



AFL FIELD UMPIRES HANDBOOK

Updated March 2024

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FREE KICKS

INSUFFICIENT INTENT

A free kick shall be awarded against a Player who kicks, handballs or forces the football over the boundary Line and does not demonstrate sufficient intent to keep the football in play.

- As a general rule, if a player kicks the ball up the line to open space with no players in the vicinity, a free kick will result if the ball lands near the boundary line from where it was kicked.
- Any player who kicks the ball off the ground runs the risk of a free kick being awarded against them.

Player shepherding ball out

If an opposition player shepherds the ball out of bounds to get a free kick, the free kick **should not** be paid as the player had an opportunity to keep the ball in play.

Ball hitting the behind post

The umpire will adjudicate according to current interpretation (“not demonstrating sufficient intent”) if the ball hits the behind post.

Ball hit out of Ruck

A free kick will be paid when a player hits the ball over the Boundary line on the full from a boundary throw in or throw up.

Not demonstrating sufficient intent from a marking contest

It is rare a free kick would be paid from a Marking Contest under this rule.

Give players more benefit of the doubt

In instances where a player’s disposal goes over the boundary line, the umpire will have more licence to throw the ball in, rather than penalise a player in the following instances:

1. A player disposing forward of centre towards the 50m arc (understand circumstances of play) from the centre of the ground (e.g., centre clearance); and
2. Ruck hit outs from a BTI or ball up which do not go out of bounds on the full.

DELIBERATE RUSHED BEHIND

A free kick shall be awarded against a player from the defending team who intentionally kicks, handballs or forces the football over the attacking team's goal line or behind line or onto one of the attacking team's goal posts, and the player.

There are 4 criteria to help establish if an action would result in a DRB decision:

- A player cannot rush a behind if he is outside the top of the kick-off line (9m) and its extension to the behind posts.
- A player who has had time and space in which to dispose of the ball cannot rush a behind (guide 3-5m).
- A player who is not considered under immediate physical pressure cannot rush a behind (guide 3-5m). Work on fact, not perceived.
- From a ruck contest, if an opposition ruck hits the ball through for a rushed behind on the full, this will be adjudicated as a DRB.

DRB can only be paid for intentional acts

When not to pay

- If under immediate physical pressure (unless outside 9m or has had time and space), the defender should be given the benefit to rush the ball through for a behind.
- For the purposes of clarification, a player being tackled or in the contest for the ball (guide <3-5m) is considered under immediate pressure. In these situations, a player may dispose of, punch, or knock the ball away from their opponents to prevent them from gaining possession of the ball or from scoring.
- In the event a defender has had time and space or not under immediate physical pressure, but is pushed / tackled over the scoring line, it would not be considered DRB as the intent of the player with the ball was not to force the football over the attacking scoring line.
- A player may prevent a goal from occurring if not under immediate pressure, but was the only option available (e.g., momentum).

Position to pay free kick

A Free Kick awarded under this Law shall be taken at the point where the football crossed the Behind Line or directly in front if rushed occurred over the goal line. In the case of the ball hitting a goal post, the free kick shall be taken from the middle of the goal line, directly in front.

50m PENALTIES

Where a field umpire has awarded a Mark or Free Kick to a player, or a player is preparing to bring or bringing the football back into play after a behind is scored, a 50 metre penalty in favour of that player will be awarded if the field umpire is of the opinion that any player or official from the opposing team:

- a) *has moved off the mark;*
- b) *when in the immediate contest, unreasonably holds a player after that player has marked the football or been awarded a free kick;*
- c) *when not in the immediate contest, holds a player after that player has marked the football or been awarded a free kick;*
- d) *enters or does not make every endeavour to immediately vacate the protected area, except when the player is accompanying or following within two metres of their opponent;*
- e) *has not returned the football directly and on the full to the player awarded the mark or free kick;*
- f) *engages in any conduct which delays or impedes the play; or*
- g) *engages in any other conduct for which a free kick would ordinarily be awarded.*

Players who have taken a mark or been awarded a free kick have the right to, and will be given the opportunity to, move it on quickly if they desire. Opposition players will be penalised if they delay the play and/or prevent the player with the mark or free kick from moving the ball on.

50m Penalty – Prohibited Contact After Disposal

If a player intentionally makes prohibited contact against an opposition player who has disposed of the football for the purpose of preventing that player from taking part in the next act of play, the field umpire shall award a free kick and a 50 metre penalty to that player.

- In assessing whether a 50m penalty should be awarded, we must consider whether the tackler has time and opportunity to pull out of the tackle.
- A lingering tackle made without time and space is just a downfield free kick and not a 50m penalty **unless** the intent of the tackle was to prevent the opposition player from taking part in the next act of play or being able to run to the next contest.
- The 50m penalty will be implemented from where the infringement occurred and is awarded to the player offended against.
- The 50m penalty can be cancelled and advantage paid if it disadvantages the team offended against.

50m penalty implementation

Players who have been awarded a 50m penalty should be able to play on in any direction at any time so:

- an opposition player who falls behind the player with the ball must clear the protected area to become the player on the mark; and
- an opposition player who races the player with the ball cannot impede or prevent the player from playing on at any time.

In implementing a 50m penalty the umpire **will blow “time on” immediately** and manage the situation. A player who has been awarded the 50m penalty should be allowed to advance the 50m and not be impeded. If a player is impeded, pay another 50m penalty (50m + 50m = 100m). You should not take your attention away from the incident – move quickly backwards while maintaining observation or run forward with the players when required.

A player may play on at any time as the 50m penalty is being applied.

Opposition running within proximity (2m) or to the side of the player with ball

An opposition player is considered to be impeding or preventing the player with the ball from playing on if they are running to the side or within close proximity (<2m), including in front. Provide 2 warnings to the opposition player to clear the area immediately – if they do not follow direction, award another 50m (50m + 50m = 100m).



50m within arc

Any 50m penalty awarded within the forward 50 must result in a free kick directly in front of goal from the goal line.

Interference on mark by same team with ball

Any subsequent interference by the team who has been awarded the 50m penalty following will need to be managed. Clear infringements by the team with the ball will result in the free kick being reversed at the spot where the infringement occurred. For the avoidance of doubt, a 50m penalty will not be ‘stopped’; it will either be implemented fully or a reversal free kick will be awarded.

Advantage and 50m

In circumstances where the team would be disadvantaged if the 50m penalty were to be applied, an advantage call is permitted.

HIGH CONTACT

A field umpire shall award a free kick against a player when that player makes any of the following prohibited contact with an opposition player who makes high contact to an opposition player (including the top of the shoulders) with any part of their body;

Where the tackle is reasonably applied and the ball carrier is **responsible** for the high contact via a shrug, drop, arm lift or duck, **play on** should be called.

Reckless tackles will still be penalised as high contact.

	Situation	Result
Front On	Head down over the ball trying to gain possession.	Free kick for HT (as long as tackler on move).
Ducking	Elects to drop head from higher position.	Must successfully dispose of ball otherwise HTB.
Drive	Leads with head and moves into tackler who is stationary or near stationary.	Must successfully dispose of ball otherwise HTB.
Shrugs	Tackle around shoulder area and arm pushes tackle up.	Play on.

A player can bump an opponent's body from side on but any high contact forward of side on will be deemed as front on.

A player with his head down in anticipation of winning possession of the ball will be deemed to have his head down over the ball for the purposes of this law.



HOLDING THE BALL

Tackle must be legal

A player must be legally tackled before the umpire can consider whether the player with the ball is Holding the Ball

Prior opportunity

A player who is tackled legally after prior opportunity must immediately dispose of the ball legally.

There are 7 cues for prior opportunity:

- **Balanced and steady**
- **Fend**
- **Evade**
- **Prior option not taken** - If a player **has had an opportunity to dispose and chooses not to** (goes to handball and decides not to),
- **Play on from a Mark or Free Kick**
- **Elects to drive or lead with the head** through an opposition player who is stationary or near stationary (the tackler may in effect go to the side of the player who leads with the head and this could fulfill the requirements of this law as it is the action that needs to be prevented).

- **Ducks** their head

Immediately

Umpires will be less lenient towards players who have had a Prior Opportunity and do not immediately and correctly dispose of the football when they are legally tackled under Law 18.6.2.

For the avoidance of doubt a drop kick is **NOT** considered a legal disposal.

No Genuine Attempt

When a player has had no prior opportunity to dispose of the ball and is legally tackled, he must demonstrate to the umpire that he is making a **genuine attempt** to kick or handball the ball **if they are able to**. The ball being pinned to an opposition player or the ground may prevent the opportunity to make a genuine attempt.

If there is no genuine attempt, umpires will award a free kick against this player.

It is important for the umpire to delay the whistle and use correct terminology when awarding Holding the Ball (i.e., “no genuine attempt”).

Incorrect Disposal

Where a Player in Possession of the Football has not had Prior Opportunity, a Free Kick shall be awarded if that Player elects to Incorrectly Dispose of the football when Legally Tackled.

For the avoidance of doubt, a Player does not elect to Incorrectly Dispose of the football when:

- the Player genuinely attempts to Correctly Dispose of the football;
- the Legal Tackle causes the football to be dislodged from the Player’s possession (including the ball being forced out of the tackle when a player is tackled to ground).

A free kick for incorrect disposal will be awarded to the tackler when the opposition player;

- has control of the ball
- does not attempt to kick or handball the ball
- and the ball is not knocked out in the tackle

Diving / Dragging in the ball

- A Free Kick shall be awarded against a Player who dives on top of or drags the football underneath their body and fails to immediately knock clear or Correctly Dispose of the football when Legally Tackled.
- If a player dives on the ball or elects to drag the ball under their body while on the ground, and then stands up and is tackled, he must dispose of the ball under this law.

MARKING CONTESTS

“The player whose sole objective is to contest a mark shall be permitted to do so”

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick in a Marking contest against a Player where the Player:

- a) holds or blocks an opposition Player;*
- b) unduly pushes or bumps an opposition Player;*
- c) deliberately interferes with the arms of an opposition Player;*
- d) makes contact to an opposition Player from front-on and whose sole objective is not to contest or spoil a Mark; or*
- e) makes an unrealistic attempt to contest or spoil a Mark which interferes with an opposition Player.*

Permitted Contact

Incidental contact in a Marking contest will be permitted if the Player’s sole objective is to contest or spoil a Mark.

Contact in a marking contest will be permitted if such contact is incidental and the player is legitimately marking, attempting to mark, spoiling or attempting to spoil the football.

There will still be an expectation that players demonstrate they are legitimately attempting to mark the ball, but players can use their body to protect space so long as those actions are not excessive, but rather incidental to the marking contest.

Free Kicks	What it Looks Like
Holding	Arm(s) held, jumper flag, arm around waist
Block	2 v 1, moving offline, arms shepherding, eyes not on ball
Push in the Back	Propels opposition forward, bump in the back, does not have to be undue.
Unduly pushes or bumps	Excessive force, timing out, not contesting the mark
Interferes with the arms	Deliberate action, arm not near ball, sweeping the arms
Front On Contact	Makes contact front on, no objective to contest ball
Unrealistic Attempt	Uncontrolled leap, unable to contest ball, interferes with opponent

MISCONDUCT

It should be noted that we should try to **manage situations** prior to the act of misconduct by having a physical presence to quell a situation, if possible. Therefore, misconduct free kicks would rarely be paid.

Examples:

- Throwing an opponent's boot
- Squirted water bottles in an opponent's face
- Interfering with an injured player
- Throwing clumps of grass

PROHIBITED CONTACT

A field umpire or **emergency umpire** (See **Emergency Umpire**) shall award a Free Kick against a Player where he is satisfied that the Player has made Prohibited Contact with an opposition Player.

Free kicks are to be paid for instances where:

- A strike with a closed fist occurs, regardless of force
- An elbow to the back delivered with an element of force
- An open hand delivered with force
- Repeated prohibited contact, that may not in a single instance warrant a free kick, but repeated instances will (provide warnings that do not back you into a corner).
- Player bumped off ball.

It is important that Matchcom is used to communicate between umpires that warnings have been issued to players in relation to prohibited contact.

ROUGH CONDUCT

A field umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player when that Player engages in rough conduct against an opposition Player which in the circumstances is unreasonable, which includes but is not limited to:

- a) executing a dangerous tackle on an opposition Player;
- b) making forceful contact below the knees of an opposition Player or executing a forceful action towards the lower leg of an opposition Player, causing the opposition Player to take evasive action;
- c) sliding knees or feet first into an opposition Player;
- d) using boot studs in a manner likely to cause injury.

Dangerous Tackles

Players, when tackling should not:

- Place their opponent (head or body) in a vulnerable position which is inherently dangerous.

A dangerous tackle could be considered when the level of force is more than is normally expected in a given situation.

Doing so will be deemed to be rough conduct and will result in a free kick and possibly a report or incident referral.

Cues:

- Excessive rotation, including slinging
- Arm or arms pinned
- Lifting legs (above horizontal)
- A tackle that drives or has 2 actions

Under the MRO Guidelines the tackle may be considered rough conduct if the tackle is of an “**Inherently Dangerous**” kind.

Sliding

A free kick for rough conduct will be paid against a player who slides into an opponent feet or knees first and makes any type of contact with an opposition player.

Contact below the knees

A free kick shall be paid against a player who makes forceful contact, or action in a manner likely to cause injury (reckless manner), or causing an opposition to take evasive action.

Cues:

- Player going to ground (may not necessarily “elect”)
- Reckless bowling ball type action
- Movement into opposition legs
- Forceful contact (may cause player to go to ground) below knees
- Opposition player not causing contact.
-

Note: A player can still be penalised if he makes forceful contact below knees of his opponent even if he is moving side by side in the same direction with that player.

The following are instances when contact below the knees would **not** be paid

- When a player is **genuinely attempting to mark the ball** and in doing so, makes contact to an opponent below the knees.
- When a player **is already on the ground** and makes contact below the knees of an opponent in a genuine effort (reaches out) to contest the ball.
- Where a player **is pushed, bumped, or tackled to the ground** and makes contact to the knees of an opponent.

- **When a player smothers, or attempts to smother, an opponent's kick** (including kicking off the ground) when contact is made with hands or arms.

Studs up

Players are not permitted to carelessly employ their studs in marking contests, ruck contests, or general play. The determination of carelessness will depend on the view of the field umpire as to whether the action of the Player is unreasonable in the circumstances.

Cues:

- Full use of studs
- Kicking out motion
- Be considered likely to cause injury
- Rarely going to be from a marking contest from behind.



Kennedy & Reiwoldt examples no longer considered a free kick due to its low consideration to likely causing injury



RUCK CONTESTS

“The player whose sole objective is to contest the ruck shall be permitted to do so”

18.4.2 Number of Rucks

Each Team must have no more than one Ruck contesting any centre bounce, throw-up or boundary throw-in.

18.4.3 Free Kicks - Ruck Contests

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick in a Ruck contest against a Player where the Player:

- a) who is not a Ruck, contests a throw-up or boundary throw-in;*
- b) unduly pushes or bumps an opposition Ruck;*
- c) blocks an opposition Ruck;*
- d) makes contact with an opposition Ruck prior to the football leaving the field or boundary Umpire’s hand;*
- e) who is a Ruck, enters their attacking half or steps outside the Centre Circle prior to the field Umpire bouncing or throwing up the football; or*
- f) hits the football Out of Bounds On the Full from a throw-up by a field Umpire or a throw-in by a boundary Umpire.*

Free Kicks - Blocks

Block Criteria	Play On	Free Kick
Drop Zone	Protects space under the drop zone and contests ball	Moves past drop zone to block and does not contest ball or comes back searching for ball
Timing of Jump		Jumps early into opponent then lands before contesting / does not contest
Nature of Contact		Leads with knee in manner likely to cause injury / leads with studs or straight leg.

Other Free Kicks

- **Push in the Back**, that prevents an opponent from contesting the ball.
- A **hold** of any type.
- Cross the line before ball is bounced or thrown up

Nominated ruckman

Both clubs need to nominate a ruckman who is entitled to contest the ruck. No other player is permitted to contest. It is important to use players' names at every opportunity that have nominated to contest.

The support umpire can assist, particularly in instances where the traditional ruckman are approaching from a distance or from behind the controlling umpire.

At boundary throw-ins go to drop of ball to get nomination - ask 2 times. If no response, you are within your right to say that no one from that team can contest the ruck.



Field throw ups

Rucks are to be separated by at least 1m prior to the ball leaving the umpire's hands. This is to ensure that the ruckmen's objective is to play the ball and not the man.

A free kick will be awarded against a ruckman who makes contact prior to the release of the ball by an umpire (this is not encouraged but should be managed prior to the ball's release).

STOPPAGE FREE KICKS

All players have a right to attack the ball on their merits. Support umpires will continue to focus on holding and PIB at stoppages.

A player will be penalised for holding if he:

- Holds a uniform of an opponent
- Puts one or two arms around an opponent preventing him from moving to the contest (block)
- Holds any part of an opponent's body (wrist/forearm)
- Corrals his opponent by putting his arms on the side and preventing him from contesting the ball (block / hold).

A player will be penalised for a PIB at a stoppage, including the action of pushing a player into or under the stoppage contest.

Support umpires need to adjust their position so they can adjudicate these decisions at stoppages.

Be aware of players facing an opponent, which may lead to a block.

Note: No advantage allowed when an umpire awards a support free kick paid at a stoppage

DISSENT TOWARDS AN UMPIRE

Umpires may pay a free kick when a player demonstrates dissent by -

- Verbally arguing and disputing an umpire's decision.
- Actions of pointing and waving arms at an umpire while moving towards them or in an umpire's space.
- Directing an umpire to look at a replay screen
- Demeaning and belittling behaviour directed to an umpire.

A free kick or 50m penalty should not be paid for;

- Incidents of dissent behind play (Umpires should manage these).
- Players self-regulating and correcting their behaviour
- Accumulation of behaviour during a match.
- Appealing for a free kick.

Zero tolerance towards umpire abuse will still be enforced.

TIME DELAY

Umpire will continue to be less lenient towards players who deliberately delay the play. A free kick or 50m penalty will be awarded under Law 19.2 (f).

Examples include;

- **Delaying the play** by not returning the ball to a field umpire after a ball up is called – (walking away with the ball, keeping the ball while pointing and directing teammates)
- Delaying returning the ball to opponent after a free kick is paid.

PART 2 - GAME PROCESS & PRODECURES

ADVANTAGE

A field umpire will call and signal 'Advantage' where a team offended against demonstrates an intent to continue with play within a reasonable time.

It is the player, and not the field umpire, that determines whether their team has advantage after a whistle is blown for a free kick infringement.

The play must still be continuous to allow an advantage play. Continuous is defined as play would continue in the same manner if no free kick was paid.

It is important for the umpire to delay the advantage call to allow the player a chance to assess options and make a decision either to stop or to take advantage.

Once the team has elected to take the advantage, the umpire will not bring play back if the team changes their decision to take the advantage.

Advantage from a Support Umpire

There is no advantage allowed when a free kick is paid by a **support** umpire at a **stoppage**.

This includes:

- centre bounce, field throw up or boundary throw in; or
- following the payment of a zone infringement by a boundary or goal umpire.

Umpires should use their discretion in allowing advantage upon payment of a free kick by a support umpire in **general play situations**. The Umpire in control should avoid immediately blowing Time on when a support free kick is paid to allow a team the opportunity to take advantage.

Advantage in relation to siren

If a player has taken advantage and the umpire has called advantage prior to hearing the siren, the advantage **will not be cancelled**.

50m penalty and advantage.

A 50m penalty may be cancelled to allow the advantage to occur.

ALL CLEAR

It is imperative that when signalling “All Clear” to the goal umpire for a goal or behind, that the field umpire clearly says “All Clear” and makes **eye contact** with the goal umpire.

The field umpire must also **be aware and observe** that the goal umpire has signalled the score before play can recommence.

BLOOD RULE

Active Bleeding	Passive Bleeding
‘Active Bleeding’ is the existence of an injury or wound which continues to bleed.	‘Passive Bleeding’ is bleeding from a graze or scratch, which has abated and can be readily removed from a player at the first opportunity by the player or a trainer.
Play stops at the next available opportunity and the player shall be directed to immediately leave the ground and be replaced by a teammate.	Play continues and umpire speaks to player/trainer at the first available opportunity to be ‘cleaned’.
Play can recommence if the team has been provided with a clear opportunity to replace the bleeding player but has not done so (usually approximately 30 seconds).	

Active bleeding and shot on goal after siren

A player who has been awarded a free kick or taken a mark prior to the siren sounding and is actively bleeding will be allowed to take the kick if it is taken after the siren. Otherwise, any player who is actively bleeding must be replaced.

Report for wiping blood on opponent

A player should be reported for Misconduct, in that they smeared blood on an opponent, and have a free kick awarded against the team. The player with the blood on the jumper should then have time to have the blood removed or have the jumper replaced prior to the game recommencing.

BOUNCING & RECALLS

Teamwork

We must get the best result for the game. In circumstances where one umpire is struggling bouncing the ball in a contestable manner, it is expected that their teammates assist by taking more centre bounces.

The umpires should then use their best endeavours to ensure the mid zone is shared equally by regular chop-outs after the centre bounces.

Centre bounce and chime

Prior to the recommencement of play after a goal, field umpires will be alerted by a chime through their earpiece at 41 seconds (finishes at 45). It is expected that the ball be bounced within 7 seconds of the chime ending (after ensuring all players are in correct starting position).

Bounce in the last seconds of quarters

In the last seconds of the quarter Umpires have the license to throw the ball up, if they feel it would likely result in a contestable ruck contest.

Centre throw ups

In cases where a throw up needs to occur (e.g., due to weather / number of recalls etc.), we need to allow 5 seconds post the chime to allow broadcast commitments to conclude.

Recall Bounces

An umpire will recall a bounce that is unable to be clearly contested by one ruckman.

Ceasing to Bounce

Once an umpire has 3 x re-called bounces, the preferred option is that the umpire does not bounce. However, if the umpire feels confident again (i.e., after having practised at a quarter break) they can continue to bounce.

Once the group gets to 5 recalls, all umpires are to throw the ball up for the remainder of the game.

Can throw ball up

At times, it may be best for an umpire to throw the ball up to take pressure off the team if, for example, we have had 2 consecutive recalls.

Or there may be times when the centre surface may have been re-laid which makes it difficult for one umpire to get appropriate height, but other umpires height is acceptable.

Starting Positions Warning

After a Starting Positions Warning the umpire will recommence play by throwing the ball up – not bouncing it.

BOUNDARY THROW IN'S

A Boundary umpire is required to throw the ball in 18-20 metres towards the centre of the ground, except for when throwing in within 10 metres of a behind post, where it will be thrown parallel to the goal square.

Boundary Umpires are aiming to throw the ball in within 14 seconds. This time occurs from the signal to the ball hitting the ruckmen's hands.

Boundary throw in recall.

A field umpire will recall a boundary throw in when it is extremely short or wide and has resulted in one Ruck being prevented from contesting.

KICK IN AFTER A BEHIND

AFL Ball Steward

A player may use the ball that was previously in use or alternatively an AFL Ball Steward shall pass the ball to the defending team. The AFL Ball Steward will:

- throw the ball to the player who must be positioned between the fence and scoring line; and
- throw the ball only after the goal umpire's signal has been given.

Failure to adhere to the above will result in a reset of play, with the umpire getting the player to return the ball to the bucket.

Ball thrown onto ground

The umpire will allow play to continue as long as the extra ball on the ground (thrown on by spectators) does not enter the field of play further than the goal square or interferes with the players.

How to bring the ball back into play

The player may only bring the ball back into play once the goal umpire has signalled. Prior to the umpire's play on call, a player may bring the ball back into play by exiting the goal square or kicking from within it.

The player must start with 2 feet within the goal square, with the only exception being when the player re-enters the field of play from between the goal posts (one foot in the goal square will suffice in this instance).

A ball up at the top of the square will no longer occur in any circumstance relating to bringing the ball back into play.

Handballing the ball

A player may only handball from within the goal square after the field umpire has called “play on”. If this occurs prior to the “play on” a reset will take place.

“Not demonstrating sufficient intent” from bringing the ball back into play after a behind

A kick that goes OOB from a kick-in (without being touched by another player) is not an automatic free kick to the opposition. It is now treated as a normal “not demonstrating sufficient intent” decision. That is, it is only a free kick if the player does not demonstrate sufficient intent to keep the ball in play.

Bringing the ball back into play after a behind – time allowed is 10 seconds, followed by whistle, then move it on & play on

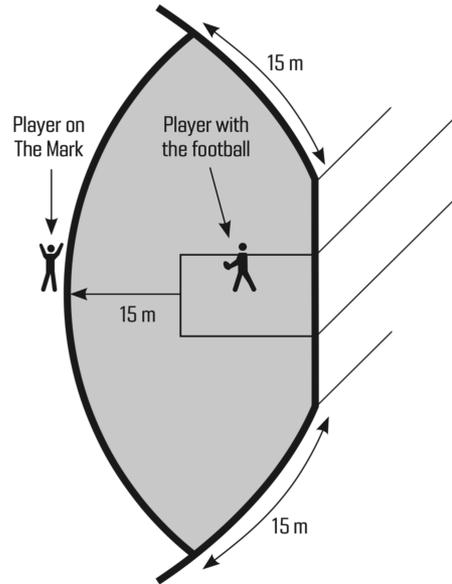
Players will be afforded 10 seconds (as distinct from 6 seconds as per other instances) to bring the ball back into play. The umpire will whistle the player up and then tell the player to “move on” followed by “play on”.

An umpire needs to show common sense and proactively manage when:

- no player has possession of the ball,
- a teammate passes the ball to another player, or
- a player shows no urgency to retrieve the ball and bring it back into play within the reasonable time.

Protected area and bringing the ball back into play after a behind

Other than the player bringing the football into play, all players must make every endeavour to immediately vacate the protected area (as described in diagram below).



An opponent cannot interfere with the quick kick in after a behind if still in the protected area. A player must be passive when leaving the goal square and the protected area. A 50-metre penalty will be applied if an opponent interferes with the kick in from the spot of the mark (9m + 15m + 50m = 74m). The same player who originally was going to bring the ball back into play will take the 50-metre penalty.

Boundary umpires will be positioned 15m from the behind post to assist with clearing the protected area



15m mark on ground

A blue dot 15-metres from the goal square will be marked at all AFL grounds to assist with setting up play from a kick in.

Kick in Scenarios

Situation	Result
<p>A player who has had his 10 seconds to bring the ball in and been told by the field umpire to “move it on” and then called to play on is considered to have had a clear opportunity to dispose of the ball. He is then pressured, & retreats to the scoring line.</p>	<p>If tackled, could be HTB for prior opportunity.</p> <p>If not tackled and player retreats over the scoring line, it will result in DRB as player has had “time and space”.</p>
<p>A player handballs the ball out of the goal square prior to umpire’s “play on” call.</p>	<p>Reset.</p>
<p>Ball is kicked from within the goal square prior to umpire calling “play on” and ball goes OOB without being touched by any player.</p>	<p>The umpire shall determine whether the player has demonstrated sufficient intent to keep the ball in play.</p> <p>If so: throw in.</p> <p>If not: “insufficient intent”.</p>
<p>Player slips out of the goal square and does not kick the ball.</p>	<p>Play on.</p>
<p>Player kicks the ball from behind the goal line (i.e., does not kick the ball inside the goal square).</p>	<p>Reset.</p>

Note: Player is deemed to have played on when one foot has clearly exited the goal square.

Official within arc

Unless attending to an injured player or making every endeavor to vacate the area, no official is permitted within the 50m arc during the time when a defensive Player is preparing to bring the football back into play after a behind has been scored.

Where an official contravenes this law, the opposing team shall be awarded a 50m penalty (so 74m), or being awarded a free kick at spot of where player is on mark (9m + 15m).

COMMENCEMENT OF PLAY

Procedure for sounding siren – Start of matches and quarters

Where possible, acknowledge the starting siren blown by the timekeepers and then bounce the ball without any further need to blow the whistle to start the quarter (within 15 seconds of starting siren).

Before the game	
5 Minutes before start of the game	1 Siren
2 Minutes before the start of the game	2 Sirens
1 Minute before the start of the game	1 Siren
Scheduled start of the game	1 Siren
Start of 2nd and 4th quarters	
2 Minutes before the start of the game	2 Sirens
1 Minute before the start of the game	1 Siren
Scheduled start of the game	1 Siren
Start of 3rd quarter	
5 Minutes before start of the quarter and as umpires enter the field	1 Siren
2 Minutes before the start of the quarter	2 Sirens
1 Minute before the start of the quarter	1 Siren
Scheduled start of the quarter	1 Siren

Free kick prior to start of game

As a guide, free kicks can be awarded after the one siren (1 minute before the start of the quarter) as teams take up their position prior to the start of quarters.

If a free kick has been awarded prior to the start of a quarter, **the umpire must hold/retain the ball** until such time as the starting siren sounds to commence play. The umpire must then hold the ball aloft to signal the start of the game and blow the whistle after which time the ball can be handed to the player awarded the free kick or the Ruck, whichever is the greatest advantage.

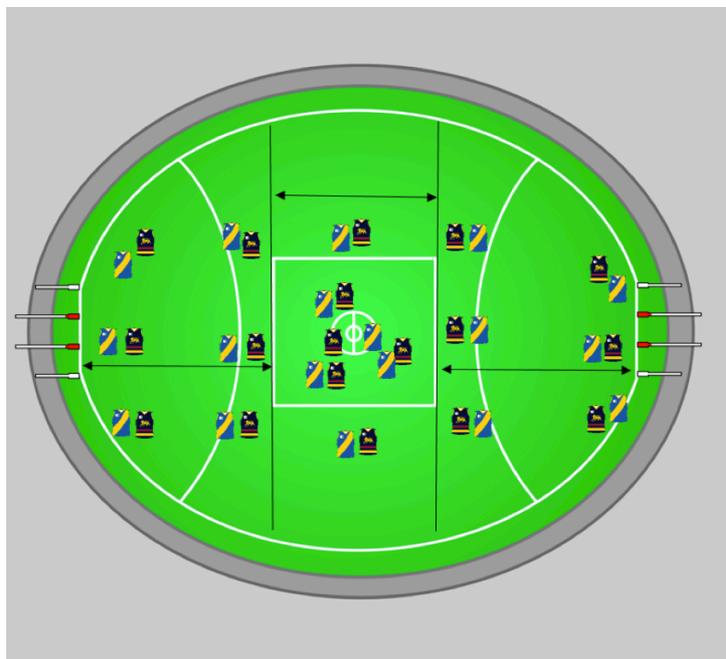
The time-keeper will start the clock on either the disposal by the player, or when the umpire calls “play on”.

Starting play after a goal and free kick being awarded

Any free kick paid prior to the chime **needs** to be controlled by the field umpire. The field umpire should only hand the ball to the player after the chime.

There is no need for players to be in their correct starting position (6/6/6) as this type of free kick (as described above) is not due to a starting position infringement.

STARTING POSITIONS



When numbers are <18, teams must have

- at least one Player from each Team in the Goal Square;
- one Player from each Team in the Ruck



If a Player is injured and is being attended to by team personnel, we will wait until replacement Player will take up position (in these instances, apply the blood rule guidelines)

All umpires (field, boundary and goal) will make their best efforts to work with both teams in order to get them to adhere to rules governing the starting positions.

Both teams must not exceed the maximum number of players as described in the diagram above (except goal square where up to 6 can start).

Both teams are to receive one warning each per game before paying a free kick for a starting position infringement.

Note: Be aware that a team may legally start with 4 players in the arc and 1 player at full forward (there may be 5 players on the interchange bench).

Chime

Last point of time for starting position is when the chime finishes (45 secs), unless if less than 15m away. Hold off on bounce on these occasions (provided player demonstrates intent to get to position).

If both teams are late to their positions, no warning or free kick will be applied

Warning Process

Warning process

Before each centre bounce, the bouncing umpire is to ask support umpires whether starting positions are set.

In the case of starting positions not being set (after being told by one of the support umpires), the bouncing umpire determines whether we can hold off on the bounce after the chime, or whether we apply a warning if it is considered an unacceptable delay of the bounce

You should provide a warning if a player is not demonstrating any intent to get to correct starting position or is too far away from starting position, thus causing an unacceptable delay of the bounce (>15m)

If a warning is provided, the bouncing umpire blows the whistle and points to who is responsible for the warning (support umpire would move towards this player as well). Bouncing umpire to inform ruckman that a warning has been given to his team.

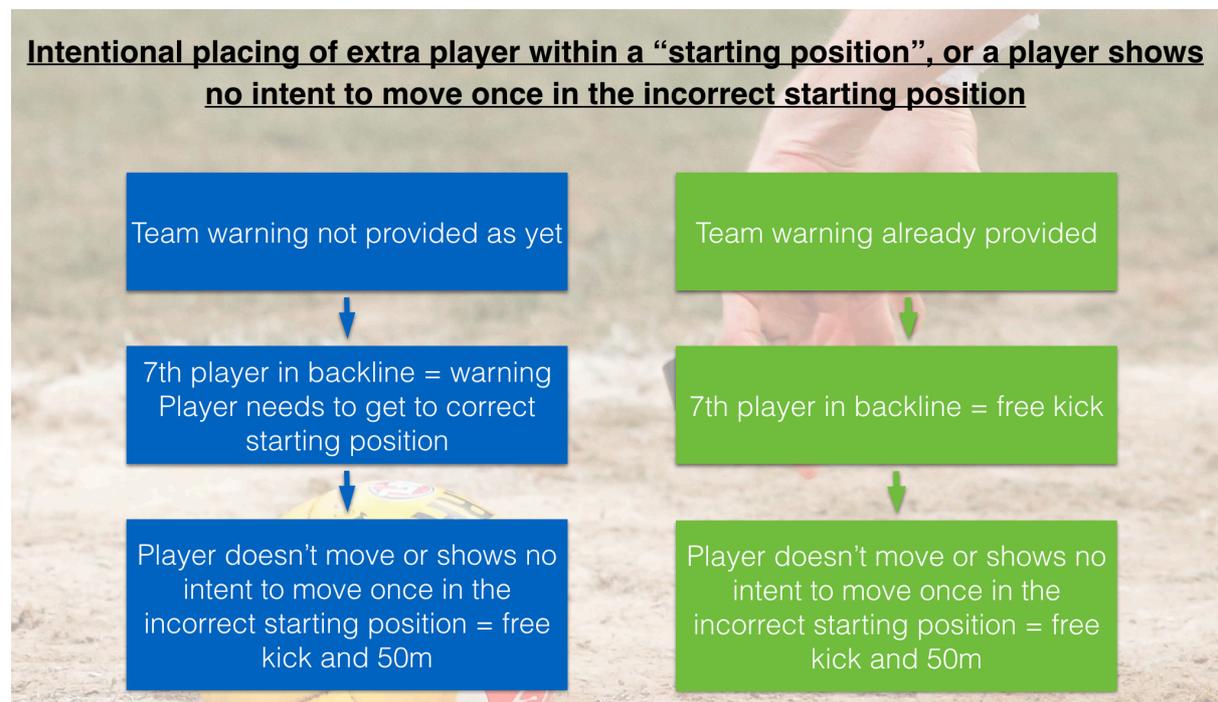
The emergency goal umpire would then inform the team who has been given the warning by informing the club (interchange official)

Field Umpires will throw the ball up after a warning is applied.

Free kick for 6/6/6 starting position infringement

Play needs to be reset prior to the umpire throwing the ball to the ruck. To avoid any delay in set up and applying a warning or Free Kicks Umpires should wait until the players are set in positions before blowing the whistle for a Free Kick or Warning. Umpires will do best to avoid having players aware of the free kick before the whistle to avoid a break occurring.

Intentional placing of extra player within a “starting position”, or a player shows no intent to move



Free kicks paid by goal or boundary umpire for a line breach prior to centre bounce

Where the starting positions specified in Law 13.1 have been met, but a Player subsequently fails to maintain a starting position listed in Law 13.1 prior to the ball touching the ground in the act of bouncing by the field Umpire, or leaving the field Umpire's hand in the act of the ball being thrown up, an Umpire shall award a Free Kick to the Player of the opposing Team who is in the Centre Circle.

On the line is considered in. For a free kick to be paid by a boundary or goal umpire, it must be a foot that has entered another zone prior to the bounce (a foot that is partially on a line is considered in).

This is an immediate free kick (no warnings for these types of free kicks). Free kick to be taken by the ruckman in the centre of the ground.

Play ***does not*** need to be reset before the bouncing umpire throws the ball to the ruckman who is receiving the free kick.



Rule talks about “entering”, so you have not entered if your foot is on the line

What if a player is delayed from getting off the ground post goal (by an opponent), which delays his team mate from being in position?

The umpire would be reliant on communication from Emergency Umpire. The umpire will wait for the player to be in position.

What happens if a player pushes an opposition player into another zone?

A free kick can only be paid by a field umpire for these types of infringements.

A free kick for entering a zone prior to the bounce will not be paid against the player who gets pushed in, regardless of force. We will not penalise the player who gets pushed in under any circumstances.

Important to speak to both players at the next opportunity.

Starting position and injured player

When a player is being escorted from the ground with the assistance of trainers or medical staff after a goal, play should not recommence until that player exits the ground and the new player takes up his starting position. The injured player can be replaced prior to exiting the field. The Emergency Goal Umpire will come on to the ground by 5m to assist this process.

Free kick prior to the centre bounce (not for starting position or line breach)

The field umpire should only hand the ball to the player after the chime. There is no need to reset the players into their starting positions on these occasions.

COMMUNICATION

- When communicating free kicks, umpires should just say “Free kick [Team Name]”.
- Identification of who should receive the free kick (i.e., which player) can also be used when appropriate, especially from support position.

- Refrain from using nicknames.
- Your dialogue with players should 'Be Respectful'.

CONSULTS BETWEEN UMPIRES

Consultation between field and boundary umpires occur when any doubt occurs in relation to out of bounds or out of bounds on the full.

The field umpire should lead this discussion but must be specific in the questioning to attain the appropriate answers.

For example: "I have paid the mark. Was it taken in or outside the field of play?"

Consultation between field umpires in general play

In general play situations, blow time when required to consult (i.e., marking the ball [did it carry?]). For simultaneous free kicks determine outcome based on Law 18.1.4.

SCORE REVIEW

If any umpire or Score Reviewer is in any doubt concerning a scoring decision, the Score Review Process will be triggered. The field umpire will control the consultation process.

The field umpire should follow the process as outlined below:

1. Blow "time on" prior to start of consultation and remove players who are interfering with the process.
2. The field umpire will consult and determine the "Umpire's Call".
3. The field umpire will then call for the review process by signaling a square in the air towards the interchange bench and instruct the Score Reviewer what the Umpire's Call will be and what to review. A hand signal indicating a behind or goal will also be given.
4. The Score Reviewer acknowledges the signal by communicating "Review Underway". Once all vision has been viewed, the Score Reviewer will refer an answer to "decision on the scoreboard".

It is vital that all other umpires keep quiet to ensure the umpires involved in the score review can hear each other and concentrate on executing the process.

THE REVIEW PROCESS CAN NOT BE UNDERTAKEN ONCE PLAY HAS RECOMMENCED

Consultation between goal and boundary umpire in relation to a behind or out of bounds

This should trigger the score review process. The umpires need to determine what the umpire's call will be prior to going to a Score Review.

Silent score review

After each goal, the Score Review Officer (SRO) will review the available vision, irrespective of whether an umpire calls for a review or not.

If a player(s) approach an umpire appealing for a review (e.g., “it was touched” or “it hit the post:”) after the all clear has been given, the field umpire should tell the player(s) the SRO is currently checking. The umpire does not need to inform the SRO.

If there is no communication from the SRO prior to the chime for bouncing the ball, the umpire will proceed with the bounce.

If there is communication from the SRO, please hold the ball until further communication.

In the case of a score annulment, the bouncing field umpire will blow time on and draw the review square towards the interchange bench from the centre circle, signalling a change of score will occur.

The bouncing field umpire then jogs slowly with the ball to the goal square in a controlled manner and manages the annulling of the original score with the goal umpire (or support umpire can do this). It is important to hold the ball until the new score is recorded and play is reset.

Touched kicks at goals

When a ball is touched off the boot and the field umpire calls “touched play on” but the ball goes through for a goal, the field umpire **can** initiate a score review (if not 100% sure it was touched) to ensure ball was in fact touched. In this case, the umpire’s call would be “touched, behind”.

In instances where the field umpire is totally confident the ball was touched, there is no need to go to score review.

Ball hitting an umpire that may have prevented or altered a score

If the football touches an umpire, and in the opinion of the field and/or goal umpire it has affected a score, play will be stopped and the score review process will be initiated.

There will be no “umpire’s call” in this case.

The communication will be “could you please check what the score would have been”



Standard score review.

Blow time off

Determine “umpire’s call”

Signal score review towards interchange bench and inform SRO what “umpire’s call” is and what to review



Touched off boot and called touched by field umpire

If you have any doubt in the call, go to a score review.

*If it is obvious that it has been touched, no need for the score review



Silent score review

SRO will alert you that you need to hold play

If this has occurred, do not bounce the ball until communication from SRO

If there is a change of score, blow your whistle and draw the score review signal in middle of ground to the interchange area.

Control your run to the goal to annul the score (support umpire can do this)

Once new score has been signalled, throw the ball to the defending team to be brought back into play



Ball hits an umpire

If there is a belief that a score has been affected by the ball hitting an umpire, call for a score review.

There is no “umpire’s call” in this case.

The communication should be “please check what the score would have been”

Recommencing Play – No Score

Where a score review determines that “No Score” is the outcome play where the ball has not crossed a scoring line play will recommence with a Field Throw Up at the Top of the Kick Off Line.

Other No Score outcome will recommence as described by the Score Review (i.e. Mark, Out of Bounds, Out of Bounds on the Full).

Score reviews at ends of quarters:

What SRO can do	What SRO cannot do
Determine who ball came off	When the siren sounded in relation to the score
Determine what ball came off (kick or not)	
The actual score	

SCORE OR OUT OF BOUNDS NOT OBSERVED BY A FIELD UMPIRE

Score not observed by field umpire

Goal umpires are instructed to run out to the field umpire when the field umpire does not observe the goal umpire's intention to signal a goal or behind.

Upon receiving this advice from the goal umpire, the umpire should stop play and give the "all clear" for the score. Any free kick that occurs in the meantime should be cancelled.

Play is restarted as per the normal method after a behind or goal.

Out of bounds signal not observed by field umpire

Where the field umpire has failed to notice a boundary umpire's signal that the football has gone Out of Bounds or Out of Bounds on the Full, the following shall apply:

- The boundary umpire shall continue signalling and run to the field umpire until they are noticed by any one of the field umpires.
- Upon noticing the boundary umpire's signal, the field umpire shall stop play and direct that the football be taken to where it crossed the boundary line, at which point the football shall be thrown in by the boundary umpire or kicked back into play, as the case may be.
 - This provision does not apply if a free kick or 50m penalty is awarded before the field umpire notices the boundary umpire's signal; in such cases, the free kick or 50m penalty will stand.
- This Law applies even if a goal or behind is scored before a field umpire notices the boundary umpire's signal. In such instances, the field Umpire shall direct the goal umpire to annul the score.

EMERGENCY GOAL UMPIRE ROLE

The Emergency Goal Umpires has assumed the role previously filled by the Emergency Field Umpire. If an Emergency Field Umpires is appointed the Emergency Goal Umpire will still fulfil these duties.

Prior to the Start of Game and Quarters

The Emergency Goal Umpire will let the Field Umpires know that the interchange area is "**all clear**" before the start of the game and each quarter.

The "all clear" will be conveyed to the Field Umpires with the communication, "**Benches Are Clear**". The Field Umpire will not start the game / quarter until this occurs.

Blood Rule Process

For blood rules, the Emergency Goal Umpire will stand up, cross their arms above their head to acknowledge the field umpire. They will instruct the bench to allow the player on the ground straight away. After 30 seconds has elapsed they will indicate to the field umpires this is the case by crossing their arms above their head again.

Starting Positions Warning

Once the Field Umpires have provided a warning for a team's first breach of the starting position, The Emergency Goal Umpire will relay this message to the Club's Interchange Steward and record the warning at the top of their Score Card.

Procedure for Interchange Breaches

Players intending to interchange shall leave and enter the Playing Surface through the Interchange Area. Where a Player does not leave or enter the Playing Surface as specified the Interchange Steward shall report the breach to the Emergency Goal Umpire.

If an Interchange Steward informs the Emergency Goal Umpire of a major breach, they are to confirm which Team the breach is against and note where the ball was at the time of the breach.

They will walk onto the field of play, touch on, blow their whistle, and communicate there is an interchange breach free kick to **“team” and the position where it is to be taken.**

- the nearest player to the free kick shall be awarded the free kick.
- additionally, a 50-metre penalty will be awarded by the field umpire from where the ball was at the time of the breach.

If a score has been recorded during the period between the breach occurring and the play being stopped the score will need to be annulled before commencing play.

END OF QUARTER

The end of a quarter occurs when any field umpire or emergency umpire first hears the siren sounded by the Timekeepers to signal the end of a quarter.

The field umpire shall acknowledge the siren and bring play to an end by blowing a whistle and holding both arms above their head.

Out of Bounds after the Siren Sounds

If a player has kicked the ball and the siren sounds while the ball is in transit and before the ball crosses the boundary line on the full, **no** free kick shall be awarded for out on the full or insufficient intent to keep the ball in play.

Shot after siren: umpire positioning

The field umpire controlling the mark at the time of the siren remains at the mark to control the protected area. There may be a need to communicate with the kicker regarding his obligations to kick over the mark.

A support field umpire will take up a position so as to monitor the players on the goal line and to adjudicate any contests that may take place on or near the goal line. This could include any free kicks or score-assists.

The other field umpires take up a position of **best influence**...this may be behind the kicker to ensure the player kicks in a direct line with the mark.

When having a set shot at goal after the siren, the player taking the kick will initially be lined up in a direct line with the player on the mark and the centre of the goals.

The player may have an approach that is off his direct line of kick. He may kick from a “disadvantaged” position (that is, inside the direct line of kick) but cannot move past the line of kick (the planted foot) creating an advantage. If this occurs, the result is no score. This may include where a player lines up perpendicular to their line of kick to kick a ‘snap’ shot.

The umpire controlling the set kick will assume the normal position of backing off to the lateral protected area, in line with the player on the mark.

One support umpire may be at goal square to ensure contests are fair on the scoring line. Another umpire may set up behind the kicker to ensure the player disposes along correct line of kick.



Scoring in Relation to the Siren

If a player takes possession of the ball immediately after the siren sounds and prior to the ball passing over a scoring line, then the player elects to step over a scoring line, all clear will **NOT** be given for a behind as this is deemed a separate act of play.

Situation	Result
Defender assists / punches the ball through for a score even though the siren has sounded.	Behind.
Ball comes off the hands of the pack and goes over the scoring line.	Behind.
Ball is assisted through by a 'forward'.	No Score.
Ball touches any player below the knee while in transit.	No score (deemed a kick).
A player takes possession of the football before or on the scoring line and, in the same motion, ends up over the scoring line (Please be clear - if he takes possession prior to the scoring line, and then lands within the field of play, this would result in no score)	Behind.
Free kick awarded beyond the scoring line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To a defender = no score To an attacker = may accept score or take free kick at point on scoring line where ball crossed or where kick originally came from (whichever is the greatest advantage).

FIELD THROW UP'S

For all field throws, the umpire will back out to the boundary. If you feel you are in a vulnerable position, take the time to indicate which direction you are backing out to clear a path for you.

When the ball is close to the boundary, umpires will make every effort to arc back inside when appropriate to do so.

Execute the field throw in a prompt and composed manner. Do not throw the ball up in cases where players are still on the ground – ensure player safety. The throw should be approximately **7m** high.

RUNNERS & TRAINER

- Team runners may only enter the playing surface once a goal has been kicked and must exit the playing surface before play recommences.
- Runners can also enter the field x2 other times during a quarter, but not in last 3 minutes of play (exception = after a goal)
- Water carriers are not permitted to enter the playing surface during live play.

We do not need to warn runners and trainers – it will be the AFL’s responsibility to follow up any concerns with runners / trainers.

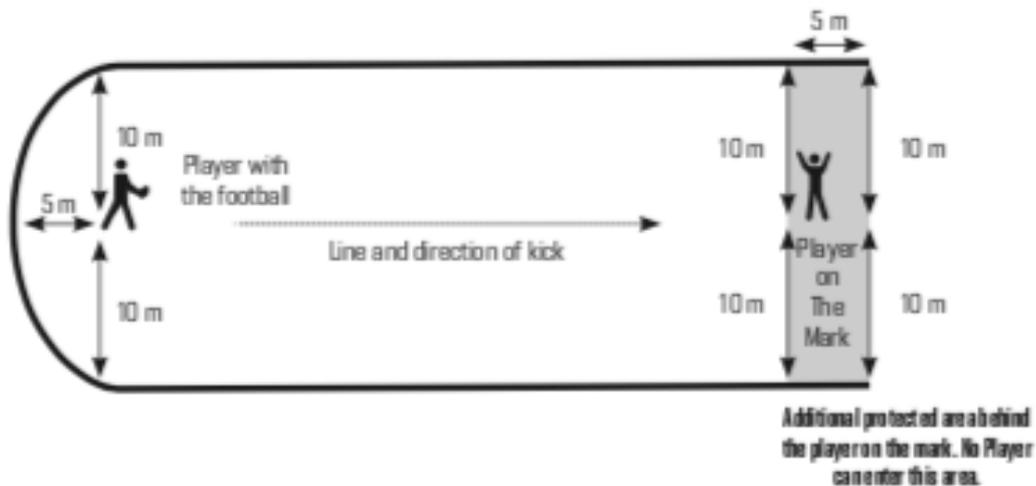
We will continue to pay free kicks against runners / trainers if they interfere with the football, an opposition player, an umpire, or general play.

SET KICKS

When a Player is awarded a Mark or Free Kick, one Player from the opposing Team may:

- a) stand on The Mark; or
- b) otherwise be directed by a field Umpire.

For the avoidance of doubt, all other Players from the opposing Team must be positioned behind The Mark or otherwise outside the Protected Area defined in Law 20.1.2.



Stand

When the time and opportunity presents itself, a player should be set up on the exact spot of the mark. In instances where a player sets up off the spot of the mark, we can call “stand”, if there is no time nor opportunity to set up on exact spot

An umpire will call “stand” and use the hand in a stop signal style to acknowledge the instruction as well.

Once a player has been directed to stand, the player on the mark is not allowed to move, with the exception of jumping up and down on the mark. No lateral, backwards or forwards movement is permissible.

Once a player elects to come up to the mark with the intention of standing the mark, the umpire will call Stand; players cannot come up to within 5 metres of the mark and then retreat.

OOB on the full or free kicks for “insufficient intent”

If we have the time and opportunity to set the player on the exact spot of mark of where the free kick occurred, the player must stand on the boundary line, or clear the protected area.

Mark within the Goal Square

The player is deemed to have marked the ball in the goal square if the ball is controlled **within or on** the goal square line. The mark will then be set by the umpire in the middle of the goal square.

Set shots on goal

We can afford to hold off on the “stand” direction with a set shot on goal until the player with the ball is near ready to begin the approach to goal. If a player is clearly in position to stand the mark the will not be permitted to swap with another player.

Direct line of kick

“Play on” shall be called when it is obvious to an umpire that a player with the ball has clearly retreated off the direct line of kick after being awarded a mark or free kick.

End Zone Support (releasing Mid Zone set kick)

The Mid Zone Umpire is initially responsible for setting the mark. In some circumstances in the, it might be appropriate for the Mid Zone Umpire to back off, with the End Zone using “stand” to ensure there is no confusion as to who has control of the set kick.

Time Given Before a Play on Call

	General Play	Kick In after a Behind	Set Shot of Goal
Double Whistle	At 6 Seconds	At 10 Second	With 5 seconds to go if approach to goal hasn't started
"Move It On"	At 7 Seconds	At 11 Seconds	
Call "Play On"	At 8 Seconds	At 12 Seconds	When Shot Clock reaches Zero if approach hasn't started

Player Kicking for Goal – Completing set shot by 30 seconds.

An umpire in support position needs to assist the umpire with the timing when a player is having a set shot on goal. Player elects not to stand mark but wants to rush mark as kicker approaches

- A player may elect to 1 protected area; the umpire will call 'outside 5') but they cannot rush the player with ball as the player with ball approaches to kick.
- We will adjudicate this in same manner as a team that has not nominated a Ruck for a Ruck contest (no player on the mark)

Faking a disposal

When a player fakes a disposal and the player on the mark moves laterally, a 50 metre penalty will no longer be applied. If this occurs, the mark will be reset.

However, if the player on the mark moves forward (where there is no fake), a 50 metre penalty will still be applied.

PLAYER GURNSEYS

All players must be always wearing a playing guernsey. When a player has his guernsey removed in play he must put it back on before play can recommence. If the guernsey has been damaged and is unwearable play will be stopped until a replacement can be given to the player.

If a player has had their guernsey damaged but is still wearable, the player must be advised to have it replaced at the as soon as possible but play can recommence.

INJURED PLAYERS & STRETCHERS

Where a player is clearly injured, and play is withing a kick of the injured player, play must be stopped to ensure the safety of the player and trainers attending to the player.

In the event of a stretcher being called, play will continue until an appropriate opportunity (i.e., stoppage in play - after a goal or behind has been scored, or when a mark/free kick has been paid) or play is too close to where the injured player is located.

If the ball is not in the immediate vicinity (within a kick) and a stretcher has not been called for, play should continue but umpires need to be prepared stop play should play get within a kick.

Restart of play following a stretcher or injured player

Once play has stopped play can commence when either;

- a) injured player leaving the field has moved from the vicinity of the of play and will be in no danger of resuming play. Umpires are asked to be cautious and avoid restarting when it is likely a second stop of play could occur.
- b) A player on a stretcher has left the playing arena.
- c) Player who play was stopped for is no longer with the trainers and setting up to resume play.

If one team has possession when play is stopped for a stretcher or injured player, that same team will retain possession of the ball when play is restarted.

If the ball is in dispute, is out of bounds, or where a goal or behind has been registered before play was stopped, it will continue to be restarted with a bounce, throw in, centre bounce or kick-in respectively (whichever restart is relevant to that situation).

Stretcher called, but not used

If the player is assessed by a Club Medical Officer or Club Physiotherapist and is capable of leaving the arena without the aid of a stretcher, then the player must do so via the interchange gates.

A player for whom a stretcher is called, even if he does not leave the arena on the stretcher, shall not resume playing for a period of 20 minutes of play (including time on but excluding the quarter-time, half-time and three quarter-time breaks) from the time when the player left the arena.

Exceptional injury procedure

A player, who in the opinion of the Club's Medical Officer or Club Physiotherapist needs to be taken directly from the ground for treatment (i.e., not through the interchange gates) or who requires to be escorted off the field on a stretcher, may be taken from the playing arena at any point.

Procedure:

1. The Club's Interchange Official (or medical staff) must notify the Emergency Goal Umpire and the AFL Interchange Official that they need to make an interchange due to an "exceptional injury" on the field, or that they require the use of a stretcher.
2. Upon this notification, the Emergency Goal Umpire shall notify the controlling field umpire via the communications system (if not already aware) that the game needs to be stopped due to an "exceptional injury" or a stretcher. At this time, the replacement player must make themselves known to the AFL Interchange Official.
3. When the game has stopped the replacement player may enter the field of play through the interchange gates. The game will not resume until the replacement player is in position and the injured player has left the arena.
4. The player who leaves the field in the manner detailed above will be ineligible to return to the field for 20 minutes (excluding breaks between quarters). The 20-minute period begins from the time the player leaves the playing arena (i.e., crosses the boundary line).
5. If a club calls for a stretcher and the game is stopped as a result, however the player does not use the stretcher, he must still remain off the ground for 20 minutes of playing time.

Player breaches associated with stretcher/serious and exceptional injury procedure.

If a player who left the field under either a stretcher or serious and exceptional injury situation returns to the playing arena prior to the 20-minute period expiring, this is a major interchange breach.

Note: The player who has returned early to the field will be sent off by the field umpire on advice from the Emergency Goal Umpire for the remainder of the 20 minutes. If a player leaves the field, but not through the interchange gates, and is replaced before the club has notified you, this is a major interchange breach. The player will be required to remain off the playing surface for 20 minutes.

TIME ON/OFF

Umpires need to indicate "time off" where appropriate (e.g., crossing arms for a field bounce, signalling any delay in play). "Time on" needs to be signalled and communicated (play on call with signalling of arms) at all times to the timekeepers by indicating with the time off / on signal, the whistle, voice and / or a play on signal.

Time back on will be applied by the timekeepers on the field umpire's signal of "play on" in the following instances:

- Bringing the ball back into play after a behind.
- When the ball is brought back into play (player disposes or plays on) after a free kick has been awarded prior to the start of a quarter or after an umpire calls play on.
- When a player is outside the playing surface (as in the case of an out of bounds on the full or an insufficient intent free kick).

Using the MatchComm system Timekeeper may ask the umpires for Time back on where the Field Umpire fails to do so.

PART 3 - OFF FIELD PROCESS & PROCEDURES

BROWNLOW MEDAL VOTING

The Brownlow Medal is the most prestigious AFL industry award and field umpires who are entrusted to vote on the award, should take the time, care and thoughtful deliberation they need to reach their unanimous decision to ensure the integrity of the award is upheld.

The four field umpires shall within a reasonable time following the conclusion of the match, go to a **secure and private room** to deliberate on who were in their opinion the three 'fairest and best' players during their game. During this confidential discussion, there is no set time limit for how long nor the way in which a unanimous decision is reached. However, umpires should be open minded, listen to each other's points of view and be prepared to change their mind when there is a good reason to do so. The player adjudged fairest and best shall receive three votes; the player adjudged second fairest and best shall receive two votes and the player adjudged the third fairest and best, one vote.

The AFL nominated umpire who is responsible for the secure and safe keeping of the votes, should complete The Brownlow Medal Ballot Card (Ballot Card) in front of the other three field umpires. All four field umpires must read the instructions and check that the votes entered on the Ballot Card reflect the unanimous decision of the group before each of them sign the Ballot Card. The AFL nominated umpire must then put the completed Ballot Card into the envelope marked 'Brownlow Medal' and place the red seal over the sealed envelope flap. **All four Field Umpires' must then sign across the red seal.**

The AFL nominated umpire responsible for the secure and safe keeping of the votes, must personally always keep the sealed votes with them (including during flights) until they personally deliver the votes to either the AFL House or designated Armaguard office and complete the delivery paperwork. All Ballot Cards must be delivered as soon as possible following a match and must be delivered no later than 9am on the first business day following a round to ensure compliance with governance and integrity measures.

Field umpires must never discuss, reveal or disclose the details of their voting deliberations and/or the voting outcome with any other person (including other umpires) nor record the votes anywhere, except on the official Ballot Card. If anyone approaches an umpire to obtain the confidential details of any Brownlow voting outcome, they should immediately report this approach to the AFL Integrity team.

NOTE: Field umpires are to award votes to the players adjudged by them as the fairest and best players on the day irrespective of whether such players have been found guilty

of an offence in a previous match during that season (or in a previous season) and irrespective of whether any of such players have been reported on the day. Field umpires will not be provided with any player performance reports, data or statistics as part of their deliberation process, and they must not access this type of information on any mobile device.

If a field umpire is injured or falls ill during the game and is unable to participate in the deliberation/voting process due to incapacity and/or absence, the remaining three field umpires should proceed with the voting process as normal. Care should be taken to state the player's initial and number, particularly when two or more players of the same surname are engaged in a match.

Submitting Your Votes

Votes will be distributed to 1 nominated Umpire for each game at training each Tuesday. That Umpire is responsible for taking the votes to the game and returning them afterwards.

Umpires have the option of returning them to the AFL in two ways:
Drop them into AFL House, deliver into safe in the ARC; or
Drop them off at Armaguard at Essendon Fields (good option if you are travelling)
Sign the signature sheet next to the relevant game indicating you have dropped your votes off in one of the two available safes.

AFL House/ARC Swipe Cards

Your swipe card will provide you access to the ARC and also through the fire gate just outside the Northern Change Rooms. Delivery of Brownlow Medal votes needs to be done straight after your game or when you fly back into Melbourne because Armaguard will conduct their weekly pick up of votes on the first business day following a round. **This means you cannot wait until training to deliver the votes, we don't want you holding onto them.**

Safe in the ARC

A safe has been installed in the ARC in a locked cupboard behind the kitchen. Access to this cupboard is via your Access Swipe Card. The safe and signature sheets will be located inside this cupboard. There will also be a security camera pointing directly at the cupboard to increase security around the safe. Only Field Umpires and a select number of AFLUD staff members will have access to this cupboard.

Dropping Votes Off at the ARC

For games at Marvel Stadium, simply walk around the ring road until you get the gate outside the Northern Change Rooms, this will give you direct access to the ARC. If you have a game elsewhere in Victoria (MCG, GMHBA Stadium, Mars Stadium etc), you can drive into Marvel Stadium via the Service Entry, let the guards at the Security bunker know you are there to drop off Brownlow Medal votes and they will let you drive around

the internal ring road to the Northern Change Rooms where you can access the ARC to drop off the votes.

For interstate games, the option of dropping votes off at Armaguard at Essendon Fields is still available to you. We will ensure there is a signature page available for you to sign at each location.

MOBILE PHONE USAGE

Except for users authorised, no person may use a mobile communication device in a Match Day Restricted Area (unless in an emergency). A mobile communication device includes, without limitation, mobile telephone, smart watches, tablet or laptop computer (whether those devices are enabled for communication or not).

All mobile phones are to be given to umpire trainers upon arrival and are not to be retrieved until all match day paperwork is completed (this includes finals).

ON FIELD WARM UP OPPORTUNITY

Individual warm-ups occur prior to the teams enter the ground.

When teams enter the arena for the start of the game, they warm up in the end closest to their interchange bench.

REPORTS & INCIDENT REFFERALS

Reports vs. Referrals

- Umpires are expected to make reports on any egregious incident they observe during a match.
- Other in play incidents may be referred to the Match Review Officer.
- Refer any incident to the Match Review Officer that you are unsure what may have happened but feel a reportable offence may have occurred (off ball etc).
- Refer to the Match Review Officer any allegation by a player who may have been infringed which could be a reportable offence and not observed by an umpire. Provide as much detail as possible including what was said to you by the players involved.
- Refer any vilification heard or alleged by a player as per guidelines (see **Vilification**).

When a Report is laid – a copy of the match Day Report Form is to be completed and handed to the Match Day Coach.

Incident Referrals will be made via an online form which can be completed on the device of an Authorised Device User (usually Match Day Coach).

Reports made by Boundary, Goal and Emergency Umpires

Before the commencement of the next quarter a field umpire must go with the reporting boundary, goal or emergency umpire to the offending player and the player offended against and the reporting umpire must notify them of the report. It is important that the reporting boundary, goal or emergency umpire notifies the players of the report, not the field umpire. If either of the players involved in the incident are not on the ground at the time, then notification should be given to that team's captain or acting captain.

If the report is in the last quarter and there is no chance to notify the player or captain then the team official will be notified when they collect the paperwork after the match.

Intra-club matches

Umpires will not report in intra-club matches but notify in writing any incident that would be a report to the General Manager of Football Operations and Head of Officiating. The letter would contain the details of the incident the same as you would in a report or incident review.

UMPIRE RESPECT

No person subject to AFL Regulations shall approach or talk to an umpire during the quarter time, half time or three-quarter time interval or when the umpires are entering or leaving the arena.

Any team address shall be given outside the centre square.

Players and coaches approach to umpires – Notice procedure

Umpires are not to be approached by players or coaches during breaks or at the end of a game. If this does occur a letter will be written by a field umpire addressed to General Manager, Football Operations, and cc to Head of Officiating, this letter is to be placed in the match envelope.

Details to be included in the letter: Offending player/coach, which break the incident occurred, what was said to the umpires. **If the player/coaches conduct is deemed a reportable offence, he shall be reported under rule 19.2.2.**

Note: This instruction does not apply in intra-club practice matches provided any approach is undertaken in a respectful manner

VILIFICATION PROCESS

No person subject to the Rules and Regulations shall act towards or speak to any other person in a manner, or engage in any other conduct which threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults another person ("the person vilified") on any basis, including but not limited to, a person's race, religion, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity.

If an umpire observes any type of vilification, or a player has made a complaint of vilification, the umpire is to write to the person nominated below advising of:

- The details of the breach (i.e., what was said)
- The name and club of the person who committed the breach
- The name and club of the person who was the subject of the breach
- Any other relevant information such as witnesses who heard the remark and were offended, or other players who may have made comment on the event.

In the event that a player advises an umpire that he has been vilified, then the Umpire is to write to the person nominated below advising of;

- The name and the club of the player who claims he was vilified
- The quarter and time at which the umpire was advised of the claim.
- Any other relevant information given to the umpire by the complainant (i.e., the opposition player's name, what was said, etc.).

Letters to be marked **CONFIDENTIAL**.

There is no need to advise the offender or either club of your intention to write to the Controlling Body. You must advise the person who was the subject of the breach that you will be writing to the Controlling Body.

The letter must be lodged with the Match Report by 8.30am on the first working day after the match.

Please address to:

AFL - STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
General Manager - Football Operations
cc: Head of Officiating
AFL House
GPO Box 1449
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

It is important that immediately after the game when vilification occurred, the reporting umpire rings the Head of Officiating to inform them of the referral.