpire, trainer, runner, water-carrier or any official "on field" capacity in any Competition Match for the duration of his/her suspension.
- (B) Any Coach suspended in his/her capacity as a Coach will not be permitted to enter the field of play at any stage of a Competition Match that is sanctioned by the League.

### **7.4 Working with Children Policy**

- (A) All persons must comply with the requirements of the Child Protection Legislation.
- (B) All Coaches and team managers must obtain a Working with Children Check clearance, whether or not they would otherwise be exempted under the Regulations of the Child Protection Legislation as not requiring a check by reason of their being a parent or close relative of a Player in a team in which the Player usually participates.
- (C) All Working With Children Check clearances must be valid and effective by 1 April each season.

## **8. DISQUALIFICATIONS – PERSONS NOT TO ACT**

Any person who has been refused a transfer or permit to play or has been suspended or de-registered shall not hold any on field position with any League or Club until the transfer or permit is granted, or the period of suspension or de-registration has expired or is removed by the body imposing the suspension or de-registration.

## **9. DISCIPLINARY AND TRIBUNAL PROCEDURES**

Leagues must adopt the procedures set out in the State and Territory Tribunal Guidelines and the National Disciplinary Tribunal Guidelines NSW/ACT, as amended from time to time, for any disciplinary related matter.

## **10. OFFENCES IN INTER-LEAGUE MATCHES**

In the event of a Player being reported in an inter-league/ representative Match or in a Match between clubs of different leagues, the independent Tribunal of the League with which the Player is registered shall hear the charge.

## **11. APPEALS**

- (A) AFL NSW/ACT adopts the State and Territory Tribunal Guidelines including in respect of “Section 4 – Competition Appeal Rules” and National Disciplinary Tribunal Guidelines NSW/ACT including in respect of “Section 3 – Appeal from Disciplinary Tribunal Decision” such that Players, Coaches, Officials, spectators, administrators and any other people reasonably connected to AFL NSW/ACT are required to comply with those Guidelines.
- (B) Any Player, Official, Club or League may appeal to its Appeals Board where constituted or where no such body exists, to AFL NSW/ACT against a decision of his/her/its governing body, including any decision arising out of these Regulations and By-Laws (where applicable) in accordance with the AFL NSW/ ACT Appeal Board Rules (see Appendix E).
- (C) All appeals to AFL NSW/ ACT, whether against a tribunal finding or against a decision in Regulation 11(B) above, will be conducted in accordance with the AFL NSW/ ACT Appeal Board Rules (see Appendix E).
- (D) The decision of the AFL NSW/ ACT Appeals Board will be final and binding on all parties.

## **12. DOMESTIC MATTERS**

- (A) Each League has the power to promulgate supplementary rules or by-laws to provide for the effective management of its own affairs, provided that any such supplementary rules or by-laws are not inconsistent with these Regulations and By-Laws.
- (B) In the event of any inconsistency between a League rule or by-law and a provision contained with these Regulations and By-Laws, the latter will prevail to the extent of such inconsistency.

## **13. AFL NSW/ACT COMPETITION BY-LAWS**

Unless agreed to in writing by AFL NSW/ACT each League adopts the By-Laws provided in Part B.

## **14. AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS**

In accordance with the Constitution, AFL NSW/ACT may from time to time amend or repeal any of these Regulations as may be necessary for the proper conduct and management of AFL NSW/ACT and the regulation of its affairs.

## **15. MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR**

AFL NSW/ACT has the power to decide or determine any matters not provided for in these Regulations.

## **Appendix “A”**

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

This Code of Conduct aims to 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. It also seeks to 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.

#### **1. PLAYERS AND OFFICIALS CODE OF CONDUCT**

Each Player and Official understands and agrees to:

- (A) Not bring the game of Australian Football, the AFL, AFL NSW/ACT or the League into disrepute;
- (B) Participate in Competition Matches in accordance with the Laws of Australian Football;
- (C) Respect the spirit of the Laws of Australian Football and fair play, and behave accordingly;
- (D) Display and foster respect for Umpires, opponents, Coaches, administrators, Officials, parents and spectators;
- (E) Never to argue with or dispute a decision of an Official. If a Participant disagrees with a decision, they should deal with their dispute in accordance with the relevant Rules, Regulations, Policies and Determinations;
- (F) Control their emotions, and not engage in verbal abuse of Officials, sledging Players and/or Coaches or behaviour that deliberately distracts or provokes an opponent;
- (G) Comply with the AFL and AFL NSW/ ACT Rules and Regulations including the National Member Protection Policy, the League By-Laws and this Code of Conduct;
- (H) Never engage in any type of violence either on or off the field;
- (I) Contribute to a safe sporting environment and respectful culture which is accepting of individual differences, and behave accordingly;
- (J) Cooperate with their Club Officials, Coaches and team-mates;
- (K) Participate for their own enjoyment and benefit and for the enjoyment and benefit of their teammates, Coaches and Club Officials;
- (L) Comply with and observe the AFL Vilification and Discrimination Policy including respecting the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of gender, ability, sexual orientation, cultural background or religion;
- (M) Not behave in any way so as to bring themselves, Australian Football, the AFL, AFL NSW/ ACT, the League or the Club into disrepute;
- (N) Not engage in conduct that is (in the AFL NSW/ ACT’s reasonable opinion), unethical, unbecoming or likely to cause harm to the reputation of the Participant, the AFL, the AFL NSW/ ACT, the League, the Club or Australian Football;

- (O) Not take part in any form of bullying including via the use of social media;
- (P) Not make or post inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory comments in public, including via social media, about Players, Clubs, Umpires, Officials, the AFL or the League. Social media includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messaging, text messages, phone messages, digital images, website postings (including social media such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, websites and blogs);
- (Q) Use appropriately the facilities and equipment made available for administration, coaching, training, Competition Matches and events, including facilities provided by the opposing teams;
- (R) Comply with and observe the AFL Anti-Doping Code and any relevant Illicit Drugs policies; and
- (S) Be responsible for their actions.

## **2. PARENTS & SUPPORTERS CODE OF CONDUCT**

Each Parent and Supporter understands and agrees to:

- (A) Support the participants and enjoy the Match;
- (B) Encourage participation, but don't force it;
- (C) Teach that enjoyment is more important than winning;
- (D) Never ridicule mistakes or losses;
- (E) Lead by example and respect all Players, Coaches, Umpires, Officials and spectators. Physical or verbal abuse will not be tolerated;
- (F) Recognise all volunteers who give up their valuable time;
- (G) Never publicly criticise Umpires and instead raise personal concerns with Club Officials in private;
- (H) Do not use remarks based on race, religion, gender or ability as many such comments are politically incorrect and it is your Coach, team-mates, Club and family that are let down with such remarks;
- (I) Respect the facilities and equipment of their own and opposing Clubs;
- (J) Do not engage in physical and/or verbal intimidation, abuse or conduct toward any Player, Official, Umpire or supporter. Such actions are totally unacceptable;
- (K) Condemn the use of violence in any form, whether it is by spectators, Coaches, Officials or Players;
- (L) Refrain from using abusive language.
- (M) Not to enter the field of play in any sanctioned Competition Match unless granted permission by an Official to do so;
- (N) Not take part in any form of bullying including via the use of social media;

- (O) Not make or post inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory comments in public, including via social media, about Players, Clubs, Umpires, Officials, the AFL or the League. Social media includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messaging, text messages, phone messages, digital images, website postings (including social media such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, websites and blogs);

## **Appendix “B”**

### **CODE OF CONDUCT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

#### **1. The Scope of the Code**

1.1. This Code:

- a) forms part of the AFL NSW/ ACT Regulations and applies to the conduct and behaviour of Leagues, Clubs, Players and Officials;
- b) applies to all forms of Australian Football under AFL NSW/ ACT’s jurisdiction;
- c) continues to apply to a participant even after that participants association, registration, employment or engagement has ended, if that participant breached this Code while a current participant; and
- d) does not limit or restrict the application of AFL or AFL NSW/ ACT Rules and Regulations and, in particular, the National Match Tribunal Guidelines, National Disciplinary Tribunal Guidelines, Member Protection Policy, National Vilification and Discrimination Policy or Anti-Doping Policy.

1.2. The Code of Conduct does not govern Reportable Offences, the Order-Off Rule \ or “Citations.

1.3. Where an incident may constitute both an Reportable Offence or a breach of the Code of Conduct, the charge of a Reportable Offence will take precedence. An individual must not be penalised under both the Tribunal/ Prescribed Penalty System and the Code of Conduct.

1.4. This Code of Conduct may be supplemented by additional codes of behaviour or ethics, provided that they are not inconsistent with the terms of this Code.

#### **2. Categories of Breach**

2.1. There are three categories of breach as follows:

- a) Level 1 – Minor indiscretion;
- b) Level 2 – More serious offence or second Level 1 offence within previous 3 years; and
- c) Level 3 – Serious offence, third or subsequent Level 1 offence within previous 3 years or second or subsequent Level 2 offence within previous 3 years.

2.2. Any Player, Official or supporter bringing a Club into disrepute will be entitled to one warning for a ‘Level 1’ breach.

2.3. Level 2 or Level 3 breaches must be dealt with in the following manner:

A written ‘complaint’ may be made by:

- a) An authorised Club Official on behalf of the Club and any of its members;
- b) The Administration Committee directly;
- c) Officiating Umpires (on Umpire Match Report Form).

2.4. All written complaints shall be referred to the Administration Committee. Complaints directly to the League will be accepted within three (3) business days of an alleged indiscretion.

- 2.5. Any alleged breach will be initially assessed by the Administration Committee. The Administration Committee may in its absolute discretion taking into account all the available evidence either:
- impose a Level 1 breach;
  - refer the matter to the Conduct Committee for hearing and determination; or
  - dismiss the complaint including determining such complaint to be frivolous.
- 2.6. Should the Administration Committee or Conduct Committee determine a complaint made by a Club or Club Official to be frivolous, a fee of \$100 will be imposed upon that Club.
- 2.7. Individuals and Clubs will be notified via their Club President in writing of any case to answer and the time and date of a convened hearing. Those requested to attend a convened hearing into the matter are compelled to attend or have a representative attend in their place.
- 2.8. The following is indicative of the process and available sanctions:

<b>Breach</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Sanctions</b>	<b>Referred</b>
Level 1	Minor Indiscretion	Individuals name recorded; counselling, mediation or written apology if appropriate; official warning or reprimand	Usually Not
Level 2	More Serious Infraction or repetition (within 3 years)	Suspended sentence, registration ban or removal of affiliation/ membership rights; the assigning of the individual to a mentor program by the League; counselling, mediation or written apology; suspended fine for Club	Yes
Level 3	Serious Infraction or 'Third Strike' (third Level 1 or second Level 2 within 3 years)	Any of the above; AND/ OR suspension, registration ban, removal of affiliation/ membership rights of an individual; fines and/or loss of competition points to a Club/team	Yes

- 2.9. As such penalties may potentially be apportioned to either an individual or Club or both as determined by the Conduct Committee, Clubs are liable for the conduct and behaviour of its Players, Officials and supporters.

#### *Liability for Spectator Conduct*

- 2.11. A Club is responsible, and liable, for the conduct and behaviour of its supporters, whether at home or away Matches.
- 2.12. Each patron at a Match must comply with the Spectator Code of Behaviour. It is the host Club's responsibility to ensure the Spectator Code of Behaviour is implemented and enforced against all spectators.

#### *Ground Manager Responsibilities*

- 2.13. In maintaining the Code of Conduct, the Ground Manager shall:
- 2.13.1. Liaise with Club Officials as requested (from either the home or visiting Club) to help identify and find details for the alleged offender(s), those affected and any witnesses.



- 2.13.2. Where an incident appears to represent a minor breach, the Ground Manager may issue a warning to any person that they may be close to breaching the Code of Conduct.
- 2.13.3. Where a formal complaint is warranted, the Ground Manager shall advise the affected Club to submit a formal complaint to the Administration Committee and follow the procedures as described in paragraph 1.2 of these Code of Conduct Disciplinary Procedures.
- 2.13.4. The Ground Manager shall ensure that appropriate signage (provided by the League) is maintained and clearly visible at the venue's canteen and in each change-room.

2.14. The Ground Manager should also assist the Umpires upon request to:

- 2.14.1. Identify and obtain the details of any supporter, member or non-member spectator that they believe to be an offender or witness to a breach.
- 2.14.2. Identify and obtain the details of any Club Official or member that they believe to have been involved in a reportable offence where the Umpire has not been able to ascertain the individual's identity.

2.15. Club Officials must co-operate in assisting the Ground Manager upon request to identify and obtain details for any member or supporter belonging to their Club. Where it is believed that a Club Official has not co-operated appropriately, it will be considered a Level 2 breach.

### **3. Conduct Committee**

- 3.1. The Conduct Committee is an independent committee whose duties are to determine and adjudicate upon such matters that the Administration Committee may from time to time refer.
- 3.2. The Administration Committee shall appoint the Conduct Committee of not less than three members which may consist of a combination of the following: a representative from the independent Tribunal Panel, a representative from the Administration Committee or nominee(s) and/or an independent Club President.
- 3.3. Where reasonably practicable, the Conduct Committee will meet on the first Wednesday evening after all relevant parties can be notified of the hearing date and time and any formal investigations completed.

### **4. Scope and Powers of the Conduct Committee**

- 4.1. The Conduct Committee is governed by the same the procedures applying to the Tribunal as outlined in By-Law 26 and the National Disciplinary Tribunal Guidelines.
- 4.2. Decisions may be appealed to the Conduct Committee in accordance with the National Disciplinary Tribunal Guidelines.
- 4.3. The Tribunal representative will chair all Conduct Committee hearings and ensure Tribunal procedures are followed.

- 4.4. The Conduct Committee has the power to dismiss or change the grading of a breach, as well as postpone a hearing as they deem necessary in relation to the evidence produced.
- 4.5. The Conduct Committee may impose any of the following disciplinary sanctions:
  - 4.5.1. Appointing a mentor to an individual for a period of time ;
  - 4.5.2. Requiring that the individual participate in a remedial program or counselling;
  - 4.5.3. Requiring a written apology;
  - 4.5.4. Requiring mediation between parties including on specified conditions;
  - 4.5.5. Revoking a Player, Umpires or Coach's registration for a period of time;
  - 4.5.6. Revoking a child's/associated Player's position to play for a period of time in the case of a parent/spectator;
  - 4.5.7. Banning or prohibiting an individual from admission to any recognised League event and venue;
  - 4.5.8. Banning an individual from holding any post as an Official, administrator or committee person in the League.
  - 4.5.9. Deducting Club of the Year Award points for the season in which the indiscretion has taken place;
  - 4.5.10. Imposing a fine on a Club (up to \$1,000 per first offence);
  - 4.5.11. Imposing the loss of 'competition points' upon a team/Club;
  - 4.5.12. Imposing a suspended penalty of any of the above.
- 4.6. A third violation/breach of the Code of Conduct within a period of three (3) years in any capacity as Player, Coach, Official and/or spectator will bring about an automatic revocation or suspension of the Player's eligibility to play and/or Coach's permit to coach for a period of time as determined by the Conduct Committee in its absolute discretion.
- 4.7. Failure to comply with any penalty or sanction imposed by the Conduct Committee may result in further disciplinary sanctions as determined by the Conduct Committee in its absolute discretion.

## **5. Notice and Disciplinary Sanctions**

- 5.1. AFL NSW/ ACT or a League may enforce the terms of this Code of Conduct and invoke the sanctions only if it has given the party alleged to have infringed this Code of Conduct:
  - 5.1.1. reasonable details of the alleged infringement;
  - 5.1.2. notice of possible sanctions; and
  - 5.1.3. the opportunity to be heard in relation to the issues of infringement and sanction.
- 5.2. The imposition of a sanction is immediate or as otherwise notified by the party imposing the sanction.

- 5.3. If a participant disputes the sanction or purported action taken under this Code of Conduct that party may appeal in accordance with the National Disciplinary Tribunal Guidelines.

## **6. Promoting the Code of Conduct**

- 6.1 A copy must be available on each Club's website.
- 6.2 A copy must be in a prominent position in the following locations: on canteen wall, in front of canteen; in the home and visitors change rooms; and at entrances to public toilets.
- 6.3 The League will provide Clubs with an initial supply of A4 signs and a large corflute sign to be displayed outside a Club's canteen.
- 6.4 All Clubs are required to ensure that all members receive a copy of the Code of Conduct.
- 6.5 Clubs must ensure that its Players Officials, Coaches and parents of Under 18 Players sign off on their understanding of their obligations under the Code of Conduct.

## Appendix “C”



### AFL NSW/ACT PRESCRIBED PENALTY SYSTEM FOR REPORTED PLAYERS

#### **Introduction**

The League has adopted the State and Territory Tribunal Guidelines for the purposes of dealing with Reportable Offences. Section 5 of the State and Territory Tribunal Guidelines contains grading templates for various classifications of offences and outlines the prescribed penalties which can be offered to reported Players (where applicable).

The system will not apply to Officials who are reported. Those reports will be heard by the Tribunal.

#### **Procedure**

Umpires shall report and charge Players in the usual manner. The reporting Umpire shall complete the Player Report Form template and forward to the League by 10.00 am on the Monday immediately following the Match.

Once the Player Report Form and Report Template has been received the League’s Football Operations Co-ordinator will process the report and decide whether:

1. the offence by the Player is suitable for determination under the Prescribed Penalty System;  
or
2. the report should be referred to the Tribunal for determination.

If the offence and/or Player is suitable for determination under the Prescribed Penalty System, the prescribed penalty shall be offered to the Player (via the Club) on the Monday following the Match in which the Player was reported (where reasonably practicable).

The Player (either directly or via the Club) shall notify the League of the acceptance or refusal to accept the set penalty no later than 5.00pm on the Tuesday following the Match in which the Player was reported (or at a later time and/ or date as reasonably prescribed or provided for by the League).

If accepted, the penalty shall be recorded against the player’s record kept by the league. If the prescribed penalty is rejected the report shall be referred to the Tribunal for hearing at a time to be advised the League.

# Appendix "D"

## INCIDENT REFERRAL FORM

TO: Football Operations Coordinator

E-mail:

Fax:

I, the undersigned give notice I wish to refer an incident:-

- (i) that is not subject of a Notice of Report under By-Law 24.8; and
- (ii) which may constitute a Reportable Offence or Breach of Code of Conduct

Round: .....

Match: ..... vs.....

Venue: ..... Date:.....

Player/s involved (please state offending player/s): .....

Type of Infringement: .....

Vicinity on Ground: .....

Quarter: ..... Time of Incident: .....

Other relevant information:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

How do you rate the seriousness of the incident? (1 = Moderate; 5 = Extreme)

1	2	3	4	5
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Print Name: ..... Club:.....(if applicable)

Signed:.....Dated:.....

Umpire / Umpires Coach / Club Official / Other.....(Please Circle)

This form is to be completed and lodged, along with the deposit in accordance with the League By-Laws.

**League use only:**

Lodged with League on ...../...../..... at .....(time)

**Appendix “E”**

**AFL NSW/ ACT APPEAL BOARD RULES**